

and Spain about ten millions each, that of Italy three and a quarter millions, and that of Russia less than two millions. The geographical extent of the British possessions is well illustrated by the correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who, telegraphing from British Columbia, could say that after travelling 3,000 miles across the ocean in an English ship he was able to travel 3,000 miles by railway on British soil, and that he is about to start on a 4,000-mile ocean voyage in another British ship, only to reach another land of almost continental dimensions over which the British flag waves. He might have added that from the Australian Continent he might, if so disposed, sail across to British India, an empire of vast extent and magnificent resources and possibilities yet undeveloped. When and where will the culminating point of British expansion be reached?

THE larger war believed to be impending between the great European Powers diverts public attention to a large degree from the smaller, but still by no means insignificant struggle which may be regarded as actually in progress between Italy and Abyssinia. The King of Abyssinia seems resolute in his determination to drive the Italians from Massowah. The Italians, on the other hand, are equally eager for the conflict, both the Government and the troops stimulated, no doubt, by a desire to avenge the four hundred of their countrymen who were recently overwhelmed and slain by the Abyssinians. The Italian force at Massowah and vicinity is said to be now increased by reinforcements to about 12,000, and King John, with an army of probably twice the number, is believed to be on the march to attack them. The Abyssinians are a hardy and warlike race, and their mountain heights and defiles afford them a great advantage, especially in defence or retreat. Should war between Russia and the members of the Triple Alliance break out before Italy has this business off her hands, the latter's means of aiding her allies will be greatly curtailed; a fact of which the Czar will not fail to take account.

THE treaty which the British East African Association has recently concluded with the Sultan of Zanzibar has brought under British control a large district of what is probably one of the most healthful and promising regions in Eastern Africa. The area of the district is estimated at 50,000 square miles. It contains, according to a correspondent of the *London Mail*, "a population of some two millions of people, a rich belt of coast-land, vast grazing grounds for cattle, and, above all, a splendid high-land plateau, covered with pine-like woods and European vegetation, plentifully watered, and enjoying a climate in which Englishmen may live and work." If railway communication could be opened up with the interior, this fine sea-board district would compete on at least equal terms with the adjacent territory under German influence for the trade of the rich regions around the Great Lakes and on the Upper Nile. Such development is, presumably, only a question of time. The energetic rivalry which is going on between Great Britain and other nations for some of the splendid prizes to be won in Eastern Africa, affords a pretty sure pledge and prophecy of the steady opening up of the vast habitable regions of the dark continent to European enterprise and civilization.

WHAT is to be the character of the approaching session of the British Parliament? Will it, like so many that have preceded it, be occupied almost exclusively with a succession of duels having more or less direct connection with the Irish Question, or will the affairs of other portions of the Empire come in for a modest share of attention? This is a question to which the public mind naturally turns as the day of opening draws near. Lord Salisbury and his colleagues are, no doubt, honestly anxious to let Irish affairs have the go-by to a large extent, and to devote their energies to the promotion of much-needed legislation about matters nearer home. The Local Government Bill, full as it must be of difficulties and complicated details, sure to excite almost endless differences of opinion, will of itself, if exhaustively discussed, make a very large draught upon the time and energies of both Government and Parliament. It is so far satisfactory to note that Mr. Gladstone, in his Dover speech, somewhat modified his previous declaration that "Ireland blocks the way." He now says that there is no reason why "some progress" may not be made with other legislation, if only the Government will leave aside "aggressive and provocative measures," and apply themselves to business. Some discussion has arisen over the alleged ambiguity of the phrase just quoted, but the context seems to make it clear enough that the reference is not to the Crimes Bill, which the Government does not probably intend to amend or modify, but to its foreshadowed purpose of further strengthening the powers of the majority in the House of Commons by fresh amending the rules of procedure. Even so, Mr. Gladstone's condition gives no hope

of unobstructed progress unless the Government will forego its policy in that respect, which is not at all likely. Hence it is pretty clear that even if the session is not inaugurated with a prolonged struggle over the Irish Question, the Local Government Bill can be reached only after a bitter contest over the new rules of procedure. The great measure of the session is thus relegated to second, if not third place on the programme. The prospect is not reassuring to those who think other parts of the nation, as well as Ireland, entitled to some share of Parliamentary attention. Mr. Parnell's utterances, however, seem to indicate a wish on his part to let business proceed without unnecessary obstruction. That acute strategist no doubt anticipates disagreement and possibly disruption of the Tories and Liberal Unionists over the Local Government Bill.

ATTENTION has recently been drawn to the wonderful material development of India. When India first came into British hands it neither bought nor sold to any considerable extent in the markets of the world. It has now become one of the most important buyers and sellers. In the cotton trade, for instance, India is becoming a formidable rival of Lancashire. Its exports in cotton yarn have increased eighty-three per cent. within five years. Its proximity to China and Japan enables Bombay to interfere seriously with Lancashire's command of these markets. In 1886 these two countries combined absorbed no less than 80,000,000 lbs. of Indian yarn. In regard to the wheat export from India to England, of which so much has been said, it appears that though the United Kingdom took twenty per cent. less of Indian wheat in 1886-7 than in 1885-6, India actually exported between five and six per cent. more in the former than in the latter year. The apparent discrepancy is explained by the fact that France, notwithstanding her high tariff, took large quantities, and a vast expansion took place in the export to Italy, where Indian wheat is becoming increasingly popular, and by reason of its cheapness is making the cultivation of the native product unprofitable. An important factor in the rapid progress of India is the remarkable development of her railway system. During the year ending March 31, 1887, 1,025 miles of railway were opened for traffic, making the total mileage in operation at that date 13,390. And yet such is the activity of trade that in the year 1886, an average return of close upon six per cent. was yielded on the entire capital of nearly £180,000,000 sterling invested in these roads.

AN important question has been raised in the United States Congress by the application of Utah for admission as a State, and the introduction of a Bill for that purpose. The Territory has the necessary population. With a view, no doubt, to the present application, it has adopted a constitution prohibiting polygamy absolutely and forever. Nevertheless, the objections to its admission are many and strong, and will probably prevail. The population, though sufficient in numbers, is not, it is urged, in quality up to the standard the nation has a right to apply to a people claiming the high privilege of equal representation in the Senate, proportionate representation in the House of Representatives, and all the other prerogatives of Stateship. A very large majority of the people of Utah are foreigners by birth, and wholly un-American in political views, methods, and aims. They have come to America not to identify themselves with the institutions and life of the great Republic, but to secure opportunity and scope for the propagation of a fanatical creed, and the reign of an aggressive though politic hierarchy. They know and care nothing for American history. They have no sympathy with the genius and aspirations of American nationalism. With regard even to the crucial test, the formal renunciation of polygamy, it is impossible for the national Government to exact any guarantee of good faith, since no law will enforce itself, and in the absence of an honest and strong sentiment against polygamous practices in the State, there would be nothing to prevent this article of the Constitution from becoming practically a dead letter, without the possibility of interference by the Federal authority. On the whole there seems little probability of the Bill being allowed to pass. If the Mormon propagandism has been the source of so much perplexity in a Territory, it would seem to be the height of unwisdom to permit it to entrench itself in the heart of the Union, with all the advantages that must accrue from possession of the rights and powers of a full-fledged State.

A RESOLUTION has been offered by a member of the House of Representatives at Washington, and reported from the Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries, calling for information relative to an alleged discrimination in tolls against American vessels passing through the Welland Canal, in violation of Article 27 of the Washington Treaty. That Article provides, in substance, that the citizens of the United States