

electoral processes must be evident to every one who compares the quiet and orderly proceedings of a polling day under the present system, with the two or three days of confusion, drunkenness and brawling which were almost the rule under the old order of things. But these constantly recurring election trials, followed in so many cases by the voiding of the election on the ground of bribery, prove but too clearly that for the prevention of corrupt methods the present law is, to say the least, a partial failure. We do not suppose that any legislation whatever could wholly prevent unprincipled individuals from resorting to corrupt practices, but it seems clear that a most effectual means of reducing the evil to the *minimum* would be the adoption of the English system, requiring from the responsible parties sworn statements of all receipts and disbursements for the purposes of the given election. The number of partisans who are able and willing to furnish money for the purchase of votes out of their own pockets, must be small compared with that of those who are ready to make corrupt use of funds put freely into their hands for the support of the party candidate.

THE report furnished to the newspapers by Professor Saunders, Director of the Central Experimental Farm, giving the results of the first 50 tests of frozen grain sent by farmers in Manitoba and the North-West, shows, according to Professor Saunders' calculation, that nearly one-third of the farmers in those districts which suffered from the frost are unprovided with reliable seed. This is a matter of great importance, not only to those immediately concerned, but to the whole country, whose reputation is to a certain extent at stake. If, as may be hoped, these tests and reports have the effect of preventing the use of damaged seed, the benefit conferred will be a very real and tangible one, and the usefulness of the Experimental Farm in one direction will have been well illustrated.

THE Canadian Institute deserves well of the citizens of Toronto and of the Province generally for having secured the holding of the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto next summer. The occasion will doubtless be one of great interest, though the season of the year, midsummer, is not the most favourable for serious exertion, either physical or mental. It does seem, at first thought, very like a reflection upon the hospitality of the city and the interest of its citizens in scientific matters, that it should be thought necessary to appeal to the Legislature for aid in entertaining the expected visitors. A precedent is, however, furnished in the bestowal by the Dominion Government, on a former occasion, of the sum of \$10,000 to aid the City of Montreal in entertaining the British Association. Taking the lowest point of view it will be in the interests of the city to contribute liberally, and it cannot be doubted that many of our wealthy citizens will gladly aid the members of the Canadian Institute in their praiseworthy efforts to make the hospitalities extended worthy of the occasion and creditable to all concerned.

IF it be correct that the Postmaster-General, after fully considering the question, has decided against the reduction of letter postage from three to two cents, the fact is greatly to be regretted. We do not say that the decision may not be necessary under the circumstances. Possibly further reduction is at present impracticable. While there can be no doubt that the number of letters passing through the mails would be enormously increased under a two-cent rate, it would, perhaps, be too much to expect that the increase would at once be sufficient to balance the loss of one-third of the revenue derived from each letter, plus the increased cost of sorting and carrying. The Minister, with all the facts and statistics before him, should be the best judge on this point, and he would, of course, be held to strict account by Parliament and the people should the annual deficit of his Department be greatly increased under his management. These considerations may well make him cautious. But, on the other hand, as is well-known, similar reductions in other countries have usually been wonderfully successful in stimulating letter-writing and augmenting revenue. Nor should it be forgotten that there is an indirect, but very real, gain to the country in the increase of business which is sure to follow cheaper communication of any kind—a gain which would in this case, no doubt, more than compensate for a considerable loss of ordinary revenue. It is, on this principle that the postal business is now carried on at an annual apparent loss. Another circumstance which is not without

a most important bearing upon the question is the fact that an agitation is being carried on in the United States for the reduction of letter postage from two cents to one cent. It is far from improbable that the reduction will be made by the incoming, if not by the present, Congress. There is also on foot a project for a two-cent rate of ocean postage between the United States and Great Britain. Canada should certainly not be behind her neighbour in seeking to facilitate intercourse with the Mother Country.

THE uneasiness which was created in England a few years ago by certain alarmist predictions touching the rapid exhaustion of the coal beds does not seem to have been entirely allayed by the scientific calculations which put the date of such a calamity so far away in the indefinite future as apparently to remove it entirely from the list of matters of present practical concern. Sir Frederick Bramwell, in delivering the inaugural address of the Heriot Watt College at Edinburgh a short time since, recurred to the subject by renewing the often-repeated protest against English extravagance in the use of coal. It is capable of scientific demonstration that the waste by even the best of the present modes of producing heat is enormous, only a small percentage of the energy stored up in the fuel being actually made available as heat or force. In view of this fact considerable interest attaches to a series of experiments now being carried on in the United States, as described in a recent number of *Science*. The essence of the proposed innovation consists in the delivery of the coal into the furnace in a finely pulverized form, the process of delivery being so arranged that each particle is brought into contact with the flame in a state of separation and surrounded by a volume of air. The delivery in this state is effected by means of a current of air produced by revolving fans, and thereby, it is claimed, the supply of oxygen necessary to complete combustion is furnished in connection with every particle of the fuel. Thus far the experiments seem to have been attended with a promising degree of success. That in this way a much nearer approach to perfect combustion may be secured seems evident, but whether the saving thus effected will much more than counterbalance the additional expenditure of force required in the processes of pulverization and delivery remains to be seen. It seems scarcely possible that the science of the day can fail eventually to devise some better means of economizing fuel and utilizing its stored-up energy than has yet been found.

THE British lion, that is the newspaper lion, has been bearded in his den. The *New York Herald* has made its appearance in London as a morning paper. It is henceforth to appear simultaneously in the three greatest cities of the world, London, Paris and New York. As a stroke of newspaper enterprise this is probably without a precedent. It will be an interesting and curious study to watch the effects of this introduction of American newspaper methods, and familiarity with the habits of American life and thought they represent, upon the English journals and people. The strong protest uttered by the *Pall Mall Gazette* against the Sunday edition will appeal strongly to the good sense and conservative instincts of the English people, though, we must admit, the logic of the protest limps seriously. Mr. Stead of the *Gazette* bases his protest, not on Sabbatarian, but on humanitarian grounds. He does not protest against Sunday journals *per se*, for there are many of them, with enormous circulations printed, published and sold every Sunday in London. He, as a practical journalist, knows that it is not the Sunday morning but the Monday morning newspaper which makes the largest demands for Sunday work. What he objects to is the publication of any newspaper seven days in the week. "It is not," he says, "a question of religion, but one of health and opportunities for leisure which make life worth living." To compel the staff of any daily newspaper to produce that newspaper seven days in the week is "a social crime of the first magnitude." But it will be observed that the whole force of this protest may be obviated by the simple process of making the staff of employees large enough to admit of each one having one day of rest in seven. As a matter of fact, unless we are much mistaken, this is now the practice in the *New York Herald* newspaper offices which issue Sunday editions. Each man has, we believe, his "off day" in the course of the week.

IT is now announced without qualification, and may probably be regarded as true, that Mr. Blaine is to be Secretary of State, and Mr. Allison Secretary of the Treasury, in Mr. Harrison's Cabinet. With the character and

record of the latter Canadians have little concern, though the Americans themselves may be pardoned if many of them look forward with some apprehension to the administration of the Department by the man who has had the preparation and management of the Republican Tariff Bill, now before Congress, and who is not free from suspicion of having made indefensible concessions to the powerful influences of the Trusts and Monopolies. But we may well view with some apprehension, under present circumstances, the placing of the Secretaryship in the hands of a man of Blaine's unenviable reputation for trickery, and undeniable capacity for blundering and mischief-making. It may be, however, that the weight of official responsibility will have a sobering effect upon the mercurial temperament of the Man from Maine. It is, moreover, necessary to remember that the American Secretary of State is, after all, but the official servant of the President who appoints him. There is as yet no reason, unless it be found in this selection, to doubt the sound judgment and good feeling of the President elect. Moreover, the foreign policy of the Government is not finally left even in his hands, the ultimate responsibility being with the Senate. Still, it must be confessed, that in view of last winter's debates and tactics the Republican Senate of the United States is not just the fair-minded and dispassionate body with which one would like best to discuss intricate and delicate international questions.

WHAT is to be the future of the Negro in the United States is one of the most difficult of the many race problems which are constantly coming to the front with the progress of civilization. That he will not be a mere cipher in American society and politics is becoming increasingly evident. By the coloured people of the South the advent of a Republican Administration is hailed as a harbinger of better opportunities. It cannot be that they will permanently submit to be deprived of their civil rights by fraud or intimidation. Already they seem to be learning the secret of organization and united action. The demand which they were at one time said to be making for a race representative in the Cabinet, has been, it appears, so far modified that they will be content, for the present, with some moderate share of the more important offices in the Civil Service Department. This demand it will be neither easy nor seemly for a Republican President to refuse. If we may rely upon what seem to be unprejudiced statements in journals not blindly hostile, the negroes are outstripping the poor whites of the South in educational and industrial progress, and bid fair to become dominant in many sections. As an indication of this, it is said that the white race is rolling back from the coast plantations to the highlands, leaving the negroes in possession. The *Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution* says that this movement is not limited to the coast, but that wherever the negroes are largely prominent the whites are retiring. Another significant fact is that the dark race is becoming blacker. The mulatto is disappearing, giving place to the full-blooded negro. This tendency is easily explicable, and is a natural consequence of the abolition of slavery, but it is an important factor in the problem. What effect the gradual elimination of the admixture of white blood may have upon the energy and intelligence of the coloured population remains to be seen. But the fact remains that the lines of separation between the races are becoming more and more distinct. And this is said to be as much the choice of the blacks as of the whites. What the future may have in store, whether national unity in racial diversity, or a race conflict of prodigious and terrible dimensions, the future alone can reveal. The one settled fact is that neither amalgamation nor absorption is possible.

THE reports concerning the state of affairs in Samoa, and concerning diplomatic negotiations in regard to those affairs, are still full of darkness. It may now, however, be regarded as tolerably certain that no serious rupture will result from the imbroglio. Prince Bismarck's instructions to the German Consul at Samoa to withdraw his demand for control of the Island, assure a peaceful issue, though it is difficult to reconcile the statement that such instructions have been given, with the remarks ascribed to Prince Bismarck in the interview with the *New York Herald* correspondent. That interview, assuming its genuineness, is remarkable in more respects than one. It is certainly a singular if not unique proceeding, for a great statesman to explain and defend the policy of the nation he represents through the medium of a foreign newspaper. The statements themselves are found on close examination to convey a strikingly small amount of definite information