

of the accused, the solemnity of the issue makes it almost impossible to suspect any but a most disreputable witness of a design or desire to secure a conviction by false, distorted, or exaggerated testimony. It may be possible for a counsel who is anxious to secure the acquittal, by any means, of a man he believes to be guilty, to so intimidate or confuse a timid or nervous witness as to lead him or her to make incompatible or even contradictory admissions. It may be possible, too, to unduly weaken the force of testimony by insinuating unjust and cruel suspicions in regard to the moral character of the witness. But we cannot conceive of a high-minded and honourable barrister as either desiring such an end, contrary to the interests of justice, or as being willing to resort to the use of such means. Nevertheless, it is, as we all know, quite customary for the counsel for the defendant to cross-examine witnesses of whose good faith he can have no reasonable doubt, in such a style as would seem to the unprofessional mind to be justified only by strong suspicion of intentional perjury. Such a mode of treatment cannot be in the interests of truth, for the more complete the self-possession of the witness, the clearer will be his recollection and statement of the facts within his knowledge. It cannot be in the interests of justice, for the effect is to create such a dread of being subjected to the ordeal as no doubt deters many a one who might give valuable testimony from making known facts that may have come under his observation. May it not be worth the consideration of the members of the bar whether the dignity of the profession would not be promoted, and the true interests of justice subserved better by the breach than by the observance of this traditional mode, if such it be, of cross-examination in criminal cases?

THE standing objection with which the advocates of Imperial Federation have hitherto been met, and, as it has seemed to us, fairly met, has been that, in the absence of some well-defined scheme, no one was able to say or to know what Imperial Federation really means. To this the answer has usually been that it was too soon to ask or expect such a scheme, and that to attempt to formulate one at so early a stage in the progress of the movement would be but a source of embarrassment, if not of disaster. We are glad to see that the Executive Committee of the Imperial Federation League of Canada are no longer of this opinion. Under their auspices and by their order there has just appeared from the publishing houses of C. Blackett Robinson, Toronto, and William Drysdale and Company, Montreal, a treatise of more than a hundred pages, entitled "A Federal Parliament of the British People," by Arch. McGoun, M.A., B.C.L., advocate, Montreal. We have not yet been able to give this pamphlet the careful reading throughout, which its importance deserves, and must, therefore, defer any extended notice until another number. Meanwhile we may say that we have read far enough and closely enough to become very favourably impressed with the ability and lucidity of the work, and the author's comprehensive grasp of the subject. So far as we are aware, Mr. McGoun's pamphlet is by far the most important treatise which has yet appeared on the subject, and we cannot doubt that it will be widely read and will make a marked impression. If it does not give a strong and lasting impulse to the Federation movement, it will be, in our opinion, only because thoughtful readers, recognizing in it the outlines of the most complete scheme that could be evolved by a competent and judicious advocate, will be but the more firmly convinced that the obstacles which make it difficult if not impossible to regard such a scheme as practicable are obstacles inherent in the conditions of the problem, rather than mere faults of procedure in the attempted solution. Be that as it may, however, to Mr. McGoun belongs the great credit of having seen clearly that if the advocates of the scheme wish to gain the adhesion of thoughtful and practical men, they must not shrink from attempting to define their position; and of having had the courage which refuses to "shirk the consideration of the question in all its bearings," or "foster the delusion that it can be accomplished without some sacrifices." While we fail to be convinced that Imperial Federation is either a feasible or a desirable destiny for Canada, and may attempt to give some reasons for our opinion in connection with a fuller consideration of this able and interesting paper, at another time, we heartily commend Mr. McGoun's treatise as worthy of careful perusal by everyone who is interested in the question, whether as friend or opponent of the proposed federation.

THE remarkable letter addressed a few weeks ago by the Minister of the Interior to the Oka Indians, on which we commented at the time, has had its natural effect in arousing sympathy for the Indians and indignation against both the Sulpicians and the Hon. Mr. Dewdney. It is probable that the public meeting held in Ottawa a few days since may have been too much under the influence of feeling to take a dispassionate view of the question discussed. It is possible, too, that Mr. MacLaren's sketch of the history and legal aspects of the case may need supplementing from the Seminary's standpoint. It would be beyond our sphere to venture an opinion in regard to the validity or invalidity of the Seminary's claim to the disputed property. That is a purely legal question. But it is not easy to see how any fair-minded man can feel otherwise than indignant in view of the manner in which the Seminary has attempted to crowd out those unfortunate Indians who have incurred its displeasure by becoming Protestants. Either the Seminary's title to the lands so long occupied by these Indians is good in law and equity or it is not. There is a regular way in which the question may be decided, and should it be decided in favour of the Sulpician claim there is a regular way in which to gain possession. Mere *ex parte* legal opinions are worthless in such a case. Mr. MacLaren says that he, as Counsel for the Indians, has repeatedly challenged the Seminary to take such action as would insure the early settlement of the dispute by the courts. The fact that they have steadily refused to do this gives ground for a pretty strong suspicion that the Seminary authorities have not full confidence in the justice of their cause. On the other hand Chief Timothy's complaints of the manner in which his people have been treated and his simple faith in British honour appeal strongly not only to the sympathy of the public but to its sense of justice and its love of fair play. In any case Mr. Dewdney's letter is indefensible and inexcusable. As Chief Timothy intimated, it is the duty of the Government to secure justice to the poor and weak. Especially is this the case when they are its wards. But it surely cannot be its duty to bring pressure to bear to aid the strong in enforcing claims not duly established in a court of justice. The attachment of the Indians to the spot in which their fathers have lived and died is touching. Even should the Seminary's claim be made good in a court of law, it would devolve upon the Government to maintain British justice, and to honour the faith of the Indians in the covenant of British kings, by either purchasing for the dispossessed the homes to which they are so much attached, or securing for them others in a locality satisfactory to them. It is gratifying to know that Mr. Dewdney's blunder is likely to have an effect just the opposite of that intended, and by fixing public attention upon the case and raising up powerful friends for the Protestant Indians, to compel either the abandonment of the attempt to remove them, or the settlement of the question by proper legal processes.

"PROFESSIONAL politician" is a phrase very often used in these days, and almost invariably with a sneering inflection. And yet, unless the word "politician" itself is understood to carry with it necessarily a bad connotation, it is not easy to see why the duties it implies should not constitute one of the noblest of professions. Theoretically, politics, or the science of government, is one of the most difficult and abstruse, as well as one of the most indispensable of studies, and hence one that demands the undivided energies of the ablest minds; while if in the term "politician" we include the business of reducing the science to practice in the work of legislation and government, the demands necessarily made upon the time and powers of the individual are increased to a degree that should know no limits but those set by nature and necessity. These remarks are suggested by the rumour, whether well-founded or not we have no means of knowing, that the friends and admirers of the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier are proposing to establish a fund for the purpose of paying him such a salary as might in some measure compensate him for giving up his legal practice and giving all his time and attention to the duties resting upon him as leader of the Opposition in the Dominion Parliament. The suggestion, if properly conditioned, seems to us wise on political and unobjectionable on ethical grounds. Whether it is feasible or not depends upon the earnestness and liberality of his supporters. We have, as our readers are well aware, no admiration for the party system in government. It is, to our thinking, a roundabout, wasteful mode of making and administering the laws of a country. What is infinitely worse, it is the fruitful parent of much of the favouritism

and corruption which are the curse of our politics and the bane of our civilization. But so long as we are unable to work a radical reform in this respect, it is eminently desirable that the representatives chosen, and especially the leaders of both parties, should be the very best men the country can produce, and that they should have every inducement to give their best energies to their political duties, and every encouragement and help to spurn the temptations with which their path will always be thickly bestrewn. Under the present system the State provides moderate salaries for the members of the Government, that is the leaders of the successful party, but makes, of course, no provision for the leaders of the minority, though it is generally admitted, and is indeed but a corollary of the party system, that an efficient Opposition is almost as useful and as necessary to good government as an efficient administration. But as in the majority of cases our best public men are dependent upon some business or profession for support, it is too much to ask or expect that they shall forego their means of livelihood in order to serve either the public or the party. Canada has no doubt lost the services of more than one of her ablest and most incorruptible statesmen, simply because they could not afford to give the necessary attention to political matters. We are, therefore, unable to see why it should not be in the best interest of the country that each party should have a sufficient fund to enable more than one of its ablest men to give their whole time to the study of the science of politics, and the application of sound political principles and laws to the solution of the hard, practical questions which are continually coming up for discussion and settlement. Such men could do, too, an excellent and much-needed educational work by series of statesmanlike addresses and lectures in different localities all over the Dominion. Of course it would be necessary to guard against the use of any portion of such a fund for improper purposes, and to this end it should be collected and managed in the most open and above-board manner, all accounts being subject to Parliamentary inspection. In the same category should be placed all party expenditures in elections. These indeed might well be brought under the same management. The adoption of the British system in regard to such expenditures is the reform most imperatively needed just now to promote purity of elections.

IT is, perhaps, impossible to conceive of a more fiendish crime than that of purposely wrecking, or trying to wreck, a railway train, in order either to plunder the dead and maimed passengers, or to take revenge upon stockholders or managers. Hence, such an event as the destruction of the train on the N. Y. Central Railroad, a week or two since, is of more than local or even national importance. The whole continent at least is interested in finding out the perpetrators of such an outrage, and the motives which could prompt them to so horrible a deed. Especially is it desirable that it should be known whether the dastardly act was committed by members of a labour organization and with the connivance of its local managers. Were it to be proved that a section of the Knights of Labour were responsible for the crime, the effect would be, not only to brand those immediately concerned as criminals of the deepest dye, but, however unjustly, to put an indelible stigma upon the whole organization, and probably to lead to its destruction. On the other hand, if it be that the Knights as such are innocent, the members of the Order, everywhere, will suffer cruel wrong from the unjust accusation. The fact that three men, who were alleged to be Knights of Labour, confessed themselves to be the guilty parties was naturally accepted at first as settling the question unfavourably for the Knights. But the further fact that the Grand Jury before whom this confession was laid, failed to indict the men for the alleged crime, though it did for a lesser one committed elsewhere, and acquitted two other men whom the confession implicated as accomplices, shows that the confession could hardly have been considered genuine by those who had the best means of judging. That which tends more than anything else to make the people cautious in believing the Knights guilty is the presence of a paid detective agency in the persons of the Pinkerton men. Many of these are, undoubtedly, men of the very lowest type, and the agency has a direct interest in leading the public to believe that it has made some great discoveries. It is encouraging to learn that the Legislature of New York is considering the propriety of legislating against the employment of private police such as those organized by Pinkerton. As the *Christian Union* well observes: "the difference between a