

at a discount. Staid party newspapers descend to the discussion of such trivial subjects as Fanning in church, while the typical country sheet opens its columns to the consideration of such unaccustomed matters as the transit of Venus, the Carlist War, Professor Schliemann's Trojan discoveries, and the crisis in France. Cremation, the *pi-aller* of the perplexed editor, is totally tabooed as a theme utterly unbearable at the present state of the thermometer, and even the fiery Rochefort is dismissed as out of place during the "heated term."

The Free School policy of the New Brunswick Government has been undoubtedly sustained by the elections which are about closing in that Province. An unusual, we had almost said a perilous amount of violence was infused into the campaign. The issue is such that the question must perforce come up for settlement at the next Session of the Federal Parliament. Mr. Costigan will then bring forward his resolutions. It is no use sounding the note of alarm prematurely, but for ourselves we know of no matter so fraught with danger to the Constitution as is this school business.

Gambetta has inaugurated a new mode of dealing with his adversaries. Instead of challenging them to a duel, according to old French ideas, he has adopted the rougher but readier English plan of having them arrested and fined by the police magistrate. This is the course he has pursued against a M. de St. Croix, who brutally assaulted him with a stick at the railway station. We are inclined to have some faith in M. Gambetta as a reformer after such a proceeding. It is to be hoped that his action will have the effect of stopping street fights among gentlemen.

During his stay in New York, Henri Rochefort carefully abstained from giving a circumstantial account of his evasion from Noumea. The reason he urged for his silence was the fear of implicating fellow-convicts who were still in the island. The necessity for this reticence is to be regretted, because it leaves a delicate little matter unsettled. Did Rochefort break his parole or not? All his friends would like to be clear about that. However low the ex-communist has fallen, it would be satisfactory to ascertain positively whether he has maintained his honour or not.

The member for Marquette says that the Grand Lodge wants to rule Canada. He affirms, furthermore, that unless the Manitoba difficulties are speedily settled annexation will ensue. Now really, in view of these facts, it is too bad that Mr. Cunningham should withdraw from political life and retire to the shelter of magistracy.

Is anything going to be done to keep St. Helen's Island from desecration this summer? If not, after the first picnic the grass will be trampled, the bushes stripped, and the whole scenery ruined for the rest of the season; and we shall have nothing but empty soda bottles to show for it all.

McVicar was superintendent of fisheries and editor of a paper at Sarnia. He might have known that the two offices were incompatible, especially when his paper attacked the Government. Mr. McVicar has been given full leisure to give his undivided attention to his editorial labours.

Attorney-General Walkem had no need of being so touchy. The destinies of British Columbia do not lie solely in his hands. Hon. Amor De Cosmos is still in Ottawa, and he and the Premier will make it up between them, without the help of intermediaries.

Mr. Sandford Fleming's report has set everybody thinking about the Pacific Railway. The Government cannot shirk the work. Professional men show that it is feasible, and the country will require its construction. If the road is not built, the future of this country is lost.

Mr. M. P. Ryan retains his seat for Montreal Centre. It is now Mr. Fred. Mackenzie's turn. It is a hard matter to under take the responsibility of ousting a man, after he has sat through one session of Parliament.

Our civil service friends had better cultivate a habit of know-nothingism. There is such a thing as destitution and there are swarms of applications for vacancies.

An Ottawa paper calls Dr. Strange, of Kingston, Orlando Furioso Strange. The Doctor ought to show that paper that the *soubriquet* is deserved.

The Ministerial papers are beginning to clamour for full and accurate information concerning the Reciprocity Treaty. What does it mean?

The Quebec Government are said to be meditating dissolution. It is a risky game. Dissolution saved Mackenzie, but it ruined Gladstone.

Really, they are slow about it. We have been expecting a copy of that Ross letter for the last month. What is the matter?

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RATIONALE OF ANNEXATION.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS:

SIR,—A word upon a topic which has occasionally served to entertain the leisure of our reading public—I mean annexation—may perhaps not be deemed at the present moment either useless or unnecessary.

It is certainly conceivable that the question may arise in the minds of a few Canadians by birth or adoption. Is our Confederation worth preserving? We also think that it will be by no means difficult to discern that on fair discussion it will be found to be so. The Dominion of Canada is a nation within a ring fence—its filling up and its complete political homogeneity have yet to be achieved. It is large in extent of territory, but we shall hope not too unwieldy, if we exert ourselves faithfully to complete its communications.

Notwithstanding its recent organisation into a Dominion, British North America forms a nation with traditions both interesting and patriotic, and has a history linked with the greatness of the empire with which it is still connected. A nation, as we have lately been told, lives in its history and its traditions. This is certainly true so far as it goes. It is true of the United States, and why not of ourselves?

It is admitted we are no longer dependent on Great Britain in the sense in which dependence used to be understood, but we still acknowledge ourselves the recipients of important benefits, both moral and material, through our connection with the Mother of Nations.

There is no need at present to comment upon the institutions or the public feeling of the neighbouring Republic. Let it suffice that our friends across the lines have started the business of free institutions upon a distinct basis from that which underlies our own modes of thought and action.

Annexation is a word easily pronounced, but that is nearly all that would be found easy about it. For, observe, other discrepancies being put aside, there is an essential limit to the extent of your model Republic, and this limit will be discovered in the, after all, only human capacity of the legislative Unit. If the desires of man are boundless, his powers, on the other hand, are far from being so. The extent of any self-governed Empire or Republic—if government, within its bounds, is to be a reality and not a sham—will have to be limited by the mental endurance of the individual citizen. Designate governments as you please, this is nature's law of self-governed communities, and we may observe that a constitutional Monarchy differs very little from a Republic in its claims upon its individual members. Casting our eyes across the line that separates us from our neighbours, we would ask if the constituent politician in that favoured land has not already under his charge as much territory as he can govern with comfort and satisfaction to himself, and whether, for his own sake, he should be the person to cry out for more. The world has never before seen so large or complex a Republic as the United States. If the citizen of that country takes up the duty that devolves upon him, every considerable portion of every State and Territory must come within his ken—be under his periodical review—and the telegraph has made this only too possible. Have we ever fully measured this obligation and burden, or fairly estimated its bearings upon the limited human capacity of the anxious constituent ruler? The pages of a great metropolitan newspaper in New York will give some conception of what we mean. Such a newspaper seeks to provide that the American citizen shall not enter upon the work and contest of legislation unpanoplied by knowledge of his duties. For fullness and approximate completeness of detail, when has the world seen anything like this before? If it could only enlarge the powers of the reader to correspond with the perfection of its machinery! But a limit has been set to these powers by their creator. The great bulk of the collected matter has to be passed over by the private reader. Would this man be made any happier by having a great Dominion to supervise, as a slight addition to the present claims upon his severely taxed nerves and mental powers? or would it increase his unpleasant consciousness of not being able to overtake the responsibilities of his position? For neither country could afford to be left ungoverned for the gratification of a popular fancy, and the theory of popular government is that the citizen should participate.

All men in free countries need a political system that will come within the mental grasp of those amongst them who are accustomed to exercise the thinking faculty. Politics, whether taken up as the chief pursuit of life, or in the simply patriotic sense of the private citizen, while they form a fine exercise for the cultivated intelligence, constitute also no little strain upon the mental faculties of the faithful student. The absorbing attractions of other departments of life have left the more earnest enquirers in a considerable minority—but all good subjects or citizens should be able to give an intelligent vote—for their collective voices, in the last resort, decide questions of imperial and world-wide significance, and all enlightened men amongst them will wish to educate themselves to the point of doing so. Our Canadian journals devote themselves with great assiduity to assisting the judgments of all classes of politicians in their mastery of this great department of the science of life. Of the entire mass of thought in Canada a considerable proportion is given to politics, and this thoughtfulness, taken in its entirety, forms the great balance-wheel or pendulum that regulates the clock of state and prevents its springs and levers from pursuing at any time too headlong or uncontrolled a course. Now all thought, but the lightest, im-

plies labour, however we may choose to overlook the fact. Can we, Canadians, afford any more than our active-minded neighbours to enlarge so enormously the field of supervisions? We should have to master those voluminous politics in addition to our own, while the thing that is really needed is rather a greater devotion of study to our home interests.

However wide may be the territory we choose to grasp within our immediate sympathies and labours, it is the tract of which we are denizens which will always have the first claim. If Canada were annexed to the States, or the States to her, she would be just as much Canada as at present in her essential, moral, and material requirements, for these are affected by her geographical position, her traditions, and the condition of her people. The point of chief importance in connection with the hypothesis of annexation is, then, that as the principal result of such an arrangement, if it were ever attempted, we should find that we had acquired two huge orbs of political thought and responsibility to master instead of one. If the one we are already endowed with, comprising the interests of the northern half of the continent, will soon be as much as we can fairly bring within our control, what would the new requirement become for us? If the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the peopling and development of our vast interior territory—the opening of new channels for trade, and the cultivating pleasant relations with the outer world, are already sufficient to keep our minds something more than merely amused; how would things be if we had the southern negro upon our hands—the Indian of the Territories—the repression of the speculative mania—the reform in the United States currency—those terrible quadrennial elections, which seem to be always going on—not to speak of the minor excitements involved in the general diplomatic relations of our neighbours which we should have to assume, or of their great festivals, as the day of Independence, of the evacuation of the country, of the decoration of the graves of the brave fellows who fell in their civil war, &c.

What I have thus endeavoured roughly to set forth I conceive to be the broad ground for avoiding the great extension of our political field which annexation would involve. If we were to extend the argument so as to embrace the question of relative degrees of liberty under a constitutional Monarchy and a Republic, it would not be by any means difficult to show that all the tyranny that the constituents of either have any occasion to fear, under any supposable circumstances, would take the form in these times of what is known as monetary and speculative corruption; and we need not consider in this respect we have anything more to dread than our lively-spirited neighbours. The Crown may be looked upon as a very quiet force as regards the control it exercises in this Dominion, but it should be justly recognized in the peace it has succeeded in diffusing and maintaining, and this most valuable blessing is perhaps the easiest of all to overlook. The essential principle of British rule, of governing for the good of a people and not for a class, is the one upon which our own liberties will in all the future have to be based.

In our permanent relations with our friends of the United States, as well as with our more immediate connexions in Great Britain, we have an increasing commercial intercourse, the constant natural flow of over-crowded populations to newer lands, and the claims of a common Christianity to bind us all in a world-respected social compact; and there should be nothing to hinder these great links in the intercourse of the three communities from receiving daily accessions to their strength and importance.

I am, yours, &c.,
CANADENSIS.

THE FLANEUR.

A legal scruple.

Was the appointment of Mr. Dorion to the head of the Quebec Bench a regular one?

It was, unquestionably.

How so?

He was appointed by the Minister of Justice.

What fee did Paine, the expert, receive for proving that Palmer, not Boyes, wrote the famous slip to Mr. Young?

The trifle of \$500.

At such rate poor Boyes himself would undertake to prove that he had mistaken his own handwriting.

For once our lawyers were agreed
In choosing a *Batonnier*,
From prejudice their choice was freed,
His name is William Kerr;
But they did a great deal more,
For in acting thus—
A marvel never seen before—
The lawyers were unanimous!

Some timid people imagine that there is danger in the doctrines of spiritualism. They apprehend that the fancy is apt to get too highly coloured by them, and that the moral faculties may be wrought up to a perilous degree of morbid tension. Such fears are puerile. The motto of spiritualism is, and ought to be:

"In medio tutissimus ibis."

Who will say that no good can come from Manitoba? It gave us one capital joke in the shape of Cunningham, and now it furnishes us with a pun. Speaking of Sir Henry Thompson's new hobby, a Fort Garry man says it is nothing new for Red River, where *crea-mating* has been carried on for generations upon generations.

What are the duties of a President of the Council?
To reside in Montreal and practise law.

A new way of speaking German in one lesson.

Talk gibberish for about ten minutes, without stopping, and wind up with "gehabt haben." You will be sure to bring out the intelligent reply "so?"

There are two things in Canada which have gone beyond the region of gravity, and which cannot be mentioned without a malicious smile—Royal Commissions and Confidential Missions. Sir John is responsible for the first; Mr. Mackenzie for the second. Poor Edgar!