

Macdonald, he reckoned among the possibilities, if not among the probabilities, a combination of Mr. Blake with Sir Hector Langevin. Now if there is anybody who professes to represent the rigid purity of the Reform party, it is Mr. Blake; and if there is anybody who represents the principle opposed to rigid purity it is Sir Hector Langevin. Sir Hector's frailty has always been the special mark of Grit denunciation, and many have been the virtuous editorials, the moral of which was pointed with his luckless name. Nor, it must be owned, without excuse. Unquestionably he has been for many years the centre and the arch-priest of all the intrigue and corruption which have so thoroughly demoralized Quebec. Unquestionably it has been through him that Quebec has made her bargain whenever she found an occasion for selling herself anew to the Government at Ottawa. He has been the go-between and the broker of her dishonour. In the Pacific Scandal he was one of the three. Not only so, but while nobody for a moment suspected either Sir John Macdonald or Sir George Cartier of using the money for any purpose but the elections, a great many people strongly suspected, and do still strongly suspect Sir Hector Langevin of using a part, at least, of it in a different way. His disclaimers were scouted, his challenges of inquiry were derided by Mr. Blake's allies in the Reform press. A coalition with him therefore would prove that the moral barrier between parties, as well as the political barrier, was capable of being surmounted, and might yield to the paramount necessity of forming an Administration. The correspondent's idea is given merely as a conjecture; but it is the conjecture of a trained observer at the centre of politics; and it is rendered plausible at all events by Mr. Blake's double appeal to Catholic sympathies on St. Patrick's day. If it should be confirmed by the event we should be able to apply, and with better reason, to the parties in Canada the apologue which Mr. Bright applied to the two old aristocratic parties in England. There were, he said, in a city which he knew, two rival stores which waged against each other a furious war of advertisements and counter advertisements, each assuring the public that it alone sold the genuine article and that the article sold by its competitor was a counterfeit; the noise drew custom to both; but at last both became bankrupt, when the fact was disclosed that they were the same concern. Our Canadian parties show that they are the same concern in one respect, at all events: they invariably unite their voices to denounce and their forces to exclude that pestilent interloper the Independent. They are antagonists in the game; but they wish to keep the table and the stakes to themselves.

THE term fanatic, applied by an Australian journal quoted the other day in THE WEEK to an intemperate advocate of Temperance, appears to have aroused ire in certain bosoms. Have not the best causes suffered from the frenzy of fanatics? Did not Cromwell's party suffer from it, as well as that of General Neal Dow? Fanaticism has certain well-known marks. One of these is the propensity to treat friends who will not go your length, or differ from you with regard to means, as worse than declared enemies. It was by denouncing "moderate drinkers" as more hateful and dangerous than actual drunkards, that the preacher incurred the censure of the Australian journal. Another mark is the habit of treating error, or what is assumed to be error, as sin. Is he not a fanatic who treats as sin that which was unquestionably the daily practice of Christ and of the Apostles, and has been the daily practice of the best men in Christendom down to this hour? Where has fanaticism ever shown itself, if not in attempting to proscribe the use of wine in the Sacrament? A third mark, and indeed the very essence of fanaticism, is the disregard of ordinary morality in the headlong pursuit of the favourite object; and assuredly ordinary morality is disregarded, when, to hasten the disuse of liquor, it is proposed to rob those who have been selling it under the license of the State. A leading Prohibitionist has been heard seriously to propose the punishment of death, in the last resort, for contumacious liquor-sellers. The first execution under his code would bring Prohibitionism down with a run. The blue ribbon which temperance men have assumed as their badge may remind them that there once were Blue Laws, and that their galling severity brought on a reaction in which other things besides the Blue Laws perished.

A CURIOUS crisis of the liquor question is impending in the United States. The period during which whiskey is permitted to be in bond before the payment of the tax upon it is three years. In the course of this year and the next the period will expire on 70,000,000 gallons held in bond, mainly in Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois and Ohio. The distillers, and the banks which have made large advances on this immense stock, have been trying to obtain from Congress an extension of the term, but they have failed; so of the 70,000,000 gallons, 30,000,000 at once, the rest

very soon, will be poured upon the market. As a Congressman picturesque, though profanely, expressed it, "a fiery river of damnation will soon be set flowing" over the United States. What, then, is the proper remedy? To forbid the use of pitchers, cups and glasses? That is the remedy of the Prohibitionist, and the only result will be that people will be compelled to drink out of extemporized vessels, or to scoop up the liquor with their hands. While it flows and lips are thirsty, it will not be allowed to sink into the sand. The one effectual remedy is to stop the river at its source by compensating the distillers, removing the revenue and shutting up the stills. We shall not be able to believe in the perfect sincerity of the Temperance party till they have either adopted this thorough-going policy, or given good reasons for refusing to adopt it.

THAT a league has been formed by the European powers with Bismarck at its head for the purpose of curbing British aggrandizement is beyond doubt a fable; nothing either in Bismarck's character or in his policy points in that direction; and he has from the first encouraged England to occupy Egypt, though with the covert design, it may be, of shifting French enmity from Germany to her. Yet the addition of Egypt to the Empire could not fail to raise the hobgoblin of British ambition. The hobgoblin rises accordingly. The Anglophobic press tells over in accents of alarm how it girdles the globe and threatens to enslave the commerce of the world. A definite and persistent design is of course ascribed to the British Government, though amidst the perpetual vicissitudes of the conflict between British parties power passes from Peel to Palmerston, from Palmerston to Gladstone, from Gladstone to Beaconsfield, and from Beaconsfield back to Gladstone, wielded one day by a Jingo, next day by an apostle of moderation who has just been denouncing the Jingo's Imperial policy in an election campaign. This notion, ridiculously baseless, as the slightest acquaintance with the history of the vast miscellany of possessions comprised in the British Empire would show, derives colour from such historical phantasmagorias as Professor Seeley's *Expansion of England*, and from the ambitious sentiments breathed by Imperialists when they are advocating Imperial Federation. Extension and dispersion, instead of being elements of strength and making the Empire formidable to the world, are manifestly sources of weakness. An Empire on which the sun never sets is one assailable through the whole circumference of the globe. Wellington complained to Peel that the colonies and dependencies were undefended. Peel, in reply, could only invite the Duke to frame a plan for their defence. The British Empire is sometimes compared to that of Rome; and Palmerston in his boastful mood talked of the Englishman as the modern Roman. But the Roman Empire, vast as was its extent, lay all within a ring fence; nor, with the questionable exception of the Persian monarchy, was there at that time any other great power in the world. The British Empire has to be defended against a number of other powers greatly superior in military strength to England, and some of them lying between her and the principal mass of her possessions. There is no military or naval force of importance in any part of the enormous frame saving in Great Britain herself, and the strain of a war with a coalition of naval powers would almost certainly prove too great to be borne. Egypt is annexed: the step was inevitable: but the hesitancy with which it was taken shows that England feels the burden and the peril. Expansion has now reached its limits; contraction is at hand, let Imperialists vapour as they may; and it will begin in this hemisphere, where the so-called dominion of Great Britain is now a dangerous liability without real compensation of any kind.

ONCE more the social alarm bell has sounded, and sounded loudly, in the United States. Cincinnati has been the scene of a repetition of the Pittsburgh riots, though, happily, on a smaller scale, as well as more accidental and trivial in its immediate origin. On the former occasion it was a quarrel between the railway managers and their men that set fire to the materials of social combustion in the shape of rowdiness, communism, and anarchism, which lay around. On the present occasion it was a lynching affair. Once more, however, the hordes of barbarism, which have been collected in the homes of civilization, poured forth to riot and plunder, nor were they driven into their lair again without lamentable carnage. As in the case of the Pittsburgh riots, some of the militia appear to have misbehaved themselves, and refused to answer to the call of duty; but those who did act seem to have acted as fiercely as militia always do in a civil war where, as civilians, they share the passions. Regular troops are always the most humane, as well as the firmest guardians of order; and the Americans would do well to provide against their real danger by doubling their diminutive army, instead of spending money, as they appear inclined