

MARCH 19th, 1885.]

by the progress of learning, science and culture in the Province, is a consideration which perhaps we can hardly expect to prevail over the fear of immediate loss. A writer in the *Queen's College Journal*, on "Science as a Factor in the Development of a Country," dwells with great force on the necessity of pure science as the foundation of all improvement in the industrial arts, and insists with justice that education of the right sort is the only thing which will enable us to compete with the rest of the world. But how are we to get first-rate scientific teaching if all that we have to offer as an attraction to talent is "a little oatmeal"? It is not likely that the buildings at Cobourg will be left vacant: their occupation by another institution is in fact a part of the plan; and though the new institution is not likely to bring as much renown to Cobourg, it may perhaps bring as much money. It may also continue to flourish and be a permanent gain to the town, whereas the scanty measure of prosperity conferred by a petty university will certainly last only till students become aware that the means of a first-rate education, at no greater cost, are close at hand. Denominationalism is no sure support in an age of advancing Liberalism: it is even repudiated by Queen's, though her representatives seem a little perplexed between their desire of Presbyterian support and their fear of the Presbyterian brand. The system of petty local universities, originally the offspring of calamitous accident, has now unfortunately struck deep root; with the rocky soil of Kingston they seem for the present to be inextricably entwined. But is there a single man among the highly educated opponents of Confederation who can lay his hand upon his heart and declare that, if the university system of Ontario were to be organized now, he would be against the concentration of our limited resources, and in favour of their dispersion? No institution or system, however preposterous or even noxious, once established and bound up with vested interests and associations, has ever lacked *ex post facto* arguments in its defence.

WE beg leave cordially to second the demand of the *Globe* for a censorship of bill-sticking in the interest of morality. If immorality is not to be sold in our bookstores, or transmitted through our mails, there can be no reason why we should allow it to be placarded in the shape of pictorial allurements to the unclean on the walls of our cities. The walls of Toronto have been stuck with bills which are an outrage on public decency, and a special insult to womanhood. In the demoralization of Paris nothing is more revolting or more symptomatic of wide-spread corruption than the display on the greatest thoroughfares of things which in London would be removed by the police. It is with profound regret that we see entertainments, which if they correspond to the pictures in the bills must be disgraceful, advertised in connection with a management which has earned the thanks of the public by spirited and judicious efforts to cater for very different tastes. A policy can scarcely be even commercially wise which must lead decent people to shun the Theatre as the portico of the brothel. The Crown-Attorney is doing his duty by trying to put these abominations down. It is a fallacy to say that he advertises them by prosecution: prosecution may act as an advertisement in the case of heterodoxy, but it does not in the case of obscenity, unless the community is utterly depraved. It is no squeamish or pharisaic morality that prompts a protest against public incentives to lewdness. The passion which lascivious exhibitions stimulate, while it is the source of our existence and our chief happiness, is also, in its terrible excesses and aberrations, the source of our greatest miseries. Left to itself it is dangerously strong, and to excite it artificially through stimulating exhibitions is surely to do humanity a most cruel wrong.

FROM three different quarters, besides Egypt, England has been in danger, real or supposed, of war. The dispute with Germany is at an end. Like everything else it was made to wear a formidable aspect in sensational telegrams and editorials; but in that cloud there was no lightning; it was morally impossible that the squabble should lead to war. The German Emperor is not a pageant; he has real power, and as soon as the affair looked serious he was sure to interpose. Nor was it conceivable that Bismarck, however much his temper may have been impaired by disease and opposition, or however strong his personal antipathy to Mr. Gladstone, should carry matters so far, for the sake of a piece of waste land on the Congo or at the Antipodes, as to throw the great maritime power into the arms of France. In that quarter, at any rate, the sky is again clear, and an effect of the reconciliation of Germany with England may perhaps be seen in the vigorous action taken by the French Government against the Irish dynamiters, to the great disgust of their French brethren. The military preparations of the British Government showed that they deemed the dispute with Russia dangerous. The Russian Government, and still more perhaps its subordinates, especially those on its Asiatic frontier, have been irritated, as might have been expected, by the hostile

attitude of England, by the invasion of Afghanistan, and by the torrent of abuse and menace which is perpetually poured forth by the Jingo press. The commanders in Asia have probably been pressing forward, as they are always apt to do, under the impulse of their personal ambition and in advance of their instructions from St. Petersburg, while the Afghans, on the other side, are at least equally restless. Under circumstances such as these complications were likely to arise. But statesmanship and diplomacy, whatever satire may say, are not so imbecile or so impotent as to allow two great powers to be involved in a war which neither of them desires by guard-room swagger or by a casual affray between outposts. The government of Russia is personal; the Czar will think of himself; and if he ever feels inclined to play so wicked and desperate a game as that of merging domestic discontent in the excitement of foreign war, he would be almost certainly checked by the reflection that the conspirators against his life would be at once provided with an asylum and a vantage-ground for their operations. His finances, too, are in evil plight. His professions of a desire for peace may be reasonably regarded as sincere, and if they are sincere, there can be no war. The Russian ambassador is right in saying that the chief obstacle to an agreement is the bitterness of the British press and people. The Government of France, on the other hand, is demagogic; it must satisfy popular passion; its members personally are believed to be pacific and not unfriendly to England; but their first care is to float. For the last century each French Government in succession has had to choose between foreign aggrandisement and revolution at home. Impelled by this fatal necessity the present Government is carrying on piratical war in China and Madagascar, and the operations in China especially may any day bring it into collision with Great Britain. A pacific settlement of any dispute, the temper of the French people towards England being what it is, might prove more than diplomacy could accomplish. It is on the side of France that the danger of war, if any, seems to lie.

HAD those who voted for censuring Mr. Gladstone's Government been agreed among themselves on the question at issue in general principle, or even in desiring a change of government, the narrowness of the majority might have been fatal to the Ministry, though the Whigs under Lord Melbourne held power with a majority as narrow. But among the Conservatives, Parnellites, malcontent Whigs, and irreconcilable Radicals, who made up the minority, there was no agreement or union of any kind, either in relation to the war or to the general policy of the country. The Parnellites do not want a Tory Government; they are acting simply as enemies to the realm, and their Conservative allies of the moment would hang them if they had the power. When an unprincipled coalition of this kind misses its mark, however narrowly, the miss is as good as a mile, and the Government, though it may have escaped but by a hair's breadth, is none the worse, very likely it is the better, for the peril which it has undergone. The relations of the Tories with the Parnellites were marked, as it happened, in the clearest and most disgraceful way. In the scene of Irish outrage which preceded the debate on the Vote of Censure, Mr. Redmond was supported against order and the Speaker by a large force of Conservatives, headed by Sir Hardinge Gifford and Lord Elcho; of the forty-six who voted for Obstruction, twenty-six were of that party, and there can be no shadow of doubt that their object was to capture the Parnellite Vote for the motion which was to follow. The incapacity of the Opposition and its inability to make a government were displayed more signally than ever. Sir Stafford Northcote found a depth below himself; even the aesthetic journals sing dirges over the catastrophe of the Conservative first fiddle. Sir Stafford is a drudge called under an evil star to the chief command. He was made leader of the House of Commons simply because he was most fitted by his passive docility to act as telephone to a leader in the House of Lords, and his present performances are those of the telephone without the Beaconsfield. About the only member of the Opposition who shows ability of at all a first-class order is Mr. Gibson, and even he is greatly losing in the frenzy of the faction fight the high position which he had gained by patriotism and moderation. Nor has Lord Salisbury increased the amount of confidence felt in him by the unscrupulous eagerness with which he has grasped at power. No patriot, however indifferent to party or even inclined to Conservatism, would put England, in an hour of peril, into such hands as those of the present leaders of the Opposition. If the tide appears to be turning against the Ministry in elections, the main cause is the socialistic violence of Mr. Chamberlain, which has alarmed all holders of property and united them in self-defence. There are divisions in the Cabinet, of course, but they do not seem to extend to the war. No government is possible at present but that of Mr. Gladstone, nor, till his strength fails, is there any likelihood of a change.