

opportunity for considering in a friendly manner all doubtful points which exist between himself and the Government of India. Such points are always in existence between two neighbouring Governments." The grounds of misgiving in connection with the mission are two-fold. In the first place it recalls the fatal history of previous British embassies and missions to Cabul, from the time of Lord Auckland, whose emissary, Captain Alexander Burnes, was sent to Dost Mohammed in 1837, and whose assassination four years later was the prelude to all the horrors of the first Afghan War. The failure of Lord Beaconsfield's attempts to have a British Resident permanently stationed at Cabul will be still fresh in the memories of many readers. There is, however, this radical difference, that, whereas all former envoys and embassies were thrust upon the Ameer against his will, this one is being sent at his special request. Hence its despatch cannot give rise to jealousy or suspicion. The feeble attempt at revolt of Ishak Khan, Governor of Turkestan, and cousin of the Ameer, suggests a possible origin of the Ameer's unusual request. Turkestan, Ishak's Province, lies along its whole extent close to lands under Russian protection, and Ishak is almost certain to seek refuge in Russian territory, if he has not already done so. Hence the situation is not without danger of Russian complications. It is probably with a view to soothing Russian susceptibilities that Lord Dufferin's ministry has been so careful to make public that the mission has been called forth by no special circumstances. The Ameer's communication will be awaited with curiosity and interest.

If anything could set the ways of the United States' political leaders in a less pleasing light than their undignified and reckless competition for the anti-British and anti-Canadian vote, it is to be found in the headlong race they have been running for the prize of the anti-Chinese vote. From the day on which Secretary Bayard began negotiations for a new treaty with China, the struggle has been to see which could go farthest in bidding for the support of voters on the Pacific Coast. First the Republican majority in the Senate, by adding offensive amendments to the treaty negotiated by the Democratic Administration, insure its rejection at Pekin. Then Mr. Felton, a Republican Congressman, introduces a bill providing for "the termination of certain treaty stipulations" between the United States and China; prohibiting Chinese, except officials or students, from entering the country; and requiring all resident Chinese to procure certificates of registration. Next Mr. Voorhees, a Democrat, bids a little higher by proposing to exclude Chinese students. A week or two later, Mr. Cummings, Democrat, and Mr. Hermann, Republican, came forward almost simultaneously with restrictions still more severe. Then comes Mr. Belmont's bill admitting Chinese officials, teachers, students, merchants and tourists, and allowing resident Chinese then absent six months to return to this country. This bill also allowed Chinese residents to return to China to visit, provided they had parents, wives or children in this country or property and debt, to the amount of \$1,000. These were the chief points of the rejected Bayard Treaty. The race now became headlong and exciting. While the Republicans were making ready in all haste an absolute restriction bill, the President's party repeated his brilliant Canadian retaliation tactics by the introduction of Mr. Scott's absolute restriction bill. This the Republicans, after vainly trying to amend, were forced to accept, and so the matter stands. In spite of the existing treaty, which it is alleged the Chinese have already abrogated by refusing free passage to Americans through large sections of the empire, and in other ways violating the convention, the Chinese are to be treated as probably no other people have ever been treated by a civilized nation in modern times, by being forbidden to set foot on United States soil. Surely the most ardent lover of his country in the Union must blush a little at the manner in which all the obligations of international courtesy are sacrificed for the sake of petty party advantages.

#### OUR CRIMINAL CLASSES.

It was publicly stated at the opening of the Toronto Exhibition that the police had intimated to certain well-known thieves that for the term of a fortnight their absence would be considered good company, and that the—in reporters' language—"Crooks" stood not on the order of their going but went at once. The circumstance necessarily draws public attention to the fact that Toronto, and, in fact, all Canada, has made such advances in civilization as to be afflicted with a professional criminal class, people who make a living by stealing and otherwise acquiring by unlawful means the goods of their neighbours. It also shows that the city police is well acquainted with the law breakers, and at any moment can lay hands upon them. The question irresistibly suggests itself—if the police can

clear the city of crooks for a fortnight, why do they not exclude them permanently? On the surface there seems to be no reason for precautions for the safety of Exhibition visitors which does not apply to the citizens, not perhaps so innocently unsuspecting, but having vastly more property and lives as valuable to be protected. We reject, of course, as impossible the idea that the police, after the manner of Jonathan Wild, tolerate the existence of criminals in order to magnify their own office, and even to blackmail them. There is said to be a legal difficulty in the way. A man known to the police can be snapped up on a charge of vagrancy and kept in gaol for a short period, but if no other charge can be proved against him he must perforce be released. This would have been the result if the thieves in question had not yielded to the hints of the police, and left the city.

The facts suggest the enquiry whether a more trenchant method of dealing with habitual criminals might not be introduced to advantage. A thief is arrested, convicted, and sent to prison, the offence being the first, for a short time. His character is gone, he cannot obtain employment, and again he falls into the meshes of the law. Probably he is sent to the penitentiary for three years, serves his term, and comes out to resume his career in his old haunts. Practically, Society undertakes the task of maintaining the criminal during his lifetime—in prison at great expense in massive buildings, wardens, guards, food and clothing—at liberty at the expense of individuals whom he robs, of police employed at great cost to watch him, and of lawyers and judges to try him. The evil is magnified in Canada by the circumstance that there is no tariff on American "crooks," and that we have to bear the burden of those who have found a southern climate too hot for them.

A good deal has been said and done about the reform of criminals, but it is to be feared that those who persistently commit serious offences are from character and circumstances beyond the reach of improvement by confinement in gaols. Their life, then, is unhealthy and not calculated to develop any good feelings which a career of crime may not have extinguished. Can no other form of restraint or punishment be adopted likely to produce better results? Britain has had her Australian convict settlements; France her New Hebrides; Russia still has her Siberia. The settlement of Australia was largely aided by the penal colonies, and Siberia is fast being populated on the foundations established by convict labour. Would it not be possible in our far northern and north-western regions to give an impetus to settlement by the establishment of penal colonies to which those who have broken the law might be sent with their relatives willing to accompany them? There they might learn to abandon their evil ways, and become, if not industrious or progressive, at least self-supporting at an outlay by the state much less than the present expenditure on penitentiaries. These extreme northern regions, Mackenzie River or Hudson Bay, would have terrors for them no doubt, and would perhaps deter them from crime. But whatever was good in them would be brought out by the prospect of a new life, under surveillance, but with opportunity to make a fair living and good prospects for their families. Much might also be accomplished by such settlements in assisting the development of mines and fisheries, in constructing wharves and harbours and other public works. The experience of Britain in Australia and Russia in Siberia encourages the belief that, notwithstanding the failings of the convicts, their descendants would not fall behind the standard of the population by which they would ultimately be surrounded and obliterated.

The lesson which our legislators, judges, and magistrates have to learn is, that habitual criminals cannot be cured by short terms of imprisonment if they are afterwards permitted to venture to their old haunts, and that some other remedy must be tried. A first offence may be dealt with leniently, but a second ought to be regarded as a proof that the culprit is a permanent enemy of the community, and that steps must be taken to deprive him of the power of doing further mischief. Sending him off to a new territory seems to offer the best prospect of at once relieving the nation of the burden of his maintenance, and affording him a fresh start in life.

LIME-WATER is an admirable remedy in cases of diphtheria. Its local effect is most useful in cleansing and purifying the fauces, and its mode of application is the easiest imaginable. It requires no spray apparatus, no douching, and no effort at gargling. It is sufficient to have the patient slowly swallow a teaspoonful or more every hour, in order to get good results from its use. This fact is of the greatest importance in treating children, who are too often cruelly tortured in the attempt to make local applications to the throat. Lime-water can be given easily, and is taken readily by children; and there are, we believe, few cases of diphtheria which require a more energetic local treatment than the one just described.