

Here is the report as it comes to us through the ocean telegraph:—

"Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Lowestoft yesterday, said the English public conscience had been greatly shocked by the reports of Russian prisoners being ruthlessly shot without the form of a trial, and by the fact that these outrages passed without the reprobation of the Russian Government. He had been asked why he did not denounce these outrages in the House of Commons, but he felt a scruple about asking the Government to take steps unless he could see the way to a favourable result. He desired to see the law applied in his own land whenever cruelty and oppression were found. He would be glad if the Government was in a position to expostulate with Russia, but he feared Russia might retort that a country whose police ruthlessly shot innocent Irish citizens engaged in a public meeting was hardly in a position to dictate how another country should treat its convicts."

This is truly scandalous, and beyond anything which the supposed exigencies of party policy could by any stretch of tolerance be allowed to justify. Mr. Gladstone dares to suggest that the putting down of an unlawful meeting, a meeting convoked for unlawful purposes, for the sake of plundering and persecuting and killing those who were loyal to the British Crown, that the putting down of such a meeting, and the accidental killing of two or three persons, is to be compared with the butchery of mostly unresisting men and women, men and women who, for the most part, had no power of resistance, and who were guilty of no fault but the inability to obey contradictory orders received from those who had charge of them!

The force of party could no further go. This is that Mr. Gladstone who once spoke of Mr. Parnell's wading through rapine and bloodshed to the destruction of the Empire; and now—not because Mr. Parnell has changed his policy or his methods, but because it has suited Mr. Gladstone to go into political partnership with him now—this Mr. Gladstone must declare that an English Government which does what he did and defended himself is to be put in the same category with the ruffianism of the Russian Government which banishes, flogs, kills by blows, and hangs men and women who dare to say that the voice of the people should be heard, and some who are only suspected of saying or of thinking this.

We consider that Mr. Gladstone owes a humble apology to the whole people of England for these atrocious statements. They were made, not in the heat of speech, but calmly and deliberately, for we find them repeated, in very nearly the same terms, in a letter addressed to a committee formed for the purpose of protesting against the treatment of political prisoners in Russia. It is, therefore, a deliberate offence committed against the whole of the British nation.

These words are not too strong; for, if the Government of England has permitted the subjects of the Empire to be treated in the manner implied by Mr. Gladstone, and if they have not been impeached in the House of Commons, then the Parliament of England is morally responsible for the crime of which Mr. Gladstone accuses the Government. Nay, more, the people of England are themselves the criminals, for not only are they represented by their chosen delegates in Parliament, but they have themselves uttered no protest against the alleged outrage. Mr. Gladstone will not apologize. He will probably explain, and we know what that means; but the people of England will also know.

PARIS LETTER.

THE advanced republican deputies are taking up, in the sense of forcing parliament to handle, the grievances of the labour-world. One of the first Gordian knots is the right of the workmen to syndicate. Employers, according to M. Clemenceau, are dead against that unionism; they dismiss every artisan who belongs to such an association. He adds that the campaign between employers and employed has opened, and that they are the former who have let slip the dogs of war. Evidently M. Clemenceau, now that the incubus of Boulangism is removed from the Republic, intends to lead the labour party.

The labour problem in France is complicated by special difficulties. The workmen have not the patience to allow their unionism to grow; they are not self-sacrificing enough to subscribe funds; and the men selected to govern and guide guilds are those who are proficient in gab, accomplished in pose, but barren in common sense. In France, too, the multitude of artisans who work in their own homes as chamber capitalists and back-room employers is a formidable barrier against co-operation for production; while co-operation for consumption has to encounter social habits where the working families group and contract at a tavern for their board. But it is not the less desirable to insert in the French Code the liberal labour laws of other countries. Then parliament could no longer be indicted for legislative indifference to working-class interests.

M. Jules Ferry is a very able, but above all a plucky, man. Unfortunately it seems to be in France an axiom that political freshmen are as much a necessity as hot rolls with *café-au-lait*, and new plays for theatres. Thiers, Gambetta, Ferry—all have been used, and cast aside like sucked oranges. M. Ferry has delivered an address before the Students' Association. It is rather in the vein of the lamentations of Jeremiah; he feels the sting of public indifference and the tooth of national ingratitude. However, he counsels the rising intellect of France to expect these shuntings aside in life, while not foregoing the illusions of youth. He is a freethinker, so urges them not to despair, because the problems of human destiny are not resolved; as their solution lies not in faith, which is undemonstrable, but in love—perhaps Buddhism.

The question of Colonial expansion appears to be on the tapis once more. Lord Salisbury is suspected of negotiating transactions with Turkey respecting Egypt and Cyprus, by which France would be placed in the alternative of keeping or quitting Tunisia, as the balance of power in the Mediterranean would be raised; while Turkey in certain contingencies would aid an Anglo-Egyptian advance to Equatorial Africa. Then the trips of the king of the Belgians to England are construed as relating to something between an alliance and an amalgamation of the interests of Belgian Congo with those of the British East Africa Company—both nations being favourable to free trading. Germany will not renounce her Colonial ambition; but reading between the lines intends that it shall not be limitless. It may be accepted as a foregone conclusion that France will take it out of the king of Dahomey by protecting him, and frame that portion of West Africa with her southern bulging Algerian Empire. In France there are two clearly defined parties on the Colonial question; one that would grab land where it can be grabbed, and the other that would concentrate all Colonial efforts on Algeria and the formation there of a Colonial army.

The second or Secessionist Picture Show, or *Salon*, at the Champ de Mars, is exceptionally rich in good exhibits. Among the 1,409 objects exhibited 911 are paintings. Of the latter 30 are first-class; the remainder like similar balances at every picture exhibition. At the Champs Elysees Show young talent—besides an important sprinkling of the "old masters" of the period—predominate; at the Champ de Mars, ripe talent, that is, artists of established reputation, figure prominently. M. Meissonier sends but one work, "October, 1806." It is for German visitors to add, with the mind's eye, the date of the month—fourteenth—and discover that the battle scene is that of Jena, which the bridge outside over the Seine immortalizes. Jena was the Prussians' Sedan; they lost 20,000 prisoners, a score of generals, 60 standards and 300 cannons—the latter being utilized for the column of the Vendôme. There is Napoleon on the battlefield amidst all the circumstance of war; the homogeneity of the scene is superb; the figures microscopically accurate, displaying a fine appreciation of colour and light, with a noble sense of space, dignity of line, full of delicate, free and firm touches and harmonious relationships of colours and tones to each other, and all exquisitely finished.

M. Carolus-Duran sends eight pictures, all gems, over which the visitor lounges with a loving joy. The likenesses are of incontestable beauty; the costumes, fine in colour, harmoniously brilliant and pure. They are solid, true painting. What freedom, firmness, and ease! How the silks shine, the velvets reflect; how glossy the furs are; what delicate carnation tints of the flesh. One of the portraits, that of an old gentleman, is absolutely perfection.

M. Frappa in his six pictures has a capital portrait of ex-Minister of Justice Thénard; full of courageous energy and resolute decision; just the temperament that knocked Boulangism on the head. M. John Lewis Brown, a Frenchman with an English name, has a dozen of his charming little pictures of hunting and military scenes, full of light and colour, of sunshine and of space.

M. Colin has ten pictures; scenes from real life, truthfully painted, and harmoniously coloured. The "Fontaine de San Pedro" is a collection of handsome Spanish young women round a well. M. Dagnan Bouveret sends three pictures, all capital, but his best is an "Algerian Cemetery," an exquisite reality, full of sentiment and style. Last year he was accorded the medal of honour for his "Bretonnes au Pardon." M. Gervex likes subjects of contemporary life, all actual incidents, demanding air, light, and simple sympathy. The editorial sanctum of the *Republique Française* Gambetta's journal, is very true. M. Reinach there is forging fetters for the press, and M. Spuller, racking his brains how to get the English out of Egypt. M. H. Moore has eleven carefully painted scenes from Japanese life, of which his "Musiciens" is full of expression and rich colouring.

The show of sculpture is not large; there is a splendid recumbent bronze of Victor Noir, who was shot by Prince Pierre Napoleon, intended for his tomb; a truthful bust of M. Floquet, both the work of M. Dalou. M. Baffier's model for the statue to Danton is too elaborate; it is one of those productions, like the Gambetta monument in the Place du Carrousel, where the pedestal, glories and allegories drown the figure to be honoured. Z.

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that out of a total of 17,760 publications in the United States, 11,189, or two-thirds of the whole, are rated by Rowell's newspaper directory for 1890, as having an average issue of less than 1,000.

BEFORE AND AFTER.

METHOUGHT I stood midway on Life's strange sea
And looked back: a dark and sin-stain'd track
Proclaimed my early years; above, the rack
And storm of Heaven raged unceasingly;
Sad strewn here and there recall'd to me
Long shipwreck'd hopes and prayers that God sent back.
My heart was troubled and my soul was black;
I loathed the past, from which I could not flee;
When, lo! a spirit touch'd me, and I turn'd
And look'd beyond—the sea was silver-bright;
The heavenly blue was glad with golden light;
A rainbow promised all for which I yearn'd;
Then, never looking back, the future path I trod
That led me unto thee, and through thee, unto God.
SAREPTA.

IS CONFEDERATION A SUCCESS?

THE restless feeling among men, in which so many of the modern revolutionary "isms" have had their birth, doubtless conduces to the prevalent easy manner of attacking and disposing argumentatively of settled conditions.

"Is Confederation a success?" is asked as readily, and answered in the negative as cheerfully, as though the abrogation of the existing order of things involved no greater result than the choice of a route for some holiday excursion. And yet this very Confederation was the fruit of an idea held to tenaciously by one man through many stormy years. It was adopted at last by those who had most bitterly opposed it. It was introduced by a coalition embracing the most able and the most patriotic of Canadian statesmen. It was heralded by citizens of all shades of opinion as the panacea for evils of a half century's growth, and it was entered into by the different provinces, with a full knowledge of their rights and after a full discussion of its probable effects, solemnly and gladly.

The union of Upper and Lower Canada had proved a complete failure, and yet disunion meant disaster to the English minority in Quebec. The Maritime provinces were territorially insignificant; neither they nor the other provinces could hope for separate national existence. Not one of them was willing to sever its connection with the Mother land, and yet in their condition they were a source of weakness to her rather than strength. Dimly, at first, but more clearly as the necessity for some change was pressed upon their notice, men saw that, in a union of the whole, security and growth could alone be hoped for. In such a union they desisted the promise of a future national life, the foundation of a great community stretching from ocean to ocean, the welding together of scattered masses of true metal and the ultimate establishment of a people having a common name, a common country, and a common hope.

Thus did Canadians aspire. Thus was Canada founded—the Canada of a thousand mighty lakes and noble rivers, of a continental territory, of five million true-hearted God-fearing people—and now when the most distant of the provinces has been linked to those on the other sea by an iron chain and the great scheme of Confederation has been brought from the cloudland of problem into the practical realm of fact, "Is Confederation a success?" is asked, and in the same unworthy, hope-nothing breath is uttered "I declare for commercial union with the United States."

Now, the reasons which are given for despairing of the success of Confederation are not numerous. They may be stated, shortly, as the consequences which flow from Canada's geographical position, and the presence of an antagonistic French majority in Quebec. On looking at a map of the continent one writer finds that Ontario lies, in part, between two states of the Union; another notices that the New England territories interpose a barrier between the Maritime Provinces and Quebec. From these premises and from the fact that practically only one other nation exists upon the continent, the opponents of the existing order of things base their main argument. How, they say, can provinces so situated ever succeed as partners? How can Canadians hope to escape ultimate absorption by the great country to the south of them? If that be their destiny why fight against it now? Is it not folly to divert trade from its natural channels and build up home markets at a loss both to consumers and producers? These questions the believers in Confederation are triumphantly requested to answer, and in furnishing replies to them the opponents of our present theory of existence find their main justification for the cry for commercial union with the United States.

Now, as a reason against the possibility of the success of Confederation, the geographical argument standing alone is worthless. Let us suppose the United States filled with an alien race. Can it be maintained that another nation could not preserve its national identity in the territories we occupy? The idea is preposterous. How many peoples have such a varied climate, such broad lands, such an extent of seaboard? How many nations can boast such a wealth of resources? And yet, say its enemies, Confederation can never succeed because its boundaries permit small portions of it to dip into an adjoining country? Let the Ontario man look at the map more frequently than he does, let the Nova Scotian scan it carefully, let the Lower Canadian ponder it well, and, when each of them fully realizes the vastness of the country he is privileged to call his native land, he will understand