

a case the overthrow of the Government becomes, from the point of view of the Opposition, the only hope of saving the country, and so a party end to be promoted by all honourable means. Hence it follows that to aid the Government to perfect and pass other really good measures is but to increase its popularity, fix it more firmly in its seat, and so postpone or defeat the great change upon which the salvation of the nation depends. For illustration, suppose that a new election has been held and a Gladstonian majority returned, pledged to give Home Rule to Ireland. Tories and Unionists honestly believe that this means nothing less than disruption of the Empire. By aiding the Government in all good measures they will be actually hastening the approach of the evil day; by obstructing all legislation they can postpone and may eventually defeat the measure so greatly dreaded, and become the saviours of their country. It is easy to see how by such reasoning they may persuade themselves that the most persistent obstruction is a patriotic obligation. We do not say that the reasoning is sound, but would the *Spectator* in Opposition hold to its dictum above quoted without misgiving? These questions are of great interest at all times to countries where responsible government prevails. They promise to be of living interest in Canada for some time to come. When the great statesmen and journalists of England are agreed that there is no possibility of improving the party system, it would seem presumptuous in a colonial journal to dissent. And yet we cannot dismiss the hope that the future will solve the problem of government of the people, by the people and for the people, in some better fashion. It would seem as if the simple device of holding the Government responsible individually instead of as a body would go far to correct the difficulty, though the advocates of the present system might argue that it would engender others still more serious.

THE predicted storm of public censure is falling fast and furious upon the self-devoted head of the Prince of Wales. Making due allowance for the exaggerations of the newspapers and the cable despatches, it still cannot be doubted that the revelations of the Chief Justice's Court have given to the moral sentiment of the people of England a shock from which it will not soon recover. This is especially true of the now mighty middle classes, who have hitherto been disposed to be rather lenient to the faults of royalty. Later despatches have thrown light upon the obscure utterances of the Solicitor-General as cabled. It now appears that his declaration that the name of his client could not be removed from the army list, and that of the Prince of Wales permitted to remain, was based upon the army regulation, or practice, which makes the one who is cognizant of unprofessional or criminal conduct on the part of an army officer, and fails to report it, an accomplice in the guilt and a sharer in the punishment. Sir William Gordon Cumming's name has, however, been stricken from the army list, while that of the Prince of Wales remains, and will, no doubt, remain untouched. Even British law is not quite the same for princes as for lords or common people. But at a time when the gambling propensities of the people are deplored by many as the great national vice, and strenuous efforts are being made to circumscribe and curtail that destructive vice, it is easy to understand the feelings of earnest reformers in the presence of such a revelation. Indignation rises almost to exasperation, and it is evident that not many repetitions of such conduct would be needed to turn aside the succession, if not to abolish the monarchy itself. It is devoutly to be hoped that the rumours that revelations of still more disgraceful conduct are imminent, may prove baseless. In the present mood of the nation, proof of actual debauchery on the part of the heir to the throne would seriously threaten the stability of the throne itself.

WRETCHED Chili! What a spectacle this unhappy country, which but a twelve month ago might have been thought on the highway to prosperity, now presents to the world. Is there really nothing for the nations to do in such a case but to look helplessly on while the contending factions are ruthlessly destroying each other and bringing ruin upon their country? In view of the utter unreliability of the news reaching the outside world from either party, it seems almost impossible to form any definite opinion on the merits of the quarrel, or to determine which party is most deserving of sympathy or of censure. By some correspondents Balmaceda is painted as a truly regal figure, and his *regime* as that of a liberal,

conscientious and liberty-loving ruler, in every way deserving of confidence; popular, moreover, in the capital and in the army, and consequently sure of ultimate victory. By others the Parliamentarians are represented as patriots in revolt against misrule and attempted despotism, and having the heart of the whole country with them, that of the rank and file of the army included. Whatever the facts in this respect, the spectacle presented to the world is a pitiful and demoralizing one, and it is not easy to see why a kind of international police should not be organized to put a stop to such internecine struggles. It is not unlikely that the absurd Munroe doctrine may stand in the way, seeing that the United States would be necessarily prominent in any scheme of intervention. If such be the fact, the case is one which should suffice to show the statesmen of the Great Republic the folly, if not the absurdity, of attempting to hold themselves aloof, and keep their national action and influence apart from that of European nations. There seems little reason to hope as yet that either party would accept mediation, but it is not unlikely that the moral sentiment of the world would approve if the three Republics, America, France and Mexico, as has been suggested by an influential English journal, should undertake a "dictatorial intervention on the basis of a general amnesty, followed by a really free election." We can see no good reason, however, why such intervention should be confined to the Republics. The larger the number of nations uniting in it, the more readily would it be accepted, while from both the humanitarian and the political or commercial point of view, Great Britain's right and obligation to take a part in it would certainly seem not less than that of any other nation, certainly not less than that of any European nation.

HONOUR THE KING.

WHEN S. John the Baptist, standing before Herod Antipas, who had carried off his brother's wife, declared: "It is not lawful for thee to have her," he knew not only the meaning of the words which he uttered, but the consequences which they might entail. He was obeying his conscience and not his interests. He showed that he feared God and not man; and he paid the price of his boldness. His testimony cost him his head. When S. Ambrose repulsed the Emperor Theodosius from the altar at Milan because he had on his hands the blood of his innocent subjects, he was fully conscious that he was trying conclusions with the Master of the World; and, although his loyalty to God ultimately cost him nothing, he knew perfectly well that it might have cost him a great deal. The merit of his action was the same as if he had suffered for it.

We confess that the recent clerical protests against the card playing of the Prince of Wales do not excite quite the same emotions in our minds. No doubt the Prince of Wales has acted very foolishly in encouraging the playing of Baccarat, and this would have been true, even if no scandal had come of it. But his sufferings have been fully commensurate with his offence; and, although it is quite proper that the papers and the clergy should deliver their testimony, it is a pity that some of them should get into such a state of excitement over it. The Prince of Wales has rather a hard time of it. He has a great deal of work, an enormous amount of expense to incur in doing his work, and a very insufficient income. He can take no pleasures as other men can take them. Although he does not yet actually live in "the fierce light which beats against a throne," he gets the reflection of it. And generous editors and preachers should remember these things.

It is quite true that the encouragement of Baccarat playing was an imprudent thing on the part of His Royal Highness; but it is surely not strictly correct to say that it was an illegal thing. The game is illegal at clubs, and to a quite prudent person this might be, and we think is, a good reason for not playing it anywhere, even in the family circle and without stakes, but this does not prove that it is illegal in a private house. It is illegal to pay for and drink a glass of beer in a Scott Act county, if any such blissful district can still be found, but it is not, therefore, illegal to send a jug to the public house round the corner and there purchase a pint of ale, nor even to go to that "house of call" and drink it there. If we are going to be very rhadamanthine over these matters, let us be quite sure of the truth of the indictment.

We have no wish to minimize the nature of the offence; but it is certainly wrong, ungenerous, and most mean to exaggerate it. A brave man does not strike a woman or

a priest. The weakness of the woman protects her; and he would be a coward who would strike a man whose office would be a protection to the striker. And the Prince of Wales is in a somewhat similar position. Some allowance may be made for Sir Edward Clarke, although most people think he went too far. He certainly went absurdly too far when he said that the striking off of the name of Sir William Gordon Cumming from the army list involved the removal of the names of the Prince and General Williams. Sir William was proved, to the satisfaction of the jury, to have cheated at cards; and few people out of the unthinking and impulsive mob have thought of questioning the justice of the verdict. No such imputation was even suggested as lying against the Prince of Wales. We suppose that things of this kind may be defended or excused in a barrister who is bound to make the best case possible for his client; and the Solicitor-General could plead that he was only following his instructions. We doubt very much whether his doing so really benefited his client; but at any rate no such plea can be urged by the irresponsible writers and speakers, who are guilty of the audacity and the falsehood of saying that the Prince and General Williams are in the same category with Sir William Gordon Cumming.

Everyone must lament the fall of Sir William. That a brave gentleman and gallant officer should incur such disgrace is a calamity which reaches far beyond himself. Everyone will hope that he may live to retrieve his error; and we must all wish that he may so live that the memory of it shall be forgotten; but this can be no reason for blackening the heir to the throne. There was a time when it was thought that the fact of a man's occupying an exalted post was a reason for handling him tenderly; and we believe that the sentiment proceeded not from mere toadyism, but from a spirit of generosity and even of justice. It seems now that the higher the object the more unsparingly must it be bespattered with mud. We believe that this is absolutely and infinitely wrong and mischievous. It is bad not merely for the Sovereign or heir to the throne. It is bad for ourselves, and it is bad for the people. The Prince of Wales occupies a very difficult position; and he has occupied it with great ability and kindness. He has been one of the most popular men in the Empire, and he has deserved his popularity. He has been a good son, husband and father; and in society his deportment is at once manly, amiable and dignified. We believe that he has had his lesson and will profit by it. We have no doubt that his many admirable qualities will soon efface the remembrance of his recent indiscretion; and it is the duty of all generous, just and patriotic men to help forward this result.

L.L.D.

OTTAWA LETTER.

THERE was thunder in the air on the memorable morning of the 10th, and the sultry stillness of the air was scarcely broken until the bell from the City Hall, quickly echoed by those of the churches, announced the start of that procession of thousands which made up the funeral cortege of the late Premier. Every rank and position in life was represented, and as mourners had hurried from all parts of the Dominion to pay the last tribute of respect to their departed friend and Chief, there were meetings between those who had not met for years; meetings that might have been joyous, but which on this occasion could only call forth regret and sad reminiscences of the "good times" that had been. The whole city was out of doors, and the crowds were swelled by hundreds of country-folk dressed in their best, who had brought their children, and held them up to see the last honours rendered to one whose memory they will be taught to revere. And still the sun's rays beat down with scorching intensity till all had passed into the church; but during the progress of the service the heavy clouds rolled up, the wind rose, and scarcely had the procession formed for its progress to the station than the rain began to fall in torrents. "Blessed are the dead that the rain rains on"; and we must take it as a good omen for the country that this rain, so long expected, so eagerly desired, should have fallen, whilst he who ever kept the interests of his country prominently before him was being borne to his rest.

And now, another page has been turned in the modern history of Canada, a page blank as yet, but which the events of every succeeding day will now help to fill. There has been a necessary pause of inaction and of reaction after the tension and excitement of the past fortnight. But inaction in this case has not meant inactivity, any more than reaction is a synonym for revolt. The sentiments of the Conservative party, as expressed in the Ottawa Government organ, are exactly what should animate them at this juncture. They have lost their head, the moving spirit of their policy, but if those that remain resolve to "quit themselves like men," which simply is to merge their own interests in those of the country, there