

Mr. Gladstone has beyond question pledged himself to secure the dis-establishment of the English Church in Wales. He has even promised to deal with the matter during the coming session of Parliament, greatly to the delight of his Welsh constituents. While no doubt the cry for dis-establishment is in part called up by the hope of diverting the revenues of the Church to public purposes, yet in the main, considering that more than half of the population belong to dissenting churches, the plea is eminently a just one.

We are delighted to note the return of Mr. George K. Parkin to our Canadian shores. Mr. Parkin has been abroad for some years travelling in the interests of "Imperial Federation," on which he has lectured throughout Great Britain and Australia. Mr. Parkin is Canadian born and bred—a great enthusiast for the future of his country—and a most forcible speaker. The addresses which he is to give throughout the Dominion on his favorite topic—the advantage of Imperial Confederation to Canada—will doubtless arouse much interest in the subject.

A carnivorous plant has been recently discovered in Central America which is said to be unlike any known vegetable creature, and very similar to that very powerful fish, the octopus. The Nicaraguan natives have well-named this plant, so unfamiliar to European eyes, the Devil's Snare. The body of the plant is small and ball-shaped. Great fleshy, yet flexible, arms spread out from it in every direction. A dog recently trod on one of the arms which was trailing on the ground. In a trice the muscular vines arose and enveloped the dog so completely and tightly that his breath was nearly crushed out of him before his master could free him from his perilous situation by means of an axe. The natives state that many wild animals are trapped and the blood sucked entirely out of them by these ferocious plants.

The safety of the Jews during cholera panics has directed much attention to their mode of life, and it has been found that they are singularly free from many diseases which their Christian brethren endure. Consumption, for instance, is quite rare amongst the race, and many physicians are agreed that this immunity arises from the extreme care which the Jews exercise in selecting their meat supplies, no diseased or tainted meat ever being used by them. Scrupulous care is given to the preparation of food—in most families two sets of cooking vessels are kept quite distinct, the vessels in which meat is cooked never being used for the cooking of any foods in which butter or milk are used. This custom is of long standing and is based on the commandment in Exodus XXIII, 19—"Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk."

Some interesting facts regarding the Foreign Colonies in our North-West have recently been published. There are several new and thriving settlements of Danes, Poles, Icelanders, Hungarians, Bohemians, Slavonians, Japs and Scandinavians, in Dakota. As the majority of these immigrants are from cold regions, their physical constitutions are adapted to the severity of our Northern climate, and with the exception perhaps of some Bohemians and Hungarians, they are a healthy body of settlers. Wherever the Danes have struck root they have made a specialty of dairy farming, while the Swedish people have at once devoted themselves to grain-raising. The Icelandic colony has suffered from the lack of a proper water supply, but the Territorial Government is making every effort to irrigate the arid land. On the whole, the future of our adopted brothers looks to be most prosperous.

Apropos of the latest idea of the Emperor William of Germany, our contemporary, the *Week*, very aptly quotes the Latin adage—"Whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." His Majesty, it seems, is fearful of the present freedom of the suffrage, and is desirous of restricting it. The opposition which his sweeping propositions have frequently aroused in the Reichstag and his general impatience of constitutional control have convinced him that it will be better for the nation to give him a more direct influence in preventing the elections and appointments of those who will not sympathise with his reformatory plans. The mere suggestion of the proposed change has fired the liberty-loving press of the fatherland. The *Volks Zeitung* declares that it will "mean revolution—real, living revolution." The blows which the Emperor has aimed at the social and even the religious life of his subjects have not cut so deeply as this incipient attack on the hereditary freedom of the people.

The reported mobbing of American Consul Smith at Three Rivers, Quebec, for his interference in civic affairs, has roused much public feeling. The statements of the Consul regarding the bad sewage and the unclean habits of the French Canadians of the district are perhaps true, but these are matters which do not come under his jurisdiction, and we take decided exception to his remark, that "cholera has been riding at anchor upon the Canadian sea-board." In truth there has not been a single case of cholera in Canadian waters, while there has been a great amount of it on the sea-board of the United States. As for the alleged mob, it seems to have been a pitiable imitation of the still more pitiable mob of Fire Island, and its action is much to be regretted. And by-the-bye, has it occurred to any of our citizens that within two years the same selfish spirit which has provoked the disturbances re cholera during the past summer was abroad in Halifax. It is passing strange to hear men who took an active part in the praiseworthy (save the mark) business of wrecking a diphtheria hospital, denouncing the action of both the American and Canadian mobs.

A factory at Lynn has asked for space at the World's Fair to show pneumatic dynamite guns and projectiles; one dynamite field gun to be shown on a wheeled carriage 15 by 6 feet over all; one coast defense pneumatic dynamite gun, stationary, mounted on carriage with turntable track, tube 8 inch bore, three feet long.

The troublesome copyright question is again to the fore. Of late many public men, both in Europe and America, have been writing political articles for the United States Press. The *North American Review* has been especially fortunate in securing papers from Gladstone and other public men, for whose productions large prices have been paid. A late article on "Home Rule," from the pen of the Grand Old Man, was looked at with envious eyes by the *London Times*, but as the *Review* would not consent to its republication no copy was printed. A New York daily paper has, however, openly pirated the paper, and an enormous number of copies of this cheaper paper have now been sold in consequence of the theft. The lawsuit on which the *Review* has entered for recovery for damages is extremely interesting to all proprietors of magazines vs. newspapers; and if the *Review* is upheld a thorough reform will have to be effected in the business management of many papers of the American Press.

The increasing use of initial letters or initial and final letters as abbreviations for proper names is becoming a decided nuisance. There is not a State in the neighbouring Republic that does not boast of some almost unintelligible abbreviation. Ga., for instance, does not at once suggest Georgia, nor does the enormity of Ks. call to mind the famous Western State. Mass. and Col. are fairly well in their way, but to a foreigner they must be as suggestive as Choctaw. On our own side of the border we are becoming careless of these abbreviations, and too often we address letters to D. C., forgetting that those hieroglyphics represent District of Columbia as well as Dominion of Canada, while those of us who go a step further and indite Dom. of Can. have a furtive feeling that we have been guilty of some disrespect to our noble country. N. B. and N. S. are doing constant work, and for Provincial letters these abbreviations answer well, but it is extremely doubtful if they are appreciated in the foreign offices through which they often travel. P. E. I. has a slightly humorous tinge, but the P. Q. of the glorious Province of Quebec is an insult which should not be permitted. As Canadians, we should be too proud of our Provinces and Towns to use any such ridiculous or doubtful shortenings of their proper names.

A very sad case has recently been settled in our Canadian courts, the particulars of which cannot fail to arouse much thoughtful comment. Frank Wilson, of Toronto, was accused of the murder of his wife and child, and although he is now formally declared to be innocent of that terrible crime, yet his character, and that of a young woman who has for some time been corresponding with him, is utterly destroyed. The young woman seems to have been guiltless of any actual intimacy with the prisoner—in fact she characterised the whole affair to the jury as a mere school-girl flirtation, yet she has been manifestly imprudent in her actions. Half crazed by novel-reading, this girl of seventeen years persuaded herself that she was possessed of a most lasting passion for a married man. She received from him many attentions, small presents, and finally engaged in the correspondence which at first seemed to implicate both in the crime of murder. A weak man and a silly girl—neither of them ill-meaning—yet they have succeeded in wrecking their future lives, and in causing about them a horrible story and memory which will pursue them to their lives end. We trust that the awful example which they have brought before the public may be the means of breaking off at least a few of those undesirable intimacies which are of no benefit to any of the parties concerned.

It is comforting to the needy author to note that Mr. Besant, the novelist, is shortly to publish a list of publishers, editors, etc., from whom the literary aspirant will be awarded a fair treatment. The magazines and weekly papers that are continually "mislaying MSS.," or deciding that payments had best be made by mailing a few copies of the issue in which the author's work appears, or by promising and omitting to pay for the article in question—all such papers will be black-balled from the best of reputable firms. Special attention has been drawn of late to the ill-treatment which is so often awarded authors by the breaking up of a bogus "International Society of Literature, Science and Art," the main office of which was in London, G. B. A half-dozen of rascals, one of them an English Baronet, combined their forces to form first an author's alliance, where MSS. were to be received, edited, and sent to magazines or papers where they would be acceptable. A "Painters' Alliance" was then formed, and a more imposing title was selected. Sketches, studies in oil and water-colors were sent in as readily by the devotees of the brush as stories, novels, and serious articles had been sent by the knights of the quill. A fee was charged for admission into the Society, and a small sum was paid for the examination of each MSS. or painting, and in the case of MSS. a promise was often given to print a small edition at a nominal charge of from £10 to £50. Not only were needy writers and artists caught by the tricky Alliance, who neither read, examined, or published any MSS. during its life-time of five years, but numberless illiterate people were among the dupes—laundresses and restaurant waiters being especially noted among the plaintiffs of the law suit recently brought against the Alliance. It is pleasing to hear that substantial punishments of imprisonment and hard labor have been awarded the perpetrators of the fraud.

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