

per and are ground at once into Yankee. The assimilating powers of the Union are no doubt immense, and the system of public schools is about the most powerful mill ever invented for the purpose of crushing out peculiarities and reducing all the grains of humanity to a perfect uniformity of character. Yet even in the Union the work is beginning to be too much for the machine. To say nothing of the unassimilable negro, both the German and the Irish nationalities are now pretty sharply defined; each has to be reckoned with politically as a substantive power; the Germans to a large extent retain their language; while the Irish avowedly pursue political objects of their own, to which they treat those of American citizenship as secondary and subservient. British Canada is necessarily inferior in assimilative power, as in bulk, to her colossal neighbour; physically she is so, and morally she lacks a sentiment of nationality to supersede that which the immigrant brings with him from his native land. Instead of absorbing the French element she is in some danger of being absorbed by it, and she is certainly governed by it to a very undesirable degree. Next to the French element in sectional influence is the Irish; which, though it does not like the French form a compact mass or retain a language of its own, is intensely clannish, and is held together by its priesthood and by its separate schools. To these two nationalities all the politicians pay their court. The English are not clannish, and therefore they are weak and despised. That they should be clannish is not to be desired, but neither is it to be desired that they should be above all others weak and despised. They are not the lowest of all the nationalities nor that which has done least for civilization on this continent. The best thing of all would be entire absence of sectionalism, the next best thing is equality between the sections. We want no nationality or religion to be in any way deprived of its rights, but at the same time we want none to domineer. This thought probably was not absent from the minds of those by whom the Sons-of-England Benevolent Society was founded. The first object of the society, as its name imports, is mutual assistance in case of need, but incidentally it serves as a bond and rallying-point for Canadians of English birth and extraction. It now numbers upwards of thirty lodges, and its recent rate of increase has been large. Party politics are excluded, and it is vitally essential to the character and well-being of the society that the exclusion should always be maintained. But if politicians should again take into their heads to angle for the Fenian vote by assailing England in the rear when she is struggling against insurrection in her front, it is not unlikely that the members of the Sons-of-England Society may offer them some arguments on the other side.

MR. LOWELL has been entertaining Birmingham with a display of rhetorical fireworks, of which he is no mean artist, in praise of Democracy. His success was assisted by circumstance, as Democracy in England is just entering on its final struggle with Aristocracy and Birmingham is the realm of Mr. Chamberlain. The American Ambassador tops his part when he puts Abraham Lincoln foremost among the statesmen of a generation which produced Bismarck and Cavour. Flattery is not exactly the tribute of which Democracy as "the Coming King" is at present most in need, or which would be offered to it by its sincerest friend. There is, or used to be, a ceremony called the Adoration of a newly-elected Pope. It was just before its performance that a Cardinal whispered in the ear of the newly-elect, "Remember that you are ignorant, self-willed and arrogant. This is the last word of truth that you will ever hear from me: I am going to adore you." Hereditary government is gone. Democracy has come. This is the moral of the century. It is doubted by no calm student of the political situation. Nor do many doubt that where adequate capacity for self-government exists the change is fraught both with elevation of character and with increase of happiness for the masses of mankind. Certainly he is not a Christian who, whatever his station in life, will recoil out of selfish fear from a new and better dispensation. Still Democracy, as all reasonable men think, has its perils and needs its safeguards. Its perils are the greater and it needs its safeguards the more because its advent coincides with a general decay of religious belief, a consequent disturbance of the morality of which hitherto religion has been the basis, and the opening of social questions, the agitation of which, blending with the political revolution, shakes as with volcanic force the foundations of the social system. Hearty acceptance of Democracy, combined with a clear perception of the necessity of so regulating it in the interest of all classes alike as to make it a government of reason and not of passion, must be the basis of statesmanship at the present day. A Democratic government of passion, such as Jacobinism, is of all tyrannies the most intolerable and the most destructive to civilization. Power, unless mated with duty and intelligence, can only work mischief, whether it is held by a despot or by a mob. The American Ambassador points to his own Republic, and he is warranted in

the appeal. The state of things there is, in the main, sound and hopeful. But the observation is not less true than trite that the American experiment has been tried under economical advantages not shared by old and crowded countries, which, in their transition to Democracy, have given birth to the Communist, the Intransigent and the Anarchist. It has been tried, moreover, with the very flower of a race peculiarly fitted and trained for self-government. Mr. Lowell can guess what a Republic of Irish and Southern Germans, to say nothing of the Negro, would be. Perhaps the coming generations may see the thing itself; for that Anglo-American element, in which the reserve force of wisdom and patriotism depicted by Mr. Lowell resides, is apparently decreasing, while the foreign and negro elements increase. Even at present Mr. Lowell may note that the best representatives of public morality, and those with whom he may be presumed to sympathize, are struggling, with a doubtful prospect of success, to keep immoral magnetism out of the chair of State. Electoral corruption on an enormous scale, the ascendancy of wire-pullers and ballot-stuffers, and the general exclusion of the best citizens from politics by the tyranny of organized faction, are not reasons for despondency, but they are reasons for moderation in hallelujahs; and the same may be said with regard to the prevalence of lynching and the scandalous impunity of crime, to which lynching owes its existence. Of the Civil War the cause was Slavery, for which Democracy assuredly had not to answer: but it might perhaps have been averted if the public characters produced by the demagogic system had been less worthless, or if the frenzy of faction, excited by a Presidential election, had not set the match to the mine. Let it not be forgotten that Democracy is liable to suicide as well as to excesses. Twice, under the fatal guidance of public sycophants who made the people a god, it has committed suicide in France; nor is it yet secure against self-destruction. To Anarchy society will always prefer a government of force; and there is more force in one battalion of disciplined soldiers than in the undisciplined Democracy of London or New York.

MR. PARNELL'S speech at the opening of the British Session has at all events defined the situation. That the policy of conciliation for Ireland could succeed must be the wish of every right-minded man; that it has succeeded no man who has not closed his eyes to facts can believe. Conciliation in truth is not the right name for the policy which has been pursued; kindness, liberality and justice would have been not less but more conciliatory had they been combined with the firmness that ensures respect. What has brought things to the present pass is the tampering of faction or selfish ambition with rebellion. The result, however, is not doubtful. The spirit of Mr. Parnell's speech is the spirit of his Party. The streets of Dublin are renamed after rebels as an insult to the British Government and the people. Moral filth with which no civilized man would ever pollute his fingers is raked with savage delight out of the sewers of Dublin vice, in the hope that the foul stain will adhere to British character. The tale of an Irishman who accuses himself of having falsely sworn away the lives of other Irishmen is welcomed, and the infamy of him who tells it is overlooked because it impeaches British justice. In the last few years an incessant stream of the most brutal and venomous calumny has been poured by all Irish speakers and writers, not only upon the British Government, but upon the whole British race and name. A savagery passing the savagery of the Red Indian has been displayed in the open collection of subscriptions for the wholesale murder by dynamite of British men and women guiltless of any conceivable connection with Irish wrongs. What was the cause of all this fury and atrocity? What enormous act of tyranny or grinding system of oppression provoked the outbreak? This is the question which a reasonable posterity will ask. The answer will be that Parliament had just passed the Land Act and the Arrears' Act, and was known to be preparing to pass a measure of Home Rule, while a hundred Irishmen had seats in the Legislature, numbers of them were filling offices in all departments of the public service and in every portion of the Empire, and more than two millions of them were finding employment and bread in the cities of Great Britain. What benefits could not avert, benefits will not remove. It is mournfully manifest that with the Irish Disunionists, no terms can be made; their hatred is not of the kind which any concessions can allay; it will be necessary at last, however regretfully, to accept their enmity, to deal with it as what it is, and prevent it from wrecking British civilization. Great Britain must see that an independent Ireland, if she were to consent to its creation, would be always a deadly foe and a rankling thorn in her side. Stern necessity, apart from any thought of honour or dominion, constrains her to uphold the Union, and the British statesman who abandons it, let his previous achievements be what they may, will, to use the words of Cromwell, be rolled with infamy into his grave.