

confederations are not to be made as easily as omelets. They have in fact rarely been accomplished except under the constraining pressure of some external danger such as those which threatened the members of the Achaean League, the Swiss Cantons, the Insurgent Netherlands, and the American Colonies. Our own Confederation can hardly be said to have been entirely an exception, inasmuch as the sense of peril awakened by the Trent affair was not without influence in bringing it about. Its success, greatly exaggerated by jubilant officialism, formed a delusive precedent which lured Lord Carnarvon into his project of a South African Empire, and caused the mildest of mankind to become guilty of shedding torrents of innocent blood. The Australians have fallen into the same trap; but as they have no Zulus or Boers, miscarriage in their case is attended by no serious disaster. An attempt at union among communities which have long existed separately, sets the centrifugal as well as the centripetal forces in action: it emphasizes divergences of interest and calls mutual jealousies into play. The American Colonies, before their rupture with the Mother Country, had tried a union of Councils, but with an unfavourable result. A group of dependencies such as the Australian Colonies, those of South Africa, or those of British North America, is in fact already federated through its connection with the Imperial country for the purpose of external defence, and for all important purposes, except that of a common tariff, which happens to be precisely the point on which the Australian Colonies cannot agree. In truth federation, in the case of a group of dependencies, has no meaning except as a preparation for independence.

THAT the House of Commons, as well as the House of Lords, is on its trial is the avowed opinion of some in England, and the deepening though unavowed conviction of many. We may smile at Carlyle's invocation of Lord Wolseley to play the part of Cromwell and once more take away the Bauble; but it becomes increasingly manifest to all observant and reflecting minds that a mob of six hundred and fifty men, full of faction and selfishness, cannot govern a nation. The extension of the franchise, by rendering the House more demagogic, is pretty sure to increase the evil. New rules, though Mr. Gladstone hoped that they would restore order to the chaos, have produced no more effect than new rules usually do where a change of character is needed. In the present session it has already appeared that matters instead of growing better are growing worse. Disorganization and disregard of authority increase; time is more than ever wasted in altercation; faction grows more than ever regardless alike of the claims of public business and of the decencies of debate. Such a name as deliberative assembly is rapidly becoming a mockery in its application to the House of Commons. Into the debate on the Address is interpolated a personal affray between Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Chamberlain. No such thing could have been suffered half a century ago. Canning, Peel or Russell, as a leader of Opposition, would at once have put a veto on Lord Randolph Churchill's rabid motion; but Sir Stafford Northcote, though plainly aware of its impropriety, not only was unable to forbid it, but was constrained to follow with drooping head in the train of the mutineer. Only by the personal authority of an aged chief is a similar state of anarchy averted on the Liberal side. The Parnellites are utterly beyond control; their object is to wreck the Legislature and the Government, and for social decency they have no more regard than Kaffirs. The *Graphic*, a neutral journal, describes them as "howling like wild beasts" at Mr. Trevelyan, and "hailing him with a shower of contumelious reproaches which made it difficult for him to get out three consecutive sentences." Mr. Gladstone, the author of Disestablishment and the Land Act, the enfranchiser of the Irish peasantry, reaps the fruits of his great policy of conciliation by being "frequently stopped by rowdy cries from the Irish quarter." An assembly of English gentlemen has to sit and hear Lord Spencer, one of the most kind-hearted as well as the noblest of public servants, repeatedly called "a murderer" and, together with his colleague, assailed with ribaldry which is compared by the *Graphic* to "the irresponsible ravings of lunatics." But indignation at the outrages of the Irish is swallowed up in another feeling when we learn that a set of men, calling themselves English gentlemen and headed by an English nobleman in the person of Lord Randolph Churchill, voted with the enemies of the country for the motion of censure on the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Such is Tory "loyalty" in England as well as in Canada; such it was in the days of William the Third, and such it is now.

In the elections to the German Reichstag the Socialists have gained largely; the Conservatives have also gained; the Liberals have lost heavily. Particularly notable is the great gain of Socialism, after seven years of repression. Of this the burdensomeness of the German military system is perhaps the immediate cause, as it is the cause of the constant outflow of

emigration. But there is also a great deal of indigence arising it seems partly from the subdivision of land, which is so extreme that, according to Mr. Rae, there are more than a million of proprietors, holding on the average little more than an acre, while the soil as a rule is poor. The peasant also groans under Jewish usury, against which, and the growing domination of the Jewish plutocracy, Herr Stöcker's crusade is directed, though the movement is persistently misrepresented as a religious persecution. The principal seat of Socialism, however, is said at present to be among the factory operatives, who enjoy the greatest facilities for mutual fomentation and, though the best paid of all the work-people, are the most improvident and discontented. German Socialism had powerful apostles in Lassalle and Karl Marx, whose influence has not died with them. Perhaps the Government itself, in trying a policy of vaccination by means of such semi-socialistic, or as it is the fashion to call them, Collectivist appliances as State Insurance, has rather fostered than dissipated the disease. German Socialism, however, is not of the malignant type; it does not, like Nihilism, Intransigentism and Fenianism, deal in dynamite or preach murder. Some of its leading writers, at all events, seem to see that all social change must be gradual, and that violence will never regenerate mankind. Still its growth gives the German Government occupation enough, and renders more than ever improbable any hostile action of Germany against Great Britain. The Conservative gain is no doubt due in some measure to the reaction against Socialism; but the party of reaction rests on a large and solid mass of Roman Catholicism and aristocracy, as well as the military. The Liberal Party appears to have lost rather by apathy and abstraction than by change of opinion or desertion. Its creed is necessarily of a somewhat negative kind, and neither appeals like Conservatism to strong sentiment, nor like Socialism, to ardent hopes. On the morrow of a great struggle for national unity and independence the patriotic sentiment is strong, and Liberalism is rather philosophic and cosmopolitan than patriotic. Bismarck will now have to change the Parliamentary base of his government, and make up a working majority of new materials. This he will do without hesitation or scruple. This is what he always does when elections go against him, or his following in the House fails him, and when any other Parliamentary minister would resign. It is in this way that his government is rendered stable, while all the other party governments in Europe are in a continual state of flux and the nations which they are ironically said to sway are kept in constant danger of administrative anarchy. Thus the one apparent exception to the instability of Party Government is an exception which emphatically proves the rule.

PRESIDENT WILSON has a militant life; yesterday he was grappling with co-educationists; now he is repelling the attacks of clericists, though apparently they are not clericists of much mark. His obvious answer in the latter case is that if he were to introduce theological teaching he would be guilty of a breach of trust, which would not be a religious proceeding. He would be equally guilty of a breach of trust if he connived at the abuse of any lecture-room for the purpose of subverting religion. But of this he is not accused, and cannot be suspected. Science must be taught in universities. It must be taught whoever the discoverer may have been, whether Newton, Faraday, Laplace or Darwin, and whatever may have been his theological opinions. Whatever is true in it is of God; this surely none of us will deny. How many fatal discoveries, including that of the rotation of the earth, has religion already survived! Are not bishops now telling us that the doctrine of evolution leaves the argument for an intelligent Creator or governor of the world stronger than it was before? A restoration of clerical control over university teaching must be seen by every sensible clergyman to be unattainable in this generation, at least anywhere but in the Church of Rome. Oscott or Maynooth may mew up minds so that no discovery can reach them; to any Protestant college this is impossible. There is nothing for it but to let knowledge have its course, and renounce the thought of what Bacon calls offering to God the unclean sacrifice of a lie. As to official recognition of Christianity, on which some worthy people set great store, the shafts of scepticism go through such buckram as rifle bullets go through paper. That which is at once valuable and attainable is the conservation of religious life by the self-governed college in the free university. The assailants of President Wilson would be more profitably employed in strengthening the hands and confirming the resolution of Mr. Ross who, as we all hope, is trying to bring about university confederation.

No more tremendous problem was ever presented to a nation than that of the two races in the Southern States. Even the problem with which England has to deal in Ireland is less desperate. It is brought before us in its full