

Rev. Dr. Howley, vicar-apostolic of the French const of Newfoundland, advocates the annexation of Newfoundland to the Dominion, claiming that it would put an end to the vexatious encroachments of the French fishermen. French men-of-war, he says, take complete control of the fishing grounds, ignoring all local political arrangements, and commit with impunity acts which would never be permitted if they belonged to the United States or any other nation.—*Exchange*. We are not quite so sure of the immediate good effect of Confederation, but it might possibly tend in the direction Dr. Howley believes.

We are a little surprised that so respectable a journal as the *St. John Evening Gazette* should condescend to get off such an article as the following:—"Halifax harbor is maintaining its old reputation as the most dangerous port to enter on the coast of North America. The steamer *Uluda*, which arrived there last week, struck on Egg Island in the Eastern Passage Thursday night, while entering Halifax. Between fog and sunken rocks Halifax is in a bad way." Considering the number of vessels of all classes which enter the Port of Halifax, the number of casualties which occur is singularly small, but such paragraphs are probably due more to a spirit of chaff than to the inter-civic rivalry.

The enactment of a statute of New York for the execution of criminals by electricity seemed at first sight to be an eminently humane conception. Considerable doubt has, however, been since thrown on the expediency of the measure by a number of persons more or less expert in the operations of electric currents. Instances are cited of the most intense suffering from powerful electric shocks which yet failed to induce instantaneous death, and it is affirmed that much depends on the subject's normal constitutional powers of resistance, which can scarcely be gauged. It might seem that science ought, in time, to be able to arrive at a certainty of the shock that will kill instantaneously, and with the least pain, but it would appear that it is at present quite an open question.

Much surprise has been freely expressed at what is called the "extraordinary decision" of the Montreal Harbor Commissioners on the recent collision between the *Polynesian* and the *Cynthia*. It is pointed out that it was caused by a departure from the rules of the road. If those rules are observed collision is supposed to be impossible. The violation of them is due to either one pilot or the other. The Board declined to decide which, and was very reluctant to publish its finding, which re-instated both. If the rules of the road are defective the Board should have specified in what particular. The proceedings in cases of wreck or collision are often discreditable. We are reminded by this instance of laxity of the wreck of the *Canadian*, which vessel, in 1857, was run on a rock a quarter of a mile from the Pillars Light House, on a calm, bright moonlight night, with two miles of clear channel along the southern shore of the t. Lawrence where the pilot ought to have been. This worthy, for whose act there was not a shadow of excuse, had his certificate suspended for a year, when stringing up to a yard-arm would have been no more than an appropriate punishment.

The alarm started some months ago on the supposed formidable increase of the French-Canadian population has been pretty well allayed by the publication of recent statistics, and it is now demonstrated that, in all denominations in the Province of Quebec, Protestants more than hold their own. Figures given, without going into intermediate census periods, show the following results:—

	1851.	1881.
Episcopalians .....	44,682	68,797
Presbyterians.....	33,470	50,287
Methodists .....	21,199	39,701
Baptists .....	4,493	8,853
Congregationalists .....	3,927	5,244
Adventists (1871).....	3,150	4,210
	110,921	177,092

There were, in addition, 248 Jews in 1851, and 989 in 1881. There is certainly no cause for alarm in these figures.

A novel phase in the Irish aspirations for nationality is reported from Chicago, where a number of prominent Irish Americans held a meeting to discuss the advisability of establishing an Irish American republic to further the interests of the Irish race. An organization was perfected to be known as the "Irish American Republic Association." It is hoped to secure Lower California for the purpose of establishing a republic. Efforts will be made to secure this land or a large tract of Canadian land. Should Canadian land be secured, an effort will be made to colonize it with 1,000,000 Irish and Irish American farmers. This number of Irishmen, with the addition of the Irish already in Canada, and the assistance of the French Canadian element, would, it is thought, be able to capture the Canadian Government and convert it into a powerful Franco-Irish Republic. Now if there be any depth of purpose in this movement, we do not regard it as at all an extravagant idea. When the English Puritans found intolerable the persecution of their day they bravely abandoned their then intolerant country, and boldly committed themselves to a far off and singularly inhospitable land. We have wondered, while yet there were large Islands in the Pacific open to the world, that the idea never occurred to Irishmen of making for themselves a grand new country wherein they could order all things to their own liking. It would not, perhaps, be a bad thing if the Lower California idea, which may possibly be advanced by the circumstance of the Cronin murder, should take tangible shape.

In reference to previous remarks in our columns on the franking system, we find it stated that no fewer than 200,000 free letters were, under it, sent out of the Ottawa Departments last year. Commenting on this statement the *Montreal Witness* justly observes:—"It is very improbable that one hundred thousand of them had even the remotest connection with public business. All private letters franked through the post represent nothing short of robbery of the taxpayers of the Dominion of Canada, and the franking of public letters is equivalent to the robbery of the Post Office Department for the benefit of the other departments. The whole system is an abuse, and not a small one either, and should be wiped out."

We have pleasure in quoting the following from a recent issue of the *Dalhousie Gazette*:—"The prospects of a settler in Western Canada to-day are very bright, and the future of Canada depends in a great measure upon the settlement of the far west by a right class of people, all the better if already imbued with a strong national sentiment. Why should the New England States be over stocked with young Canadians while our own country is being rapidly populated by English, Irish, Scotch, and French, by Germans, Icelanders, Chinese and Japanese? And as great a percentage of these get rich and richer in Canada than do our own people in the United States. If only the young men who are leaving their farm homes in the Maritime Provinces could be induced to go west with the fixed determination to 'endure hardness' while making homes for themselves on our own prairie, where, in a few years at most, they would find themselves in prosperous circumstances, it would give 'annexation' to the winds, and would ultimately build up under the 'brilliant folds' of the British Flag a Canadian nationality more compact and a country as wealthy as the United States." We may always look with confidence to the journals of our educational institutions for utterances of a true tone of patriotism.

Besides the brittle relations between Austria, Germany, France and Russia, which are a standing menace to the peace of Europe, there are yet other complications which more nearly affect Great Britain. One is Egypt, the other is Armenia. France has refused her consent to the conversion of the Egyptian debt until England fixes the day for her withdrawal from Egypt. This, if England bears steadily in mind the refusal of France to co-operate with her in 1882, she would be pusillanimous to listen to. She has every right to control there. The other is Armenia, where Turkey continues the cruellest outrages and oppressions in defiance of the Anglo-Turkish convention which binds Turkey to protect her Christian subjects against the very ruffians who are desolating Armenia. It is improbable that the English people will long tolerate this state of things. The treaty of Berlin has been contemptuously set aside by Turkey. Russia may find in that a plausible way, even a just and strong ground, for interference. She may require England to put an end to these crimes in Armenia, or insist upon doing it herself. In the latter case England must either stand passively by and see the *comp de grace* inflicted on the sick man of Europe, or she must go to war to save Turkey. The latter is an alternative which the nation is not likely to approve. The Crimean war will never be repeated. There is still another fact to consider. France is believed to have a very thorough understanding with Russia. Both these powers contemplate the English occupation of Egypt with the same eyes. At any moment such a pressure could be brought to bear upon England as to leave her no alternative but to retreat from Egypt under pressure or fight. A more serious situation can scarcely be conceived. But of course it may all blow over, as so many other threatening complications have blown over during the last three years.

"Now at least," continues Prof. Delitzsch, "the following dates are recovered to science with absolute certainty.—854 B.C., battle of Karkar between Shalmaneser II and the twelve allied states of Chatti, "Ahab of Israel" being amongst them; 842 as one of the years of Jehu of Israel; the years between 742 and 738 for Menahem of Samaria and Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah; 734 for Pekah of Israel and Ahaz of Judah; 722 for the fall of Samaria; 701 for Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah of Judah. That the Jewish chronology of the time before Solomon is not reliable, that, indeed, it makes no claim to be such, has never been difficult to see. Babylonian chronology, which has itself until the present time been in many respects obscure, is now beginning, thanks to Hormuzd Rassam's wonderful discoveries, to be cleared up. Especially by the recent recovery of the authenticated date 3750 B.C. as the date of Naram Sin, and so of about 3800 B.C. as the date of his father, Sargon I., there opens before us a new and wide perspective to the history of Semitic peoples and of mankind in general. It is a remarkable coincidence that Egyptologists claim nearly the same date for the oldest historical king of Egypt, Menes—a date almost as old as that at which Biblical chronology fixes the creation of man. As for history, I mention Sargon II, whose name had been preserved only in Isaiah xx. 1, and whose very existence was thirty or forty years ago a matter of dispute, he is now one of those grand Assyrian monarchs whose deeds and lives are known to us even in the smallest details. Belshazzar likewise has been proved by the Babylonian monuments to be a historical personage. As if by a magician's wand the history of all the Western Asiatic nations, large and small, is unrolled before us in the vast cuneiform literature. Babylon and Nineveh, with all their customs, manners, institutions, literature, art, and religion, awake from the sleep of twenty-five centuries and live before our eyes. The few traces which the Old Testament preserved of many long-cherished peoples are now supplemented by fuller cuneiform accounts, and the fragmentary sketches which we possessed before are assuming more and more the form of an imposing picture full of life and color, or rather of a grand panorama extending from beyond 3000 B.C. down to the times of Alexander and Antiochus the Great."