

accordance with sound political economy for the Government to aid in educating men for lucrative professions, and various teaching medical corporations having since that date, and in consequence of that action, been established and equipped at great expense, and having attained to great efficiency and success, it is now unfair and unjust that the University of Toronto, sustained by public funds, should occupy the position of a body eagerly competing with the independent medical colleges which have thus been created. It is impossible to deny that there is a good deal of force in the argument. The wonder is that the protest was not made at an earlier date, and that all the independent medical colleges in the Province did not heartily unite in making it. The main question, however, it seems to us, resolves itself into that of the soundness of the view affirmed by the Legislature in 1853. If the principle be admitted—and it is not easy to gainsay it—that it is no part of the business of the State to aid in educating men for lucrative professions, all the rest follows as a matter of logic. But will not that principle carry us a great deal farther? What is a very large part even of the ordinary Arts work of the University but, in effect, a course of instruction to aid in preparing men for lucrative professions, such as those of law, medicine and theology? And why not as well prepare them for lucrative professions as for lives of learned leisure, or for positions requiring superior intelligence and influence in any private sphere or business pursuit? The principle in question will thus be found to take a very wide sweep in its application. Followed to its logical results, it would probably be found to forbid the use of the money of the whole people to furnish educational advantages of any kind, such as can, in the nature of things, be used only by the few and not by the whole tax-paying population. It is, therefore, pretty clear either that the principle in question is unsound or that all public funds given for the support of colleges and universities are misappropriated. It is, perhaps, not necessary that we should now make a choice between the two horns of the dilemma.

THERE is some reason to fear that the negotiations for the settlement of the Behring Sea question are not progressing as rapidly as could be desired. Without accepting the statements of doubtful Washington despatches, we may conclude that no permanent agreement can now be reached in time to govern this season's operations. That being the case, it must be obvious to both parties that it is highly desirable that some *modus vivendi* should be arranged pending further enquiries and negotiations. The fact that no such *modus vivendi* has been authoritatively announced gives colour to the rumour that none has been agreed on. The extreme reticence of both the British and the Canadian Governments is not reassuring. If, as is generally believed on both sides of the line, the American Government has abandoned, if, indeed, it ever seriously advanced, the absurd *mare clausum* contention, it is incredible that that Government can, as alleged, have again sent its cruisers to pursue the same course as in previous years in the waters in question. It would be an incomprehensible and intolerable weakness on the part of the British Government to permit such treatment of Canadian vessels during another season. If the British and Canadian Governments are convinced that a rigid police surveillance of Behring Sea, or any portion of it, is necessary for the preservation of the seal fishery, and it has been found convenient to let the American Government continue to perform that service unaided, the least they can do, surely, is to make a distinct announcement of the fact, accompanied with such explanations as may enable Canadian sealers to avoid trespassing on the forbidden grounds. But to permit the United States Government to rule the open sea with a high hand, in defiance of international law, and to capture and plunder Canadian vessels at its own sweet will, as hitherto, would certainly go far to convince Canadians of the uselessness of expecting protection from the Mother Country against any aggressive action it may please her powerful and capricious neighbour to take.

THE return of a large majority of Government supporters, in the Nova Scotia local elections, did not, we suppose, greatly surprise even the friends of the Opposition, however deeply they may regret the fact. As we have before pointed out, the issues were local in a remarkable degree. They did not involve any important principle even in provincial politics. The question, as presented in the campaign, was very largely one of the management and distribution of local funds. The Government had been liberal in the matter of expenditure for roads and

bridges, and for schools. The Opposition could hardly outbid them in this respect. Mr. Fielding, the Premier, is a man not only of exceptional ability, but of good reputation, and, as the event seems to prove, extremely popular. The Attorney-General, Mr. Longley, is pretty well known to readers of THE WEEK, as one who wields a ready pen, and is frank and courageous to an unusual degree in the expression of his rather radical opinions. He is the kind of politician to make strong opponents, as well as strong supporters, but his personal reputation is, we believe, without stain. Indeed, the record of the administration, as a whole, is, so far as we are aware, free from serious reproach. Their liberal policy in road matters, especially during the past year or two, was, it is true, characterized by the Opposition as wholesale bribery. Whether funds for this purpose were voted beyond the means of the Province, and whether the apportionments were made solely with a view to the wants of the constituencies, are questions which we have no means of deciding. It is clear, however, that the system, like that of the Dominion Government in regard to railway and other subsidies, is thoroughly bad. It lends itself readily to gross abuse. It undoubtedly can be made by both Dominion and Local Governments a most potent means of retaining office. If the distribution of public moneys in the constituencies must continue to be a function of Government and Parliament, it is one which should be performed through the agency of non-partisan boards or commissions. The remoter provinces are particularly susceptible to corrupt influences through such means by reason of their feebleness of interest in those larger questions of politics and policy which agitate the more central provinces. From the party point of view the course of Nova Scotia is certainly remarkable, especially when we remember the tenacity with which her people adhere to the old party names and traditions. They all claim to be either Liberals or Conservatives. Yet they so use the franchise that a pronounced Conservative victory in a Dominion election is preceded and followed by still more pronounced Liberal triumphs in local elections. How will her future historians explain the enigma?

THE report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Sweating System does not contain any very revolutionary or sweeping proposals. No one, of course, expected that, though it is possible that had the report prepared by the Chairman of the Committee, Lord Dunraven, who has given much time and thought to the subject, been adopted, something more worthy to take the name of action might have been forthcoming. As it is, Lord Dunraven's draft report was rejected, and the public know nothing of its contents. The report adopted and submitted was prepared by Lord Derby. Though somewhat pessimistic and helpless in its tone when the question of doing something is touched, it contains a good deal of valuable information and some wise practical suggestions, especially in the direction of sanitary reform, which may prove useful. The *Times* observes that the Committee endeavoured, without much success, to extract from the principal witnesses a clear explanation of what is meant by "sweating." That no clear definition was forthcoming is not surprising. It is impossible in the nature of things to draw mathematical lines in moral planes. Sweating means "very hard work for very poor pay, in deplorably bad sanitary conditions." The Committee found it very clearly proved that the earnings of the lowest classes of workers are barely sufficient to keep body and soul together, and that their lives are one dreary round of almost ceaseless toil, hard and often unhealthy. The Committee express admiration of the courage with which the sufferers endure their lot, the absence of attempts on their part to excite pity by exaggeration, and the "almost unbounded charity" they display towards each other. The *Times* thinks it may be doubted whether this courage is not rather insensibility, but insensibility will not explain the state of feeling which leads to "unbounded charity." The *Times* dwells upon the difficulty of helping the unskilled poor, arising out of their refusal to respond to the ordinary incentives to effort. But it may fairly be questioned whether this is not at least quite as much a consequence as a cause of their low condition. Whether it be the one or the other, it surely affords a very strong argument in favour of outside intervention with a view to raise them to a higher level of ambition and energy, rather than against attempting any interference. The report does not find that machinery, or division of labour, or even the influx of foreign labour, is chiefly responsible for the deplorable state of affairs. The main causes of the evils in question it finds to be "the inefficiency of many of the lower class of workers, early

marriages, and the tendency of the residuum of the population in large towns to form a helpless community, together with a low standard of life and an excessive supply of unskilled labour," an explanation which, by the way, is about as satisfactory as the famous answer to the question, Why does the poppy induce sleep? "Because it has a soporific tendency." The Committee point out the many and serious difficulties which stand in the way of any effort to improve the condition of these wretched citizens by legislation, but a resolute reforming statesmanship would no doubt find many of these difficulties vanish into thin air when grappled with, as has been the case in a hundred somewhat similar instances. The old politico-economic dread of interfering with the laws of competition is sensibly present in the report, though the Committee are in favour of extension and amendment of the Factory Acts, unmindful, apparently, that those very Acts, now so universally admired because of their proved beneficent effects, involve, in slightly disguised form, the very principle of State interference which is strongly deprecated by many theorists.

MR. GLADSTONE ON RUSSIA.

MR. GLADSTONE is getting to be a little trying to his most ardent admirers and most devoted followers. His most unfortunate habit of seeing everything through the medium of his present political views has the effect of distorting his vision to such an extent that it is difficult to believe that he means what he says. We must not, however, forget the admonition of Mr. Forster, who said of Mr. Gladstone that "the honourable gentleman could convince other people of most things, but he could convince himself of anything." Assuming this theory, we must deal as charitably as possible with the facts before us.

Some of our readers may, perhaps, remember the "Bulgarian atrocities" committed by the Turks at the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war. Many persons believed that Mr. Gladstone was trying to make political capital out of the subject; but this was not our belief. We believed then, and we believe now, that the case as put by Mr. Gladstone was not overstated, and that, in exposing the cruelties of the Turks, he was doing service to humanity.

But humanity is humanity everywhere, and cruelty is cruelty wherever committed; and those who remembered the eloquent denunciations of Bulgarian atrocities expected that Mr. Gladstone would be the first to lift his indignant and eloquent voice against the atrocities of Russian officials and soldiers at Yakoutsck. And what does Mr. Gladstone say to this? He is not yet sufficiently convinced—the evidence is insufficient—and we must wait. But Mr. Marvin, who has done such good work in making known the true nature of Russian doings in Central Asia, ventures to ask whether Mr. Gladstone has not as good evidence as he had of the Bulgarian doings? It is the old story of the lawyer, who found that his dog had done the injury to a neighbour, and not the neighbour's dog to him: "The case being altered, it alters the case."

Now, it is really worth while to go back and compare the subjects of Mr. Gladstone's diverse judgments. The Bulgarians were hardly worse governed than the Russians are; and, at the time of the Bulgarian slaughters, there had been risings and preparations for rebellion which had certainly been fostered by Russia. Now, we do not plead that such a state of things justified the atrocities committed; but the case was far worse than anything which has occurred in Russia, as a provocation of the Government.

Most of these Siberian exiles have not even thought of conspiring against the government of the Czar; most of them have perhaps cherished liberal sentiments, some few of them have given utterance to them, still fewer have joined secret political societies. And for this they are sent into exile with no charge proved—in many cases with no charge alleged against them. But the massacre of Yakoutsck is one of the very worst of many of the horrible things done by the officials of the Russian Government against men and women, some of whom are absolutely innocent, none of whom are guilty of crime.

This "atrocious" has now been proved by a series of independent testimonies, which not only verify the general outline of the occurrence, but furnish us with most of the details. It appears, therefore, that Mr. Gladstone can no longer urge that there is insufficient proof of the alleged massacre, and therefore he takes another line of argument, and one so surprising—we had almost said so shameful—that we believe it will be read with shame and indignation by every man who has the honour of the Empire at heart.