

will reserve our comments ; but the re-appearance of the Goodhue case, in the form of a bill to supply the omissions which caused the objects of the promoters of the former Act to miscarry in a Court of Law, leads us, in common with all who respect law, to uplift a warning voice against legislative tampering with private wills or contracts. We speak of contracts as well as wills because it is impossible to draw any distinction of principle between them as subjects of direct legislative interference. It is possible that large powers might be vested with advantage in courts of law to relax provisions in wills found to be inconsistent with the improvement of the property, especially in a country so rife with enterprise and change as ours, though this would scarcely apply to any case but that of real estate. But in any case the function of the Legislature—the only function which it can safely exercise—is that of passing a general law. Such legislation as that which has been attempted in the Goodhue case opens a vista of evil which it would be invidious to describe. The power of Parliament is of course indisputable ; but so is its obligation to use that power consistently with the objects for which Parliaments exist.—Shortly after the appearance of our last number Mr. Froude concluded his ill-starred mission. That any man should select the people of the United States as impartial judges of the question between England and Ireland, or any question in which it is possible for the mind to be prejudiced by Anti-British feeling, seems to Canadians almost incredible. Yet there may be an excuse for Mr. Froude's error, and one partly applicable also to what appear to us the exceedingly awkward attempts made to propitiate the Americans by English statesmen. The common American feeling against England is not one of which intelligent and cultivated Americans can be very proud ; it is essentially a vulgar feeling. Consequently the intelligent and cultivated American habitually disclaims it in society, and most

vehemently of course when he is a guest in England ; though the very same man, if he were transferred to a platform in his own country, would too probably chime in with the popular sentiment. It is probable that Mr. Froude was in this way beguiled into the belief that American hostility was merely diplomatic, and that there was goodwill towards the old country in the heart of the people. In that case there was nothing extravagant (supposing him to have been invited to lecture in America) in his choosing Irish history as a subject, authentic information about which would be welcome to the Americans and might have a salutary effect on their minds. He is only to be blamed for having too much assumed the character of a missionary, which, among other objections, was hardly consistent with that of a paid lecturer. No doubt, in spite of the hospitality with which he was received, and in which Americans never fail, the truth soon dawned upon his mind. A misgiving must have arisen as soon as he read the newspaper report of his first lecture, headed "The British Monarchy Exposed—Ireland's Wrongs Confessed." The effect we fear will be bad. Little harm will have been done among the Americans, who are not likely to be offended by having been taken for serene arbiters of international morality any more than they would at being taken for dukes ; and all this fizzing and bouncing of Father Burke and Bridget will subside, so far as the Irish in the States are concerned, like a temporary excitement at Donnybrook Fair. But we are not so sure that Father Burke's lectures will not do mischief in Ireland at a rather critical moment. As to Mr. Froude, we suspect that he fled not only from the thunders of Father Burke or the broomstick brandished by Bridget, but from the really far more formidable opposition of Colonel Meliae, whose criticisms, brought into general notice by the other affray, have seriously, and in the absence of any reply to them we must think