

keeping with the prime object of the free-grant system—that of furthering the settlement and cultivation of the country? There is surely land enough for all, without being unfair or niggardly to the children of the original proprietors.

THANKS to the action of the Premier in giving it a place on the Government orders, Dr. Weldon's Extradition Act passed through both Houses of Parliament with unexpected celerity. It now awaits only the assent of the Governor-General to become operative. Some reason to apprehend delay from this quarter arises from the fact, of which Mr. Mills reminded the Members of the Commons, that similar legislation proposed by him some years ago had been objected to by England. But had it been the intention to persist in that objection it seems altogether likely that the Government would have had some intimation of it, and would have governed themselves accordingly. The fact that the measure is merely an Act of Parliament and could be promptly repealed in case any evil or abuse should be found to follow from it, reduces any objection which might otherwise hold against one-sided action in such a matter to the minimum, and in view of the actual and growing practical evil which it is designed to remedy, it seems highly improbable that the British Government would veto it on purely theoretical grounds. It is not easy to understand why the Commons should have refused by so large a majority to make the Bill retro-active. The ordinary objections to *ex post facto* legislation seem hardly applicable in this case. Surely those who have come to the country to escape the punishment due to crime cannot, by lapse of time, have acquired any vested rights in their immunity from justice. A crime does not become outlawed like a debt. The alleged danger to innocent and unsuspecting families must surely be greatly exaggerated if not wholly imaginary. The man who has truly repented of former wrong-doing and reformed will have made what atonement and restitution is in his power, and the danger of such an one being molested after years of honest living is very small. It will be a grand thing, however, to have the doors firmly closed against fugitive criminals in the future.

MR. WALLACE'S Anti-Combines Bill has been extremely unfortunate. For a long time it seemed destined to perish ignominiously amidst the mass of private bills which "cannot be reached" because of the pressure of Government measures and the precedence claimed for them. When finally rescued from this limbo by favour of the Government, it was so changed in its passage through the Commons that even its warmest advocates did not seem quite certain of its identity, and the representatives of labour, whose interests it was largely designed to conserve, declared that it had become transformed in the process into a dangerous weapon for the hands of their oppressors. And now while we are studying the facts of the case, in order to discover whether the promoters or the Labour representatives are right in their views of the meaning of the Act as altered, the inquiry is made superfluous by the announcement that the Act has been so emasculated in the Senate by the insertion of adverbial modifiers, that it can no longer matter to anyone whether it is passed or not. The present probability seems to be that the Senatorial amendments will be rejected in the Commons, with the effect of throwing the Bill over to another session. Perhaps this will be the best thing under the circumstances.

THE paper filed on Monday in the Superior Court of Montreal by the *Mai's* attorneys, as the preliminary pleas of the defence in the action for libel brought against that journal by the Society of Jesuits, is an interesting document. The position taken is a bold one. The corporate standing of the Society is challenged on the grounds that the Provincial Act incorporating it was *ultra vires* of that Legislature; that all the members of the Society in the Province are, in virtue of the laws of the British Empire, absolutely without civil rights; that the rules and regulations of the Society, binding upon its members, are such as to prevent the Society or any of its members from holding property; that its objects are extra-provincial, its constitution and aims incompatible with the Constitution of the Province and of the Dominion, etc. If issue can be fairly joined on these points, the discussion and decision cannot fail to make the trial memorable in Canadian history. Even should these preliminary objections be set aside, and the issue joined at once on the merits of the case touching the alleged libel, the trial will still bid fair to become famous by reason of the inquest held and evi-

dence adduced touching the tenets and practices of the much maligned or very infamous Jesuits.

PENDING the rigid investigation that will no doubt be made into the causes of the terrible railway accident near Hamilton, it would be worse than useless to indulge in surmises, or to insinuate blameworthiness where none may have existed. None the less it becomes the sacred duty of the Government to spare no pains in the effort to ascertain whether the catastrophe can be traced to any carelessness of servants, imperfection of machinery or methods, or neglect of precautions; whether, in short, it belongs to the class of so-called accidents which may be regarded, with sufficient accuracy for practical purposes, as non-preventible. There are probably very few instances in which such a calamity may not and should not be made the means of discovering new sources of danger, and so still further reducing the chances on the side of the recurrence of such a fatality. One lesson is brought home with horrible impressiveness to all who read the newspapers. The murderous stove in the railway coach must be put away and some other mode of warming substituted. Failing this, some automatic arrangement for instantly extinguishing the fires in case of accident should surely be possible. The occurrence of such a holocaust adds greatly to the sufficient horrors of a railway accident.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD'S statements in the House in reply to the very natural complaints of delay in the Behring Sea matter were, perhaps, as satisfactory as could have been expected. However exasperating the strange pretensions and actions of the United States Government in the case, we see no reason to doubt that both the Canadian and the British Governments have been unceasing in their efforts to find a peaceful and just solution of the difficulty. It is highly probable that both President Cleveland and Secretary Bayard were convinced of the untenableness of their assumptions, and that, had they remained in office and been able to restrain the Senate, they would have agreed to a fair and honourable international arrangement for the protection of the seal fishery. If their successors are otherwise minded, if President Harrison and Secretary Blaine have seized the opportunity to inaugurate a jingo foreign policy, they are assuming a tremendous responsibility. No one can reasonably doubt that the British Ministry and people are most sincerely desirous of peace and friendship with the United States and are ready to make great concessions for that purpose. But to concede claims so utterly inadmissible as those which underlie the assumption of exclusive authority over Behring's Sea could not be in the interests of peace—certainly not "peace with honour." Sir John no doubt knows whereof he speaks. His words were carefully chosen and strictly guarded, but if they mean anything they mean that while the British Government will exhaust every legitimate means of reaching a friendly solution, they have no intention whatever of surrendering the rights of British subjects on the high seas, by acknowledging United States sovereignty over a branch of the North Pacific Ocean. As every other maritime power would doubtless be with England in resisting such a claim we cannot believe that the Washington authorities are in earnest in asserting it. It must be, rather, that they are resorting to the tactics of old-fashioned "cheap Jacks" who always ask an exorbitant price for their wares in order to have ample room for the "beating-down" process.

WHILE all good citizens are glad that the supremacy of law in the Province of Quebec has been to a certain extent vindicated by the capture of Morrison, all who have any high sense of honour must blush to think of the means by which the capture of the outlaw was effected. The affair does not involve any nice questions of casuistry touching the obligation of the officers of the law to use good faith with criminals or fugitives from justice whom it is their duty to capture. If the reports which have thus far been made public may be relied on, a clear agreement for a three days' truce was made, not with Morrison, but with his friends, and this truce was treacherously broken by the constables who shot and captured him. The case has taken on a new phase, and one which but for the question of honour would be made amusing or ridiculous by the claim now set up on behalf of the Richmond Caledonian Society, or its officers who represented the fugitive's friends in making the truce, to the proffered reward. Whether they are moved by purely

mercenary motives, or, as we may more charitably suppose, wish to secure the money for the defence of the prisoner, they have, it must be confessed, some logic on their side. If the truce was the means by which the arrest was made possible, why should not the makers of the truce, at least share in the reward? Much praise has been bestowed upon the officer who effected the capture, but if he really knew that a solemn promise had been given that all officers and men engaged in the expedition would remain at their posts and suspend efforts for three days, admiration of his bravery must yield to disapproval of the act of treachery. We shrink from the still more humiliating supposition that his lying-in-wait was planned and approved by his superiors by whom the truce was made.

BOULANGER has effected another flank movement. He has transferred his precious person from Belgium to England for safe keeping. If it be true that he is to be feted by certain prominent Englishmen, it must be that the English are losing their sense of humour. It is not a little ridiculous that the man, whose chief aim is said to be to destroy Parliamentary institutions in his own country as inimical to liberty, should be obliged to seek liberty and safety in the country which is the inventor and exemplifier of the modern Parliamentary system. To deny asylum and hospitality to a political refugee would be contrary to all British principle and precedent. But it was to have been hoped that once safely bestowed on British soil, the French adventurer would have been left pretty much to his own devices. Why he should be given fictitious prominence by banquets and receptions at the houses of noblemen and political leaders it is hard to conjecture. What can British Radicalism, for instance, have in common with French Boulangerism?

WHAT is to be the outcome of the spirit of militarism which seems to be taking full possession of the German nation? The phenomenon is one of the strangest in history. That a people, naturally devoted to the arts of peace, and preëminent in education and philosophy, could have become in a few years transformed into a nation of soldiers, dreaming by night and by day of military glory, is indeed remarkable, and may we not add? deplorable. This process of transformation which is still going on before the eyes of all observers, cannot but have a deteriorating effect upon the national character. It must tend to lower the standard of intellectual attainment. It must seriously discourage the pursuit of art and philosophy for their own sakes. The mischief, too, seems to be due, in a large measure, to the baleful influence of a few ambitious men, the Bismarcks and Von Moltkes of the nation. Preparation for war is said to be now regarded as the supreme duty of the nation, a mischievous notion which has, no doubt, received a fresh impulse since the accession of the present Emperor, whose ideals are all of a military type. As an illustration of the working of the military craze which has thus taken possession of at least the rulers of the nation it is said that "in the German military schools one of the principal lines of study is the working out of plans and schemes for the invasion of the different countries of Europe, these plans being often suggested by the pupils, worked over with the teachers, and afterwards submitted for criticism to military officials." Von Moltke has, it is said, no less than eleven elaborate and thoroughly worked out plans for the invasion of England. There may be exaggeration in these statements, but that they represent the present tendency in German Court and military circles cannot be doubted. Such ideas cannot dominate the minds of the leaders of a nation without producing a large crop of evils. They are also dangerous as tending directly towards war, for "As a man (or a nation) thinketh in his heart, so is he." The imagination is a powerful agent in moulding character and conduct. It is not in human nature that a body of officers should spend their time in devising invasions of England, for instance, without feeling a growing wish that an opportunity might offer to put their plans to the test. No doubt there is a mighty liberal sentiment amongst the masses of the German people which must sooner or later assert itself. It may be hoped that the reaction will set in in time to preserve the peace of Europe, which is seriously menaced by these war studies and enormous armaments.

THERE are now some indications that the short-sighted experiment which has been demoralizing the prisons and prisoners of New York State will soon come to an end. The Yates Bill, which prohibits the use of machinery in