

better judgment, have made the collection of books which is soon to enrich the Toronto Public Library. It only remains now to get the building in order, to have the purchases properly housed and classified, and then, with adequate funds, to give every facility for the efficient working of the Library. Doubtless, other towns throughout the Province are waiting to see the result of the Toronto experiment, and satisfied as to that, will make haste to tax themselves, under the Provincial Act, for the organization of a local library.

BOSTON has been receiving from Mr. Matthew Arnold something of the nature of a wet blanket to apply to its enthusiasm for Emerson. In his lecture delivered in Chickering Hall, Mr. Arnold has spoken of Emerson, for the most part, with a temperance, accuracy, and disinterestedness which have rendered resentment impossible, and contradiction nearly so. It is difficult to question the justice of Mr. Arnold's verdict on Emerson's poetry. It is wonderful critical insight which has led Mr. Arnold to class Emerson with Marcus Aurelius; yet with many similarities there is one difference, which is important and fundamental, though possibly perceptible only to minds of a certain cast. We refer to a power in Emerson of impregnating, of rendering fruitful other minds; which power sets him on a higher level than that occupied by the Imperial moralist and sage. It is characteristic of Mr. Arnold's mode of thought to select Emerson's essays as the most important work done in English prose during the century, and it is especially characteristic of him to attach more value to these essays than to those of Carlyle. But his verdict that the two most distinctively and honourably American, most original, and most valuable of the New World writers are Franklin and Emerson, we can scarcely look upon as characteristic, and cannot but consider hasty. It is certainly provocative of discussion.

IF President Arthur is representative of his nation, then does it seem as if the military spirit were not entirely quiescent in the great Republic. In his message to Congress the President urged that a portion of the enormous surplus revenue should be applied towards rehabilitating the navy, and setting the coasts in a state of defence; and promised to revert to the matter again. It is perhaps natural, when sounds of war are in the air, that those at the head of the nation should look to the safeguards at home, though it would be a fertile brain that could imagine the quarter from which the coasts of our neighbour have aught to fear. Nevertheless, President Arthur's anxiety may not be entirely out of place. The naval force of the United States is now nothing more than a marine police, while the army has found itself sorely pressed to maintain its ground against a few tribes of savages.

WE hear that the election of Mr. Carlisle to the Speakership of the House of Representatives, by the Democratic majority, means that the Presidential battle is going to be fought on the square issue of Free Trade against Protection. This is everywhere announced with great confidence, and a tariff for revenue purposes only is expected to be the Democratic battle-cry. But we shall see. It looks as if New York were likely to be the State to decide the struggle. If the Democrats lose New York, that will mean for them defeat. The Democratic vote of New York is to a vast degree Irish. The Irish have been by thousands driven from Ireland because the Free Trade policy so favourable to England's manufacturing interests enabled these to dwarf and crush out Irish industries. Irish manufactures could not compete. They went to the wall. Thousands of Irishmen emigrated to New York, hating the Free Trade policy that had forced them from their home. They know that England craves the removal of American tariff-barriers. What is for England's good, they think can hardly be for theirs. They are Democrats, but when told that must mean free-traders, it would not be strange if they should cease to be Democrats, and that speedily. Out of several considerations which may make the Democrats hesitate, this is one not unimportant.

CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

THE great event of the week, so far as the Dominion is concerned, may be said to be the throwing open of the Southern Reserve in the North-West, announced for the first of January. It is natural that by the devotees of the Government this concession should be hailed with hallelujahs as the New Year's gift of a beneficent providence to a thrice fortunate people. But we cannot forget that it was the Government itself which laid the embargo on the bounty of nature. If a man hangs you up, and when you are at the point of death cuts you down, a debt of gratitude will, perhaps, be due from you to your preserver, yet it will not be unquali-

fied. It is difficult to see how the same policy can embrace at once the present measure and the encouragement of the colonization companies, which will hardly escape ruin. On the whole, when the account is closed and the balance struck between the achievements of Ottawa beneficence and the probable results of free settlement, it will, perhaps, appear once more that commercial interest is its own best regulator, especially when the government is a party government, and has above and before all things to maintain its own hold of power, satisfy its partisans, and provide for its friends. Of the Syndicate there is nothing but good to be said. It made, of course, the best bargain for itself that it could; but it has done its work with extraordinary energy; it is likely to complete its contract within little more than half the assigned time; it has been so far, at all events, true to its agreement and fair in its dealings. Still, a country with a single political railway drawn across it and spinning out the population on a narrow line cannot possibly be on a par with one in the enjoyment of a freely developed railway system and of the competition which permanently insures low freights. It has been among the merits of the Syndicate that hitherto nothing has appeared to convict it of political intrigue or clandestine dealings with the Press. The financial relations into which it has been drawn with the Government under the new and not easily intelligible arrangement respecting the guarantee of the stock are, if a necessity, a necessity to be deplored. The one great inducement by which the country was moved in assenting to the original agreement, which it did with a groan, was the hope that, by the severance of the Railway from the Government, we should be rescued from the slough of corruption into which we had been manifestly sinking. This guarantee arrangement renews the connection, though in a less intimate form, and will revive the apprehensions of the country. When the Government supports the company the company can hardly help supporting the Government.

If the most positive and reiterated assertions are to be believed, good coal in abundance has been found. This turns the wavering balance; and specimens of the coal, with satisfactory attestations, both as to its quality and quantity, will, if exhibited in the great centres, be better than all the puffs in the world. On the other hand a regulation of the company reducing the freight on "frozen wheat" discloses a fact which it might otherwise have been difficult to ascertain; for it is about as easy to get truth from the region the which revisers of the New Testament call Hades, as it is to get it from the North-West. The wheat crop has been injured by the early frosts, and this mishap seems likely to prove not accidental but normal, or, at least, of very frequent occurrence. It follows that the full use of the best machinery will always be necessary to save the harvest, and that only farmers who have such machinery at their command will be likely to attain a full measure of success. To plant the indigent Irish on farm lots will be mere cruelty, though, as labourers, there is no reason why they should not do well. It would not be wonderful if the tendency of agriculture in the North-West should prove to be toward large farms, scientifically cultivated with full machine power and such a staff as to insure the utmost rapidity in the operations. A paper in the last number of THE WEEK pointed out the necessity, even in the case of that miraculously fertile soil, of antidotes to exhaustion, which the small and needy farmer will never apply. Stock raising, also, it is evident, requires sheds and other winter provisions on a large scale. If these are the economical conditions of the country, the structure of society is sure, in some measure, to conform itself to them, and democracy in the North-West will some day be tempered by large farms. These, however, are questions over which the veil of destiny still hangs.

THE "Bystander," unblushingly heterodox, has always avowed his impious disbelief in the ultimate consolidation of British Columbia and the North-Western Territory with Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. If these distinct regions were situated in a continent by themselves the attractions of union might prevail over the barriers interposed in three cases by nature, and in a fourth by difference of nationality. But, situated as they are, not merely are they held apart by intervening obstacles—a triple range of mountains, a fresh-water sea, an intercolonial wilderness—but each of them is acted upon in a direction adverse to their union by social and economical forces of the most powerful kind, and drawn constantly towards a different combination. While commerce links New Brunswick to New England, the Canadians of the North-West join hands over a diplomatic line with the Canadians, almost equally numerous, of Dakota and Minnesota. The restiveness which finds expression in the manifesto put forth by the Provincial League of Manitoba, whatever may be the exact amount of force in the present movement, is the symptom of a natural tendency, not a brainless ebullition or a party trick. The interests of Old Canada and the North-West are not identical; much less can it be