

one with a conviction of the readiness of this population for self-government. The ready retort that seems open to the English advocate of Home Rule is, that if this is the result of centuries of training as an integral part of the Empire, it is surely time to try some other educational method. Whether the *penchant* for the use of the brick-bat and the shillalah is ineradicable in the Irish blood, or has been superinduced by political discontent and social hardship operating through many generations, it may be difficult to say. It would be easy to quote numerous instances of the great achievements of Irishmen in politics and statesmanship and in positions of authority, abroad, and to cap them all with the case of Lord Dufferin, just now made Warden of the Cinque Ports, in addition to other positions of honour and emolument too numerous to mention, but it may still be argued that these are but the exceptions which prove the rule. In any case the triumphant return of the McCarthyite augurs well for the progress of the Home Rule movement. What effect the recent change in the office of the Secretary of State for Ireland may have upon the situation remains to be seen. Mr. Jackson, who has been appointed to succeed Mr. Balfour, is said to be strongly opposed to everything looking or supposed to look in the direction of a separation of Ireland from Great Britain. Whether this means that he will not favour a generous measure of local self-government, as proposed by Mr. Balfour, is not clear, though it is probable that there will be no change in the Government policy.

FOUR naval cadets were, a few weeks since, dismissed from the English training ship *Britannia* for the reprehensible practice of "fagging money." The last two words are the euphemism used to describe a practice which had grown up among the cadets and simply mean the forcible appropriation by the senior boys of the money and valuables of the new-comers. We are indebted to the circumstance as having furnished occasion for a lengthy article in the *Spectator* on "School Fagging." This article, while admitting that in the special form of appropriating valuables, the thing is hardly defensible, is nevertheless an elaborate defence of the practice of school "fagging." By most of those who have been born and bred in the democratic atmosphere of the New World, the *Spectator's* course of reasoning will be followed with curiosity, not unmixed with amazement at the way of looking at human nature and its rights which it seems still prevails in Old World circles and even in the editorial rooms of a Liberal-Unionist newspaper of the highest standing. The writer defines fagging as "the right exercised by the older boy to make the younger do what he likes, and what the younger one generally dislikes." This right (?) when abused, naturally turns into "bullying," which is, of course, a reprehensible thing and not to be tolerated. Unfortunately we are not taught where to draw the line which separates between "fagging" and "bullying." We are not even left quite sure whether "fagging money"—which the *Spectator* does not exactly approve, though it confesses to feeling more sympathy for those who were expelled for practising it than for "the victims of their childish villainy"—is to be regarded as a species of bullying or not. We should have supposed that there are to an English boy at school some things worth more and to be more sacredly cherished than money, and that his right, or what we have always supposed to be such, to bodily freedom so far as other boys are concerned, was one of these. Of the two things, we feel sure that the average Canadian school-boy would rather give up his watch or his purse, than surrender his personal liberty so far as to become a slave to the whims of another, simply because that other was older and bigger. But we did not mean to argue the case but only to quote, as an argumentative curiosity, a few sentences from the *Spectator's* article. "One of the best ways to prevent its abuse ('fagging' is the use, 'bullying' the abuse) is for the authorities openly to recognize it, and to make their own limits as to its exercise." Fagging, we are assured again and again, "cannot be abolished." Given a community of some two hundred boys or so, of different ages and of different sizes, it is inevitable that the natural law will assert itself among them and that the stronger will seek to impose their will upon the weaker. The thing must be, and cannot possibly be helped." And so, after half a column of similar reasoning from the inevitable, the next step is, of course, to show that the whole thing, within limits which no attempt is made to define, is beneficent: "The fond mother may exclaim in horror at the idea of her own boy performing such menial

offices as brushing the clothes or preparing the breakfast of another; but then she has no idea of the benefit of that discipline." We should think not! "It is the making of some unruly and unlicked little cubs, who would otherwise have grown up into the most unpleasant kind of young men; and the responsibility of the authority is very often quite as beneficial to those who exercise it." But why then should not the discipline of losing his money and his watch be equally beneficial to the smaller cadet on shipboard, and the responsibility of carrying the former and spending the latter be equally beneficial to the bigger one who so magnanimously loads himself with that responsibility? Some of our readers may, perhaps, like ourselves, have a notion or tradition that yielding to brute force and accepting a position of involuntary servitude is the very thing to take the spirit and manliness out of a boy, and that the assumption and exercise of despotic authority, by virtue of might, not right, is equally well adapted to take that regard for the rights and liberties of others, which is one of the attributes of the highest manliness, out of boy or man. But then we are only colonists, and cannot be expected to understand these things.

THE result of the elections of last week in several States of the Union is pretty clearly, as we inferred from the scanty data at hand last week, what is called in sporting parlance, "a draw." The Republican success in Ohio is to some extent, though not fully, offset by the Democratic victory in New York. Moreover, there is evidently some truth—just how much it is impossible to determine—in the Democratic claim that the silver coinage, not the tariff question, was the chief factor in defeating their candidate and producing McKinley's large majority. If the moral result of the contest, which has undoubtedly been to give fresh courage and hope to the Republicans, should be likewise to convince the Democrats of the necessity of casting aside secondary issues and working together for their best man and best measures, their chances will still be perhaps about even in the Presidential elections. Meanwhile the educational discussion of the Tariff question will still go on. The independent, or "Mugwump," element will probably grow stronger month by month, and increase the uncertainty of the situation. Much, almost everything, in fact—when other things are so nearly equal—will depend upon the men selected by the respective parties. Such selection is always one of the great difficulties and dangers of the parties under the American system, and the attitude of the Mugwumps tends to make it more and more a critical question.

THOSE who have followed with sympathetic interest the fortunes of the Congressional party, which seems really to have been the Constitutional party in Chili, through and since the civil war, will be glad to learn of the complete triumph of constitutionalism in the recent Presidential election. The presence of a Provisional Government or ruler, no matter how justifiable or necessary, is always an element of danger to freedom in any State. The election of Admiral Montt by a sweeping majority restores the Republic to its normal position and places the choice of the people at the head of the nation. Under the restored Constitutional Government and after the discovery and defeat of the plot to attempt its overthrow, it seems altogether probable that the difficulty with the United States Government will be peaceably adjusted. If it be true, as is very likely, that the victorious Congressionals have not forgiven the United States for the pursuit and capture of the vessel which was violating their neutrality laws, a little further reflection must convince President Montt and his advisers that the Washington Government merely did its duty in that matter. If, on the other hand, it be true, as the officers of the British ship *Champion* are said to have declared, that the United States steamer *Baltimore* acted as a spy on the movements of the Congressional forces, and reported them to the Balmacedists, the U. S. Government will surely not hesitate to call Minister Egan to account and replace him with a Minister who better understands the duties of his office. It cannot be that he so shamefully violated the laws of neutrality with the knowledge and consent of his Government. The slaughter in this fratricidal struggle was horrible, but the Chilians have unquestionably many of the elements of which strong nations are made, and as the party now in power stood for freedom and self-government, against despotism, one can but wish them a long season of peace, good government and national prosperity.

THE first onset in the prosecution of Professor Briggs, of the Union Theological Seminary, of New York, for heresy, has terminated in favour of the accused. The Professor began the proceedings with a defence in which, while admitting the jurisdiction of the court, he urged many and cogent objections to the charges and specifications, on legal grounds. This was followed up with a denial of the substance of the charges themselves, Professor Briggs declaring especially that he had never "made any statements or taught any doctrine that in the slightest degree would impair what he had ever regarded as a cardinal doctrine, that the Holy Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice." On the conclusion of the reading of the paper which embodied this defence, a motion to dismiss the case was made and carried by a majority of 94 to 39. It would seem that Dr. Briggs' defence must have produced a powerful impression, for it was not expected that any test vote would show any such majority in his favour. It is probably incorrect to infer, as some journals have done, that the result may be accepted as showing that "two-thirds of the Presbyterians of New York city are adherents of Dr. Briggs," though it is probably true that two-thirds of them are opposed to trying him for heresy on the ground of what he said in the famous inaugural address. It is believed that the case will be carried to the Synod, and, in any event, an appeal is pretty sure to be taken from the Synod to the General Assembly. The full statement made by Dr. Briggs has not yet come to hand, but it seems impossible to doubt that he has made a very strong point in maintaining that the statements of belief which he did and does actually make, to which exception is taken, are none of them denounced as heresies in the standards of the Church, to which alone, and as they stand, the appeal must be made. The charge can be brought home to him, he maintains, only by a new interpretation of the meaning of the Standards, and that would be equivalent to the construction of a new creed for the occasion. Such we understand to be the substance of his legal argument, and, as we have said, it must have had great weight with the Presbytery. When we go further and enquire into the merits of the case, apart from any question of the meaning of Church standards, there can be no doubt that very many of the more intelligent and liberal-minded of the Presbyterians who will meet in Synod or Assembly, though perhaps not a majority of them, are opposed to the trial on principle, as tending to fetter the minds of the devout scholars of the Church in their search for truth. The matters in question, as *e. g.* that touching the authorship of the Pentateuch, or of the latter part of Isaiah's Prophecy, are, they say, merely matters of evidence, to be decided solely on historical and critical grounds, and do not involve any cardinal truth of revelation. It would, therefore, be opposed to the whole spirit of Christianity, and of the age, for any ecclesiastical court virtually to decree that any scholar under its jurisdiction who may enter upon such studies, however honestly and devoutly, must do so with a sword of ecclesiastical censure hanging over his head, ready to descend the moment he reaches a conclusion differing in any respect from that reached by the scholars of the Church who have preceded him, though with greatly inferior means and facilities for arriving at truth. This course of reasoning is certainly cogent, if not unanswerable.

BRAZIL bids fair to be the next South American Republic to be shaken to its centre by civil war. As it was for a time with Chili, so now in regard to Brazil, it is difficult to get a reliable view of the situation. A recent special to the New York *Herald*, from Rio Janeiro, represents the action of President Fonseca as generally approved in that city. But as Janeiro is in the hands of the President—now a self-constituted Dictator—and as martial law has been proclaimed, the despatches from that city may well be taken with a large pinch of salt. In ancient Rome a patriotic citizen was sometimes made dictator for the salvation of the Republic, with good results, but it is to be feared that Cincinnatuses are scarce in South American republics. Dictator Fonseca, moreover, seems to lack the very essential qualification of a call from the people to that high office. In his manifesto he launches serious charges of conspiracy and treason against the members of the late Congress, and other alleged enemies of the Republic, assumes full responsibility for the dissolution of Congress and assumption of arbitrary power, and "guarantees free elections, a constitutional government, with peace and good order." There will be, he declares, no alteration of existing laws, except, as he significantly adds, in cases