

looks, in the first place, very like a confession of defeat before the tribunal of the national judgment and conscience. But, not to insist on that point, in what position would the Government and Parliament be placed if it should, in consequence of such threat, refrain from passing and putting into operation a measure which had been an issue in more than one election, and to which they were committed by the popular mandate. Such a course would be a distinct surrender to violence and an admission before the world that the will of the majority was no longer supreme in the council of the nation, but that any legislative proposal could be at any time defeated by a comparatively small minority sufficiently determined and ready to resort to violence. Then, again, suppose the Home-Rule Bill withdrawn in view of the threatened forcible resistance, what would be the state of affairs in Ireland after the event? What could be expected from the great majority of Irishmen, who had seen themselves denied what they had so long and earnestly demanded as an act of justice and conciliation, after their claim had been conceded by the constitutional law-makers of the nation, under a threat of rebellion made by a comparatively small section of the population? Could the state of Ireland ever after be better than one in which all the bitterest passions of civil war were perpetually fermenting.

The speech of Mr. Meredith at the Young Conservatives' banquet illustrated the fact that the functions of the local Government are mainly administrative and municipal. Had there been really any broad question of political principle separating the two parties in the Ontario Legislature, he would have no doubt made it clear and based his appeal to his followers upon it. It is noteworthy that though the leader of the Opposition, naturally enough we suppose, chided some of those who vote as Conservatives in Dominion politics for not adhering more faithfully to the party in provincial elections, he did not discuss the tariff or any other of the questions which are most prominent at Ottawa. The omission is, indeed, somewhat noteworthy, and suggests the question whether Mr. Meredith is himself an ardent protectionist. His comments on the burning question of Mr. McCarthy's defection were worthy of his well known liberality of mind, and under the circumstances were courageous. There can be no doubt that in touching upon the tendency to increase the number of those who live at the expense of the country he put his finger upon a vulnerable spot in Mr. Mowat's administration. Mr. Meredith's claim of credit, on behalf of his party, for whatever of liberal and progressive legislation has been had in the Province under the present regime, is doubtless to a considerable extent just, and shows that, an Opposition

even when small in numbers, can do much to promote good government. Notwithstanding the popular belief in Sir. Oliver's immaculateness, the matters to which the Opposition leader referred show that there is yet room for improvement in the methods and morals of the Administration.

One of the most interesting and profitable features of the World's Fair, at Chicago, will be the meeting of the Congress Auxiliary which will attract students of historical and political science from the Continent and Europe. It is to open the discussions on questions of Suffrage and Government in the Art Institute during the week commencing August 7th. It is the aim of the Congress to solicit such papers and encourage such discussions "as will present as nearly as possible a review of human experience and a consideration of pending questions in as logical and systematic a manner as circumstances will permit." It is intended also to present a comparison between the Parliamentary system and Congressional Government, with a special reference to the effects of these systems upon the independence of the judiciary and the efficiency of administration generally. The eminent historical and political writer, Dr. Von Holst, is to open the Congress with an address on the historical phase of the subject, and a Canadian, Dr. Bourinot, is to follow with another from the point of view of a political student who has given special study to the practical aspects of this deeply interesting subject. We congratulate our Canadian author on the splendid opportunity that has been offered him of presenting to a great critical audience his matured thoughts and opinions on English institutions, as worked out in the Dominion. All these addresses are to be published in handsome form and widely circulated by the authorities of the Exhibition, and must have excellent results everywhere by disseminating important information on momentous questions of the day, and suggesting remedies and improvements in Government, especially among our neighbors, who are commencing to agitate radical changes in their own constitution.

The Bill which has been introduced in the Ontario Legislature by the Provincial Secretary for the prevention of cruelty to children and their better protection from bad treatment or neglect is one which will need to be carefully considered and wisely administered, but it is, nevertheless, a movement in the right direction. It cannot be doubted that even in this happy land and despite the best efforts of the philanthropic societies, there are many children who are daily subjected to cruelties such as, if understood and duly considered, would kindle indignation and shame in every humane bosom. To create a body of public officers empowered to look after and deal with such cases will be a boon to hun-

dreds of the defenceless victims of ignorance, selfishness, or greed on the part of worthless parents as well as of others. The most novel and important clauses of the Bill are those which provide for the permanent care and training of those children who, from any cause, are suffering physically or morally for the want of such oversight. To give power, as it is now proposed to do, to the properly constituted authority, to take a child out of the custody of any person who has proved himself unfit or unworthy to have it, and to place such child in charge of some one who can be trusted, will be to supply what has long been a cruel and glaring deficiency in our legislation. We have not yet had an opportunity to acquaint ourselves with the details of the proposed legislation. It is very likely that these details may need to be modified and improved in Committee. But the general principle of the measure is one which has long seemed to us desirable and which we have frequently advocated. When Christian communities shall have learned to take care of the children the adults may be trusted in large measure to take care of themselves, and society will be the gainer to a degree which is practically unlimited.

The most important changes are not always those which come with observation. The recent despatches from Ottawa to the effect that Major General Herbert has set out for England to advise with the Imperial authorities with regard to the Esquimalt fortifications and other military arrangements in British Columbia remind us that a change which may be fraught with most important consequences took place almost without notice during the recent Parliamentary session at Ottawa. We refer to the quiet transfer of authority from the Minister of Militia to the British Major-General commanding the military forces in Canada, for the new arrangement seems to have almost amounted to this. Why has this change been made? Was it at the suggestion of the Government or of the General? Was any communication received from England in regard to the matter? Did the Minister of Militia and Defence actually say, the other day, as reported by the Ottawa Correspondent of the Mail, "It seems to me absurd that it should be said that we are going to construct coast defences at Esquimalt against the United States, when there is merely an imaginary boundary between the Dominion and the United States running across the continent west of the great lakes, which is left unprotected." The absurdity is apparent enough but the remark is a strange one to be made by the very minister in whose department the business belongs and who should, if any one, be cognizant of the causes and purposes of the whole affair. If the defences are being constructed with reference to any nation in particular it is probably Russia rather than the United States. But let that pass. If the manage-