

irresponsible advisers whose activity, even if they are personally upright, gives umbrage and begets mistrust. Perhaps the embroglio about the Readers, to which reference was just made, may incline the ear of the Government to counsels of moderation.

It has been alleged in the course of the discussion that the Council of Instruction was a scene of discord and of wrangling. Inquiry, it is believed, will show that this is true with reference to the conduct of one of the members only. Dr. Ryerson had perhaps made up his mind that he would be the last Chief Superintendent. At all events he did his best to wreck the council, and his behaviour to some of his colleagues at last was such as is seldom witnessed in any assembly in which the rules of public business or of social decency are acknowledged. The Government not only failed to control him but virtually abetted him, not without an eye perhaps to his supposed command of the Methodist vote. Among the other members, though they represented different creeds and interests, perfect harmony prevailed, and questions exactly similar to some which under the political system have set the Province in a blaze were settled quietly as well as equitably and without an angry word.

BRITISH COLUMBIA, it is announced, meditates stringent legislation for the exclusion of Chinese. The Chinese are heathens, though not incorrigible heathens as somebody at the Toronto Trades Congress averred, and they are in some points far below the Christian standard of morality, owing perhaps less to their innate depravity than to the desperate pressure of a swarming population on the means of subsistence. They bring with them the detestable habit of opium-smoking, and the whole world over which they wander is thus made to suffer for the fell necessities of Anglo-Indian finance. Politically they are harmless, which is a good deal more than can be said of some immigrants whom nobody proposes to exclude. But let us sweep hypocrisy aside; it is not the heathenism of the Chinese nor their immorality, it is their industry which is dreaded and which forms the real motive of those who agitate for their exclusion here as in the United States. But the interest of the community points the other way; it points to the free admission of all good workers who without State aid can find their way hither and who, when here, obey the law. There are certain branches of industry in which the Chinese excel. The question before us, however, is whether British Columbia shall be allowed by her local legislature to close the labour market of the whole Dominion against a certain kind of labour. This it is practically that she is going to do; for the ports of the United States are shut against the Chinese, and they will not come round Cape Horn. Withdrawal of State aid from artisan immigration is one thing; industrial protection by means of exclusion-laws, whether undisguised, or masked by moral pretences, is another.

THE BYSTANDER said the other day, perhaps in rather an impious mood, that a Governor-General would show himself a great man, or something like one, if he could abstain from using the artificial authority of his rank and station on the stump for the purpose of influencing destinies which he would not share. The *Mail*, rather shocked, asks whether by the Governor-General's being a great man it is meant that he is not to be a man at all, but a stick or a bootjack. What do we read in the *Mail* itself? We read that "in the Governor-General's speech at the opening of Parliament, no private views of His Excellency will be expressed, and even the language will not be his own." Now on this occasion His Excellency is a man unquestionably, because, till the anthropophone shall have been invented, nothing but a man will be able to read a speech; but the stick or the bootjack would perhaps have the advantage in point of moral dignity, inasmuch as neither of them could be compelled to deliver, as its own, an address of which it had not written a word, and with the contents of which it might not agree. We have had a Lieut.-Governor recommending a policy from the Throne and afterwards, the Ministry having been changed, congratulating the Legislature on its reversal. We have had a Free Trader used as the speaking trumpet of Protection. Lord Lansdowne can scarcely have believed that the account given by his lips of the causes of commercial depression was in exact accordance with the facts. Surely this comedy might be discontinued, and the time might be saved which is now spent in aimless wrangling over the Address. Politics must differ strangely from all the other business of life if in them any good can be done by undisguised, conscious, and avowed humbug. The Queen evades, at all events, the personal absurdity by having her speeches always read by Commission.

WHEN the Suez canal was opened and the route to India changed, the intervention of England in Egypt became a mere question of time. Nor, having intervened, is it possible that she should ever completely withdraw,

whether her control is exercised in the way of downright annexation or under some diplomatic guise. To establish a national government in Egypt is impossible, for the simple reason that there is no such a thing as an Egyptian nation. There is nothing but the rotten remnant of a conquering horde, with a mercenary and turbulent soldiery, exercising a dominion of plunder over an abject and helpless peasantry. The Fellaheen, who till the soil, and who alone are not robbers or extortioners, are absolutely destitute of political spirit and of anything like the power of self-government; to frame a polity out of such materials would be about as easy as it would be to frame it out of the mud of the Nile. If the country were left to itself empire would be divided between military anarchy and the Jews. On the other hand, the position of England is extremely difficult. France watches her movements with ill-suppressed jealousy, and will infallibly try to disturb any settlement which she may make. This would almost certainly preclude the best settlement of all, the rule of a good pro-consul from British India under a joint protectorate of the Powers. And now the host of the False Prophet which, for some time, hovered like a cloud over Upper Egypt, and was expected, like a cloud to disperse, has suddenly assumed both solidity and most formidable dimensions. It will be remembered that at Tel-el-kebir, the only troops in the Egyptian army which made a stand were some black regiments from the Soudan. These soldiers were recent converts to Mahometanism, burning with the zeal of neophytes; and they were the advanced guard of a large mass of half-savage population, over which Islam has, of late, been spreading. The False Prophet will probably collapse, as the leaders of hordes usually do, for want of a commissariat and of the other sinews of war. But this New India evidently has its Sikhs, and England, already "staggering beneath the too vast orb of her fate," seems about to receive a heavy addition to her burden. To call in Turkey is to call in the very worst of barbarism, and if this is done the wheel of calamity will soon come again full circle.

BISMARCK'S Machiavellism has, perhaps, been exaggerated. There are people who see his malign influence everywhere, as there are people who see everywhere the malign influence of Russia. But it is impossible that he should not rejoice over an embroilment between France and any other great Power. For himself, he is far too wise and too much a man of his own century to covet any distant dependency. He has read and understands the history of the delusion which styles itself Empire. It must be with the keenest pleasure that he notices the progress of French marauding in Tunis, Madagascar, Cochin China; and sees his arch-enemy dissipating her force in wild enterprises, and planting at the ends of the earth outposts of ambition, which, if ever she tries to take her revenge on Germany, will be so many points of strategical weakness. Military ambition is too deeply rooted in the breast of France to be killed even by so nipping a frost as Sedan. No one who is acquainted with French literature can fail to be impressed with the intensity of the passion, which glows in the pages of a French historian like Martin as fiercely as in those of any Chauvinist pamphleteer. Sismondi's history, though the best, is unpopular and almost hated because it is moderate and moral. In the foreign policy of France there is, as yet, no change; her restless spirit of aggrandizement has only sought what she believes to be a safer field. At home she is doing better. It was supposed that Gambetta's death would be followed by chaos. He has been now dead a year, yet chaos has not come. On the contrary affairs look more settled. The fear of a dictatorship having been removed, the Assembly seems more willing to support, at least to abstain from overturning, the Government, and even to be inclined to sanction some of the measures to which it refused its consent when they were proposed by Gambetta, and were suspected of being devised in the interest of his ambition. The substitution of *scrutin de liste* for *scrutin d'arrondissement*—in other words the delocalization of elections by the enlargement of the electoral districts was refused, while it was supposed that the dreaded hand would frame the ticket: it now seems more likely to be accepted. There are reasons, however, against this change apart from the manoeuvres of Gambetta. Parochialism may be bad in politics, but wire-pulling is a great deal worse; and you will make the parochial politician large-minded much more easily than you will make the wire-puller honest.

THE meteoric light of Mr. Henry George after flaming across the economic sky, seems now to be approaching extinction. The rupture between him and his friends the Land Leaguers, which destiny evidently had in store, has come. On the general principle of confiscation without compensation Mr. George and the Land Leaguers are agreed; but the Land Leaguer wants to confiscate the property of his landlord for his own benefit, while Mr. George wants to confiscate all landed property for the benefit of