

Public Schools. Parents are not only exhorted, but even "charged by all the authority" the prelates possess, to "defend their children, during the whole period of infancy and boyhood, from the dangers of a merely secular education."

So far all is plain. The Roman Catholic Hierarchy not only warn their people against patronizing the secular schools, but enjoin upon them to establish schools peculiar to themselves, "truly Catholic and Christian," and "by no means inferior to the Public Schools," and to send their children, under ordinary circumstances, only to these schools. And just here the crucial question emerges. "In a republic," says the *Christian Union*, "the majority are bound to respect the sentiments of the minority; especially when it is so large a minority as are the Roman Catholic populations of the United States." Have then the Protestant majority any right to compel the Roman Catholic minority to pay taxes for the support of schools to which they cannot conscientiously send their children to be educated, to say nothing of requiring them to put their children into them? To the first question the answer given is, that bachelors, spinsters, childless couples, etc., might urge the same objection to tax-paying, and that "the gist of the whole matter lies in the answer to the question, whether a system of public schools fosters the material and moral interests of a country." The answer is, it may be admitted, hardly conclusive to a Protestant, and must be very unsatisfactory to a Roman Catholic mind. The parallelism suggested is incomplete, as the Roman Catholic parents are, by hypothesis, bound also to provide schools for the education of their own children. The devout Catholic might well contend too, that these religious schools foster, still better than the secular, the material and moral interests of the country. The answer quoted is, however, that of the contributor. The Editor furnishes one entirely different, and one which, if correct, settles the question. He contends that as a matter of fact, the hostility to the public schools is not that of the Roman Catholic laity, but that of the prelates only; that the decrees are the expression, not of American Roman Catholicism, but of Italian Ecclesiasticism; that the American Roman Catholic parent, as a rule, prefers the public to the parochial school; that more than once the laity have, in the face of clerical persuasions, and even absolute commands, voted to sustain the public schools; and that to-day, in New York City and Brooklyn, a majority of the Roman Catholic children are to be found in the public schools. If the fact be so, the conclusion is clear and irresistible.

As the date fixed for the Republican Convention draws near the uncertainty in respect to the nominees of the party seems to increase rather than diminish. For a long time it seemed almost certain that the Blainites would carry their point and secure the renomination of the defeated leader of the last campaign, in spite of his Florence letter. His subsequent declarations seem, however, to make it almost as certain as words can do that Mr. Blaine was sincere in his announced resolve not to be again a candidate. From the fact that comparatively few delegates of the party have been positively instructed to vote for him, and the further fact that many are declaring that his nomination would be the sure precursor of defeat, it is now becoming probable that he may be taken at his word. The other candidates are numerous, and the choice between them full of uncertainty. It is indeed quite possible that the result of the Convention may be a surprise, as has sometimes happened before, and that, to use a favourite metaphor of the politicians, some "dark horse" may win. So far, however, as there are grounds for any opinion, in the least better than a guess, the chances seem to be divided between three, Depew, Sherman, Gresham, and in that order. It is not unlikely that many of the more discerning of the party may have concluded privately that it matters little so far as the issue of the impending contest is concerned which is chosen, as the Democrats with their one strong candidate are sure to win. But of course it would never do to let the victory go by default, and in view of the future, the party must make the best selection, and the best fight possible.

"It is an unpleasant reflection that what is sometimes termed the miscarriage of justice is not unfrequently the triumph of law." Such is the suggestive remark with which Judge Barrett begins an interesting article in the *May Forum* on "Miscarriages of Justice." We are not sure that his reasonings will satisfy the ordinary lay mind that it is wholly unreasonable to require of the judicial machinery, if not "the absolute righting of wrongs," and the "ideal punishment of crime," at least such approach to it that mere legal technicalities should not be permitted in cases of "special atrocity," and indisputable evidence, to "obstruct the sword of justice." Judge Barrett shows that in the United States law is cheap, and the higher

courts accessible to all. The long and vexatious delays so much complained of are, he contends, the result not so much of blocked calendars as of the operation of the rule that where, as usually happens, several briefs are held by a great advocate, and two or more of the causes are on the calendar, those at which he cannot be present are held over subject to his engagement. Judge Barrett advocates doing away with the rule and giving the struggling barristers a chance, but has been unable to get any of his brethren who are in active practice to agree with him. The idea that inferiority in judges results from the elective system is hardly, he thinks, borne out by experience. The people have just as good judges as they are willing to pay for. They want cheap judges and they get them. If the people want the best, they must pay for it. Tenure he regards as a much more important factor. Life tenure is not, he thinks, in entire accord with the spirit of republican institutions. The most upright judge may stand in need too, of a certain kind of corrective discipline, which is given by the consciousness that the time is coming when the people will require an account of his stewardship, and the shaking up consequent upon the periodical contact, at long intervals, with the people. A system under which the judge "sums up," for or against a prisoner would not be tolerated in the States, but the jury should be able to look to the judge for impartial guidance, in matters of law, relevancy, etc. The most radical innovation approved by the article is a constitutional amendment, making a vote of nine jurors, when approved by the court, equivalent to unanimity. "Weak and ignorant juries are apt enough to agree," but the more intelligent and conscientious the twelve men, the more rare the chance of absolute unanimity.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

THE gentle admonition given by Lord Lansdowne to the Imperial Federation agitators was most timely, and will doubtless have the desired effect. The rebuke could have been administered by no one so effectively as by him. A moderate Conservative himself, and representing a decidedly Tory Government both in England and Canada, his condemnation comes with a force that cannot be withstood. His lordship has a remarkable power of neat and clear expression, and his sound judgment and common sense eminently fitted him for the office which he has given up, and that which he is about to fill. His successor will have difficulty in rivalling his five years' administration in this country without a fault.

The late Imperial Federation meeting in Toronto was excusable. It was large, representative, and enthusiastic, and gave the lie to the assertion that the people of Ontario would consent to Commercial Union with the States. But to go further—to ask Great Britain to peril her world-wide commerce, which alone enables her to find food for her people, would be an act of folly. English protectionists form a mere handful of the population. No politician known to fame—great land holder or Tory dyed-in-the-wool—would propose to levy preferential duties for the benefit of the colonies. Yet such preference is universally alleged by its advocates to be a condition precedent to Imperial Federation. These gentlemen, probably, do not see the dilemma in which they place themselves. It is clear that if Conservatives allege that Canada cannot prosper without a preference in British markets, and cannot get it, they give an opening for the Commercial Unionists.

If all civilized peoples were to become free traders, the main difficulties in the way of Imperial Federation would disappear. But that event is apparently far off. During forty years of freedom from customs Britain has not made a single convert. The fact is not creditable to the intelligence of the race, but it exists. There may be a change sooner than any one now anticipates. But who can foretell other changes which may arise to render Britain less an Imperial power than she is at present. An aristocracy is always ready for foreign war; it diverts attention from home affairs; the commercial middle classes favour an Imperial policy to extend their trade; but who shall predict what the proletariat—fast becoming the rulers of Britain—will make of the colonial empire? The British workman is not a coward, he has won all England's battles of the last four hundred years. And he is not sparing of his cash for a worthy object. But a long and expensive war against a European combination, stoppage of food supplies, and of foreign demand for manufactures, might make the British wage-earner anxious to escape from complications arising from a widely scattered confederation of states. It is also possible that when Canada's five millions have become fifty, and Australia's three have risen to thirty millions, they may be unwilling to involve themselves in European quarrels.

On the other hand the growth of popular government as distinguished from monarchical will unquestionably cause wars to be less frequent. Indi-