

individual in favour of the party whose policy commends itself to his judgment. But even the speech of Sir Charles Tupper, to say nothing of the incidents of the late election, cannot fail to convince every elector who will consider the subject dispassionately, that it is not in the interests of pure politics or good government that corporations so dependent upon Government favour and so related to the general public as railway companies, should be permitted to interfere actively in party contests. Another electoral reform suggested by this topic should, we think, commend itself now, if never before, to the judgment of broad-minded men of either party. We refer to what is popularly known as the "one man, one vote" system, combined with a strict residential qualification. It surely cannot be deemed wise or fair that those Canadians who have taken up their residence in the United States, and are to all intents and purposes citizens of that Republic, should be brought in by hundreds and thousands on polling day to turn, it may be, the scale in favour of one candidate or the other. Were the question of annexation directly in issue, it is quite conceivable that such a vote might determine the destiny of the country. Of course, we do not forget that unusual facilities for the introduction of these non-resident voters were in this instance afforded by the length of time that had elapsed since the revision of the lists. We do not suppose, either, that many Canadians are prepared to defend, on principle, an arrangement which gives to one citizen who may happen to have his property distributed in half-a-dozen different localities, as many votes; while his neighbour, whose possessions are equally large and equally productive industrially, has but one, because his property happens to be concentrated in one locality. The earlier sessions of a new Parliament, when no party contest is in view, are probably the best times for bringing about such reforms.

THE indications are, seemingly, that the fierce struggle of parties which convulsed the country for a few weeks is to be followed by a series of contests in the courts. That bribery on a large scale was made use of by the more unscrupulous partisans on both sides, it is, unhappily, impossible to doubt. That being the case, it is we suppose desirable that the stringent provisions of the law should be brought into requisition, and the work of exposure and punishment be done as thoroughly as possible. In this, as in every other sphere, the effect of a penalty depends quite as much upon its certainty as upon its severity. The spectacle of protests being entered by the dozen against this and that member of Parliament, on the ground that his election was secured by bribery or some other form of corruption, is not a pleasant one. It is far from favourable in its effects upon our political reputation. Hence many are disposed to think it better to assume that the one party is as bad as the other, that their chances of gain or loss are about equal, and that it would, therefore, be better to accept the returns as they are made, thus saving the great cost and scandal of a series of trials in the courts. But it is probable that many of those who resorted more or less openly to bribery or intimidation, relied on that very disposition for impunity. Should the wrong-doers be permitted to go scot free this time, it is easy to foresee what would follow at the next election. The law would be regarded as a dead letter; the unprincipled canvasser would redouble his dishonest devices, and we should have a carnival of corruption. It is therefore to be hoped that every citizen to whom a case of corruption or fraud of any kind has become known will make it a matter of conscience to bring the offence to light and secure the punishment of the offender. The operation of the present law has wrought improvement in many respects. The closing of the saloons gives us quietness instead of disgraceful brawls. The transfer of the trial from a partisan committee of the House, to an impartial court of justice, is in itself a grand reform. However strongly and justly we may denounce the bribery, personation and trickery that still take place, there can be no doubt that a great change for the better has been wrought. But there is great need that the moral sense of the people should be further educated. Too many are even yet ready to buy or sell the franchise and their manhood for a few dollars, and to do it unblushingly. The election court judges are the best school-masters for such persons. But their educational work would be much more effective if they could uniformly make use of their power to imprison every man clearly proved guilty of either buying or selling a vote, or the promise of one. The fine is a most unequal penalty. To the man of means, or one who has the party funds at his

back, it is a bagatelle. What is still more important, it does not carry with it the stigma of criminality, as does a term of imprisonment, however short. By all means let the law courts do their educational work and do it thoroughly.

THERE is now good reason to hope that the vexatious Behring's Sea dispute may soon be settled by the fair and sensible method of arbitration. Lord Salisbury's latest despatch, replying to that of Mr. Blaine in December, so far accepts the terms of reference proposed by Mr. Blaine that further hesitation or delay on the part of the latter seems improbable. In the despatch referred to the United States Secretary of State proposed six distinct questions for reference to the arbitrators. Lord Salisbury takes exception only to clauses in two of them. The first of these clauses is that part of Mr. Blaine's third question which asks "what rights, if any, in the Behring Sea, were given or conceded to Great Britain by Russia in the Treaty of 1825?" Lord Salisbury says, in effect, that Great Britain claims no rights of any kind so derived, as she expressly maintains that Russia did not possess any rights in the premises, therefore could confer none. Mr. Blaine can, therefore, hardly insist on retaining that question as one of the points of reference. The only conceivable object he could have in doing so would be because of its supposed bearing upon the question of the competence of Russia to cede to the United States some special jurisdiction, but this point comes up distinctly in connection with the fifth question. Moreover, Great Britain is willing to grant that any rights of jurisdiction which Russia had ever possessed in the Behring Sea passed unimpaired to the United States with the cession of Alaska. Difficulty is, perhaps, more likely to arise in connection with the fifth question, which as proposed by Mr. Blaine reads as follows:—

What are now the rights of the United States as to the fur seal fisheries in the waters of the Behring Sea, outside of the ordinary territorial limits, whether such rights grow out of the cession by Russia of any special rights or jurisdiction held by her in such fisheries or in the waters of the Behring Sea, or out of the ownership of the breeding islands and the habits of the seals in resorting thither and rearing their young thereon, and going out from the islands for food, or out of any other fact or incident connected with the relation of those seal fisheries to the territorial possessions of the United States?

Lord Salisbury is quite willing to have the direct question as to the rights of the United States in the matter of the fur seal fisheries referred to arbitration, but takes exception to the modifying clause which appears to assume that special rights in waters outside of the ordinary territorial limits could grow out of the ownership of the breeding islands, and the habits of the seals resorting to them. The objection evidently is that the fact of submitting such a question to arbitration would be equivalent to an admission that the principle involved is not already clearly established in international law. If it be true, as stated in the Washington correspondence of the *New York Herald*, that the diplomats at Washington are agreed that Lord Salisbury's point is well taken, that to submit to arbitration anything already clearly settled in the unwritten code of nations would be to reduce international law to chaos, and that other nations would refuse to accept any new judgment on such a matter, it is not likely that Mr. Blaine will insist on the retention of the objectionable clause. It is, it must be admitted, somewhat difficult to reconcile either the existence of the clause to which Lord Salisbury objects, or his objections thereto, with the statement in the earlier part of his despatch to the effect that the advisers of the President do not "rely as a justification for the seizure of British ships in the open sea upon the contention that the interests of the seal fisheries give to the United States Government any right for that purpose which, according to international law, it would not otherwise possess." As to the rest, Lord Salisbury thinks that the sixth question, relating to the establishment of a close season for seal fishing, as it presupposes a decision of the main questions adverse to the United States' contention, would more fitly form the subject of a separate reference. He also notes the omission of any provision for reference to the arbitrators of the question of damages due to those who have been injured by the action of the United States cruisers. But if an agreement is reached on other points it is scarcely conceivable that serious difficulties can arise out of these.

WE are indebted to both the Dominion and Ontario Governments for a number of reports from various departments of the public service. To some of these we

may refer more particularly in future numbers. Amongst them all none is clothed with a deeper interest, although it is a melancholy one, than that of the Inspector of Prisons and Public Charities for the Province of Ontario. That before us is the Twenty-third Annual Report, and is for the year ending 30th September, 1890. Table No. 1, showing the movements of the entire asylum population during the year, presents at a glance many facts and suggests many questions of deep interest. We find for instance that no less than 669 patients were admitted into the four asylums for the insane during the year; making a present total of 3,850 lunatics. As only 259 were discharged during the year it is evident that either the numbers of the insane are increasing sadly out of proportion to the increase of population, or that these unfortunates are being sent in larger numbers than hitherto to the asylums. The total increase of 410 is, it will be seen, about twelve per cent. of 3,181, the number in the asylums at the beginning of the year. Is lunacy increasing at so rapid a rate? If so what are the causes? The number discharged as cured during the year was 172, or a little less than one-fourth of the total number admitted. There were in all discharged 259, escaped 24, died 209, a total of 492, or less by 177 than the total number admitted. This rate of increase must soon overtax the capacity of the asylums. A feeling which is something more than mere curiosity is excited by the simple statement that no less than 24, all males, have escaped from the four institutions during the year. What became of these poor creatures, one longs to know, though we suppose the information could hardly be expected in an official volume of this kind. The number of female lunatics exceeds that of males by 49, or about thirteen per cent., a fact which suggests many enquiries. On the whole, though Ontario is justly somewhat proud of her charitable institutions, her asylums for the insane among the number, it would not be difficult to find even in the statistics evidence that there is room for improvements. A crucial test of the excellence of the system and its administration would be found in a comparison of the percentage of cures effected with that in the best institutions in other countries which are in the van in medical science.

MOST Canadians are no doubt watching with sympathetic interest the progress of the federation movement amongst our Australian fellow colonists. Any reports yet to hand concerning the results reached thus far are meagre and unsatisfactory. But it is both necessary and wise to "make haste slowly" in such matters, and we dare say a good deal of time will be consumed before a definite result is reached. No doubt the negotiations, if successful, will go forward somewhat on the lines of the resolution moved by Sir Henry Parkes, soon after the assembling of the Convention. This motion was to the effect that a Federal Parliament be established, composed of a Senate and House of Representatives, that free trade be adopted throughout the federation, that authority to impose customs duties be vested in the Federal Government and in Parliament, and that the military and naval defence be entrusted to federal forces under one command. Subsequent reports indicated that the protected manufacturing interests in some of the colonies were up in arms against the free trade proposition. This is natural enough, but it can hardly be possible that such objections can prevail. A Confederation with hostile tariffs separating its members would be almost, or quite, a contradiction in terms. If the union is consummated it can only be by the delegates taking Sir Henry Parkes' advice and, losing sight as far as possible of local interests, treating federal questions in a broad and liberal spirit. The framers of the new nationality will have the great advantage of having before them the history of the forming and working of the Canadian Confederation as a guide in the way both of example and of warning. They will doubtless find in it much more to imitate than to avoid. They will, perhaps, do well to seek some better mode of adjusting the financial arrangements between the central and local governments than our subsidy plan. The financial system is probably the weakest and most dangerous spot in our federal system, though it is by no means easy to devise a better plan, especially if the people happen to have an inveterate prejudice against direct taxation. We cordially hope for the speedy consummation and complete success of Australian federation.

THE announcement that the British and French Governments have at length agreed upon a basis for the reference of the Newfoundland dispute to arbitration is