

whether it would have the same healing effect as the measure which has been proposed in these columns. It would not operate as an antidote by way of vaccination to the Irish craving for nationality. A Grand Committee of the Irish members, sitting during the recess for Irish private bill legislation in Dublin, might operate in that way, and it would be a visible and substantial proof that in all matters really local Ireland enjoyed local legislation. The character of the Irish Celt requires something which strikes the sense, and it is just to him to say that he would probably have been much more loyal if he had been allowed to see his rulers. A Grand Committee of Irish members, sitting in College Green, would give Dublin for the time something of the aspect of a political capital. The experiment, as we said before, would be perfectly safe, inasmuch as its course might any year be arrested, without any special enactment, by the simple omission of Parliament to reappoint the committee. It is feared that there might be jobbery in College Green, as there has been with regard to the Galway Packet Contract and other Irish matters in Parliament: very likely there would; but this, at worst, would be a secondary evil, and if it went to great lengths, Westminster might revise the reports of the committee in College Green.

A VERY trustworthy correspondent writes to us, we are sorry to say, from Ireland, that in his opinion the country is on the verge of anarchy, and there will be bloodshed before long. If blood is shed, it will be due in no small measure to the inflammatory appeals of the most highly religious of statesmen. The last of these is to the Irish Protestants, whom Mr. Gladstone wishes to lure into a repetition of the Volunteer movement in 1772, or of that of the United Irishmen in 1796. To the minds of the genuine Protestants the torch of his incendiarism will be applied in vain. They know how completely the case is changed. In his present allies, the Nationalists, he has, it is true, the counterparts of Wolfe Tone, Emmet, and Napper Tandy; but those men were not Protestants, they were Revolutionary Freethinkers, like the French Jacobins, to whom they had recourse for aid in Irish rebellion. Mr. Gladstone sinks deeper with every convulsive effort that he makes.

THE English are disgusted with the waste of time in the debate on the Address, and some of them propose as a remedy, curiously enough, the payment of members. They fancy that members, who were receiving public pay, would be ashamed thus to fritter away the public time. Evidently they have not yet made a thorough study of American or Canadian legislatures. The non-payment of members, which prevents politics from becoming the trade of adventurers of the worst class, is the only conservative institution, of any practical efficacy, which the English now retain. They had better not tamper with it, even in jest.

THE last instalment of the Greville Memoirs is correctly described by its title, "A Journal of the Reign of Queen Victoria, 1852-1860" [New York: D. Appleton and Co.]. There is little in it of the personal matter and anecdote for which we usually look in Memoirs. There are portraits of Lady Ashburton, the friend of Carlyle, of Princess Lieven, of Rogers, and of Lord Ellesmere, better known as Lord Francis Egerton—the last drawn by the loving hand of a kinsman. There are interesting records of personal intercourse with important people, especially with the Emperor of the French, whose guest the diarist was. There are anecdotes, including some of the Queen and some of Lord Raglan, who, it seems, from old Peninsular habit, in the Crimean War was always embarrassing his staff by speaking of the enemy as "the French." There are glimpses behind the scenes, such as Lord Clarendon's account of the Cabinet, "where one half of them seem to be almost always asleep, the first to be off being Lansdowne, closely followed by Palmerston and Charles Wood." But in the main the book is a history in the form of a diary, with the comments of the diarist. The history embraces the formation and fall of the Coalition Government under Lord Aberdeen, the Crimean War, the reign, as it may truly be called, of Palmerston, and the Indian Mutiny. The recorder and critic is a thoroughly clear-sighted, cool-headed, and sagacious man of the world, not only the intimate friend but the frequent adviser of statesmen, and one who might probably have been a statesman himself if he had not been a man of pleasure. His opinions are those of a Liberal Conservative, friendly to all practical reforms and measures of justice, but shrinking from revolutionary change. His intimacies are mainly with the Whigs, and his preference is for such politicians as Lord Clarendon and Sir George Lewis, but he is neutral enough to see the cards in both hands, and to judge both sides fairly. He paints Palmerston, Russell, Derby, and the rest of the group as they were, occasionally pronouncing severe judgments, yet

evidently setting down nothing in malice, and he takes the measure alike of Disraeli and of Gladstone. He is not only a man of the world, but a man of the turf, and views the rivalries of politicians somewhat as he would a race, not from a high moral point of view, yet always by the standard of honour. He leaves his diary as it is written, and where his judgment has been falsified or modified by subsequent events, allows this to be seen, so that a fair estimate of his sagacity may be formed. It is rarely that he is much misled, but, on the other hand, he is too cautious often to venture on prediction. His general view of the tendency of things is gloomy; "progress" seems to him progress towards disaster. It consoles him, he says, for growing old, "that he will not see the confusion in which this well-ordered state is likely to be involved, the period of peril and suffering it will have to go through, and the reaction which will restore order and tranquillity at the expense of that temperate and rational freedom which we alone, of all the nations of the earth, are in possession of." The moral of the book, if we do not misread it, is the inevitable effect of Party upon public character and government. It is, at any rate, a good lesson in politics, as well as a valuable addition to the materials for a history of the time.

AN American correspondent, for whose opinion every one has the highest respect, tells us that we are mistaken in suggesting that one cause of the decline of statesmanlike leadership, of which an American journal complains, may be the growing ascendancy of stump oratory over statesmanship. He says that the ascendancy of stump oratory is not growing but decreasing, and that no President would think of choosing stump orators as the members of his Cabinet. The exclusion of the members of the Executive Government from the Legislature has, at least, the happy effect of making administrative ability, not oratory, the title to those appointments. But, to the ordinary observer of American politics, it seems that stump oratory, by which we mean all oratory which is not deliberative, is pretty dominant; that the machinery of public life is accommodated to it; that even the compass of the human voice has been enlarged to meet its requirements in mass meetings and convention wigwams. However, with regard to his own country, our correspondent may see deeper than we do. With regard to Canada or England, there can, unhappily, be no question. In England the masses, to whom political power has now been transferred, cannot be led by any one who will not excite and amuse them on platforms, and they can be led by any one who will, however destitute he may be both of character and wisdom. Lord Randolph Churchill is absolutely nothing but a stump speaker. Nor is there any doubt as to the fatal draughts which the platform makes on the energies of public men, or as to its interference with their powers of calm reflection and steady forecast.

THE Directors of the British America Assurance Company were able to present a very satisfactory report at their annual meeting on Wednesday. It is true the profits in the Marine Department were affected by the severe storms that prevailed last year; but this is a branch of the business that frequently so suffers for several years consecutively, and yet shows a profit on an average of years. The Fire Branch, however, showed a fair profit; and in result the assets have been increased about \$50,000 (the actual gain added to net surplus being \$54,864). A noteworthy feature of the accounts is a reduction of three and a-half per cent. in the ratio of expenses: the high character of the securities owned by the Company (a list of which is published) as evidenced by their present market value of an average of twenty per cent. premium on \$756,300, is also another fact that speaks extremely well for the management.

THE Western Assurance Company have increased their capital during the past year by the issue of \$200,000 new stock, a step which seems to have been amply justified by the results of the business of the year just closed. The Directors' report, presented at the thirty-sixth annual meeting on Friday, shows a flourishing business; the net premium income was \$70,625 more than that of the previous year; the profit on the year's business reached the handsome figure of \$122,325; the net surplus funds, over and above capital and all liabilities, now amount to \$235,736. A glance at the list of assets—included in which are cash, United States Bonds, Dominion of Canada Stock, Debentures, and Bank and Loan and Investment Companies' Stocks, to the amount of \$1,047,800—will show the substantial and available character of the investments. The business has increased in volume, and has been profitable in all its branches; and altogether the shareholders have reason to congratulate themselves on the management being in such good hands.