

Prominent Topics.

Irish Home Rule.

To-morrow the Unionists of Ulster will meet in churches, halls, and market places to sign a solemn covenant; pledging themselves never to submit to any local government at Dublin, which may be imposed upon them under the Asquith-Redmond Home Rule Bill. A constitution for a provisional government of the Province of Ulster has been drafted and accepted, and it is stated also that active preparations are in progress for armed resistance to any authority attempted to be exercised in Ulster, by an Irish Legislature or Government. The political importance of this revolutionary movement is that it makes Home Rule the paramount issue in the next general election which cannot long be deferred. If there is trouble in Ulster the issue will sink all other questions into insignificance and the Asquith Government will stand or fall by the verdict of the electorate of the whole United Kingdom upon the Home Rule question. The next Government will not be like the present one; a coalition of various elements having no particular sympathy with each other and no mandate from the people upon any one important policy. If the Asquith Government were American it would go down to history as the "Log-rolling Administration." If the right honorable ministers do not know what "log-rolling" is, they might ask Mr. Bryce, their late colleague and now British Ambassador at Washington. In his "American Commonwealth," Mr. Bryce incidentally defines "log-rolling" thus: "I do not think that corruption in its grosser forms is ripe at Washington. When it appears, it appears chiefly in the milder form of reciprocal jobbing, or (as it is called) log-rolling.

Electric Light Signs.

Whoever drafted the proposed Montreal by-law regarding the use of electric light street signs had a glimmering of light as to the principle upon which these things should be permitted. The present regulation on electric signs requires them not to project more than six inches from the sides of buildings. The new by-law provides that such signs may extend to a distance of one-half the width of the sidewalk, and as Montreal sidewalks are from eight to twelve feet wide, these signs will have a display of from four to six feet.

The by-law provides that "All the lamps forming part of an illuminated or electric sign shall burn every day except Sunday from 7 o'clock p.m. to 11 p.m. from the 1st of April to the 1st of October, and from 6 o'clock p.m. to 11 p.m. from the 2nd of October to the 31st of May."

To remove any possibility of doubt as to the meaning of this clause, the use of intermittent lights should be absolutely prohibited. That the owners of these signs should pay for the right to protrude them across the sidewalks by helping to light the streets is reason-

able enough, but signs which are lit up for a few seconds and then turned out for a few seconds are a nuisance. It is also proper that the designs should be subject to the approval of the civic authorities. The business streets will be all the brighter for the signs.

Federal Control of Trusts.

President Taft takes the ground that federal control of trusts would create a great monopoly of power which might be used by an unprincipled man to perpetuate his authority and make him an absolute dictator. In an interview discussing this plank in the platform of the Progressive party he says: "It would create the most monstrous monopoly of power in the history of the world—a power as much greater, as much more autocratic, than that of a Caesar or a Napoleon, as the business interests of the twentieth century are greater, more dominant and far-reaching than were those of two thousand or one hundred years ago. An unprincipled man with such power in his grasp could perpetuate his authority, perhaps, under legitimate forms, and become dictator until his hold could be shaken loose only by revolution."

One could almost imagine the President having in view some particular unprincipled man whom he would not like to entrust with such powers.

New Zealand Defence.

The Finance Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Allen, has bought down estimates for defence purposes amounting to \$2,280,000. This is \$280,000 larger than Lord Kitchener's estimate owing to the cost of initial equipment, but in future the vote is expected to be kept down to \$2,000,000. The vote was approved by Mr. Myers, the Finance Minister in the late administration, who declared that compulsory training had passed the experimental stage and this was largely due to the experience, tact, and whole-heartedness of General Godley. An amendment extending the privileges of conscientious objectors was rejected by 60 votes to five. The minority included three members of the Labor party. The fourth declared that the allegation that labor organizations were generally opposed to compulsion was utter nonsense and denied that the workers were so disloyal as to refuse to share in the defence of their country.

Both the discussion and the vote go to show that irrespective of party preferences the people of New Zealand are a unit in their determination to do their duty in the defence of their country at any sacrifice.

Mr. A. R. B. Hearn, manager of the Imperial Bank of Brandon, has been promoted to the managership at Calgary, and on his leaving Brandon was presented with a valuable gold watch by leading citizens. Mr. Hearn is succeeded by Mr. M. Morris, of Winnipeg.