

ters, there must be something seriously wrong either with the ministers, the constitution, or the people. Surely Canadians are not so hard to govern that they require to keep them in hand twice as many Cabinet officers as the sixty millions of the United States.

MR. LAURIER has been speaking some plain words in reference to the Dominion Franchise Act. That the Act is open to criticism at many points is almost beyond question. We should be inclined to say that its great and radical defect is its existence. It has no sufficient reason-to-be. Almost every consideration of political fair-play, as well as of convenience and economy, is on the side of leaving the determination of the franchise and the preparation of the electoral lists in the hands of the local authorities. Had the majority of the Local Governments continued to be of the same political complexion as that of the Dominion, it is in the highest degree improbable that the Dominion Franchise Act would ever have been heard of. But it is evident that whatever suspicion of partisan unfairness may attach to the character or working of a Provincial Electoral Act, drawn up and administered by a Provincial Party Government, a precisely similar presumption will exist in reference to the character and working of a Dominion Electoral Act, drawn up and administered by a Dominion Party Government. Thus, it is hardly too much to say that in the very process of taking the business into its own hands, and exercising its undoubted constitutional right to create a Dominion franchise and operate a Dominion election law, the Canadian Government laid itself open to the same suspicion it entertained in regard to the Provincial Governments. But, waiving this, and saying nothing of other serious objections, such as those touching the qualifications of voters, the appointment of revising officers, etc., there are two radical defects in the Act, either of which should suffice to condemn it. One is, the enormous and almost unheard-of expense it entails. The other is, the difficulty or impossibility of securing correct lists of voters under it. The figures in regard to the former are as startling as familiar. As to the latter, there can be little doubt that when the lists are complete and the bills footed there will still be thousands of citizens possessed of the prescribed qualifications whose names will not be on the voters' lists; while, on the other hand, those lists will contain thousands of men not legally qualified. There must be something seriously wrong when legislation so expensive leads to such results.

THE signing of the contract for the fast Atlantic service undertaken by the Messrs. Anderson may fairly be regarded as the opening of a new chapter in the commercial history of the Dominion. This is the more apparent from the fact that the arrangement in question is to be followed up by other contracts of a similar kind, except in respect to speed, for the running of steamboat lines to the Antipodes, and others to various points in the West Indies and South America. The policy is undoubtedly a bold one. The subsidies are large and will be a heavy additional drain upon an exchequer not over pléthoric. But the boldest policy, if well considered and energetically carried out, is not unfrequently the best and safest. Without being over-sanguine we may hope that the results in this case will vindicate the sagacity of the Government. It was evident that something must be done. The era of over-production was setting in, and the necessity for finding other and larger markets becoming imperative. English statesmen took a bold step when they repealed the Corn Laws and abolished other taxes on food. The result was, as Mr. Gladstone reminded a Cardiff audience the other day, that the commerce of the country had been multiplied five-fold, capital had been largely increased and wages had gone up fifty per cent. Many will have serious doubts as to the possibility of producing similar results by the reverse process, viz., putting heavy taxes on importations and using the funds thus procured to subsidize steamships in the hope of stimulating importation as well as exportation. But the country having adopted the National Policy, and being resolved, seemingly, to maintain it, it could scarcely do better in the way of giving it a further trial than to strike out boldly for a larger share in the world's commerce. Should these enterprises succeed in creating a large and profitable foreign commerce, Canadians will be enabled to congratulate themselves on having seen farther than their neighbours, and, not content with following them in their restrictive policy, gone farther and won success at the very point where the Great Republic has conspicuously failed. It is yet too soon, however, to make the boast.

IF the minds of any members of the Colonial Governments and Legislatures have been greatly vexed by the rumour that the Colonial Secretary had impugned their right to the title of "honourable" in England, it may be hoped that the explanation offered by Baron de Worms in the British House of Commons will set them at rest. Baron de Worms explains that the question has not been raised recently in any shape, and that no instructions have been issued on the subject.

"It has at no time," he added, "been the practice to use that title in addressing Colonial gentlemen residing in this country, but it is a common practice to accord it when the person entitled to it is absent from his own colony on a visit to another colony. The reason for not addressing colonial gentlemen by that title when they are in this country would appear to be that here it is not adopted as a designation of any executive or legislative status, being the courtesy title distinguishing sons of peers. But, although no new instructions have been issued on the subject, it happens to be the case that during the Colonial Conference the Secretary of State did take the new course of addressing as "honourable" the Colonial representatives actually serving on the Conference, feeling that their presence here on official duty might properly be so recognized."

So it appears that whatever innovation has been made was in a direction quite the opposite of that charged in the rumours. We are not aware that anyone in Canada has been greatly perturbed, or that any particular mischief has resulted from the misapprehension. Otherwise the parties injured would have good reason to complain that the Colonial Office did not more promptly make the explanation.

THE debate arranged for Thursday in the British House of Commons, on the question of Royal Grants, is of far more than ordinary importance. No doubt the Government policy will prevail and the increased grant to the Prince of Wales be voted by a good majority, without any condition in regard to future applications from members of the Royal Family. Unfortunately the question is one of those in which the debate counts for more than the vote. Every judicious friend of Constitutional monarchy must regret that a discussion involving a personal issue between members of the reigning Family and the nation, should have been raised. The discussion may have been unavoidable, but it can hardly fail to be mischievous. Only less to be dreaded than a refusal of Parliament to vote the money asked for the support of the Queen's grand-children is an assent given by virtue of a party majority and in the face of a strong, organized opposition. Such a victory is next door to a defeat. It gives the Opposition orators opportunity and incentive to address their speeches not to the Commons but to the electors, and to marshal their arguments and invectives against the costliness and extravagance of monarchy before the eyes of the whole people. We do not say it is not right that this should be done. The people have to pay the money, and their claim to know how and why it is appropriated is incontestable. But the fact that on every new occasion the scrutiny becomes more searching, the complaints more outspoken, the opposition more pronounced, is too significant to be overlooked, one would suppose, even by Royalty itself. This tendency makes it as certain as any future event can be that the day is coming when the minority will have become the majority and a Royal request may be met with a Parliamentary negative. How much wiser would it be to forestall the coming evil by some such compromise as that offered by the Opposition leaders, and, as we can scarcely help believing, really approved by the Government, had the matter been entirely in their hands.

THE Church Convocation of England has been discussing the gambling evil. All the speakers seemed pretty well agreed that the evil is growing, and a resolution was adopted expressive of the alarm felt at the "prevalence and increase of betting and gambling." Telling evidence of the deplorable effects of the practice was given by the governors and chaplains of gaols, to whom circulars of enquiry had been sent. What will be surprising to many of our readers is the fact that several of the speakers, amongst them Canon Bright and Archdeacon Farrar, while convinced that the practice was fraught with terrible evil, felt themselves at a loss to discover or define just what was the direct sin of betting and gambling. Canon Bright felt that they could hardly regard them as sins in themselves, although they brought in an element of fraud, and thus introduced sin. Archdeacon Farrar could find no passage in the Bible which referred absolutely to the matter, though he condemned the habit as a most dangerous and spurious excitement and moral evil. We should have sup-

posed that the violation of the great moral law involved in the effort to become possessed of the property of another without rendering an equivalent—which is the very essence of gambling—was gross and palpable. Surely if there is anything clearly implied in the whole ethical code of the New Testament, it is that the man who takes, or strives to take, that which is his neighbour's, without adequate return, is both dishonest and dishonourable. In view of the perplexity of these worthy prelates on this point, it is not to be wondered at that their condemnation of raffles and lotteries at bazaars was less emphatic than might have been expected, though after considerable discussion a rider "discouraging" these practices was added to the resolution.

THE various Oppositions in Canada favour us from time to time with interesting statements showing the remarkable tendency of qualifications for lucrative posts in the public service to run in the families of members of the Government and other high officials. But if we may judge from facts which are being just now brought to light this singular law of heredity, or rather of consanguinity, is even more operative in the United States than with us. Public attention was first directed to it by the not very seemly spectacle of the President of the Great Republic appointing several of his family relations to important positions. As might have been expected his subordinates have not been slow to imitate and even improve upon so suggestive an example. Some of the results show an amount of coolness and nerve that is truly wonderful. The new Commissioner for Indian affairs, for instance, makes his wife his Secretary at a salary of \$1,000 a year. The Superintendent of Indian Schools "goes him one better," as the sports would say, and appoints his own wife to a similar position at \$6 a day. Secretary Blaine selects his own son for an important post in the State Department. Another high official makes his daughter his private secretary, and another caps the climax by rewarding a railway porter, who has the good fortune to be of some service to his wife, with a position in the Treasury Department. As the *Nation* observes, "in every instance the public service is used as if it were private property." As we have already intimated we in Canada are in no position to cast stones at our neighbours. The same idea of the use of patronage has been reduced to a science both in Dominion and in Provincial affairs. The fact affords a by no means pleasing illustration of the power of selfishness to blunt the finer perceptions of propriety. Theoretically it might have been expected that a certain almost instinctive sense of what is becoming would have made those elevated to posts of high honour and trust scrupulously careful to avoid anything having the slightest appearance of nepotism. In the United States there are some indications that a healthful reaction may be setting in. Just as the unblushing extreme to which bribery was carried in the Presidential election has produced a recoil leading to strict anti-bribery legislation by many States, so now the very grossness of the nepotic abuse is leading to earnest protests from even the Republican press.

THE United States probably contains within its wide borders more varieties of civilization, and uncivilization, than any other nation in the world. It has long been notorious that certain parts of the South have codes of morality and honour which are, according to Northern views, little removed from barbarism. If any had partly forgotten the fact the events connected with the murder of Captain Dawson a few weeks since afforded a very startling and shocking reminder. Captain Dawson was editor of the Charleston (S.C.) *News and Courier*, a paper which had done more than any other influence to abolish the duel in South Carolina. Mr. Dawson had also, we are told, denounced the suppression of the negro vote, and might have been supposed to have earned the gratitude of the negroes. But he had, it appears, spoken slightly of negro morals and so given offence to the coloured race and had, in other ways, made himself unpopular. Having gone to Dr. McDow's office, armed only with a light cane, to reproach the latter, who seems to be an avowed libertine, for a dastardly attempt to seduce a young Swiss girl in his employ, Captain Dawson was treacherously killed by McDow. At the trial the jury of twelve, seven of whom were coloured men, gave a speedy verdict of acquittal, and Dr. McDow, after receiving the congratulations of his friends, went forth a free man, to resume his evil practices with scarcely a word of apology for what he termed his "little indiscretion." The *News and Courier* declares that the jury was "fixed," and that no accumula-