

kindly says that any reader of THE WEEK desiring a copy of the Constitution of the League, may obtain it on application to his address, 131 Bishop Street, Montreal.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON assured a deputation who waited upon him a week or two since in the interests of the prison reform movement that the Federal Government was prepared to co-operate with that of Ontario in giving full effect to the recommendations of the Prison Reform Commissioners. Two of these recommendations are of special importance. The first is that such changes be made in the laws defining the prerogatives of the Dominion Government in criminal matters, as are necessary in order to confer upon the Provincial Government and its officers all requisite authority to pardon, parole, apprentice, board out, and generally deal with and exercise control over all children and youths sentenced or committed to or placed in the reformatories and industrial schools of the Province, whether such sentences or commitments may have been made under the provisions of Dominion or Provincial laws. This recommendation is of primary importance. The fatal defect in our criminal administration in all the past has been that it is so largely a policy of punishment rather than of prevention and cure. One of the most hopeful tendencies of the age is that which manifests itself in various forms of effort to snatch the children from the environments in which so many thousands of them in every great city are being trained for lives of vice and crime, and train them up in habits of industry and virtue. He who rescues an incipient criminal from the school in which he is being developed into a full-fledged enemy to society, and trains him up for a life of honest industry, really renders a much greater service to society than he who merely secures the apprehension and conviction of a hardened offender against human and divine law. The reason is clear. In the first case the man is not merely rendered harmless; he is made useful. In the second place society is the richer by the whole amount of the damage the potential criminal would have done had he become an actual criminal, plus all the good he performs after being transformed into an upright citizen. Nor is this the whole of the gain, by any means. To the sum thus found must be added the further amount reached by adding together all the influences for evil he would have wielded as a criminal and all the influence for good he has wielded as a virtuous and law-abiding citizen. Multiply the sum total of benefit thus conferred upon society by the rescue of a single boy or girl, by the whole number of boys and girls who might be thus rescued by the faithful use of all the influences and appliances which could be brought to bear under the best attainable conditions, and we may get some conception of what may one day be accomplished in raising the level of modern life to a higher moral plane.

THE second recommendation of the Prison Reform Commissioners is based on the same grand principle which seeks to reform law-breakers instead of simply punishing them. It has to do, however, with an older class of offenders. The proposal, to which the Minister of Justice is said to have given a cordial consent, contemplates the establishment of a Dominion Reformatory for men—first offenders—between the ages of sixteen and thirty. The proposal has its origin in the well-known and deplorable fact that under present arrangements it often happens that young men who have been convicted of a first felony or serious misdemeanour are thrust into association with the most depraved and hardened criminals in the Toronto Central Prison, Kingston Penitentiary, or some similar institution, with the almost inevitable result that they are dragged down rapidly towards the level of those with whom they are thus placed in contact. There seems now good reason to hope that an institution may shortly be established in Ontario in which it will be possible to test the efficacy of the indeterminate sentence and other motives which may be brought to bear under proper conditions for the reformation of young men who have made the first false step, but many of whom may be very far from being utterly depraved, and may gladly avail themselves of a place for repentance and a chance for recovery when such are brought within their reach.

THOUGH some of the worst features of the Redistribution Bill have been modified during its passage through committee, it is yet no doubt far from being such an arrangement as an impartial commission would have

made to secure the end in view. Notwithstanding the unfairness of the last redistribution, which is now generally admitted by the Conservatives themselves to have been grossly unjust to the Opposition, and which it naturally follows must have placed the latter at a disadvantage, the present Bill, as now amended in committee, will, according to the figures of the last elections, add considerably to the strength of the Government—a fact which makes it sufficiently obvious that it is still a partizan measure. A fair though humiliating inference is that the duty of making the decennial redistributions cannot be safely entrusted to any partizan Administration. The naive declaration of one of the Government supporters, in the course of the debate, that the Government could not be expected to accept an amendment which would deprive them of a supporter, makes this clear so far as the present Government is concerned. The Bill was discussed throughout with open reference to the effect it would have upon the strength of the respective parties, though nothing can be clearer than that a Government actuated by a high sense of duty and honour would refuse to allow such a consideration to enter into their treatment of such a question. As there is no sufficient guarantee that any other Administration which may be in power ten years hence would be more just or magnanimous, the question raised by Mr. Davies, whose contention has since received the endorsement of some of the ablest lawyers of both parties, becomes one of living interest. Hence Senator Boulton's proposal to move for a reference of the Redistribution Bill to the Supreme Court, in order to test the constitutional point, becomes one of great political importance. Why should not all parties concur in this motion, and thus obtain an authoritative opinion upon a question which must be authoritatively settled sooner or later?

WE do not suppose that it is ordinarily of much use for an independent paper to enter into argument with one which exists for the defence and propagation of a certain policy. In looking over the editorial columns of our contemporary, the *Canadian Manufacturer*, a week or two since, we were struck with the severity of its censure of a new paper which it speaks of as the organ of the Canadian Press Association. On reading further we discovered that the head and front of the new paper's offending seemed to be that it advocated, or proposed to advocate, a reduction of the duty on baking powders, with the undoubtedly selfish purpose of securing for the papers whose representative it claimed to be, a return of the advertising patronage, or a part of it, which had been destroyed in consequence of the monopoly resulting from the high tariff in question. This proposal was denounced in the *Manufacturer's* most vigorous English as unpatriotic, selfish, and in every respect unworthy of Canadian journalism. It so happened that the writer of the paragraph in THE WEEK had not seen a copy of the new journal thus assailed, and had no knowledge of the merits of the baking-powder controversy, save that gained from the *Manufacturer's* article. It is, we hope, unnecessary to add that he did not and does not know whether THE WEEK ever had a baking-powder advertisement in its columns or not. But, being accustomed to see from time to time articles in the *Manufacturer* advocating new duties, or increase of duties on certain articles of commerce, partly at least with a view, as we suppose, to promote the private interests of the manufacturers whose cause it advocates, we set ourselves to discover, if we could, the essential difference between the two cases. We were curious to know why it was a crime for the one paper to advocate a decrease of a certain duty in the interest of its clients, while it was highly virtuous for the other to advocate an increase of the duty on some other commodity in the interests of its clients. Failing to satisfy ourselves on the point, we appealed to the *Manufacturer* for help. It must be, we suppose, due to our own obtuseness, but though our contemporary has very kindly devoted two or three articles to lead us into the light, and has evidently struggled hard to repress its impatience with our stupidity, we are sorry to be obliged to confess that we are still unable to see the fine point. Our mentor expends a good deal of just resentment, it is true, upon the wickedness of "singling out for destruction" a Canadian industry, "waging a war of extermination" upon it, and so forth. But all this is surely suppositional, if not wholly irrelevant. The question, as we understand it, is simply whether the legitimate aim and effect of a protective tariff—we come down or mount up to the protectionist ground for the nonce—should be to prohibit importation and estab-

lish monopolies. This is what we infer has been done in the case of the baking powders. What about the revenue? Why should so high a tariff be needed to stop importation and competition, if that be the legitimate object? Are American powders better than the Canadian? Are they cheaper? If the one or the other, has the Canadian consumer any rights at all in the matter? We respectfully suggest to the new journal that it make haste to drop the question of private interests and argue its case on high patriotic grounds. Might it not profitably take a leaf or two from the *Manufacturer's* sound and able dissertations on the sugar question?

A CORRESPONDENT in England, evidently an American, expresses great surprise, apparently not unmixed with contempt, at the manner in which the English party papers are conducted on the eve of a great campaign. They actually, he says, print at length the speeches of their political opponents, as well as those of the leaders of their own party! To those not accustomed to more cowardly methods this seems no doubt to be simple British fair play. The reading of the letter reminded us how grossly unfair and un-British has been the course of some of our Canadian party papers in this respect, during the current session of Parliament. It has been nothing unusual to find in the so-called report of a debate, certain papers of this class giving at length the speech of a member of their own party, then informing us in a single line that Mr. So-and-so made a feeble speech in reply, and going on to give the speech of another of its party friends. We hear a good deal in these days of the educational influence of the press. Newspapers certainly have it in their power to become one of the best and most potent of educational agencies. But what kind of educational work is that done by a paper which thinks itself doing its duty to its patrons by giving them one-sided glimpses of questions in the manner described? It is reasonable to suppose that a large number of the subscribers to such a paper take no other. They, therefore, never see a fair presentation of the views of the other side in politics. We have often wondered that intelligent subscribers could be found to tolerate journalism so palpably unfair. It is evident that British readers would not do so, for the writer referred to tells us in tones of wonder that the subscribers actually read these long reports of the speeches on the other side as well as on their own. Many readers, interested in knowing the whole truth in regard to public questions, cannot well afford to subscribe to two dailies, and yet they are forced to do so or condemn themselves to hear perpetually but one side of every public question.

THE enthusiastic nomination of Cleveland by the Democratic Convention pits against each other for the Presidential contest the strongest candidates in the respective parties, and can scarcely fail to result in a close and exciting contest. Where the parties are so evenly balanced, guesses as to the outcome would be idle. The election of the next President of the United States is probably in the hands of the "Mugwumps," or Independents. The battle is not so much a struggle between the men, or a race for the spoils, or even a trial of strength between the parties—though it is undoubtedly each of these things to a considerable extent—as has often been the case on previous occasions. It is probably, to a greater degree than for many years past, a contest of principles. The issue is clearly defined. It is Protection *versus* Free-trade; or, to speak with more precision, it is Protection, with trade-reciprocity as its adjunct, *versus* a tariff for revenue only. The clearness with which the Democrats have defined the issue in this respect is remarkable, and we venture to say, unexpected. The emphasis with which the Convention rejected the compromise, or, to use the expressive though not very elegant Americanism, the "straddling" article proposed by the majority of its Committee, in favour of the bold declaration formulated by the minority, shows that the reciprocity attachment which the shrewd ex Secretary caused to be appended to the McKinley Bill has not proved so effective a counter-irritant as we had supposed. The shrewd Democratic delegates in the Convention must feel themselves safe in counting on a very strong anti-protection sentiment when they deem it good tactics to "denounce Republican protection as a fraud; a robbery of the great majority of the American people for the benefit of the few," to "declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the Federal Government has no constitutional power to enforce and collect tariff duties except for the purpose of revenue