

the effect that Mr. Torr, the Gladstonian candidate, was a very popular candidate and that in no other rural constituency represented by a Unionist could the Gladstonians have fought under so favorable conditions, are evidently quite wide of the mark. Such statements fail to take account of the fact that Mr. Torr was distrusted as a very mild Liberal at the best, and that he was an avowed opponent of Welsh Disestablishment. For this reason the Liberation Society openly refused to support him, and large numbers of the friends of disestablishment refrained from voting. Some very influential Liberal journals did not hesitate to say that they were glad that he was defeated. They hope that the result will teach the managers of the Gladstonian party a much-needed lesson. The subject may not be deemed of great importance at this distance in time and place. We refer to the matter of fact simply as showing that the Horncastle election cannot be relied on as foreshadowing the issue of the great contest yet to come. It hardly offsets Accrington.

We have before us a circular of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, to which we gladly invite attention because we believe the work in which this Society is engaged is one which deserves the sympathy and aid of all good men and women. The Society is desirous of finding homes throughout the Province of Ontario and elsewhere, in which to place out children under its control. These children have either been deserted by their parents, or by reason of their parents' neglect have been committed by the courts to the care of the Society, which, in virtue of the Children's Protection Act, passed at the last session of the Provincial Legislature, is constituted their guardian until they become of age. No child is placed out which has not, after examination by order of a judge, been certified by a regular medical practitioner to be free from chronic or contagious disease. The ages of the children are from three to sixteen years, and they are said to be robust, bright, and intelligent, needing only a chance in life to become useful and respected citizens. They are placed out under regulations issued by the Provincial Government. Frequently the Society has also children for adoption. It has at present in its shelter several boys of tender years whom it would be glad to deliver over to the care of foster-parents whose references are satisfactory. The expense, necessarily large, of carrying on the work of the Society, is met solely by voluntary contributions, which are respectfully solicited. Whether regarded from the philanthropic, the sociological, or the patriotic point of view, we know no better work than that in which this Society is engaged—that of rescuing human waifs from lives of misery and vice, and rearing them up into respectable and useful manhood and womanhood. Its officers are:—The Manager of the Con-

federation Life Association, J. K. Macdonald, Esq., President; Rev. J. E. Starr, Secretary and Agent; J. Stuart Coleman, Assistant Secretary and Agent; A. M. Campbell, Treasurer. It is, of course, non-sectarian.

Some of the bold opinions expressed by Mr. H. S. Blake, at the annual meeting of the Prisoners' Aid Association, are worthy of fuller and more dispassionate consideration than they are likely to receive. Especially is this true of his remarks concerning what he is said to have stigmatized as "one of the most foolish farces of the nineteenth century," the system of sending prisoners to jail for drunkenness. It would not be hard to maintain, as a general principle, that any punishment which does not only fit the crime, but tend to the reformation of the criminal, is radically defective from both the economical and the moral point of view. The individual who has so far lost control of his appetite as to repeatedly reduce himself to a condition of drunkenness has become a nuisance and a menace to society. There could be nothing unjust or improper in depriving such a one of personal liberty until such time as he gave evidence of having gained his powers of self-control and so a right to regulate his own actions. It is but a corollary to this proposition that he should be placed under restraint amid circumstances and influences which would be directly curative. We have no doubt, too, that there is much truth in Mr. Blake's declarations of opinion touching the evil effects of admitting the general public to hear the disgusting details of many trials in the court-room, and of setting these details before them in the columns of the newspapers, though it is not so easy to point out the remedy in such cases. It is questionable whether anything in the nature of a secret trial, or of restriction of the freedom of the press, would not be more mischievous than the evil to be remedied. Publicity in such matters is the surest safeguard of justice and liberty. Probably the best that can be done is to trust hopefully to the improvement in the tone of the newspapers and in the taste of the people—an improvement which is certainly going forward in the case of the newspaper, at least. With reference to the courts we might have added, "and in the taste of such lawyers as delight to bring out the worst details of disgusting cases."

Some discussion has naturally grown out of the publication of Archbishop Cleary's reasons for objecting to the introduction of the ballot in the election of Separate School trustees, as recently given to a reporter of the *Kingston Whig*. Those reasons may fairly, we think, be summarized as follows: First. The ballot has not been asked for by the Catholics, the only persons directly concerned. Second. Those who are striving to deprive them of a right

which they wish to retain and to impose upon them a privilege which they do not want, are their enemies, and hence are to be resisted. Third. Under the ballot, noisy politicians would create disunion among Catholics. Political trustees would be elected, and the Separate schools would be in danger of becoming secularized. Whatever force there may be in the first argument rests upon the Archbishop's statement that it is a recognized principle in legislation that the established methods of organic action of any body or section of persons in the community are not to be disturbed by new legislation unless the measure be called for by those directly concerned. This contention can hardly be sustained. The main use of the ballot in any case is, we suppose, to protect those who would otherwise be unable to vote freely for fear of consequences. Such voters may be but a small minority of the whole class or section to which they belong. Even were they the majority they might be deterred from asking for the change for the very same reason which made it desirable that they should have it. Further, all citizens are interested in the efficiency of the Separate as well as the Public schools and have a right to a voice in regard to whatever impairs that efficiency, while the change asked in this case would deprive no one of any electoral right. The second reason is without logical force and is unworthy of a place in a serious argument. The third seems to imply the existence of the kind of compulsion or undue influence against which the ballot is designed to guard the voter. Hence it is a weapon which may easily be turned against the one who uses it and made effective on the other side of the controversy.

If our correspondent "Steady," will kindly refer again to our article on "Proportionate Representation" he will, we think, perceive that he is in error in saying that we favor Miss Spence's plan, if he uses the word in the sense of advocating it. Our intention was to point out, so far as our space permitted, its advantages and disadvantages, without attempting to strike the balance. The objections seemed to us very serious. But our main purpose was to direct attention to what seems to us to be a matter of the very first importance, if we are to preserve our representative institutions and make them genuinely successful. Our correspondent's suggestion has, so far as we are aware, the merit of originality. The end we have in view will, we think, be better promoted by leaving the discussion to others, who may have criticisms or fresh suggestions to offer. We may just say, however, by way of eliciting further information, that while it seems to us that the method proposed may have in it the elements of a real reform, it presents on the surface, as we understand it, one very grave defect, in that it would secure the represent-