

not going the length of making the members of the Councils, or some proportion of them, actually elective, does really, as Mr. Gladstone pointed out, embody the elective principle. The Bill, having been supported by Mr. Gladstone in a speech which won the unstinted praise of even his political opponents as a model of statesmanlike wisdom and moderation, was passed without division. This first concession to the demands of the native Indian Congress, for such it is in effect, is, as we have intimated, more important for what it implies than for what it contains, though its concessions are not without value. All parties are of course agreed in regard to the present unfitness of the people, or rather of the peoples, of India for representative institutions. The difficulties are stupendous and insuperable. They arise not more from the fact that not one in a hundred, perhaps not one in a thousand, of the whole population possesses sufficient intelligence to make the use of the franchise possible, than from the almost innumerable subdivisions of the inhabitants by barriers of race, of religion and of caste. It would, perhaps, be hard to say which of these three barriers would prove the most formidable obstacle to anything having in the remotest degree the nature of concerted political action. It would probably be but the simple truth that each is, in its place, absolutely insurmountable. Admit the fact and what follows? That there is nothing for the so-called Christian nation which rules the heterogeneous myriads of this vast Empire to do but to go on and make the absolute sway, which she has hitherto exercised, perpetual? This is evidently the opinion of many intelligent Englishmen, though, as the passage of the Bill in question shows, not of the majority. The other and, as most of our readers will say, the better view is that which holds to the possibility of educating even these vast hordes, socially, politically and morally, with varying degrees of rapidity proportioned to the varying degrees of receptivity of the different races, religions and castes. The existence of the Congress is sufficient proof that this work has already made some progress. There can be no better way of helping it forward than by granting home-rule and representative institutions just as fast and as far as sections and grades of the population become fitted to make an intelligent use of them. In the education of nations as of children the great modern educational principle of "learning to do by doing" is invaluable.

MAY-DAY has come and gone without witnessing any of the scenes of violence and bloodshed, the dread of which has for weeks past cast a cloud of apprehension over many continental cities. The people in those countries in which anarchism is rife will now breathe more freely. And yet it is doubtful whether any hopeful augury can safely be drawn from the fact that the miscreants abstained from preconcerted deeds of violence on this particular day. One might indeed reason that the very fact of their having kept quiet, at a time when the authorities were everywhere on the alert and the most complete preparations had been made for crushing the first indications of riot or disorder, may but prove that they are too desperately in earnest to risk failure in any so foolish fashion. It would be but in accordance with the cowardliness and fien-dishness which characterize their methods, that they should wait until they may hope to take their victims off their guard, and wreak their vengeance against organized society the more effectively. On the other hand there is, so far as we can perceive, no good reason for believing that the real anarchists, capable of committing such ruthless and senseless outrages as those of which Paris has had a few specimens, are at all numerous, and it is not unlikely that, with the capture of some of their most desperate leaders, the rank and file have now become pretty well scattered. A most hopeful indication is the evidence that there is no bond of union or sympathy between them and the Socialists, even of the most extreme type. So long as the workingmen hold aloof from them, the apostles of violence and assassination can do comparatively little harm. The spectacle of John Burns and other leaders of the labourers denouncing, as they did at the great Hyde Park demonstration, the Anarchists and their methods, is a better guarantee of public safety than the most complete police and military organization that could be formed. The public are reassured by seeing that Socialism and Anarchism are two very different things and that there is no fear that the workingmen, following such intelligent leaders, can be drawn into sympathy or entangling alliance with those whose aims are purely negative and destructive. The more intelligent they become, the more clearly will the workingmen and the respectable Socialists perceive that the Anarchists are their worst enemies.

OTTAWA LETTER.

OBSTRUCTION prevails. The Opposition call it zeal for the public service, but it is obstruction pure and simple and the reason is plain. Zeal for the public service demands fair and outspoken criticism; but there comes a time when criticism is carried so far that he who runs may read that what is termed zeal for the public is really zeal for the party; and the more one sees of party the more convinced does one become that the party and the public have few interests in common. The week past has been one of war to the knife between the Government and the Opposition, and those who looked forward to an early prorogation have buried their hopes and say they will expect the end of the session when they see it.

While the Opposition is obstructive and need not attempt to gull the people by saying they are not, there is good reason for their policy of obstruction from a party standpoint.

Since the beginning of last week the gentlemen to the left of Mr. Speaker have discharged their three heavy guns and followed up with a grand charge on the Government ranks. First came the impeachment of Judge Elliott and the attack on Mr. Carling, whom Mr. Lister, the general in command upon this occasion, said was no more entitled to sit for London than was a messenger at the door. This took place on Wednesday afternoon and lasted till six o'clock, to be resumed with renewed bitterness later on.

In the evening of the same day Sir Richard Cartwright continued the debate upon Mr. Edgar's motion for a committee to enquire into the alleged wrong-doing of Sir Adolph Caron. Sir Richard was even more than usually fierce, and to use a Scriptural quotation, "Smote his enemies hip and thigh." If envy was not denoted in his remarks they were characterized by "hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness." One really wonders if Sir Richard Cartwright means all that he says, for if one is to judge by his utterances every Conservative member in the House of Commons is a deep-dyed villain and owes his seat in the House to the indiscriminate scattering of filthy lucre among his constituents. The old animus which he used to display towards Sir John Macdonald seems to have been turned upon his successor, "Sir John the Less." "Sir," said Sir Richard, "I am not in the slightest degree disposed to extenuate the offence alleged to have been committed by the Post Master General, if he be found guilty of what my honourable friend has charged against him; but I will say that the Post Master General is in my opinion the honestest man of the two." This of Sir John Thompson. Again: "I likened him some time ago to a grey sheep among a lot of black ones but I am sorry to say that his fleece is of quite as inky a blackness as theirs is."

An admirable speech in reply to the member for South Oxford was made by Mr. Dickey, successor to Sir Charles Tupper, in the representation of Cumberland, Nova Scotia. He said that Sir Richard must feel gratified that this "motion had been made, if for no other reason than because it had afforded him an opportunity of scattering some of that store of parliamentary vitriol with which he is so largely supplied."

It was thought an all-night session would result with a division about sunrise or later on Thursday, but, in spite of the bitterness between parties, an arrangement was arrived at between the leaders whereby the debate will be resumed on Wednesday of this week; so the House was able to rise about one o'clock. It seems to be taken for granted that the Government will not make an enquiry into the charges made by Mr. Edgar.

The iniquity of the Government from an Opposition standpoint in its connection with Judge Elliott pales into insignificance compared with its unrighteousness with respect to the Redistribution Bill. In the early days of the session, Mr. Abbott promised that it would be a very simple measure. Sir John Thompson also threw out hints that the Opposition would find nothing very heinous in it, but, alas! results have not justified these prophecies. The Bill is down, and the Liberals are down on it. Angry and disgusted, they have put on their war paint, and will fight the "gerrymander" to the bitter end. So far as it deals with Quebec, Mr. Laurier said the apportionment was the most arbitrary that could be designed, and that where the strength of the Liberal party lay in that Province, the counties had been so gerrymandered that it would be impossible to recognize those now in existence. Mr. Mills pronounced it a mischievous and unjust measure, and waxed wrathful over the policy of the Government in undertaking to secure themselves in possession by altering the boundaries of constituencies in such a way as to enable a minority of the electors of this country to elect a majority to Parliament.

The reconstruction as explained by Sir John is confined to the neighbourhood of Toronto and the group of districts about Lake Ontario. It will be noticed that an additional representative is given to Toronto and one to the district of Nipissing, which also includes a part of the large county of Renfrew. But, as the total number of Ontario's representatives will not be increased, Lincoln and North Wentworth as now constituted will no longer have each a representative. While Mr. Mills claims that the Bill is unjust, and, in an interview published in the evening *Journal*, pronounces it "the most dishonest measure that has ever been submitted to Parliament, violating every principle of popular representation," there

are several Liberals in the House who frankly acknowledge that they are strengthened in their constituencies by the readjustment.

We will hear a great deal of the Redistribution Bill before it becomes law. It is a healthy sign that the independent press throughout the country demands with a unanimous voice that the English method of redistribution, viz., by a non-political commission, be adopted in this country. Until this happens, redistribution and gerrymandering will be synonymous terms.

A most interesting debate took place on Monday over the following resolution proposed by Mr. D'Alton McCarthy: "That in the opinion of this House, in view of the vast commercial interests existing between the United States of America and Canada, and of the political questions from time to time requiring adjustment between the Dominion and the neighbouring Republic, it would tend to the advancement of those interests and the promotion of a better understanding between the two countries were a representative appointed by the Government of the Dominion, subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Imperial advisers, and attached to the staff of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, specially charged to watch, guard and represent the interests of Canada."

It is a matter for regret that the member for North Simcoe does not take a more prominent part than he does in the debates of the House. These days we are frightfully overburdened with mediocrity, to put it mildly, in Parliament. A few years ago it was computed that one member occupied seven days during the session in speaking. Not that he spoke continuously at that length, but when the time taken up by his remarks was aggregated, it was found that one week of that session was devoted to listening to one garrulous man. The Government do not appear to know just what to do with respect to Mr. McCarthy's motion, and so the debate has been adjourned that they may have time to consider. Mr. Laurier came out fairly and squarely in favour of the resolution. Here comes the curse of our party system. Whatever they may think in their hearts, it would never do for the Government to follow the example of the Leader of the Opposition, especially after Mr. Foster has declared that there are "great difficulties in the way."

Other events in Parliament during the week past were a protest by Mr. Laurier against the action of Mr. Foster in stating, during his Budget Speech, the result of the recent conference between the Canadian Commissioners and Mr. Blaine, respecting the question of reciprocity, and a debate arising out of a question put by Mr. Borden, of Nova Scotia, who desired to know if the Government had taken any steps to bring about a new trade arrangement with the Spanish West Indies, to come into operation when the present treaty expires with Spain, the last of next June. The reply was that Sir Charles Tupper had been instructed to act with Sir Henry Drummond Wolff in negotiations with the Spanish Government on the subject.

T. C. L. K.

WHY SHOULD WE READ GERMAN LITERATURE?

"WHEN Candide came to Eldorado," says Heine, "he saw in the streets a number of boys playing with gold nuggets instead of marbles. This degree of luxury made him imagine that they must be the king's children, and he was not a little astonished when he found that in Eldorado gold nuggets are of no more value than marbles are with us, and that the schoolboys play with them. A similar thing happened to a friend of mine, a foreigner, when he came to Germany and first read German books. He was perfectly astonished at the wealth of ideas which he found in them; but he soon remarked that ideas are as plentiful in Germany as gold nuggets in Eldorado, and that those writers whom he had taken for intellectual princes were in reality only common schoolboys."

"The born lover of ideas," says Matthew Arnold, "the born hater of commonplaces, must feel in this country (England) that the sky over his head is of brass and iron."

Now, by placing in juxtaposition these utterances of two eminent men, German and English, we have an excellent reason for studying German literature, namely, a plentitude of ideas in Germany and a scarcity of them, if not in our own glorious literature, at least as the welcome companions of our lives. For, as a people, we long ago came to hate and fear ideas as such, and we everlastingly entrench ourselves in the great dismal swamp of commonplace. It was not always so. The England of Shakespeare was eminently accessible to them. But the England of Shakespeare was still full of the poetry of the old religion. She was still the England of the ancient monarchy, her throne still bright with the rays of departing chivalry. She had not yet, to quote Matthew Arnold again, "entered the dark prison of puritanism, and had the key turned on her spirit." Neither was she the England of to-day, the prey of luxury and self-indulgence, of votes and party tricks. During the centuries following those days, we have grown ever more and more political, until now we are nearly altogether political—and frivolous; and ideas and a free play of the mind being untoward things in a system of politics in which practice and precedent are everything, and being also troublesome to the peace of idle and frivolous people, we have learned to hate and fear them as dangerous things all round.

Yes, while working out our political salvation (*sic*),