

IS Germany doomed to become a second Russia? It would almost seem so if reliance can be placed on the description of the new Penal bill, given by the *Tagblatt*. Rigid repression of every out-cropping of the spirit of freedom seems to be the ideal and goal of German statesmanship, under the present regime. Persons found guilty of inciting one class against another, or of publicly attacking the basis of public and social order, especially religious, the monarchy, marriage, or property, are to be subjected to severe pains and penalties, including years of imprisonment and, in the case of second offences, banishment from certain places. Newspapers twice offending become liable to be suppressed. Almost any extreme of despotism and tyranny is possible under the operation of such a code. And yet the Government is probably strong enough to pass and enforce it. There is something very singular in the spectacle of a people like the Germans, second to none in education and general intelligence, bowing their necks so long and patiently to yokes such as no community of Anglo-Saxons would tolerate for a year.

A RECENT number of the *Canadian Practitioner* has an article by Dr. Canniff, Medical Health Officer of Toronto, which contains some valuable suggestions. One in particular is worthy of consideration by every head of a family in city or country. In no domain of business or social life does the adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," more forcibly apply than in matters pertaining to health and disease. Dr. Canniff dwells strongly upon the necessity that the services of every physician should be heartily enlisted in aid of the health officer of his district. We may remark, though Dr. Canniff does not put the thing so bluntly, that while, as a rule, physicians unquestionably do a great deal of unremunerated preventive work by means of advice and otherwise, they are but human, like other men, and should not be expected to give too much of their time to this disinterested public service, especially as it obviously does not, to say the least, lie in line with their personal interests. Dr. Canniff's suggestion is not new, but it is valuable. It is simply this, that the medical attendants should be engaged by the year to look after the health of individuals and families, instead of, as is the prevailing custom, being summoned only in extremity, and often when it is too late to save a valuable life. It would be easy to enlarge on the benefits of such a change of custom should it become general. The whole interest of all the physicians in the community would be enlisted on the side of sanitary reform. In fact we are not sure that Dr. Canniff might not soon find his own occupation as Health Officer gone. The arrangement would be economical, too, for the physician could afford to content himself with a very moderate charge, and doctor's bills would not be added to the other heavy expenses at the very time, perhaps, that the breadwinner is laid aside by sickness. The reform is surely worth thinking about. Could not the doctors themselves advocate and promote it without compromise of professional dignity or suspicion of selfish ends?

THE JESUITS ESTATES ACT.

THE extreme importance of right opinion and action on this burning question, at the present juncture, must be my apology for returning briefly to the subject. While I desire to thank Mr. Armour for his kind response to my inquiries, I have to confess myself still sceptical on the main point. The fact that Mr. Armour kindly repeats some of his views and reasonings in other forms seems to indicate that I failed to make it sufficiently clear that my difficulties were not with the arguments themselves, but with the premises, stated or assumed, underlying those arguments. I may refer to one or two instances.

Mr. Armour says that the question from his point of view is "a question of the recognition of the Queen's majesty, and loyalty to her person." Now what I was, and am, utterly unable to perceive is that there is any question of this kind in the matter. Does Mr. Armour make it clear that there is? If so there is an end of all controversy. Let us see as we proceed.

Mr. Armour elaborates at some length his reasons for concluding that the Act wants finality. This is, as I before admitted, but a secondary matter. Grant that the enacting part of the Act does not contain a clause to this effect—presumably because it was considered unnecessary seeing that no legal claim had been set up or admitted—it is to the lay mind, I venture to say, incredible that, should the question of further moral claim ever be raised,

it could not be at once settled by reference to the facts and correspondence given in the preamble. Surely these would be sufficient before any tribunal to determine the intention of the Act. Take for instance such a condition as the following laid down by Mr. Mercier and accepted in the very same terms, without condition or reservation, by the Pope's agent: "That you will grant to the Government of the Province of Quebec a full, complete and perpetual concession of all the property which may have belonged in Canada, under whatever title, to the Fathers of the old society, and that you will renounce to all rights generally whatsoever upon such property, and the revenues therefrom, in favour of our province, the whole, as well in the name of the old order of Jesuits, as of your present corporation, in the name of the Pope, of the sacred college of the Propaganda, and of the Roman Catholic Church in general." Is not the Pope's acceptance of the Act, and appropriation of the money it bestows, a virtual and tacit assent to its conditions, so far, at least, as to debar him from pressing any further moral claim? Mr. Armour certainly has not made it clear that the Act lacks finality.

"By the law of Great Britain," says Mr. Armour, "the title of the Crown was perfect; but by the rules of the Roman Catholic Church the Pope had, in Mr. Mercier's opinion, a superior title which the Crown of Great Britain did not and could not divest him of without his consent." Grant it. That superior title was of the kind called "moral." Does Mr. Armour not recognise the possibility of the existence of such a thing as a moral claim? Can he deny that if the moral claim is valid it stands on higher ground than even a legal claim, and is of such a nature that Her Majesty herself cannot divest the individual of it without his consent? Is it not conceivable, for instance, that the Queen might have unjustly confiscated an estate belonging to the ancestors of Brown or Jones at the time of the Rebellion—such mistakes do undoubtedly occur—and that in consequence the heir, Brown or Jones, loses all legal title to any portion of it? Can it be doubted that, the act of confiscation being unjust, the heir in question would have a moral claim of which not even the Queen could deprive him? And, supposing the Government of Ontario, to which the confiscated property had been transferred and which was enjoying its usufruct, should one day recognize this moral claim and vote for the heir a sum of money by way of compensation, would it not be thought unreasonable and absurd for some legal mind to raise the objection that in so doing the Government had "subordinated Her Majesty the Queen" to humble Brown or Jones, and "had thus proved itself unfaithful to British Constitutional usage, custom and law," and that consequently its "Act was void?" Suppose, further, that the heir in question, Brown or Jones, had become a citizen of the United States, or France, would that fact make a tittle of difference in either the moral claim, or the constitutionality of the Act in discharge of it? Would it make any difference were the heir an Archbishop or even President of one of those Republics? And yet we must surely admit either one or all of these absurdities or conclude that Mr. Armour has not succeeded in making good his position.

Mr. Armour further contends that, admitting the canon law of the Catholic Church to be what it undoubtedly is, I have made it abundantly clear "that the Act is a declaration that the Legislature of Quebec is powerless to make laws respecting Roman Catholic institutions, property and rights without the sanction of the Pope." No, it is clear even from the correspondence in the Preamble of the Act that the Legislature of Quebec can make what laws it pleases in such matters. But it is also clear that it cannot make any law respecting Roman Catholic institutions, property and rights, having the nature of a contract, agreement or compromise, in which the Roman Catholic Church is the party of the second part whose assent is necessary to make the transaction mutually binding, without the sanction of the Pope. Nor, we suppose, could the Legislature of Ontario make any such law respecting the Methodists of Ontario without the consent of the President of the Conference, or some other duly constituted official head. Would said President or other head in such a case be "unfaithfully set up over Her Majesty the Queen and the laws of the Province?"

I leave it to the judgment of the reader who will take the trouble to give to the foregoing questions and suggestions a consideration unbiassed by legal or other prepossessions, to determine whether the horns of that formidable dilemma do not resolve themselves, on closer examination, into mere paper bugaboos.

J. E. WELLS.

OTTAWA LETTER.

THE festivals in honour of the Patron Saint of Ireland have received a tremendous enthusiasm from the coincidence of recent events in London. In addition to the usual and imposing services of Sunday, a great gathering was held on Monday evening in the Opera House. Particularly excellent music could have monopolized the programme, had not the special interest centred around the anticipated speeches of two distinguished statesmen, which proved to be veritable orations. The Hon. Mr. Laurier has earned for himself the compliment of "silver-tongued" as he discourses from his seat in the House on the questions of the day. But if any improvement could be suggested, as he threw off the trammels of politics and luxuriated in the higher field of patriotism, it could only be in "golden-tongued." He was not Irish, he told the audience, but his love for France taught him something of their love for Ireland, and if he did not say much they were to know it came from the heart. He would not offend their leading characteristic—modesty—by telling them all he thought of them. But as the Mahomedans turned to the east at prayer, the race who were met in such enthusiasm before him gave the civilized world a lesson by turning towards Ireland, not only at prayers, but before and after. He touched on the sufferings their love of country had brought upon them; on the spectacle of such men as O'Brien and Dillon enduring humiliation for having said something which was distasteful to an English Chief Secretary for Ireland; on Parnell's slanderers, not satisfied with killing with the knife, but, what was more monstrous, with calumny, robbing a man of his dearest treasure—his reputation. But the attempt had, boomerang-like, rebounded on its authors, and Parnell now stood—alas! alas! for Hibernian lungs and Hibernian boots: now and then in the din one heard a cut of a word—darkest hour—dawn—before many more St. Patrick's Days—national Parliament in Dublin.

The Hon. Mr. Costigan caught up Mr. Laurier's hearers at red heat, but with no profession of silver or gold in extempore rhetoric, pronounced from his manuscript a magnificent and flowing epithet upon the wrongs of their Emerald Isle. Not only their Patron Saint had his memory wreathed in immortal language, but Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, Sheil, Burke, Plunkett, O'Connell were remembered in tributes of praise which but helped to crown the feast. The honourable gentleman showed his intimate knowledge of Carlyle and other philosophic seers, and quoted freely from their inspiring words. From these he bade his audience take courage. The blood-stained, weary way had been trod for seven centuries in toil and travail, sore discouragement, calumnies, obloquy, scourges, revilings, martyrdom; but now they saw before them the smiling path of peace, hope, trust, progress, honour, high aims. They represented "the sister, not the slave, of England, the peer of any nation in the world." Under Heaven, the Grand Old Man—(ah! the boots and the lungs!)—and the Grand Young Man—(ah! the lungs and the boots!)—have let in the light of aspiration, and the song of ransom would echo around the world, proclaiming the glory and sweetness of liberty.

A grim thought haunted me. What if we have not yet heard the end of Pigott?

Though Ottawa does not possess a Board of Trade, it once did; and the advantages of having the deceased commercial element revived have been the subject of a couple of rather important meetings. The late Board, it appears, left this earthly scene without paying all liabilities, and a committee was appointed to prepare a statement. In due time the statement submitted that the debts amounted to three or four hundred dollars. The old membership fee of ten dollars was considered out of the question, and a proposal to reduce it to five in the meantime was understood to mean three, or even two, later on; as a Board of two hundred at two dollars was worth more than one of one hundred at four dollars. For further economy, it was proposed to dispense with a paid Secretary, and to secure modest accommodation in the meantime, on the understanding that each member pledge himself to leave no stone unturned to raise Ottawa in this respect to the high position expected of her. Officers were elected, but—the liabilities of the deceased were not paid.

The Board of Health has had a matter of great interest brought under its consideration by an engineer from Montreal. With the enlargement of the city comes the question of increased vigilance over the welfare of the public physique, and this gentleman proposes to remove the scavenging danger in a manner of threefold application: 1, the garbage is to be burned; 2, it is thereby to