

average American for the Constitution is, no doubt, the disposition on the part of the victors, who alone could carry reforms, to rest and be thankful. They praise the bridge which has carried them over. They see no reason for changing a plan which has wrought so well for them, and, they being judges, for the nation.

WHATEVER opinions may be held as to the earlier political career of Lord Randolph Churchill, it cannot be denied that many of his later utterances, in Parliament and out, have the ring of true statesmanship. His references to the relations between Great Britain and the United States, in his speech at Paddington the other day, will commend themselves to the good judgment and feeling of the broadest minds in both countries. There is special force in his hint that sufficient allowance has not been made for the action of the United States Government in the Sackville matter, in view of the time at which it occurred. It is undoubtedly true that to have postponed action would have been to render it useless so far as counteracting the effects of Lord Sackville's "inexcusable blunder" was concerned. It is hard to imagine a parallel case in English politics, but if such a thing were conceivable it is not impossible that a British Government might display equal energy. No words that oratory can use can exaggerate the horror and atrocity of a war between England and America, or the blameworthiness of those speakers and writers in both nations who wantonly stir up bad blood by "menaces, sneers and sulks." Nor can there be any doubt that whatever tends to make the English and American nations firm allies, and to produce a "desirable friendship between the English-speaking races," tends so far to guarantee to humanity "the blessings of liberty and peace."

FROM whatever standpoint it may be viewed, the presentation to Lord Salisbury and Lord Hartington of an Anti-Home-Rule address signed by 864 of the 990 non-episcopal ministers in Ireland, is an event of great significance in its bearing upon the Irish Question. It is quite possible that these Protestant clergymen may view the question in its ecclesiastical rather than its political aspects. They may be, unconsciously, more affected by their dread of danger to Nonconformity than by their sense of justice to Ireland. But, none the less, the fact of their opposition is a very real and tangible fact, and one that will have to be reckoned with by the promoters of the Irish movement. In the absence of any formulated scheme showing what Home Rule is to be, what rights it will concede to minorities, and what guarantees it can give for the protection of those rights, it is impossible to know just how far the clergymen in question may be warranted in assuming that no safeguards can be devised adequate for the protection of those rights against the encroachment of a majority clothed with executive authority. Be that as it may, the incident shows the existence of an intelligent and influential body of opponents to the Parnellite and Gladstonian programme, of whom hitherto little account has been taken. Another element of complication is thus revealed in a problem whose difficulties were already sufficiently numerous and formidable to have driven any statesman less sanguine than Gladstone to the verge of despair.

CONSIDERABLE interest is being aroused in England by the statement that Westminster Abbey, the great National Mausoleum, has space for but two or three more statues and busts, and that not more than fifteen or twenty more burials can possibly take place within its walls. Seeing that there is no break, and no prospect of one, in the procession of illustrious men who are daily nearing the tomb, the question is becoming a pressing one to a people who have no disposition to depart from their traditional methods in the disposal of their honoured dead. Amongst other proposers of schemes Mr. Shaw Lefevre advocates in the *Nineteenth Century* the erection of a Monumental Chapel adjacent to the Abbey. Others favour the addition of a cloister to the Abbey itself. To the lovers of the old architecture the latter proposal seems little short of sacrilege, while the former would give a modern building which would be neither in fact nor in form a part of the venerable structure, or entitled to share in its hallowed associations. And yet, unless the deep-rooted and time-honoured customs of the nation are to be given up, something must shortly be done. There are at the present moment almost enough figures of heroic mould treading on the very verge of the shadowy realms, to fill the vacant places, for which the shuffling off this mortal coil will make them eligible, in the sacred pile.

A RECENT number of the London *Times* contains a translation of Bismarck's famous Insurance Laws, and of the first Report of the German Imperial Insurance Bureau. Great interest attaches to the operation of

these laws, constituting, as they no doubt do, the most serious attempt that has yet been made by the Government of any nation to meet and forestall Socialism on its own ground. The scheme is as yet imperfectly developed, the most difficult by far of all the problems presented—that of making provision against the old age of the labourer—being still untouched. Moreover, the two Acts that have been passed, relating respectively to sickness and accident, have not yet been long enough in operation to warrant any sweeping conclusions. In the case of sickness the individual workman is responsible for his own insurance, every workman being compelled to take a step analogous to joining a club or friendly society. With regard to accident the compulsion falls upon the employers, who are obliged to insure. They do this, however, not singly but in associations resembling those that have come into existence spontaneously in English manufacturing centres. In Germany, these associations are, as above intimated, called into existence by law, and act under an Imperial Insurance Department, which contains members appointed by the Emperor, as well as members elected by the employers. Trouble is already arising in consequence of the unwillingness of employers to give the necessary leave to the workmen delegates who have to attend the meetings of the courts of arbitration and of the Imperial Insurance Bureau. The difficulties are neither few nor small, apart from the State control and compulsion to which men trained under English institutions would scarcely submit. These difficulties will be immensely increased when the problem of insuring against old age is attacked. It is evident that the compulsory payments will press most hardly on those whose earnings give them the smallest margins, and who consequently have most need of insurance. One excellent feature of the German system is the absolute security of the Government insurance as contrasted with the financial unsoundness of many of the benefit societies and other agencies to which the funds are entrusted under the voluntary system.

RUSSIAN military movements are once more creating much uneasiness in Germany, while Austria is kept in a state of chronic unrest and distrust by the operation of the same cause. The reasons assigned by the Russian Government for the re-distribution of the army are very far from satisfactory to the watchful military authorities of both the great border nations. Russia's appeal for a new loan adds materially to the prevailing uneasiness, though the fact that one-third of the whole proceeds of the loan is to be used for purposes of conversion tends somewhat to allay the excitement. The *Post's* warnings to Germans against investing in the Russian bonds, on the ground that the purpose of the loan is to strengthen Russia's credit, and enable her presently to raise a larger loan for war purposes, seems far-fetched, or would do so in the case of a nation whose every movement was not regarded with suspicion. It is probable that Emperor William's speech at the opening of the Reichstag will be framed with a view to allaying popular apprehensions.

IN common with many others we reckoned without our host in assuming that Boulanger's career as a political agitator was ended by Premier Floquet's sword-thrust. The redoubtable General is again to the fore, and this time with better prospects of success than on any previous occasion. The mercurial Frenchmen seem to be in a state of mind favourable for the success of almost any man and movement appealing strongly to the popular imagination. The proposals now made for the revision of the Constitution bid fair to afford every opportunity for the display of successful strategy by a demagogue, and the veil of reticence and mystery under which Boulanger manages so well to conceal his ideas, or the want of them, is no doubt leading multitudes to look towards him as the coming man. Even the Imperialists seem disposed to aid him for their own purposes. The report of the Committee on Revision of the Constitution in favour of abolishing both Senate and Presidency shows that Radicalism has made astounding strides. With a people more self-poised and qualified by long and successful experience in democratic methods, the simplicity and directness of rule by a single assembly of representatives, without complicated checks or safeguards, might commend it as an innovation worth trying. In fickle France the experiment is almost certainly foredoomed to failure. It may be pretty safely prophesied that, if made, it will prove but a short step to a dictatorship, a monarchy, or anarchy, with the chances in favour of the last.

ALL who love liberty and mercy will be glad that England, Germany, and other European Powers, are at last uniting to check, if they cannot exterminate, the East African slave trade. That trade has hitherto flourished in spite of what England could do, almost single-handed as she has been, to prevent. The co-operation of other nations, aided by the right of