

an authority self-constituted and self-interested; it is enforced by boycott, and compels individual dealers to discriminate against individuals. Is not this a broad, a radical difference? Mr. Blain will, we presume, object to the word "boycott." The reader is at liberty to substitute any other word which more fairly expresses the fact. We can think of none.

ONE word more. Mr. Blain says, "Individual action combined with associated effort are the forces which alone can permanently establish the principles of right." He also approves our example of the "Labourers' Union," whose object he admits to be reasonable and right, and, if we understand his meaning, to be similar in kind to that of the Grocers' Combine, "except, of course, they do not use the weapons referred to." But is not the exception the really important matter? No one can condemn the object of the Grocers' Guild, as described by its members. Exception is taken only to the weapons used. Why do not the Labourers' Unions use those weapons? Is it not because the Government; that is, the law; that is, the people, will not permit them to do so? They do not recognize the weapons as fair, or such as any voluntary association has a right to use? Does Mr. Blain think otherwise? Would he be willing that the Labourers' Unions should be allowed the free use of the "boycott," or whatever we may call the weapon? If not, must he not admit that he is a little illogical in claiming for the smaller guild with which he is associated the right to use it? That is exactly the question at issue, as we understand it.

THE resolution of the Toronto Parks and Gardens Committee to advise the City Council to forbid all preaching and public speaking in the city parks, and the alleged disposition of the council to regard the proposal favourably are movements of much greater importance than may appear on the surface. The question raised is much deeper and wider than that of putting a stop to the offensive rantings of a few would-be demagogues in the open air of a Sunday afternoon. It is really a question affecting the liberties of the people. However disagreeable to people of culture and refinement may be the style and matter of some of these harangues, it would be folly to put all open air speaking indiscriminately in the same category. There seems no reason to doubt that many of the open air addresses may have a distinctly improving and elevating influence upon those to whom they are addressed. Those who do not care to listen to these fervid appeals are not obliged to do so. They have but to keep at a sufficient distance. If any of the orators abuse the privilege of free speech, by creating disorder or inciting to wrong-doing, let them be dealt with on their merits. To prohibit all open air speech because it is occasionally abused would be unworthy of our free city. The easiest and shortest way to preserve order often seems to be to prohibit every demonstration that may chance to lead to disorder. But that is the method of despotisms, not of free governments. The less the freedom of the citizens is curtailed by arbitrary restrictions and prohibitions—not absolutely necessary to the preservation of order and public decorum—the better for all concerned. The authorities should be prompt and stern to punish disturbers of the peace, but they should also be the guardians, rather than the enemies, of all liberties not necessarily incompatible with good order. Since the above was in type we have noticed with gratification that the City Council has rejected by a decisive majority the advice of its committee, and resolved to maintain the right of free speech in the parks.

JOHN BRIGHT is a short and commonplace name, but it is one which will live in history as long as the memory of Great Britain survives. The name itself, in its unpretentious simplicity eminently befitted the man. Born of the people, educated amongst the people, he was to the end of his public career a man of the people, and for many years the foremost champion of their rights and liberties. From the memorable day of the repeal of the Corn Laws, down through the last eventful half century of British history, no great popular reform was achieved with which his name is not associated and which did not receive one of its most powerful impulses from the simple and matchless eloquence of his advocacy. It would, perhaps, be too much to claim for the departed orator a place amongst the great statesmen who have stood at the helm and shaped the course of the British nation during its troubled but unique career. His places of power were the

rostrum and the floor of Parliament, rather than the Government benches, or the high councils of the state. He shrank, possibly with instinctive wisdom, from the responsibility of a seat in the Cabinet, and Mr. Gladstone has graphically told of the tremendous pressure of persuasion by which he was prevailed upon to join his Administration. Perhaps the crowning excellence in John Bright's noble character was his lofty singleness of purpose. Unassumingly but unflinchingly he always stood forth as the representative of the moral element in politics and government. His profoundest conviction was that righteousness exalteth a nation. His judgment as to what in a specific case was the right and the wrong was not necessarily infallible. His antipathy to war was unyielding and led him to raise his voice against the policy of the nation on two memorable occasions, those, viz., of the Crimean War, and the bombardment of Alexandria. Both transactions are yet, perhaps, *sub judice*, but it is highly probable in regard to both that the verdict of history may yet be in his favour. Great Britain is certainly made poorer by his death.

THE death of John Bright has naturally recalled to memory the stirring times of the great American Civil War, and the old controversy respecting the attitudes of the public men of England towards the respective combatants. Without wishing to disparage in the slightest degree the noble qualities of mind and heart displayed by the deceased Tribune of the People on that occasion, it may not be amiss to call attention to one or two facts that are often lost sight of in the discussion. The great wonder to many has always been that the leaders of thought in a nation renowned for its antipathy to slavery could have failed to give the full weight of their sympathies to the North, in the crisis of its struggle with the slave-holding oligarchy. But the fact is that the war in its inception and during the first years of its continuance was not, strictly speaking, a war for the destruction of slavery, but for national integrity as opposed to the right of secession. Was it so very strange that those who had been so long accustomed to hear the shouts of American patriots boasting of the freedom of their self-ruling millions as contrasted with the peoples of the Old World under monarchical institutions, should have made the mistake of supposing that it must be contrary to the principles of that glorious Constitution to retain and compel by force of arms the allegiance of a number of sovereign states, after the latter had not only expressed their wish to depart but had proved themselves ready to fight to the death for the right of self-rule they were already supposed to enjoy. As is well known, President Lincoln himself emphatically declared during all the earlier phases of the struggle that if he could save the Union without freeing the slaves, the slaves would not be freed. Thus the war was clearly and ostensibly a war of secession, of which the freeing of the slaves became at last a necessary incident. Had the struggle been directly and avowedly one for the overthrow of slavery, British sympathies could not have been withheld without the gravest inconsistency.

THE coming International Marine Conference in Washington will be an event of no little importance to the Maritime nations. The chief work of the Conference will be, we suppose, the revision and amendment of the rules governing the movements of vessels on the high seas, and the making of new regulations, where necessary, in regard to all matters affecting their common safety. The attention of the members of the Conference will, it may readily be inferred, be specially directed to the consideration of the possibility of devising a better system of signals and rules for the prevention of collisions in dark nights or dense fogs. Some statistics furnished by contemporaries set in a striking light the great and growing necessity for the exercise of the utmost wisdom and vigilance to guard against such disasters. The world's commerce has grown until the bosom of the broad Atlantic is dotted with vessels of all sizes and descriptions, moving at varying rates of speed. What adds most of all to the danger, is that many of these vessels are now huge steamships, dashing through the waters with a swiftness unknown a generation ago. According to the statistics referred to, there were afloat in 1881, no less than 54,976 vessels of over 100 tons. Of these, 6,392 were steamers. The total number of seamen was 1,693,000; the total value of shipping and merchandise carried at sea was \$7,000,000,000; the annual loss of life by marine casualties was estimated at 4,400, and the total number of vessels over 100 tons annually lost was 2,193—about

800,000 tons—their value, including cargo, being placed at about \$230,000,000. All these figures would, no doubt, need to be considerably increased to bring the facts up to date. The result is that, whereas a half century ago the chances of a collision in mid ocean, or even off the coast of either hemisphere, might be regarded as so small as hardly to be worth taking into consideration, those chances have now, under the changed conditions, become so great that the use of every precaution is imperatively demanded. If the deliberations of the Conference result, as there is every reason to hope, in materially lessening the dangers of disaster at sea, the United States will deserve the gratitude of the sea-going nations for having brought it about.

A REPUBLIC without a Parliament seems to the mind impregnated with modern ideas of popular representation and ministerial responsibility about as intelligible as would be a play without actors, or a kingdom without a monarch. And yet this is the programme which General Boulanger now sets before the people of France. We have waited and watched for some fuller exposition of this singular policy, but none has as yet come to hand. Probably none has been given. A certain element of reserve and mystery is, we suppose, essential in such a *role* as that which the French agitator is just now so successfully playing. It is really a great advance that he has at last declared himself distinctly in favour of the continuance of the Republic in any form. One would have supposed that this declaration, combined as it was in his Tours' speech with an unequivocal repudiation of all restoration projects, would have at once deprived him of his Monarchist allies. The fact that this result has not followed leaves ground for suspicion of good faith, though it is quite conceivable that in the desperate straits in which the Monarchist factions find themselves they are ready to clutch at any disturbing project having revolution among its possible consequences. It is conceivable, too, that the restorationists may understand the projected Republic without a Parliament to mean a Republic with Boulanger as Dictator. This, in its turn, may be regarded as but a brief halting place midway between the Republic and the Monarchy. But, interpret passing events as we may, it seems impossible to doubt that Boulanger's recent speeches and conduct have rather added to the dignity of his pose, and improved his chances of ultimate success in his purpose, whatever that purpose may be.

THERE seems strong reason, on the other hand, for very grave doubts as to the wisdom of the Cabinet's resolve to ask the Chamber of Deputies to prosecute Boulanger. The refusal of Bouchese, the public prosecutor, to sign the indictment, on the ground that there was not sufficient basis for a charge of conspiracy, is very suggestive. In view of the present temper of the French people and the astounding popularity of Boulanger, the failure of such a prosecution would be most disastrous to the Ministry, and might precipitate the crisis it was designed to avert. Unless the Ministers have the clearest, most irrefragable proofs to sustain their charges, it would seem to be madness to press them, and thus add to all other sources of Boulanger's popularity that of popular sympathy with a persecuted patriot. Boulanger has, it seems, defied or rather hailed the threatened prosecution, declaring that all his conduct has been open and above board, that he has nothing to conceal and nothing to dread from any investigation. On the other hand, the necessity for doing something no doubt presses hard upon the Cabinet. By vigorous action alone can it demonstrate its right to be, or justify its continued existence. The situation is critical, almost desperate. The continued and growing popularity of Boulanger proves at least that the dissatisfaction of the people is deep-seated and intense, and that he is the mouthpiece and representative of that dissatisfaction. A great state trial, with Boulanger as its chief figure, will almost inevitably lead to serious trouble, whether he is convicted or acquitted.

CONSIDERABLE press comment has been called forth by the recent appointments by the Governments of Great Britain and the United States, respectively, of Ministers to represent them at Washington and London. It seems now to be generally conceded that in the person of Sir Julian Pauncefote the Salisbury Administration has a Minister of unusual tact, knowledge and ability. The appointment of Robert Lincoln has met with general approval, or with that mild censure of political opponents which is next door to approval, in the United States. It is probably