

## The Spectator.

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We return our sincere thanks to Mr. James Fee N.Y. for the mark of approbation which he so kindly sent to us.

A great stir is still being made in Canadian politics. Of late there has developed an intense republican spirit, which seems destined to separate Canada from Mother England; but there is a great difference of opinion in respect to total independence and annexation to the United States. In either case, the feeling entertained is a happy one for the Dominion. Not to be free where all is freedom has much retarded her growth; and, annexed or independent, her fine resources will have a much more probable chance of development than in her present situation.

The world is full of irreligious books, and so many and great are the reasons for shunning them that no exhortation is necessary. When we consider those who have lost all trust in God we cannot but feel a mingling of pity and scorn. We pity them, because they throw away their chance of happiness; we scorn them for denying the Author of their existence. The lives and deaths of such men teach us a valuable lesson,—that we should avoid the path by which they came to their unbelief; and since unworthy books is a great propagator of irreligion we should zealously shun them. It is an easy matter to avoid works whose mission is proclaimed; but when the snares are laid in books in which they are not expected to be found a most diligent eye must be kept upon our reading. Words thoughtlessly indited often lead to grave consequences, and in order to preserve ourselves from the danger of these

pernicious results the utmost caution should be used to remove the cause from youthful minds, often too precipitate in drawing conclusions. The danger, of course, depends greatly upon the disposition of the reader; but, no matter how well-disposed a person may be, much and indiscriminate reading of irreligious articles cannot fail to bring about results more or less injurious to the reader. *Ingersollism* may not be the ultimate effect, but the faith in God may be so much shaken as to render a person unhappy.

There still appears no great change in the condition of Ireland. Evictions continue, and families are left destitute of shelter. Coercive measures have failed in their effects, whilst the Land Law has proved to be but the prelude to added trouble and suffering. It, by no means, seems to bring forth the exact issue which Mr. Gladstone had in view when he labored so zealously for its passage; but even he is not an infallible solver of the best means for ameliorating the condition of an oppressed people. Ireland's hopes are not, however, entirely dimmed; and, as a single star so long ago guided the Magi to the crib of the Redeemer, so may the star of Ireland's faith in her priests, still bright and growing brighter, gain for her the reward of all her sufferings, in a return of her former honor and plenty. The few cases in which reductions have been made, open out to us a new scene in the tragedy of the "Island Queen." The landlords claim that they are now reduced to an income too small to support the splendor to which they have become accustomed; but they will, no doubt, be amply compensated by the sympathy of their English brothers, who find in them more fitting objects of pity than they found in the starving children of a persecuted race.

In every University and College of any note whatever we find institutions whose chief aim is the furtherance of intellectual development amongst the students. That the object of their formation is generally achieved remains plainly evident from the fact that a great, and sometimes surprising, improvement is made by every one of their members. Of all these institutions, however, the Debating Society holds the first place, and cannot be too highly appreciated; for none other is more fruitful of good effects, nor in any other is our time more profitably spent; yet, after careful observation, it