

been operative in the expectation, which has much to support it, that what our neighbours refused to concede as a return either for the privilege of inshore fishing, the value of which they deny, or for the permission to "touch and trade" which they claim as right on the broad grounds of international usage and comity, they will shortly grant on purely commercial principles, and on its own merits. This consideration is certainly entitled to much weight. It seems, in fact, to be that suggested by Sir Charles Tupper himself, in his interview with the Montreal correspondent of the *Empire*. "It was impossible," he says in effect, if correctly reported, "to better our commercial relations with the United States, so long as the public mind was inflamed over the terribly irritating question of the fisheries. The causes of that irritation having been removed by the Treaty now agreed upon, both countries will be placed in a position to look with hope towards much improved commercial relations." Whether this line of argument, sound as it may be in itself, does not reflect somewhat severely upon the previous diplomacy of the Government of which Sir Charles is a member, need not here be discussed.

THE monotonous smoothness which has thus far characterized the proceedings of the Ontario Legislature was broken for a time one day last week by one of those recriminatory breezes which add nothing either to the dignity or to the usefulness of legislative bodies. Such scenes would seem better suited to the playground of a set of wrangling school boys than to the chamber of a deliberative assembly, though it must be admitted that precedents for them are not wanting even in the highest Parliament in the realm. Most thoughtful persons, however, who listened to or read the altercations referred to in the Ontario House, must have felt that it would augur better for purification of political methods if members on both sides were more anxious to purge their own skirts from the stain of corruption than to fasten that stain upon those of their opponents, and were but half as successful in doing so. The gleeful eagerness with which some members of either party seek to convict their opponents of the most disgraceful and corrupt practices is anything but edifying or hopeful. Charges and counter-charges are hurled across the chamber in tones too exultant for even righteous indignation, which, if believed, should be productive of the deepest humiliation. There was, however, one redeeming feature in this rather unseemly wrangle. It called forth from the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, respectively, emphatic denials of specific charges which have been repeated in respect to each till they had come to be very generally believed.

It is to be hoped that Lady Dufferin's early removal from India may not check the philanthropic project in which she has taken so deep and womanly an interest—that of supplying female medical aid for the women of India. The *London Illustrated News* contained a few weeks since portraits of some of those whom Lady Dufferin has in training for the work, and also information in regard to the character and need of the work itself. All who have any conception of the extreme seclusion which custom enforces upon the women of the East, the ignorant and superstitious practices to which they are subject, the unhealthiness of their modes of life, and the extent to which they are debarred from treatment by male practitioners, will understand how great would be the blessing brought to them by the presence amongst them of a supply of skilled female physicians, nurses, etc. In a letter received a short time since by a lady friend in Montreal Lady Dufferin explains that the £50,000 asked for for this project are as yet far from being subscribed, and intimates that any manifestation of interest and sympathy from Canada will be particularly grateful to her.

WHAT shall be done with and for the unemployed and famishing poor, is one of the hardest problems which Christian civilization has now to solve. It may be that the sum total of abject poverty and suffering even in England, where the cry of the starving thousands waxes exceedingly bitter, is not greater than in former days, but only that it is being brought more into notice by contrast with the increasing comfort of the well-to-do labourers on the one hand, and with the abounding wealth of the middle and upper classes on the other. But, from whatever cause, there seems good reason to believe that never before were the gaunt visages of hungry men, women, and children set so prominently before the eyes of the nation. And never before, there is good reason to believe, was the question of how the national reproach is to be wiped away, and those at least who are able and willing to work given the opportunity they seek to earn their bread, the subject of so much earnest inquiry and thought. The result promised is an early and great reform in English methods of dealing with pauperism. As some one has recently expressed it, "it is evident that in her future dealings with pauperism England will reserve her charities for those who cannot

work, and her penalties for those who will not work; but to those who at low wages both will and can work, the work shall be granted." Many projects are devised, numbers of which fail, but some of which are succeeding admirably. Amongst the latter is the experiment made last year, and repeated this year, at Chelsea with the most gratifying results. As described in a recent article in the *Contemporary Review*, this experiment was simply one in road-making. It was taken charge of by the local vestry without the aid of contractors. The pay ranged from 4d. per hour for "hacking" to 9d. per hour for paving. Though it was doubted when the offer was made if one hundred men would present themselves three hundred were on hand the first day. The writer of the article says that to his own knowledge there were among them carpenters, plasterers, bricklayers, fitters, shoemakers, watchmakers, printers, hatters, gentlemen's servants, and tailors. The severe work tried many at first, but with the good food they were able to procure there was soon a marvellous improvement in strength and physique. "One scarcely knew the men again." Two thousand pounds was distributed in this way; but not only was many a wife and her little ones saved from hunger and suffering, but a good road was built at a price "which could not be bettered for the quality of the work." The story is eloquent in its pathos and suggestiveness.

THE general surprise caused by the announcement of Lord Dufferin's resignation of the Governor-Generalship of India will scarcely be lessened by that of his appointment as Ambassador to Italy. Taken in connection with the reticence of the Government in replying to questions in the Commons concerning its relations to the Great Powers, and its correspondence with them on subjects connected with the present warlike demonstrations, the appointment may be thought suggestive of a secret understanding with the Italian Government. It gives, in fact, some colour to the rumour that Lord Salisbury is personally committed to a defence of the Italian coast, by means of a British fleet, in case of an attack upon that Power. Yet it is hard to believe that Lord Salisbury and his colleagues would be rash enough to implicate Great Britain beforehand and unnecessarily in a great European struggle, in which neither her interests nor her honour are directly involved, especially when to do so would not only be contrary to the views and wishes of the great majority of the nation, but would almost surely precipitate the conflict which has been so long imminent on the borders of India.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL'S motion for a Commission of Inquiry into the charges of malfeasance against the Metropolitan Board of Works has been agreed to in the British Commons. The list of alleged abuses of trust into which it will be the duty of the Commission to inquire, as recited in Lord Randolph's speech, is certainly a most formidable one. If one-half or one-fourth of the allegations prove to be well founded, American cities will shortly have to yield the bad pre-eminence they have hitherto maintained in municipal corruption. The enormous scale on which the operations of the London Board have necessarily been carried on have afforded opportunities and temptations unique in their magnitude, and there is unhappily reason to fear beyond the power of ordinary civic or aldermanic virtue to withstand. Astounding revelations may be expected, and the investigation will give an impetus to the impending revolution in the civic administration of the great city which is in itself a kingdom and a little world.

IF recent Berlin despatches may be relied on Russia is already moving to precipitate the crisis for which Prince Bismarck supposes her to be preparing. If the Czar is demanding a substantial recognition of the right of Russia to control Bulgaria and Roumania, or in other words, permission to depose Prince Ferdinand, remove the Sobranje, and replace both with creatures of his own, he is making a demand which he must know full well will not be granted. There seems little doubt that the Bulgarian question is to be made the occasion of the "turn of events," in anticipation of which all these immense armaments are being equipped. Quite in harmony with the German despatch is another from London stating that it is semi-officially announced that Russia will shortly call upon the signers of the Treaty of Berlin to notify the Porte that the election of Prince Ferdinand was illegal. It will not lessen the difficulty or the danger of the complication that Russia's interpretation of the Treaty may be literally correct. The other signatory Powers are tacitly agreed, it would seem, to recognize the *de facto* situation as affecting the letter of the Treaty, while Bulgaria herself has in the meantime reached a position in which her own preferences become an important factor in the problem. There is too much reason to fear that the prognostications of a great war drama, to be opened during the coming spring, may be fearfully realized.