

tion the blame. It must be admitted, however, that from this distant point of view, the action of Lieutenant-Governor Royal in proroguing the Legislature seems decidedly high-handed. To whatever extent it may or may not have been the design of the Dominion Parliament to establish responsible government at Regina, it can scarcely be in accordance with its purpose that it should be possible for the Lieutenant-Governor, by his own fiat, to prorogue the Assembly under circumstances which cause prorogation to have the effect of not only rendering nugatory the whole work of the session, but of continuing in power for an indefinite period an Executive which had failed to retain the support of a majority of the people's representatives. Anything much more anomalous than the state of affairs which has resulted from his action is not easily conceived. Four weeks' work of the Legislature counts, it appears, for nothing, because no bill was assented to. Everything was left unfinished and the result is so far exactly the same as if no session had been held, with the additional and certainly not unimportant circumstance that whereas the former Executive, had no session been called, might have fairly been supposed to have the confidence of the Representatives, the existing one has now been clearly proved to be unable to command that confidence. On the whole, and in the absence of knowledge of any facts to warrant such an exercise of the prerogative, if indeed any facts could justify it, it seems hard to resist the conclusion that either the Lieut. Governor did, as the Opposition charge, play the part of a partisan, or that he has shown his reluctance to discontinue the petty absolutism which it was the design of the new legislation to render unnecessary and impossible.

WE referred, a few weeks since, to the effort that was being made by the Attorney-General of New Jersey to have the leasing of the Central Railroad of that State by the Port Reading Railroad declared unlawful by the courts. This action has, it appears, been so far successful. Chancellor McGill, before whom the case was brought, has given a decision which grants the injunction asked for, and prohibits the Reading corporation from operating the New Jersey Central. The judgment is interesting and somewhat remarkable by reason of the broad and high grounds on which it is based. The Court refuses to be guided simply by the letter of the law. It lays special stress upon considerations of equity. It goes even further and declares the lease not only void because it was *ultra vires* of the Company, under the laws of the State, but "void also on the ground of public policy, in that it tended to the creation of a monopoly by stifling competition between the contracting corporations, and thereby to increase the price of anthracite coal to the inhabitants of the State." On this principle the Chancellor brushed ruthlessly aside, as "disguise and evasion," certain technical pleas on which the defendants no doubt relied for a verdict. To their further contention that the monopoly may be used "to introduce economies and cheapen coal," he replies that it is possible, but that "it does violence to our knowledge of human nature to expect such a result." A still more convincing answer might have been given had the judge had before him certain figures which have been published by the *Evening Post* of New York, showing that the September prices of the varieties of coal known as "egg" and "stove" are this year \$4.40 and \$4.75 respectively, whereas they were last year \$3.60 and \$3.75 respectively, and the year before \$3.50 each. It is scarcely probable that the matter will be allowed to rest here. The wily capitalists, having such enormous gains at stake, are not likely to be easily baulked, and may hope to obtain a more favourable verdict in a higher court. But it will surely be a good day for the people when the courts shall agree to base their decisions more largely on such broad considerations of equity and of public policy as those laid down by Chancellor McGill of New Jersey, though it may be that such methods would not be free from special dangers of a different character.

ACCORDING to the results of a special enquiry in which the *New York Tribune* has been engaged, which results it has now given to the public in pamphlet form, there are four thousand and forty seven millionaires in the United States. Of these no less than one thousand one hundred and three belong to the city of New York. These are believed to be worth from one to one hundred and fifty millions each. "Not only is it true," says the *Christian Union*, "that the real estate in this city is worth as much as all the real estate between the Potomac and the

Rio Grande, but, according to the *Tribune's* report, the one thousand millionaires of this city could now buy out all the property in the old slave-holding States, and evict the inhabitants by the process of their own laws." We do not suppose that there can be any doubt that the process which has led to the accumulation of so large a portion of the wealth of the Republic in a few hands is still going on. The conditions which make the process possible still exist. And the same conditions exist, the same process is going on, on a smaller scale, and perhaps in a smaller degree, in Canada. To what end is such a state of things tending? This is a question which is worth the most anxious consideration of statesmen and patriots and philanthropists in both countries. It does not necessarily follow that because the rich are growing richer, the poor must be growing poorer. But it does almost inevitably follow that the chasm between rich and poor is growing wider and wider. It also follows, "as the night the day," that, in consequence of the tremendous power of money in politics and legislation, the governing power is, unless counteracted by other tendencies of an opposite character, passing into the hands of the plutocratic few. A more practical question is whether there must not be something radically wrong in the constitution of the civil society when such tendencies and results are possible. Can it be just and right that it should be possible for the few to absorb to so alarming an extent the products of the labour of the masses, for it must be granted, we think, that this enormous wealth is produced mainly by the toil of the labourers? Could such a result follow from anything but a wrong disposal of natural and artificial monopolies, which should belong to the whole people, and in the benefits of which all have naturally the same right to share? This is, as we understand it, one of the stock arguments of the Socialists. It is a view of the case which must sooner or later be seriously regarded by those who would prevent the spread of socialism, as inimical to the well-being and safety of organized society.

THE article on "The Situation in the East," by a well informed contributor in our last number, will have given our readers a clear view of the state of affairs in Afghanistan and of the opinion prevalent in many quarters with regard to the tactics and the ultimate objects of Russian movements in that quarter of the world, and especially of the recent affair on the Pamir plateau. Of course all will not agree with the strong views expressed in the last paragraph of our contributor's article, but that is a matter of political opinion into which we need not now enter. If the latest despatch from Vienna may be relied on, it may be taken to indicate that, whatever the ultimate designs of Russia, she has no wish to provoke a dispute with Great Britain at present. Those who have confidence in the Gladstone Administration might adduce the fact that the Czar is now checking the ardour of his general in the Pamir country and showing a conciliatory disposition, to prove that he has a wholesome dread of offending the present British Government. This would have about as much plausibility, perhaps, as belongs to the conjecture that the Pamir aggression was the outcome (by anticipation, as it must have been) of the advent to power of a Liberal administration. The fact evidently is that, however willing the Russian autocrat may be to have his officers test the temper of the British Government and people, from time to time, with a view to seeing just how far he may proceed in strengthening his position in the East and preparing for a future struggle, he realizes that his Empire is at the present time very far from being in a position to challenge or risk a conflict with any great power. It is highly probable, if not certain, that Lord Salisbury asked the Russian Government for an explanation of the presence and operations of its "exploring expedition" in the Pamirs, before he gave up the seals of office. The answer will, now, of course, reach Lord Salisbury's successor in office, if it has not already done so. It is not unlikely that there may be a close connection between that correspondence and the alleged displeasure of the Czar at the excessive zeal of his officers which has led to it. It is pretty certain that any British administration which should tolerate any flagrant aggression of Russia in the East, would run a very brief course.

HOWEVER little room there may be for serious difference of opinion among British statesmen with regard to the attitude to be maintained towards Russian aggressions in the East, there is, undoubtedly, a more serious divergence touching the question of the continued occupa-

tion of Egypt. As we write, the latest despatch, evidently from a source unfriendly to the present Government, states that the process of evacuation is already about to be commenced, by the withdrawal of one of the strongest regiments from that country. The correspondent goes on to give with some detail the alleged policy of the Government. The garrison is, according to this information, to be withdrawn from Cairo, and the whole of the British troops remaining in Egypt to be concentrated at Alexandria, and the force at that place to be gradually reduced, the chief reliance for the future being placed upon the garrisons in Cyprus, from which reinforcements could be sent at short notice, should any emergency make their presence in Egypt necessary. While this programme may be based largely on conjecture, it does not lack probability. Nor is it impossible that it may be the wisest and best policy. The question turns upon the present condition of the country and the ability of the present ruler to sustain himself without the immediate support of British bayonets. If the sole desire is to promote the best interests of Egypt, and so of all who are interested in her prosperity, it is just possible that that end may be better attained by gradually and tentatively throwing the people upon their own resources, with a view to developing that power of self-help and self-reliance which can never be gained by any people so long as they rely wholly upon a foreign arm for guidance and support. Nor is it by any means likely that the cautious reduction of the British troops would be, by any means, equivalent to the withdrawal of British influence. But, as we pointed out in a recent article, the main reason which is urged by the advocates of withdrawal is the moral one. The honour and good faith of Great Britain are, it is urged, involved in the faithful observance of the conditions and pledges upon which the powers gave their consent to the occupation. If a straightforward, satisfactory answer to this argument has been made, we have hitherto failed to see it, much as we should like to do so. Strange to say, we have seen strong articles, even in leading Toronto papers, in which the policy of withdrawal was unsparingly condemned, without the slightest reference being made to this supreme question of the national honour.

THE Cholera scourge, whose steady, relentless, westward march has been a matter of anxiety and dread to those who have marked its course for some years past, has at length not only reached Europe and England but even sent its vanguard across the Atlantic. At the date at which we write, it has, however, failed to get a secure foothold on either British or American soil, or to any great extent on that of Europe, with the exception of a very few places in which, as in unfortunate Hamburg, its presence is readily accounted for. It is, of course, quite too soon for the people of the countries which have thus far succeeded, by dint of extraordinary precautions, in keeping it at arm's length, to begin to felicitate themselves on the result, or to indulge in a sense of security. At the same time, sufficient evidence has already been afforded, if indeed any were needed, to establish the possibility of successfully warding off the dread scourge, by the rigid observance and enforcement of the proper sanitary conditions. The city of Vienna, notwithstanding comparative nearness to the scene of its ravages, bids fair to escape unscathed, by virtue of its excellent enforcement of scientific and sensible preventive measures. The activity of the Boards of Health in Great Britain, Canada, and the United States, combined with the lateness of the season, give good reason to hope that the ravages of the disease may be effectively met and stayed at the infected ships and the quarantine stations. In any event a most valuable object-lesson will have been given, from which all governing bodies, political and municipal, should not fail to profit, with the result that on a future occasion there shall be no need for extraordinary exertions at the last moment, when it may be too late to escape, but that our cities and towns shall be kept constantly under such sanitary conditions that the people may enjoy a well-grounded sense of security against the whole class of diseases which are the offspring of filth and depend upon its presence for their propagation.

WE are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the superiority of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things! Each has what the other has not; each completes the other; they are in nothing alike; and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give.—*Ruskin*.