

front, or to shut off the people and business of the city from access to any portion of the lake shore, above all, to permit it to expropriate and hold in fee simple any portion of the water lots not actually necessary for railway purposes, would be treason to the best interests of the city and to future generations of citizens. However the letter of the law may seem to favour the claim of the company in this respect, common sense assures us that such a use of the powers of expropriation could never have been contemplated or intended. Expropriation of lands in a great and growing city, and especially along its water front, which may be at no distant day thronged with the masts of commerce, differs *toto celo* from the ordinary uses and manifest intentions of the powers conferred by the Act. The position of the city seems to have been gravely compromised by former hasty action, but it is hard to believe that the Railway Committee of the Privy Council can ask it to give way from these reasonable positions.

THE *Nation*, of New York, commenting on advices which it may be hoped are well-founded, to the effect that the Imperial Government has no objection to the Weldon Extradition Act, says that this is a very important step in international law and practice, and one which might be and probably will be imitated generally among civilized States, after a brief trial of the experiment by Canada. "For the first time, we believe," says the *Nation*, "the principle has been recognized that the systematic surrender of fugitives from justice need not depend upon mutual agreements, on the principle of give-and-take, but that it may be properly conducted on the same lines as those which define and govern the surrender of culprits from one court jurisdiction to another in the same country. Also, that the reasons which apply to the surrender for crimes of a high grade, such as murder, robbery, and forgery, apply also to the lesser offences of larceny, embezzlement, and the obtaining of goods under false pretences. The surrender of criminals by the sovereign power, without any treaty or law of any kind, is not infrequent, and there has been one conspicuous case of this kind in our own history—that of Arguelles, the slave trader, who was delivered to the Spanish authorities by order of Secretary Seward. But such transactions are dangerous from every point of view. The Canadian Government, it seems to us, has marked an advance in civilization." It is worthy of note that if the Canadian innovation be allowed and prove workable, it will remove at a stroke the chronic difficulty which has prevented the completion of a comprehensive extradition treaty between Great Britain and the United States. Each has but to legislate according to its own views and make its own definitions and limitations. There will be very little difference in the results reached, and no friction in reaching them.

DEMOCRACY is still on its trial not only in the United States but in Canada, and not only on this continent but over the world. Is the tendency of politics upward or downward in respect to morality? Upon the answer to this question depend the stability and permanence of all democratic systems of government. Is there taking for instance what seems almost the extreme case, sufficient moral vitality in the mixed masses of the United States to enable the Republic to expel the virus of corruption which threatens to eat into the very vitals of the political organism? If so, the politics of the Republic may yet undergo a process of reform and purification analogous to that which has done so much to raise those of England from the slough in which they were trampled in the early part of the century. Otherwise, if the utterly selfish and conscienceless forces which turned the recent Presidential election into a very carnival of corruption continue to hold sway and get the upper hand, nothing can save the nation from ultimate collapse into chaos, or Cæsarism, or, as would be most likely, into the one as the prelude to the other. This is virtually the question which is discussed by two writers from opposing points of view, in the *Forum* for June. On the one hand W. S. Lilly sees little ground for hope in the present condition of affairs. To his mind the country is wholly under the domination of material force, not of moral ideas. "The special kind of force now dominant is the force of numbers, disguised as public opinion. . . . No absolute rule of right and wrong is admitted. All is relative. No homage is paid to social truths and principles, eternal, immutable, paramount, against which the voice of the largest and loudest multitude should be powerless." In other words, the public men in all democratic countries, and above all in the United States, profess to derive their rules of conduct from what is called public

opinion, which is in Mr. Lilly's view but another name for force, the force of numbers, not of moral ideas. On the other hand Senator Edmund, while admitting almost as freely as Mr. Lilly the widespread corruption in the practical politics of the day, takes the hopeful view. "In all these evils," he writes, "manifest as they are, there is no reason for despair or discouragement in the hearts of those who believe that truth and justice and virtue are as essential in social and political affairs as they are everywhere agreed to be in the personal intercourse of men. There should be rather a hope and confidence inspired by the knowledge that these degrading and destructive practices can be brought to light, and that it is within the power of brave, unselfish and persistent patriotism to make them odious and profitless."

THERE is still room for hope that the extremely pessimistic view of democratic morals is unwarranted. In no country, perhaps, has the tendency to democracy been more marked or more rapid than in Great Britain and her colonies during the last fifty or sixty years. There is yet in these far too much of corrupt influence of one kind and another, but he would be a rash man who should hazard the assertion that either England or Canada, let us say, is more subject to such influence, or less under the dominion of moral ideas now, than half a century ago. In many parts of the United States there are signs of a pretty thorough awakening. In more than a score of States' Legislatures vigorous efforts have been made since the presidential election to amend the election laws so as to make bribery more difficult and perilous, and eight or nine of these States have already adopted ballot-reform Bills somewhat after the Australian and Canadian models. These measures, like our own, do not yet go far enough. None of them, we believe, have incorporated the simple and sensible method, which has proved so effective in England, of strictly limiting the election expenditure and requiring from the responsible parties sworn statements of receipts and disbursements. This will come in time both there and here, let us hope. Such a requirement rigidly enforced, as it is pretty sure to be through party vigilance, will carry the people about as far as legislation can go, in the direction of ballot-reform. Subtler modes of bribery, especially through Government manipulation of public funds, may still be possible and mischievous, but it will be no small gain to have the grosser forms of corruption stamped out by popular indignation embodied in legislative enactments. Meanwhile, the confidence of American patriots that there is yet virtue enough in the people to rescue their political system from the mire, finds some justification in the fact that even while the party machine is grinding out its huge daily grist of dismissals and appointments, the work of civil service reform is being efficiently carried on by the hands of honest commissioners. But Senator Edmund's calculation that \$5,000,000 was expended in bribing at the late election, shows that the task of cleansing the Augean stable is of appalling magnitude.

WE refer hopefully in another paragraph to the signs of progress in the direction of electoral and civil service reform in the United States. President Harrison's share in this work, so far as it may really be going on, seems thus far to have been confined to his spasmodic act of virtue in appointing as civil service commissioners men who have the confidence of all parties, and who are doing their duty with exemplary impartiality. But some of the changes made by President Harrison himself seem to be of the worst partisan character. His recent removal of Chief Justice Sandford, of Utah Territory, on the ground that his administration of the judicial office "was not in harmony with the policy he (the President) deemed proper to be pursued with reference to Utah affairs," is almost without precedent, even in American politics, in the way in which it lays the besmeared hand of party politics upon the ermine of the judiciary. The rejoinder of the deposed Chief Justice is dignified but most keen in its implication. "If," he writes to the Attorney-General, "the President of the United States has any policy which he desires a Judge of the Superior Court to carry out other than the one I have pursued, you may say to him that he has done well to remove me." A few more such removals would cause a reaction which would give a most powerful impulse to civil service reform.

THE investigation which is now going on in regard to the horrible Cronin murder, whatever conclusions may be reached as to the guilt or innocence of suspected individuals, can scarcely fail of one healthful result. It must

utterly discredit the Clan-na-Gael and other kindred secret organizations which have long been the worst enemies of the Irish race, and the especial bane of the Irish-American community. It is now almost beyond possibility of doubt that this murder, most foul and brutal, was deliberately planned and perpetrated by members of that society, and, so far as appears, without violence to its spirit and traditions, if not in harmony with its secret laws. Not only so, but the evidence will almost surely make clear to all, what shrewd observers have scarcely at any time doubted, that the large sums filched from the scanty earnings of servant girls and hard-working labourers have been scandalously misappropriated and embezzled by the trusted leaders of the society. It is to be hoped that the better classes of American Irish may have their eyes opened at last, and that one of the pests of Irish-American life may be effectually rooted out.

PROPERTY owners in London who are relying on the "unearned increment" for an increase of wealth are being surprised by an attack with weapons borrowed from an armoury which they fondly supposed could not be used against them. The London School Board is memorializing the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in regard to the necessity of providing better housing for the poor of the metropolis, amongst whose children the work of the schools is greatly hindered owing to the unhealthiness of the moral and physical atmosphere resulting from as many as seven persons living in one room. The London County Council has been making some movements in the direction of the same reform. And, strange to say, both the School Board and the Council are making use of arguments and recommendations furnished them in the report of the Royal Commission of 1885. Some of the members of the Council, it is said, could not believe that a reform so drastic as almost to seem tainted with Henry-Georgeism could actually have been proposed by a Royal Commission. But it is even so. The Commissioners, dealing with the rating of vacant land held by its owners with a view to enhancing its value, insisted that "if this land were rated at, say 4 per cent. on its selling value, the owners would have a more direct incentive to part with it to those who are desirous of building, and a two-fold advantage would result to the community. First, all the valuable property would contribute to the rates, and thus the burden on the occupiers would be diminished by the increase in the rateable property; secondly, the owners of the building land would be forced to offer the land for sale, and thus their competition with one another would bring down the price of building land, and so diminish the tax in the shape of ground rent or price paid for land which is now levied on urban enterprise by the adjacent landowners—a tax, be it remembered, which is no recompense for an industry or expenditure on their part, but is the natural result of the industry and activity of the townspeople themselves."

RECENT speeches of Lord Rosebery, and others have thrown a somewhat clearer light upon the mental attitude of English public men towards Imperial Federation. For some reason or other, not clearly stated, it is held even by those most friendly to the project, that the initiative, if taken at all, must be taken by the Colonies. This is scarcely the attitude that was to have been expected. The interest of the United Kingdom in the unification of the Empire cannot surely be less than that of the individual colonies. Any proposition looking to a change of the relation of dependence and subordination for one of partnership would come with better grace from the parent than from the child. Great Britain should not be, to say the least, less desirous of drawing closer and knitting more firmly the bonds which unite the scattered members of her wide Empire to herself than those members of being thus bound more closely to the centre of authority and power. Her strength, her prestige, even her safety are not less deeply involved than theirs. Then, again, any preliminary or tentative proposal emanating from the Imperial Centre might, without much trouble, be simultaneously communicated to the various dependencies, and independently considered by them, whereas concerted action on the part of colonies so far removed from each other in space, and so widely varying in circumstances and interests, would from the outset be attended with almost insuperable difficulties. They would be, in a word, hopeless.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER is said to have intimated or admitted in a recent speech that the enthusiasm in Canada in favour of Imperial Federation is equal to that in any other colony. We see no reason to doubt it. On