

Ireland, but as a criticism of Mr. Blake's speech, vanishes when we remember that the analogy on which the argument of that speech was built was not so much that existing between the relations of Great Britain and Canada on the one hand, and those of Great Britain and Ireland on the other, as that existing between the relations of the English-speaking and Protestant Province of Ontario and the French-speaking and Catholic Province of Quebec on the one hand, and those of Great Britain and Ireland on the other. The gist of his argument, be it worth little or much, was that as home-rule had proved a remedy for the dissensions between the Canadian Provinces, dissensions arising out of differences in race and religion, so it was reasonable to believe that home-rule would prove a remedy for the dissensions between England and Ireland, arising from the same source.

SARCASM is not always logical in proportion to its keenness. If it were, the following from the *Saturday Review* would be as completely crushing as it is manifestly intended to be:—

Mr. Blake, who, on the eve of Parliament last Thursday, addressed the triumphant and middle-aged youths of the Eighty Club, the other day, on his retirement from another Parliament—the Canadian—after twenty years of public life and some years of leadership, addressed a long valedictory letter to his constituents. In that letter he described the actual results of the federal system in its application to Canada, as “disintegration instead of consolidation, a small population, a scanty immigration, an empty North-West, a debt enormous and increasing, an extravagant expenditure, an oppressive tariff, restricted markets, trade forced into unnatural channels, tariff walls frowning between us and our kinsmen; worst of all, lowered standards of public virtue, deathlike apathy in public opinion; racial, provincial and religious animosities rather inflamed than soothed; a subservient Parliament, an autocratic executive, debauched constituencies, increased dependence on the public chest, and diminished self-reliance, combined with a boastful jingo spirit alien to true manliness and incapable of facing real facts.” If Mr. Blake has brought with him the talisman by which such a shower of political blessings can be bestowed upon this country, his advent will, indeed, form an epoch, and he may even fulfil the hopes of enthusiastic friends, who predict that, when the horses and chariot of fire shall come for the prophet of Midlothian, his mantle will fall upon the prophet of Longford.

Fortunately for himself, Mr. Blake, probably, without anticipating assault from this point, had in his speech indicated the line of defence. He had admitted that the Canadian constitution “has its scamy side,” that “Canadians are deeply, sharply, roughly divided in opinion,” that “a large section of the people believes that the policy of the Government is wrong and injurious,” and even that “it is maintained in its position by the abusive employment, for party purposes, of the powers and resources of the State.” Nevertheless he avers with the greatest confidence, that “the attachment of the people to home-rule, to their powers of self-government,” exists strongly in the hearts of the political minorities as well as in those of the political majorities, that all would alike scorn and spurn any proposal to look elsewhere for government, to return to their former dependent position. Mr. Blake is doubtless right. Whatever may be the political evils from which we are at the moment suffering, no one thinks of attributing them in any way to home-rule, or falters in his faith in that as the only possible system for a colony when it has reached the stage of development at which we have now arrived. Hitherto our political difficulties have not been to any great extent the outcome of those racial and religious differences which it was the main object of Confederation to overcome. Whether we shall be able to say this a few years hence remains to be seen. It must be confessed that the sky is somewhat lowering just now. Perhaps it would be wiser not to point too confidently just yet to the Canadian experiment as an example of the success of home-rule in fusing diverse elements of temperament, race and creed. And yet a twenty-five years' trial, without serious explosion, should count for something.

MUCH has been said of the heterogeneous nature of the Gladstonian majority in the British Parliament, and prominent Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists do not hesitate to predict a speedy collapse of the new Government in consequence. This is of course quite possible. But the *Christian World* points out a fact which, obvious though it is, has scarcely been sufficiently considered by those who have been figuring upon the subject. This fact is the existence of a solid Nationalist party of eighty, in the House. Whatever opinion anyone may have of these, or

of their tactics, there they are and there they are certain to be until the Home-Rule question is disposed of in some way. No one has suggested any plan by which these eighty votes can be got rid of. No one is prepared to show how they can be made to count for less in a division than any other eighty votes. Suppose that by some accident or combination the Gladstonians could be placed in a minority at some early day and compelled to resign, what could an incoming administration do in the face of eighty members pledged to make Home-Rule take precedence of every other question? Should the House be dissolved and a fresh appeal be made to the electorate, what hope could Lord Salisbury have of obtaining the one hundred and sixty majority necessary to make him independent of this vote? The fact of this vote is full of suggestion for those Radical supporters of Mr. Gladstone who are said to demur at the prospect of deferring all other reforms until Home-Rule is placed well in the van. To shelve the Home-Rule question is manifestly impossible for any administration that can be considered possible in the near future. It is out of the question for Mr. Gladstone to refuse to give it precedence, were he ever so much disposed to do so. No Government can have a majority, under present conditions, apart from the Nationalist members, and whatever administration consents to accept their support, in so doing gives itself as a hostage for the settlement of the Irish question.

ONE of the most difficult, and perhaps from the party point of view most dangerous, of the questions of foreign policy with which the new British Government will have to deal, is that of the continuance or withdrawal of British control in Egypt. By certain speeches of Mr. Gladstone and other prominent men of the party, the Liberal Government is almost as good as pledged to an early withdrawal. On the other hand, there is no doubt a considerable number of Liberals who, in view both of the great and manifest benefits which have been conferred on Egypt itself by the British occupation, and of the alleged necessity of Egyptian control to the security of the British possessions in the East, would be strongly opposed to the withdrawal of the British forces. The Conservatives are probably a unit in favour of continued occupation. But the Conservatives do not make up the whole of the present Opposition, and it is by no means certain that the Liberal-Unionists would all support them in this matter. Lord Roseberry is understood to be resolutely in favour of prolonged or permanent occupation, but whether his acceptance of the office of Foreign Secretary means that his views on this matter are to prevail remains to be seen. Mr. Gladstone has a will that is not easily turned aside, especially in a matter of conscience, which this is very likely to become in his estimation. We do not suppose that he or any one else, save possibly a few ultra-Radicals of the Labouchere stamp, really doubt the beneficence of the work which has been done by the representatives of British authority in Egypt. It is doubtful if there are many of them who are not convinced that the time has not yet come when the guiding and controlling hand can be withdrawn without great risk of relapse into the state of misrule and bankruptcy from which the English occupation has so happily rescued the once wretched people. The main, if not the sole, question with most of those who advocate withdrawal is the question of honour. Can the period of occupation be indefinitely prolonged without a breach of faith, a gross violation of the distinct pledges on which the consent of the other Powers was given to the present arrangement? Great Britain cannot afford to give the French or any other jealous nation cause to point to her as “perfidious Albion” still. There can be little doubt that in view of the best interests of Egyptian development, and of their own financial interests as well, the Powers, with the single exception of France, would willingly give their consent to at least another term of British supremacy. Whether the refusal of such consent by a single Power would make it a point of honour to observe the original agreement, at all costs, is probably the question whose decision will turn the scale. In the meantime the Gladstone Ministry will probably try the effect of straightforward diplomacy, instead of the policy of holding on doggedly to the advantage gained, regardless of pledges and protests.

TWENTY thousand dollars a day, the cost of a militia force of eight or ten thousand men, to keep five hundred railway switchmen in order! Such is, if the press telegrams may be relied on, the state of affairs in Buffalo and

vicinity at the time these words are being written. Surely the situation as described approaches very nearly to a reduction to the absurd of the present methods of carrying on the transportation business of a great country. The railroads are in these days the arteries of commerce. The business life of every nation depends upon their being kept free from obstruction. And yet these great highways are left in the hands of private individuals, who are liable at any moment to become involved in disputes with their employees such as not only interrupt travel and traffic, to the annoyance and loss of thousands, or of the whole country, but also saddle the locality in which the “hitch” may chance to take place with the heavy costs of the support and movement of large constabulary and military forces. Surely the wisdom of our boasted age should be able to devise some better way of managing these vast concerns in the interests of the people who contribute largely to the railroads, suffer the losses and foot the bills. We do not presume to pass judgment in the case in question, for we have not the data on which to found an opinion, but it is obviously supposable that all the trouble may be brought about by the excessive greed of a single railway magnate, or by the wrong-headedness and obstinacy of a single railway official. It is all very well to say that the State is bound to defend the railway companies in the exercise of their right to supply the places of the men who go out on strike with others who may be willing to supply their places. But should not the State, then, have the corresponding right to enquire into the cause of the strike, with a view to ascertaining whether the company for whose behoof all the expense is to be incurred were to blame in the matter. “Why should not the law say that all corporations employing more than a specified number of men, should, under certain carefully defined conditions, be obliged to arbitrate points of difference arising between them and their workmen, and to accept the results of such arbitration?” This question, in an article by Mr. Albert Shaw, American editor of the *Review of Reviews*, in the last number of that magazine, caught our eyes after we had written what precedes it, and is so pertinent to the view we wished to express that we quote it in preference to the concluding remarks we were about to make. We are not sure that compulsory arbitration is the ideal solution of the problem which the struggle between capital and labour has created, and which seems to be becoming constantly more and more complex and dangerous. We have strong faith that a more excellent way will yet be found. But as a first step towards a complete solution, we question whether it is not the fairest and best thing which has yet been proposed.

A MANDATE which was received by Cardinal Gibbons from the Prefect of the Roman Propaganda, a week or two since, is fraught with much interest, not only for Roman Catholics, but for all classes of citizens in the United States. The Cardinal is instructed to require each Archbishop in the nation to direct the Bishops in his diocese to state individually their views in regard to the policy which should be pursued by the Catholic Church in the matter of the education of Roman Catholic children. At their next meeting after the reception of these reports, the Archbishops are expected to agree upon the policy which they will recommend for universal adoption throughout the Union. The question to be decided is really whether the Church shall seek the extension of the parochial school system, or shall accept the policy of the Republic by permitting the children to attend the public schools and arranging for their religious instruction after school hours on week days, and in Sunday schools. For some time past a great struggle has been in progress within the ranks of the Roman Catholic clergy in the Republic, between the Progressists, led by Archbishop Ireland, and the Reactionists, led by Archbishop Corrigan, in regard to this and other questions. The former party consists of those who deem it the true policy of the Church to make the best of circumstances by conforming to and utilizing the institutions of the country in which it is located. The Reactionists, on the other hand, would keep up the struggle against the democratic system, and for separate or parochial schools, and conservative methods generally. The Papal authorities are said to incline to the view of the Progressists, and the zeal of Archbishop Corrigan in opposition has led him to write letters to Rome which are said to have drawn upon him the displeasure of the Pope. As a matter of fact, the school question seems to have almost settled itself, for there are several times as many children of Roman Catholics in the public as in the parochial