

may do well to note: "The Civil Service Law will never be decried by one who has known the departments for any number of years. . . . The stately edifices are no longer the dumping piles of politicians. The new system may not be perfect but it has removed all necessity for evil in the departments. Necessity need not now force a woman to the commission of any act contrary to her inclination?" This change is in itself worth countless millions. The woman is never now called upon to weigh in the balance honour and starvation. That women were frequently called upon to do so in the old times is only too true.

"How wise is modern legislation!" exclaims the *Boston Home Journal*. "Silver dollars are being coined at the rate of \$2,000,000 a month. It is impossible to circulate them; the people do not want such bulky money, and it has been necessary to build another treasury vault for the storage of the unwieldy coinage. This vault is yielding under the rapidly increasing weight of the useless dollars." The phenomenon is indeed singular and striking. It is almost as unique as that other presented by the American Congress, of the two great political parties of the nation exhausting their energies in a contest of wits, the object of which is to determine which party can devise the most ingenious and harmless method of disposing of a hundred millions or so of surplus in the treasury, and preventing similar accumulations in the future. But the problem of disposing of that mountain of silver coins which is growing at the enormous rate of twenty-four million of dollar pieces or ninety-six millions of quarters per year, bids fair to become the most formidable of the two, so far as they can be said to be distinct.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL seems resolved on a policy of "thorough" in English legislation. The Bill he has introduced in the British Commons for preventing bribery of, and by, the members and officials of corporations, councils and public boards, is a model of vigour and directness. It makes it a misdemeanour for any member, officer, or servant of a public body to receive a bribe, reward, consideration or commission in respect to any transaction, either of purchase or sale, on behalf of that body, and it is made a misdemeanour for any person to offer such a reward or bribe. For this crime, when proved, the offender may be imprisoned for a period of not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour, and with or without a penalty not exceeding £500 in amount. He may also be ordered to make restitution of the amount taken to the body or corporation thus defrauded. When an official, he loses his office, and shall be incapable of holding another office for seven years, or in case of a second offence, for life. He loses in addition his pension and his parliamentary vote. The Bill also makes stringent provisions for the punishment of the person who gives or offers a bribe, as well as him who takes. There is little prospect of the Bill being passed or even discussed this session, but as a straightforward and earnest attempt to check a growing evil, it will probably win its way in the future.

No incident of recent date has shewn more clearly the despotic tendencies of the present German Government than its treatment of the unhappy Queen of Servia. It is true that the flow of natural sympathy for the ill-used wife of an unfeeling husband has been checked by the revelation of the political intrigues into which she had suffered herself to be inveigled. The wife who joins the enemies of her husband in plotting for his overthrow, can scarcely expect the approval of the outside world, however it may pity her sufferings, or even share her disapprobation of the King's high-handed tyranny. But it is difficult to see how all this can justify the Government of a neighbouring nation in refusing her the right of asylum, still less in aiding her husband to tear her child from her arms. It speaks ill for the hospitality of the Fatherland that a poor political refugee, and a woman, and Queen at that, should be driven from its territory at a few hours' notice. It is hard to account for such treatment save on the ground of the fellow-feeling and common dread of absolutists.

If, as now reported, a meeting of the emperors of Germany, Russia and Austria is to take place this autumn, the event would be quite in accord with the grand project of European disarmament with which Prince Bismarck is now credited. The term disarmament can, of course, be used only in a comparative sense in reference to such reductions as would be within the reach of immediate possibility. What renders it most probable that these Great Powers may be contemplating such a movement is the fact, almost susceptible of mathematical demonstration, that the present burdens cannot be much longer borne by either nation without serious danger of collapse. Should so beneficial a change of the policy of the Great Powers be set about in earnest, France would doubtless prove the great, probably the insuperable obstacle. France can better afford,

financially, to keep up the present enormous expense than either of her rivals. Her only object in doing so would be the hope and purpose of retrieving or avenging the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. This fact sets in a pleasing light the far-seeing and wise magnanimity of the late Emperor Frederick, if, as is reported, he cherished a scheme for the re-organization of those Provinces on some basis that would be soothing to French pride and at the same time conserve the chief interest which Germany had, from a military point of view, in "rectifying the frontier." As it is in the last degree improbable that either Bismarck or the present Emperor of Germany would propose or agree to any modification of the present conditions on the border, the alternatives, if the former has really determined on disarmament, will be, for France, submission or war. Germany could hardly be blamed, were all other dangers of foreign complication removed, for insisting that France should come under such bonds to keep the peace as would relieve her (Germany) from the necessity of keeping up her present crushing military expenditure.

THE great popularity of the novels of the late Rev. E. P. Roe is hard to account for on ordinary principles. Though not wholly destitute of literary merit, his writings received, and probably merited, but scant recognition in purely literary circles. Nor can their popularity be accounted for on the ground of either sensationalism or realistic effect. The plots were certainly not devoid of interest, but they paled into tameness beside the genuinely sensational story of the day. Still less were they constructed on that principle of strict fidelity to the facts and incidents of every-day life which is the aim and charm of so many present day novelists. We are inclined to believe that it was, after all, chiefly because of the moral purpose which permeated them that they appealed so strongly to the imagination and heart of the average reader. The fact, if fact it be, goes to show that the critics are wrong in supposing the novel reading public to be tired of "the story with a moral." May it not be that with the great majority the moral issue is still the predominant one in the struggle for existence, and that therefore the battle of evil with good, of right with wrong, whether in the social world or in the individual conscience, possesses still a vital and absorbing interest? The intense local and American colouring of such a story as "Barriers Burned Away" might account for its reception in the United States, but Mr. Roe's novels were widely circulated abroad as well as at home. Several of them reached over one hundred thousand copies and few fell below fifty thousand. In all nearly a million and a half copies of his books were sold—a truly marvellous record.

SOME OF OUR NEEDS.

It is a generally admitted and understood principle, that, in order to real progress, we must have a more or less distinct idea of our actual attainments and defects. No one can deny that great progress of all kinds has been made in this country in the matter of education, in the improvement of our social circumstances, in general civilization. The way in which our necessity has become the mother of invention may be seen from the various improvements in which it is admitted that the new world has outstripped the old. Some one remarking, the other day, on the numerous American conveniences that are not to be found in France, commented upon the very slight use made, in the old country, of elevators, telephones, and other devices to save time and labour which are found in such abundance among ourselves. The reason is obvious enough. Labour is cheaper there, so that many things which we do by machinery, they prefer to do by human instruments. Moreover, our houses are generally loftier than theirs. Besides, there are actually to be found misguided Englishmen not a few who prefer to walk up two or three storeys, rather than get into a thing which they regard as a kind of cage or prison. Upon the whole, to fall back upon Mr. Matthew Arnold, we may be permitted to doubt whether elevators and telephones have made life more "interesting" among ourselves.

In spite of all our advances and improvements, we may still believe that we have defects to be remedied and needs to be supplied. More than once we have spoken of some faults in our educational system. The other day we made a slight allusion to a matter which is of more importance than is generally imagined, the manners of the pupils who come from our public schools, and to this subject we hope to return again. But there are some other things that need attention, and one or two of these have been before our minds for some time.

Some years ago Mr. Goldwin Smith drew attention to the insufficient provision made in this country for the actually destitute class. He said it was disgraceful to us as a people that the only public provision made for the pauper was the prison.

Now, it is quite true that there are very few paupers in this country,