

tremendous waste and mismanagement which have been shown to exist in the administration of the naval department." Lord Randolph Churchill is arousing great indignation by endorsing the Radical view, and proposing to support it with all the influence, be that little or much, at his command. The rumour that he has compelled the First Lord of the Admiralty to submit to him and his adherents a full and detailed statement of the Government scheme may or may not be correct; but it indicates the shape the discussion is likely to take, and the difficulties of the Government situation.

CANADIANS need not, we suppose, have any serious objection to the continuance, by the United States Senate, of its Select Committee on Relations with Canada. Perhaps they should feel honoured by so special a mark of consideration. As there are no indications of an unfriendly spirit on the part either of the Committee chosen, or of the Senate in appointing it, there may be some reason to hope that its investigations may lead to a better understanding of Canadian rights, ambitions and purposes, than is now had by these distinguished statesmen. Enlightenment of this kind seems particularly needed by those of the Senators who, like Mr. Sherman, still cling fondly to the notion that annexation, or to use that Senator's euphemism, "union," is the manifest destiny of Canada. It is worthy of note that, according to Senator Cullom, one of the chief objects of the Committee is to study the political constitution of Canada, which country he has discovered has "a very curious system of government," inasmuch as "while nominally a dependency of Great Britain, public opinion in Canada operates more promptly and instantly in the legislative body than is possible in the United States under its Constitution." Senator Cullom went on to say, if correctly reported, that he should be glad to be able to give two or three years' study to that one important matter alone, though to a Canadian, versed in the theory and practice of responsible government, the arrangement seems so simple that two or three hours of study ought to suffice for its mastery. Instead of directly appointing their ruler for four years, and clothing him with almost absolute powers for the whole term, Canadians prefer to adopt the much more democratic plan of indirectly appointing him during pleasure or good behaviour, and holding him accountable to their representatives during all that period. When the Senators have fully mastered this "curious system," they may perhaps begin to understand how it is possible for Canadians to prefer their own political institutions and resolve to keep them.

A BILL has been passed by Congress which has an important bearing on the solution of the long-vexed Indian problem in the United States. This Bill provides for the allotting to the Dakota Sioux of their land in severalty, and the opening of the Reservation to the public, whether the Sioux themselves consent or not. This is the most radical step that has yet been taken, for the breaking up of the Reservation system, and of the barbarism which that system seems designed to perpetuate. It is a declaration that the Indian must henceforth conform to the habits of civilized life. As the *Christian Union* well says, "It is a mistaken justice which treats barbarism as a vested interest which has a right to be preserved." Justice, however, demands that a school system be established "that will afford an education to every Indian of school age on the Reservations, or in communities recently on reservations." The *Christian Union* further observes, and we should like to impress the truth of the remark on our own Government at Ottawa, "In this matter liberality is economy. It is expensive to teach in successive generations a few Indian children, to be returned to the tepee when the school is over, there to be taught to forget what they have learned. It would be comparatively inexpensive to inaugurate a system of education which would put all Indian children simultaneously in school under competent teachers." In these two directions the answer to the question, Can the Indians be civilized? will, sooner or later, be sought and found, and the sooner the better. Compulsory education for every Indian child at once, and as soon as possible a separate location and life for each Indian family, under proper conditions.

THE scramble for the spoils seems to have now fairly begun at Washington. It must be confessed that the oracular utterances in President Harrison's inaugural were not of good omen for Civil Service reform. In declaring that "honourable party service will certainly not be esteemed by me a disqualification for public office.

It is entirely creditable to seek public office by proper methods and with proper motives, and all applicants will be treated with consideration," the President threw pretty wide the door of hope for the office-seekers of his party. His further admission that "we shall not, however, I am sure, be able to put our Civil Service upon a non-partisan basis until we have secured an incumbency that fair-minded men of the opposition will approve for impartiality and integrity," is, in the hands of an opponent, quite too easily twisted to mean "The only way to secure permanence in the Civil Service is to put good Republicans into the offices, and keep them there." Within ten days after the inauguration, the office-seeking and office-trading members of the party were said to be waxing very indignant that thousands of changes had not already been made. If the uncontradicted report that President Harrison has resolved to simplify the process by changing the rules, so as to permit him to authorize removals without cause, should prove correct, a grand carnival of dismissals and appointments may shortly be looked for. Meanwhile the rule forbidding removal of officials without cause is likely to prove an obstruction in many cases, especially as the Democratic journals are making almost frantic appeals to the office-holders of their party to refuse to resign when asked to do so, and thus to force the President to make a specific charge in every case. United States Attorney Watts, of the West Virginia District, has led the way by refusing to retire before the conclusion of the term of four years for which he was appointed, and assigning strong reasons from the necessities of the special cases he has in hand, for his refusal. Many will, no doubt, follow his example.

PROFESSOR MAX MULLER, in a recent address to students, made a strong and eloquent plea against the tendency to modernize University teaching by attempting to render it more practical and better adapted to fit men for the fierce necessities of modern life. He warmly combated the idea that the ancient languages, literatures, and philosophies are dead. Homer and Sophocles are incorporated into the very life of modern literature. They live in Milton and Shakespeare. Without a knowledge of the language in which they wrote, it is impossible to extract the fullest enjoyment from Browning and Tennyson. As to philosophy, wherever two or three philosophers are gathered together, there is Plato in the midst of them. Kant's philosophy may die, but Aristotle's never. All language, literature, and philosophy would be dead if they cut the historical fibres by which they cling to their native soil. He held that it is the duty of all University teaching never to lose touch with the past. It is the highest aim of all knowledge to try to understand what is by learning how it has come to be what it is. All this is very true, and the time will not soon come when those who have capacity, leisure, and ambition to become scholars will cease to commune with the great poets and thinkers of all past centuries, and to sit at the feet of those "sceptred sovereigns who still rule our spirits from their urns." But none the less the modernizing movement will go forward and continue to transform the courses and methods of instruction in most of our institutions into conformity with the conditions and needs of modern life. Learning, as conceived by Professor Max Muller, is for the few. Education is henceforth for the many. As the world grows older there will probably be a sharper differentiation between the seats of ancient learning and the Universities for modern training and culture. Each will always have its place and use, but in an age which is made intensely and increasingly practical by the operation of inexorable law, the energies of educators will be devoted mainly to the latter, while the former will be left to the care of the learned and philosophic few. Such, at least, is one reading of the signs of the times.

THOSE who are attempting to follow the erratic course of events in France will watch with interest for the results of the Government's new and harsh measures for the suppression of Boulangism. If the Ministry can clearly prove the General and his associates in the Patriotic League guilty of distinctly treasonable designs, it may succeed in its probable purpose of securing his banishment, without precipitating a struggle which might end in a revolution. Otherwise, unless it is altogether unsafe to apply to the French populace the laws which obtain under popular systems of government elsewhere, the result will almost surely be to make him more than ever the national hero of the hour. A series of petty persecutions, such as the forbidding of sword-presentations by military admirers, and of contributions of funds by wealthy friends, is much more likely to increase than diminish his popular-

ity. Nothing could better further his ends, if he is really dangerous, than thus to arouse sympathy for him as a patriot and martyr. On the whole, while the Government's course may postpone the crisis, it seems quite as likely to hasten it, and it is almost incredible that such a course can prove really successful in either crushing the obnoxious leader or permanently quieting the agitation. The state of popular unrest which makes Boulanger's strange ascendancy possible would quickly create another Boulanger were the present one forcibly removed from the arena.

#### MR. BLAIN'S DEFENCE OF THE GROCERS' COMBINE.

THE address made by Mr. Hugh Blain, before the Toronto Board of Trade, on the subject of "Trade Combinations," was calmly and frankly argumentative, and probably presents as good a defence as can be made of such "agreements" as those into which the wholesale grocers have entered. These agreements, Mr. Blain tells us, are three in number. The objects of the first and second are to establish prices of standard brands of tobacco and of standard graded sugar, respectively; that of the third, to regulate the terms of credits and cash discounts. The necessity for these agreements arose, Mr. Blain tells us, out of the old state of affairs under which merchants and travellers were accustomed to sell the best known staples at less than cost, with the hope of making up the loss out of extra profits on other goods, the exact value of which was not so well known to the buyer. Mr. Blain then goes on to show by a series of statements of facts and figures, which he is willing to submit to the most searching scrutiny, that the net profits to the wholesale dealers, under the "agreements," on these articles, are not only extremely moderate, averaging about 5½ per cent. on tobaccos, and giving only \$4.52 per cent. on granulated sugar in one-barrel lots, and only \$2.75 to \$1.33 per cent. on the same in fifteen-barrel lots, but are actually less than the cost of distribution. Mr. Blain claims that as the result of the grocers' agreement, a wholesale merchant is now unable to offer his graded sugars and tobaccos at less than cost, trusting to balance accounts by getting an unreasonable profit on other goods, the value of which he can misrepresent. If we were disposed to be captious, we might compare this statement with that above referred to, to the effect that the distribution of the goods in question is now done "for less than the average cost of doing business," and that "the grocery trade only distribute these staple articles at the prices charged, because selling them usually secures orders for other goods," and ask wherein this practice differs so widely from that which is so severely condemned, and which the combination was designed to prevent.

But we let that pass and come to the more strictly argumentative portions of Mr. Blain's defence of the combination. Mr. Blain rightly says, "Nearly every person admits our right to make this agreement, provided others were not excluded from buying on the same terms as we do," and adds, "Our answer is, they should be and are entitled to buy on the same terms if they sell on the same conditions as we do, otherwise the agreement will be inoperative. The conditions we maintain are reasonable, and are in the interests of the general public as well as in the interests of all concerned. We maintain that they are in the interests of the public because it has been found that the wholesale grocer is the cheapest medium through which these articles can be distributed, and the prices at which we now distribute them are less than the actual cost of doing the work, and we believe that no agency can be brought into operation which can distribute them at as low figures." The question, be it observed, is not that of the right of the grocers to agree amongst themselves to sell goods only at certain prices and on certain terms. No one will, we presume, dispute their right to do that, so long as the agreement is purely voluntary, no undue pressure of any kind being used to compel any dealer to enter into it. The objection is to excluding those who do not choose to enter into the agreement from buying on the same terms as those who do, by binding manufacturers not to sell to such on the same terms. This is, on the part of the grocers, a distinct interference with the commercial freedom of the merchants thus boycotted. On the part of the manufacturers, it is a distinct use of the virtual monopoly secured to them by the protective tariff, to discriminate between individual tradesmen, and secure a monopoly of the sale of their products to those only who assent to certain trade arrangements. It is not easy to see how any Government can permit such a combination against commercial freedom