

SOME speculation has been caused in political quarters by the fact that Hon. Robert Bond, Colonial Secretary of Newfoundland, has visited Washington twice within a few weeks. He has declined to make any statement touching the object of his second trip, but as that of the first is known, it is generally assumed that his second mission has the same end in view. He is said to have stated on the first occasion that he had been authorized by the Imperial Government and the Government of Newfoundland to proceed to Washington for the purpose of submitting to Sir Julian Pauncefote a proposal for reciprocity between the colony and the United States, and to take such further steps as he might deem necessary to secure the adoption of the scheme. He further stated that, acting on these instructions, he had submitted to the United States Government, through the British Minister, a proposition to the effect that American fishermen should have the privilege of entering the harbours of Newfoundland at all times to purchase bait on the same terms as Newfoundland fishermen, and of trading and selling fish, oils, etc., subject only to such customs duties as are imposed upon Newfoundland vessels similarly employed, together with the privilege of the winter frozen-herring fishery without restriction; and that in return the United States should admit free of duty the products of the Newfoundland fisheries and the crude and unmanufactured minerals of the island. Pending negotiations some questions of considerable interest were raised by an article in the *New York Tribune*, which is believed to represent the views of the Government of the United States on such matters. The gist of this article was that the reciprocity under consideration, if arranged for, must be exclusive. The right to take bait must be granted to American fishermen only, not to those of Canada or France. It would thus appear that the French shore claims must be disposed of as a preliminary to the completion of the contemplated arrangement. This suggested another question, as put by the *Mail*, "Will it (the British Government) sanction an arrangement under which Canadian fishermen would be denied in British territorial waters rights conceded to the fishermen of a foreign nation? Will it allow Newfoundland to give the United States free access to her fisheries whilst shutting a neighbouring colony out from them?" The *Mail* evidently regards this as impossible, though it might not be easy to show why the Mother Country, which freely permitted Canada under reciprocity to discriminate against herself, should be more careful of our interests than of her own. The question is not likely, however, to be brought to a practical test, since a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland holds that under existing laws, neither the Crown nor its officials has power to exact or receive a moneyed consideration for the privilege conceded by the license. It is alleged, therefore, that not only will the Newfoundland Government be obliged to refund thousands of dollars collected as fees for licenses from American and Canadian vessels, but that it will be estopped from proceeding farther in the matter of the Reciprocity Treaty, as the bait privilege is the chief inducement the Island Government has to offer, and Americans are not at all likely to pay heavily for a privilege which they can have for nothing.

WHAT are the results to civilization, to mankind, of the Stanley exhibition? This question is suggested afresh alike to the practical and the philanthropic mind by the visit of the renowned African Explorer to Toronto. Stanley has given his own estimate of the immediate results in the closing paragraph of his lecture. Some important geographical discoveries, the opening up of an immense country of unknown resources, above all the concentration of the united efforts of four European Governments, Great Britain, Germany, France, Portugal in exploring this great country. The ultimate and probably not far distant consequence must be the opening up of the habitable parts of the continent to commerce, the extermination of the abominable slave trade and the setting free of the millions now held in cruel bondage to Arab and other taskmasters. For obvious reasons we say nothing of the primary object of the expedition—the rescue of Emin Pasha—who as it proved was rescued against his will and possibly by the use of questionable strategy. No one can say that the great work described is not, apart from this, worth all it has cost and may yet cost in suffering and blood. If there be any question it must be on the ground which some have taken that the evils introduced by our so-called civilization and especially by the traffic in the poisonous whiskey and other vile concoctions which are so fatal to all that is manly in the

native character are really worse than the slave trade and barbarism combined. But no lapse of time can rob Stanley and his brave comrades of the immortal honours due to the master spirit who planned and led the Expedition, and to those who toiled and dared and suffered with him. All this being granted, it is none the less due to the honour of the British nation that an exhaustive judicial enquiry be in some way made into the conduct of the expedition, and the parts borne by the respective officers, living and dead, to whom the reputation of the British race for justice, magnanimity and humanity was in a manner entrusted. It seems unfortunate that the British Government has decided that it can have nothing to do with an enquiry in which the honour of British officers and the British nation is so deeply involved. One feels disposed to revolt from the conclusion which logically follows, viz.: that an expedition may be organized and led by British soldiers into an unappropriated country and may there inflict the most revolting cruelties upon unoffending natives, and yet neither the British nor any other Government or people upon earth have any right to enquire or punish. On what ground, one may query, did Britain send her ships to blockade the coast of Zanzibar before it came under her sway in order to put a stop to the slave trade? On what ground do her cruisers capture or destroy slave-traders in neutral seas and set the wretched captives free? Surely there is some way in which Parliament, if so disposed, could make the necessary investigation so as at least to clear the innocent and brand the guilty with the stigma of a nation's righteous indignation. Again, looking at the matter from another point of view, and taking Stanley's own account as reported in the *Mail*, is it not a most humiliating fact that of ten British officers selected for the expedition five should have proved deserving of the severest censure, and at least two of the five have been guilty of deeds so atrocious that all the records of cruelties perpetrated by the most heartless and rapacious conquerors in all ages when clothed with irresponsible authority, scarcely furnish a parallel. If these be the facts ought not this to be the last of such voluntary expeditions? But if the Government of a civilized nation is bound to prevent the fitting out of hostile expeditions from her shores against peoples with whom she is at peace, surely the same authority might be justly exercised, in cases in which the lives and well-being of unoffending savages are at stake. Some less objectionable means of carrying on the work of exploration must evidently be found.

PUBLIC attention in England during the last week has been concentrated upon the Parnell affair to such an extent that the cables have been monopolized by it, to the almost complete exclusion of other topics. When the news of the result of the O'Shea divorce trial was announced it was evident, as we intimated at the time, that the alliance between the Gladstone party and the Irish Home Rule party could not be continued, with Parnell as leader of the latter. The event has fully justified the forecast, whatever may be the issue of the struggle, just now going on between the supporters and the opponents of Parnell, in the Irish Party. Parliament and the British public are to be congratulated on the evident strength and genuineness of the feeling of moral revulsion which is at work to cast out the disreputable leader. To have condoned so flagrant a disregard of the fundamental principles of social morality—principles whose observance is necessary not only to the well-being but to the very existence of virtuous society—would have wrought untold injury to the moral fibre of the national character. Parnell, himself, and a few like-minded logicians may argue that his Parliamentary supporters have nothing to do with his private life, but only with his efficiency as a political leader, but, happily, respectable politicians, and much more the respectable voters in their constituencies, are much more disposed to be guided by their moral instincts, than by nice logical distinctions in such cases. The matter for surprise is not that Mr. Gladstone and his Parliamentary lieutenants should have at once taken the firm stand they have done, but that Parnell, himself, should have made it necessary for them to take it. Though, as we have more than once said, certain admissions coolly made by Parnell in his evidence before the High Commission, taken in connection with other facts in his political history, had long since destroyed all confidence in his truthfulness and honour, we had still given him credit for a measure of sincerity in his professed patriotism. We, therefore, really supposed that, when the question became one of personal self-effacement, or the destruction of all hope of

attaining in the near future the object for which he had founded his party and brought about the alliance with English Liberals, he would not hesitate to retire into the background. The idea that he would fight openly and desperately to retain the position of leader, when it was obvious that that position meant ruin to the cause, seemed scarcely supposable. The result must have been a surprise to many, revealing as it does the leader whose fine talents and consummate strategy had gained him a position and influence almost unique, in the light not only of a man impure and treacherous in private life, but of one utterly and unscrupulously selfish in the work to which it was supposed he had given whatever of heart he had at any time possessed.

IT is, we suppose, scarcely worth while to speculate in regard to the outcome of these exciting events in their bearing upon the future of British politics. There are contingencies upon which the results will depend, about which it would be useless to make guesses at present. Suppose that Parnell is formally deposed from the leadership by the majority of the Irish members, and another leader chosen in his stead, will Mr. Gladstone still feel bound to continue to make Home Rule for Ireland the great object of the brief period of public life which is, in the nature of things, all that can remain to him? If he and his English coadjutors are sincere, as we are bound to believe they are if we deem them men of honour, in their convictions that Home Rule is the only hope of the permanent settlement of the Irish question, their obligations to work for that end cannot be changed by the fact that one Irish leader has proved himself unworthy of respect and confidence. Should Parnell be sustained, or should it otherwise become clearly apparent, on the other hand, that there remains no possibility of the attainment of Home Rule for many years to come, or should Mr. Gladstone, for any other reason, feel himself freed from all obligation in the matter, what will be the effect upon the disunited English Liberals? With the abandonment of Home Rule, the prime cause of the division in the party would be removed. What more natural than that political affinities should begin to reassert their power in a reunion, immediate or gradual, of the disunited fragments of the once great Liberal party? This not very improbable result depends, of course, largely upon the nature of the alliance between the Tories and the Liberal Unionists. Have the latter placed themselves under any obligations, explicit or implied, to the Government party, such as would make their immediate abandonment in any way dishonourable? Without the key to the solution of such questions, the materials for opinion or forecast in regard to the next developments are wanting. Meanwhile the situation is not only full of interesting and exciting possibilities, it is also fraught with consequences of great importance to the well-being of the nation.

PRESIDENT HARRISON'S Annual Message to Congress is a lengthy document, covering an unusually wide range of subjects, most of which are of special interest only to citizens of the Republic. After the manner peculiar to United States Presidents, he not only summarizes the leading facts of the last year's administration, and recommends new measures to Congress, but, in the more important matters, undertakes to assign reasons for the views he holds and the course he recommends. The paragraphs in the Message most interesting to Canadians are those in which he intimates that there will be no modifications of the McKinley Bill, and that further correspondence touching the Behring Sea affair will be laid before Congress. Some of the newspaper correspondents say that the first of these announcements was a surprise to Democrats and tariff reformers, but it is not easy to see how they could reasonably have expected anything else. It is true that the condemnation of the measure at the polls was very emphatic, but seeing for how short a time it had been in operation, it is evident that the Government would have only stultified itself, and made a bad matter worse, by attempting any hasty changes before the Bill is fairly in operation. To have done so would inevitably have had a disturbing and depressing influence on trade, and would have supplied the Opposition with material for forging new weapons against it. President Harrison, however, waxes bold, and, while admitting that "its permanent effects upon trade and prices still largely stand in conjecture," claims that already the volume of imports is increasing instead of diminishing under its influence, and prophesies that instead of limiting exports it will enable the nation to "secure a larger and more profitable participation in