

The hopes of the would be lady members of county councils have again been doomed. In the House of Commons on May 26th, a bill proposing to legalize the election of women as members of county councils was rejected by a vote of 75 to 52. The time is not yet.

The health of the Prince of Wales is causing considerable anxiety to his friends. The attack of gripe from which he recently suffered is said to have been very slight, and that the real trouble with the Prince is varicose veins in his legs. He continues to attend theatres and balls, but is carefully guarded from incurring too much fatigue while thus enjoying himself.

The influx of Hebrews into Great Britain, consequent upon their expulsion from Russia, is causing some alarm. They are said to be arriving in London at the rate of 500 weekly, and as they are nearly all destitute they are captured by "sweaters," and work for the lowest possible wages—barely sufficient to keep body and soul together. A long train of evils will be sure to follow this movement, and the authorities are being daily petitioned to introduce legislation to exclude destitute aliens. The Jews are having a hard time of it.

Dr. Tanier, President of the French Academy of Medicine, has just published a promise that, to the wife of every poor man in his native town of Burgundy, he will give a present of 100 francs—about \$20—for each child born to her during the year 1892. The question of population is an anxious one in France, and the worthy doctor's offer will do not a little towards making him popular, not only with the people of Burgundy, but among all who desire to see a normal increase in the number of inhabitants in France. Queen Victoria gives a bounty to every woman who has triplets born to her, but Dr. Tanier goes Her Majesty two better in offering a reward for one child. But then the population question looks after itself pretty well in Great Britain, and the Queen's bounty appears to be more in the way of a consolation than anything else.

The unequal distribution of those blessings of which a quiver full is supposed to give happiness, is the subject of a letter in *Public Opinion* from J. J. Britton, who suggests a sort of Exchange and Mart for the purpose of correcting the mistakes of nature in this respect. Mr. Britton enlarges upon the desolation of homes when there are no little ones; when the woman grows sad and fretful, morbid and irritable, and the man absorbed and selfish; when the days are lonely, and the outlook to old age and failing health dreary. The other side of the picture represents the state of affairs in thousands of the homes of the respectable poor when the supply of olive branches is over abundant, and where life becomes a hard and unceasing struggle because of the number to be provided for. He points out that the children of such people have no fair chance in the world, and as a remedy for trouble in both the childless homes and the over-crowded ones, proposes the establishment of a bureau for effecting the adoption of children. His plan is that people in need of children should select them of tender years from the families of poor people of their own class—that is the children of poor gentfolk should be taken by rich gentfolk, and so on—and that they should pay a sum of money or a small annuity to the parents for relinquishing their offspring. Mr. Britton claims that the scheme would be for the benefit of all parties, and the childless fathers and mothers who adopt the children would reap the reward of having something besides themselves to care for; the children themselves would get a fair start in life, and the parents would be relieved of the burden of supporting so many. This is a very fine scheme on paper, but we fancy that very few parents of fine character—such as are recommended in the letter—would care to sell their offspring in a cold-blooded business-like manner, no matter what their necessities might be, and most people in adopting a child would consider the payment of money to the parents rather too much of the good thing. This attempt at balancing the book of existence is much more easily said than done.

An amusing story of the Russian Censorship is told in the *Fortnightly Review* by J. E. B. Lanin. The discretionary power vested in a Censor appears to be almost unlimited—that is on the side of severity, on which he may err with impunity, but he must never stretch a point in the direction of indulgence, which would inevitably prove suicidal. This explains Mr. Lanin's experience, which he recites as follows:—"A weekly periodical which I was in the habit of receiving possessed an irresistible attraction for the Censor appointed to read it, whose education had been rather neglected in his youth. Being compelled somewhat late in life to give lessons in English grammar and literature, he was laudably desirous of acquiring, for his own satisfaction, a knowledge of the language which he was being paid to teach. He selected my periodical for his experiment, and began to read it over slowly and with difficulty, working most zealously with the dictionary for ten days at a time, while I, ignorant of his efforts, was engaged in an angry correspondence with my bookseller on the subject of the delay. Several numbers never reached me at all. Once when more than usually desirous to see the periodical, in order to read an interesting paper that had appeared therein, I applied to a Russian acquaintance who, I was aware, occasionally received a copy. On inquiry, however, he proved to be merely a borrower, not a subscriber; but he kindly promised to endeavor to procure me the number I was seeking for. He kept his word and sent me the journal, which I found, to my extreme surprise, to be my own copy, paid for by me, but read and owned by the Censor, who had lent it to the friend from whom my Russian acquaintance had borrowed it. It was only lent to

me for that one day, and I never set my eyes upon it afterwards. An official whom I consulted as to the advisability of lodging a complaint against the Censor strongly dissuaded me on the ground that I should do more harm to myself thereby than to this indomitable student of the English tongue." At the conclusion, Mr. Lanin says:—"It would be difficult to imagine a code of regulations more childishly pedantic, more wantonly irksome than the 306 paragraphs of which the Censure Laws are composed, which, comprehensive though they are, constitute but the warp of the web, the weof being made of secret instructions and galling prohibitions which would seem positively ludicrous to a Chinaman and oppressive to a Turk." And no wonder!

The rough way in which poor ex-Queen Natalie of Serbia has just been treated, recalls to mind the line—

"And weigh against a grain of sand, the glories of a throne!"

No one outside of Serbia appears to either know or care where the rights or wrongs of the quarrel lie, but the forcible expulsion from Belgrade of a Queen, who had succeeded in winning for her defence a large number of students and citizens, has awakened considerable interest everywhere. Queen Natalie is described as a handsome woman still, in spite of advancing years and incipient wrinkles; not unpleasantly stout, with a skin of dusky ivory, superb black eyes, and a splendid mane of raven hair, with which she knows how to produce a whole galaxy of picturesque effects. All these have no doubt assisted her in making herself a nuisance to her enemies in Belgrade, and in winning the chivalrous regard of the scores of young students and citizens who defended her palace a fortnight ago. The feeling in Serbia is said to be turning in Natalie's favor since her expulsion, and it is thought that important political events may follow. It is well known that Natalie is the divorced wife of ex-King Milan of Serbia and the mother of the reigning King Alexander II.

The blue book dealing with the Penitentiaries of Canada shows an increase in the number of convicts for the year ending June 30th, 1890, of 56 over the preceding year, the total number in all the Penitentiaries being 1,251. In the course of the last fiscal year 1889-90, 431 convicts were sentenced to penal service in all the Penitentiaries, as compared with 434 in 1888-89. The number discharged in 1889-90 was 348, as compared with 333 in 1888-89. The increase last year was 45 less than the record on June 30th, 1889, which was 101. It is 51 more than on June 30th, 1886, when the total number was 1,200, and 67 less than on June 30th, 1879, when our convicts numbered 1,318. It can be seen from these totals, at different periods within the last eleven years, that year by year there has been a fluctuation in the criminal population, which has seldom varied any year in the direction of either increase or decrease more than fifty. Taken at its highest rate since 1879, the percentage of convict criminals is slight—about one in 4,000, assuming the population of the Dominion to be 5,000,000. The increases are distributed as follows.—32 in Ontario, 20 in Quebec, 12 in the Maritime Provinces, and 7 in Manitoba. To British Columbia is due the credit of showing a decrease in the criminal register of 15. The female convicts in the whole Dominion numbered but 22, 21 of whom are in Kingston Penitentiary, from Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, and one in the British Columbia Penitentiary. The women of Manitoba can still exult in the fact that since the establishing of the Penitentiary at the Old Stone Fort, near Selkirk, in 1871, to the present time, not one of them has worn the convict's garb. We are glad to notice that a separate penal prison, intended for the isolation of evil disposed and habitual criminals, when necessary, will probably be ready within a year. The Inspector strongly recommends that an opportunity be afforded to some one connected with the Department of Justice to acquire the knowledge and experience, in other countries, requisite for the successful operation of the separate system. This separate prison is to be situated in Kingston, and the capacity (108 cells) will, it is hoped, accommodate not only the bad and untractable characters under sentence in Kingston Penitentiary, but that all such in the other institutions can be provided for. The necessity for more severe laws in relation to those who make crime habitual is referred to. The fear of long terms of imprisonment would appear to be the greatest deterrent to the man who would like to lead a criminal life. The need of a new female prison is strongly urged, the present one at Kingston being unsuitable in many ways, and open to serious objections. We regret to observe that several boys, between the ages of 10 and 16, are inmates of Dorchester Penitentiary. Surely no better argument than this is required for the establishment of a Reformatory in New Brunswick. With the exception of two, all the boys belong to that Province, and we can but repeat the words of the report:—"It is lamentable, nay more, it is shameful, that the Judges are compelled to consign mere children in many cases to a penitentiary, where they must become contaminated by contact with hardened criminals—no matter how closely looked after—because there is no more fitting institution for their reception." It is gratifying, on the other hand, to find that the Warden had suits of grey clothes made for two little boys—brothers—and sent them to the parish school, which they attend regularly. They are described as fine little fellows, doing well. It is also gratifying in these criminal statistics to observe that in the report of every penitentiary the conduct of the prisoners is spoken of as being meritorious, except in a few cases. Penitentiaries are sad necessities in our present state of civilization, but we hope the day will come when they shall find their usefulness departed.

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