

A correspondent asks very pertinently why the Education Department, in apportioning its grants to Mechanics' Institutes, should have departed this year from its former custom of recognizing magazines taken by the Institutes as on the same footing with books. We were not before aware of the fact and we are unable to conceive of any good reason for the change. We quite agree with our correspondent in the opinion that much of the very best current literature of the day is to be found in the magazines, whose numbers and excellence constitute so marked a feature in the intellectual life of the period. Everyone knows how utterly impossible it is in these days for even the most omnivorous reader, giving his whole time to literary pursuits, to master one-tenth of the new books which are constantly issuing from the press, dealing with a thousand questions of intellectual interest. We are often disposed to bless the magazine-makers for the aid they give to the many busy workers who can at best snatch but odd moments for literary pursuits. How often it happens that, by reading a short magazine article, prepared by one who is thoroughly master of his subject, one can in an hour obtain a clearer view of the salient points of some important treatise or discussion than he could gain by a single perusal of a bulky volume, even did time and opportunity permit him to undertake the more formidable task. We know that it is the fashion in certain circles to sneer at these short cuts to the heart of literary and social questions, but those who thus speak are generally bookworms or dryasdusts, who forget their chronological place in the world's history, and fancy that the musty tomes in which they are specially interested cover the whole realm of things and thoughts worth knowing. In a word, we believe that newspapers and magazines of the better class are among the most potent of all the educational agencies of the day. We cannot but think that the Minister of Education, or whoever has charge of the affair, has been very ill-advised in discriminating against magazine literature in the Mechanics' Institutes. Such discrimination is sure to affect most of all our native magazines, which have enough to do to maintain their places in the race against the powerful competition of foreign publications. They surely should receive encouragement, rather than the opposite, from our Government authorities.

England, since the days of Napoleon, has suffered periodically from fears that her military or naval strength might, in case of war or invasion, be found insufficient. Not infrequently this uneasiness has produced something approaching a panic, which has not subsided until Parliament has authorized increased expenditure on army and navy. That England's military burden has assumed enormous proportions is a first corollary from the fact that it has long been her policy to keep her naval strength on a par

with that of the combined fleets of any two other nations. The recent ebullition of French patriotism crused by the visit of the Russian naval officers has to some extent disturbed England's confidence in her ability to cope with such a naval force as might result from the union of the French and Russian fleets. The announcement has been made, on the authority of The Westminster Gazette, that five new battle-ships, a first-class cruiser, and a number of smaller vessels have been ordered, to augment the British navy. In view of the expedients to which the present Government has been obliged to resort in order to secure the required revenue, it is evident that the constantly increasing expenditure necessary to keep the army and navy up to the high standard set by the other powers, must become a serious matter. The present war policy of the nations presents in some of its aspects a singular spectacle. Enormous sums of money have been and are being spent on modern appliances of war, to determine the real efficiency of which no actual test has been, or, save that of actual conflict, can be made. The time when the balance of war might be adjusted on a basis of numbers, either of men or of ships, has long since passed. Hence the expected combat between the petty fleets of Piexoto and Admiral Mello, of Brazil, is being awaited with an interest out of all proportion to the magnitude of the issues to be decided. Every adoption, by one of the powers, of some one of the newly invented instruments of war, many of which seem almost fiendish in the ingenuity of their power for the destruction of human life, introduces into this problem a new unknown quantity. It would seem that in the wars of the future, a country's success will depend much less upon the valour of her soldiers than upon the greatness of her resources and the extent to which a patient people will permit them to be drained.

It is to be hoped for the honor of Canadian public life that the current report, which represents a certain Member of Parliament for a New Brunswick constituency as having, shortly after the death of the late lamented Governor Boyd, telegraphed to Ottawa soliciting the appointment, is a misrepresentation. We should like much to be able to believe it untrue that any New Brunswick M.P.'s or any other persons whatever, are striving as rivals to obtain the appointment. The Lieutenant-Governorships are the offices of highest dignity and emolument in the gift of the Canadian Government. It ought not to be too much to expect that at least these positions should be kept out of the arena of political wire-pulling and the Government left free to select the very best men available to fill them. If there are any public offices in Canada which should seek the men and should not be sought by ambitious or mer-

cenary aspirants this is surely one of them. The very fact of its being openly claimed as a reward of party services, or a gift of personal friendship, should be accepted as proof conclusive of the unfitness of them for making such claim for so dignified a position. Once let it become—is it already such?—an understood custom that each Lieutenant-Governorship, as it becomes vacant, is to be looked upon as a prize set up in the political arena to be fought for and won by the competitor who can bring the strongest personal or party influence to bear upon the Government of the day, the people will not long continue to respect either the office or its incumbent as it is in every way desirable they should be respected. These Governorships are the analogues on a somewhat smaller scale of the Governor-Generalship. But how long could the Governor-General hope to retain the high respect and regard which are now so cheerfully accorded to the nobleman sent out from time to time to represent the British Government, were it known that the honor was put up for sale in the party market, and knocked down to the competitor who could bid highest in political or personal influence. If it be true that the office now vacant by so sad a fatality is being made the object of a struggle between rival claimants, it is to be hoped that the Government will consult its own dignity and the proprieties of the occasion by passing over all such aspirants and selecting some competent gentleman who is too modest and has too much respect for himself and the people to clamor for appointment to the highest position in the Province.

The close of the football season must have brought a very pleasing sense of relief to many an anxious parent on both sides of the Atlantic. Those who have sons at school or college in which this once-admirable pastime is practised in the latest fashion, may now breathe freely for a few months, no longer haunted with daily dread that the next broken leg or arm, or injured spine, or crushed skull, on the football battlefield may be that of one of their own boys. This way of putting it is hardly an exaggeration of the facts. On one day in October last, one member of a college team had his leg broken in two places in a football "scrimmage," another had his lower teeth knocked out; one of another team had a bad shoulder strain; another, a wrench in the knee which will prevent his ever playing again, in addition to having his eye bruised and his scalp laid open by a blow; while still another died from the effects of a kick in the stomach. A glorious day's record indeed! The statistics of the season's campaign show twenty-six deaths in England and eighteen in the United States from injuries received in playing football, to say nothing of the broken limbs and other bad wounds which run up no doubt into the hundreds. The healthy boy is, of