

duty brings upon a sympathetic man a pressure that must often warp his judgment. In New York the eligible list is but slight protection, as the appointment of substitutes is in reality the door to permanent appointment. The trustee must examine and pass upon and vouch for all repairs, though he has no practical knowledge, or even theoretical knowledge, of mechanics. Every bill before being paid must bear his signature. It depends on the trustees of a district whether a new school shall be put up in their district or not. The office is an unsalaried one, and its exercise is controlled, in fact, only by the sense of honor of the men appointed. The patronage of the office, which is not inconsiderable, is the return of the man who serves for political ends. The new bill, which is approved by the City Club, and commands the services of such men as Abram S. Hewitt, Elihu Root, Stephen S. Olin, J. Kennedy Tod, and Nicholas Murray Butler, should be supported by educated public sentiment. Both the Strauss and Pavey bills have been referred to the Committee on Cities, instead of the Committee on Education, by a Platt-Tammany vote. This is regarded as an indication that reform in the public-school system of New York is to be sacrificed to the politicians. The separation of politics from the public school system is imperative if the best good of the children is to be gained. Responsibility must be fixed, and trained men and women must control the professional work in the school untrammelled by the possibility of dismissal if they thwart the wishes of a petty politician. A further provision of the bill is for the establishment of a High School that will offer to the poor boys and girls larger opportunities for education.

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The Superintendent of Public Instruction of New York State has prepared a bill, now introduced in the Assembly, to make important changes in the existing school law. By the bill the higher limit of school age is changed from twenty-one to eighteen years; and the lower limit is reduced from five to four years, so far as the latter limit applies to all attending any free kindergarten, legally established. It is provided that any school commission may dissolve one or more districts, and from that territory organize a new district, or may unite a portion of such territory with any adjoining district. Thus the consolidation of many weak districts will be stimulated. No person shall be deemed qualified as a teacher who is under the age of eighteen years; the present limit is sixteen. The existing law empowers any school district, adjoining a city or village of 6,000 inhabitants, to contract with the school authorities of such community for the education of children residing in the district. When the contract has been made, the district quota (to which such district would be entitled if it maintained its school) shall still be paid to it. The proposed amendment extends this privilege so that a school district may contract for the education of its pupils with any city or village or adjoining union free school district and still retain its district quota. Districts may also expend their money in conveying pupils to such schools. This excellent feature of the Massachusetts law is so popular that last year in that State the sum of over \$40,000 was spent in transporting pupils in country districts. When the districts are weak, children can thus enjoy the better facilities of the adjoining villages. Another important change is that which empowers any school district to establish a free kindergarten. Another amendment would establish three free summer institutes to train teachers. In view of the attempt to keep the schools under political control, it is interesting to note that an amendment provides for the non-eligibility to the office of School Commissioner

of any one who is not a graduate of some college or university; a graduate of a normal school; or holds a State certificate, a first-grade certificate under the uniform system of examinations, or a certificate of graduation from a teachers' training-class. It is not too much to say that if this bill should become a law, both the inducement to study and the standard of teaching would be appreciably raised.

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Mr. Balfour has made a speech at Bristol, England, which, if we may judge from the extracts cabled, is a remarkable testimony to the desire of the English Government for permanently pacific relations between that country and the United States. This speech may be partly due to the misapprehension in this country respecting England's purpose and policy in South America and to a desire to remove that misapprehension. It may be partly due to Mr. Balfour's personal spirit, which is that of a Christian statesman endeavoring to solve national and international problems in a spirit of justice and equity. But it must also partly be due, we think, to the fact that the English Government hears and heeds that strong expression of public opinion in Great Britain which has made itself heard on both sides of the water, as the strong expression of public opinion in America for peace with Great Britain has also made itself heard. In this speech Mr. Balfour repudiates the idea that the British Empire is a selfish Empire; that it is animated by any spirit of jealousy against other nations, or is desirous to limit or restrict them. As a practical application of this denial he affirms that the commercial outlet for Russia in the Pacific Ocean would be a gain to British commerce and enterprise as well as to Russia. He invokes the spirit of Edmund Burke to cement an alliance between the English and American branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. "If," he says in closing, "we, in alliance with America, can carry out the duties which Providence has intrusted to us, I do not believe this empire need fear the menace of any external foe. Still less do I believe it has anything to fear from the menace of internal division." The development of this spirit in England and in America by the Christian press and pulpit will itself bring about such an alliance; and such an alliance will go far to secure the peace of the world.

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One of the most important recent international events, from the practical point of view, is the signing of a treaty by representatives of Great Britain and France settling the Siam dispute, each power agreeing upon the Mekong River as the boundary of British and French territory, from the north of Siam to the frontier of China, and that the Upper Mekong in Siam shall be the sole division between the territories of the two powers. The question of a buffer State was eliminated. This settlement is regarded as proof of the friendly relations between France and England, which the latter may have been suddenly forced to cultivate. In 1893 France developed an alarming aggressiveness towards Siam. Of the two great rivers of Siam, the Menam and the Mekong, the capital, Bangkok, is situated on the first, and the delta of the second is in French Cochin-China. North of this land lie the French possessions of Anam and Tongking. M. Develle, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, claimed dominion over the entire country lying between Anam and the Mekong, also over the Siamese provinces of Battambang and Angkor, bordering the Great Lake on the northwest frontier of French Cambodia. The Siamese justly resisted these claims, declaring that the mountain ridge which forms the present boundary between Anam and Siam had always been acknowledged as the true one,

and that, though certain provinces might have once been dependencies of Cambodia, they did not propose to lose them now. Furthermore, Siam has been building a railway north from Bangkok to tap the commerce of China. The new frontier will defeat the objects of that enterprise, for the trade of Indo-China will now be diverted to the south-east along the course of the Mekong, and will find its outlet at the French port of Saigon. The new frontier assures to France an immense Siamese northern tract seized in 1893, though France had pledged herself to respect the integrity and independence of Siam. The French then prohibited Siam from keeping an armed force in the province, and of course any failure to preserve order was made a fresh ground by France for requiring new indemnities. The amusing thing about the new Anglo-French treaty is not so much England's necessity, conceding to France nearly all she has asked, but the fact that the present treaty is in direct contradiction with a former one, by which both governments acknowledged the desirability of a "buffer" State. Their territorial ambition has now brought them to a coterminous frontier.

On Monday of last week the examination of the prisoners arrested at Johannesburg and brought to Pretoria was begun at the latter place. The prisoners were accused of having openly avowed their opposition to the Government of the South African Republic, and the evidence showed that a Reform Committee, of which the accused were members, had prepared a proclamation declaring that a provincial Government was necessary, as Dr. Jameson was expected at Johannesburg and disorders might ensue. The reason why Dr. Jameson was expected was because he had been invited by the same Reform Committee, as will be seen by extracts from the following letter:

"Dr. Jameson:

"Johannesburg, December 20.

"Dear Sir—The position of matters in this State has become so critical that at no distant period there will be a conflict between the Government and the Uitlander population. It is scarcely necessary for us to recapitulate what is now a matter of history. Suffice it that the position of thousands of Englishmen and others is rapidly becoming intolerable. . . . Not to go into details, we may say that the Government have called into existence all the elements necessary for armed conflict. . . . It is under these circumstances that we feel constrained to call upon you to come to our aid should a disturbance arise here. The circumstances are so extreme that we cannot avoid this step, and we cannot but believe that you will not fail to come to the rescue of the people who would be so situated. We guarantee any expense that may be incurred by you in helping us, and ask you to believe that nothing but the sternest necessity has prompted this appeal. We are, yours faithfully,

"CHARLES LEONARD, FRANCIS RHODES, LIONEL PHILLIPS, JOHN HAYS HAMMOND, GEORGE FARRAR."

As will be seen by the above, Mr. Hammond, the American mining expert, was one of the leaders of the revolt. Under the circumstances, it might be well for Secretary Olney to take the full significance of the attempted conquest into consideration before insisting on specially tender treatment for our compatriot. At the end of the week Mr. Chamberlain, the British Colonial Secretary, published a statement declaring that the Transvaal Government (the South African Republic) had no previous knowledge of the filibustering raid, that Dr. Jameson had flagrantly disobeyed Imperial orders, and that the Chartered Company had made repeated efforts to compromise the Home Government by securing its assent to a concentration of forces on the Transvaal border, but that the convention of 1884 (defining the species of British suzerainty in the Transvaal's foreign affairs) must be upheld, and that the Uitlanders had just grievances. Mr. Chamberlain added that he would welcome a visit from the President of the South African Republic. The Colonial Secretary has also pro-

visionally decided that the armed force of the Chartered Company will be placed under officers appointed by the Crown. Mr. Cecil Rhodes and Mr. Chamberlain have had an interview, but nothing authentic has been published concerning the outcome. The former has now left England suddenly, and the "Pall Mall Gazette" mentions the report that Mr. Rhodes went away in order to defeat any attempt on the part of the House of Commons to stop him from leaving the country.

On Thursday of last week the Manitoba Legislature was opened at Winnipeg, and reference was immediately made to the almost unanimous feeling in the province against accepting any modification of the present public-school system. Nevertheless, the Dominion Cabinet at Ottawa has now decided upon the remedial legislation to be introduced into the Canadian Parliament. The bill does not altogether please the Roman Catholics, since it does not place Manitoban schools under the control of the Church, as before 1890, but places them under the control of the provincial Government. In order to be eligible to receive aid from the general fund, these schools must be up to the same standard of efficiency as the other schools. Catholics may elect whether they will contribute towards separate or public schools. Should they send their children to separate schools, their taxes go towards the maintenance of such schools; should they send their children to the public schools, then their taxes go to the municipal fund. Of course the bill contains machinery for giving effect to the proposed legislation, since the Manitoban Government has repeatedly intimated that it will not recognize federal interference. A Catholic School Board is to be established, upon which the collection of school taxes from those sending their children to separate schools will devolve. In the event of the provincial authorities failing to appoint the Board, it will be appointed by the federal authorities. This also applies to the appointment of a Superintendent of Catholic Schools. In localities where no Catholic school already exists, one may be created on the petition of five families, numbering ten children. Where a municipality fails to organize a Catholic school district, this power is given to the Catholic Board. It is difficult to see how the bill will provide redress for the minority in Manitoba. It provides for the restoration of Catholic schools, to be sure, but how can a federal Government force upon a province a bill which, by the recent elections held in that province, was repudiated? Again, the bailiffs of the Manitoban municipalities will be seizing property for taxes from Catholics for the support of public schools, and yet, by the statutes of the Dominion, these have been exempted from the payment of taxes for the support of public schools when they elect to pay taxes towards the maintenance of Catholic schools. The problem is indeed a knotty one, but we believe that, in the end, the great majority in Manitoba which supports genuinely public and national schools will win.

The Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States have taken wise, vigorous, and, we hope, efficient action on behalf of the persecuted Armenians. They have addressed a letter to the President in which they express the hope that "some measures consistent with National traditions and the National dignity may be devised, and that speedily, which shall bring the whole force of the National sentiment to bear upon the solution of this subject," and their profound conviction "that our Nation should cease to recognize the Turkish Government as a civilized power so long as its barbarous treatment of