going. Precepts of decency are not observed, the standard of propriety is low, the whole moral atmosphere is pestilential. Poverty in its direst form haunts some dwellings, ghastly profligacy defiles others, and this in street after street, alley after alley, cul de sac after cul de sac, garret after garret, and cellar after cellar. Amid such gross surroundings who can be good? With this atrocious miasma continually brooding over them and settling down among them, who can rise to anything better. Morally these people are not only lost—they are dead and buried." Even high life, then, we see has been startled from its composure and brought face to face with the horrors that exist in its neighbourhood. But what has all this to say to the question of navigation as it is now carried on? Only so much that these methods were taken the other day by the President of the British Association, in opening the annual meeting of the Association at Bath, to illustrate the effects of machinery on the civilisation of the world. "The introduction of prime movers," he said, "as a mere substitute for unintelligent manual labour is in itself a great aid to civilisation and to the raising of humanity, by rendering it very difficult, if not impossible, [illegible] human [illegible] to obtain a livelihood by unintelligent work—the work of the horse in the mill, or of the turnspit." The President went on to take as an illustration the modern Atlantic liner, quickly propelled by means of engines of 19,500 horse-power, but which 117,000 men would be needed to propel slowly by oars,—with 117,000 others in reserve. It need not, however, be said that nothing of this kind would be possible. The serious question, meantime, is as to the degree in which, if at all, the prime movers or steam-engines, to which the President generally alluded as promoting civilisation and raising humanity by making it almost impossible for unintelligent work to obtain a living, contribute to the state of things described by the *Morning Post* as existing in London. That condition of things can only arise from abject poverty the prolific source of vice and the consequence of a want of employment sufficient to afford the decent means of living. It is not for us to contradict so eminent authority as the President of the British Association. He gives it as his opinion that machinery by preventing unintelligent work from earning a livelihood promotes civilisation and raises human nature. But we see thousands and tens of thousands of people, even in the very heart of the wealthiest, the healthiest, the most civilised city of the world, as the *Morning Post* says, whose condition is utterly out of joint with civilisation and whose human nature is debased far below the level of brutality. The question, therefore, forces itself upon us as to how they have come there. Are they all unintelligent, and, if they were not so, would they be able to find work that would provide them with the means of earning a decent livelihood? Or does the steam engine, while it promotes the intelligence, limit the number of those to whom it affords employment? It is in this way that we have mixed up the consideration of the Whitechapel murders with that of the navigation of the Atlantic Ocean.

BLACK PROSPECTS.

THE whole condition of British naval affairs appear to be doubtful as things now are. Admiral Baird's experiences in the late manœuvres seem to have proved convincingly that the days of the blockade have gone by. He was commissioned to blockade Berehaven, but his failure to do so was complete. The steamers of the enemy, had there been such vessels there, could have got out at night unperceived, and the strength of the men and officers of the torpedo boats, without which no blockade could be maintained, could not sustain the labour required of them for a sufficient length of time. The hope, therefore, that, in case of war, the enemy's cruisers might be shut up in port and rendered harmless against British commerce must be abandoned, and nothing remains but full preparation to watch them upon the open seas. It seems to be generally admitted, however, that the British navy in its present condition is not by any means sufficient for this. If we may trust Lord Charles Beresford as an authority, and he is possibly as good a one as can easily be found, it is not even certain as to the number of ships that would be required for the purpose. He would have the matter submitted to all the most competent experts who only after mature consideration and combined discussion would be able to pronounce upon it. Lord Charles, moreover, looks upon the matter as imperative, for, as he says, and as it must be palpable to all of us, it is one of life and death:—"What enemy," he asks, "would be mad enough to invade this country, unless he had command of the sea? And what enemy if he had command of the sea would be mad enough to risk the chances of a military descent when he could starve us all into absolute submission by simply stopping our supplies of food?" The question, meantime, is one that cannot be without its less agreeable aspects to the British tax-payer. That he should run the risk of either suffering the horrors of famine or submitting to a foreign enemy cannot fail to be a most unpleasant contingency for him to contemplate. But a more immediate and more directly touching unpleasantness must be undergone by him if he would avoid such a risk. The increase of the fleet demanded, in fact, means a large additional taxation, for ships of war are costly to build, and an additional number of them means besides, an additional and constantly improved armament, as well as a strong reinforcement of sailors. Lord Charles Beresford also proposes a training fleet of brigs, by means of which the heavy masts and spars encumbering the men-of-war might be dispensed with. It is evident, then, that John Bull must pay pretty dear for the privilege of importing his food supplies. England, in short, is perhaps destined to suffer as severely from the support of an effective navy, as Germany or France suffers from that of a gigantic army. But just at present, whatever her capabilities may still be, her claim to be actual mistress of the seas seems to be somewhat doubtful. All that appears certain is that the conditions of her navy are altered, as we said—and that decidedly for the worse.

MR. DAVITT LOSES PATIENCE.

MR. MICHAEL DAVITT has caused a commotion by a rebuke that he has given to the Liberal party. Mr. Davitt accuses the Liberals of not acting with sufficient vigour in aid of the Irish people while they prevent the Irish people from helping themselves. The people, he says, are forbidden to resort to violence for the defence of their homes, lest they should injure the Liberal party by doing so. Meantime 50,000 tenants are liable to eviction for arrears due—whereas their holdings will not yield the bare rents, without speaking of arrears. Mr. Davitt points to the effect produced in England by the action of the Liberals when the Bulgarian atrocities occurred. He, however, was not the first to make the charges referred to. Some of the English Liberals themselves had already begun to move in the matter. Their organ, the Newcastle *Leader*, for example, had spoken on the subject as follows:—"The public either do not realise the position or they do not care. The Unionists are either right in their boast that the country is with them, or, if they are not, the country has a precious queer way of showing its faith in the cause over which the next political battle will rage. If the English democracy only realised what is being done in the name of law and order we have sufficient faith in their sense of right and their humanity to say their protest would go up to heaven in thunder tones instead of feeble whispers as now. Is it really the case that our people are cowed by the despotic daring and the callous cynicism of the Castle's tool, Mr. Balfour? Are we who struck the lion down in Bulgaria to crouch before the wolf in Ireland? Once more, we ask, are there any numbers of us here who really care for Ireland and for the persecution of her sons, or is all this cry about Home Rule and our determination to see justice done a hideous sham?" It is, nevertheless, not fair to demand that Irish evictions should produce as great an effect on the English masses as was produced by the Bulgarian atrocities. The truth is bad enough without resorting to exaggeration, and it would be wild exaggeration to accuse even the most cruel landlords of excesses like those of the Bashi Bazouks. Besides, the English masses have long been familiar with the general notion of the Irish eviction, though not with its details, and we all know what the old proverb tells us as to the results of familiarity. Nor do we quite clearly see that what is wanted on the part of the English masses is an outburst of anger and indignation as passing perhaps as violent. A radical and thorough conversion that shall prove enduring for all time is what is required, and that we have every reason to believe is now being worked. Mr. Davitt's impatience, however, is easily understood, situated as he is within sight of the wrong-doing, and touched to the quick by the sufferings of the victims. A man in such a position may well be impatient.

GOOD ADVICE.

OUR contemporary, the *Marlborough Express* writes as follows concerning the Parnell Commission:—"The newspapers are likely to be flooded for some time to come with records of the doings of the Commission, and, as the inquiry proceeds, it is probable that the public excitement will grow in intensity. For the charges are of an entirely novel and startling character, and they are made at a very critical juncture—in fact, just as the hopes of the Home Rulers appeared to be approaching fruition. And the rebuttal of the charges will involve a good deal of sensational evidence in all probability. If ever the fact of a case being *sub judice* made it incumbent on the public prints to maintain a profound silence, as the spectators in a court of justice are bound to do, it does in this instance. The situation is the most extraordinary in all history. A great newspaper, the mirror of public opinion, has undertaken to show that the leader of a great national movement has sanctioned and has assisted in a plan of campaign which includes outrage, and murder, and other crimes—and that leader a member of the British Legislature. On the other hand, the leader and his party undertake to show that the charges promulgated by the paper are based upon the evidence of informers traitors, and suborned witnesses. The issue must be of a grave character. If the *Times* proves its case, the power of the Press will be seen to be the mightiest of all powers in human affairs, and the national cause of Ireland will have received almost a death-blow, at least for many years. If, on the other hand, the leader emerges unsinged from the fiery trial, not only will the *Times* receive a mortal blow, but the cause of Ireland will become the cause of humanity,