

England public opinion works more slowly, but gradually she is coming to handle these matters seriously. And when England does this, she usually settles the question satisfactorily. The Australian federation is now complete. It has a constitution and a system of State Governments as perfect as those of the United States.

The Imperial Government in London appoints the Governor-General, but the Australians reserved the right to appoint a President, in case the Governor-General should not prove acceptable. This is the most delicate point in the whole matter, yet when the limitations to even the Royal prerogative in England are considered, it only shows that if the Governor-General leaves matters to move as the Queen does, all will come out right.

Statesmen are now moving in the direction of a vast federation of all the British possessions.

And there seems to be a tendency towards some sort of local governments for Scotland and Wales as well as for Ireland.

NEW YORK FORTIFICATIONS.

ABOUT one week ago the Legislature of the State of New York ceded to the General Government land in and around New York city, for purposes of defense in case of attack. The outer line of defense will be removed six miles beyond its present limit. The plan of defense to be adopted is in harmony with that outlined by General Sheridan some years ago.

Plumb Island, in Sheepshead Bay, north of Coney Island, is to be given to the United States. On this will be erected a mortar battery of the latest approved pattern. At Sandy Hook new fortifications are being erected, and new batteries also constructed. These two batteries, Plumb Island and Sandy Hook, will protect the entrance to New York city from the Atlantic ocean. Another Battery will be erected on Raritan Bay, so as to cover the Perth Amboy channel.

Sand's Point and Hewlett's are some of the lands given by the State for Federal use. They are situated near Long Island Sound, and batteries will be erected on them at once. These will guard the northern part of the city from the sea, by way of the Sound. At Waterlitt the most formidable works of defense are being constructed. Pieces of sixteen-inch bore will be mounted on these works. At present the batteries are being supplied with twelve-inch rifled mortars, effective at a six mile range, and capable of raining tons of metal all over the water approaches.

Gotham is awake. Its millionaires begin to realize that bank accounts are of little use if not protected against the chances of war.

THE GOLD BRICK BUSINESS.

THE gold brick trick, which was lately performed at Provo, is an old confidence "chestnut." It is almost as antiquated as modern mining, and it is astounding that men of ability and intelligence can still be found who can be caught by anything so transparent. It was successfully played in this city a number of years ago, and the victim—we cannot recall his name at present—was not only chagrined at the loss of his ducats, but was so disgusted with himself that he was fired with a powerful desire to subject himself to a vigorous process of kicking for his simplicity.

There are a few safeguards against victimization by confidence sharps which should never be lost sight of. One is that surreptitious philanthropists who roam about the country seeking well-to-do men they wish to enrich by letting them have something of great worth for one-fourth of its value, are not overwhelmingly numerous. When one of the genuine sort is found the discoverer will make more money by entering into a partnership with the phenomenal character in the dime museum business than by buying his solid gold bricks. Such a scarce specimen of the *genus homo* would draw well if placed on exhibition.

Confidence games are generally accompanied by some degree of mystery—private interviews are a necessity. This is not even excepted in the old jewelry trick, in which the possessor of a valuable diamond ring draws the article cautiously from his boot and tells how it belonged to a wealthy family and how he obtained it when on a voyage to India.

It is well that people in general should look with suspicion upon people who propose to make them nabobs by a sudden method at their expense. And it is a good thing not to attempt to heap up riches by a questionable process, to which class the mysterious gold brick purchasing transaction belongs.

IN SOUTH AMERICA.

THE South American continent has long been noted for the tendency of the inhabitants of most of the countries upon it to indulge in insurrections and revolutions. A war of this character is now in progress, in Chili, and there is no telling what conspiracies of a

political character promising war, may be afoot. But convulsions of a sort quite different from the carnal warfare of which South American nations have seen so much, have recently taken place in some of them. Financial crashes are here referred to. In the Argentine Republic these were especially extensive and disastrous last year. It was owing to the panic in that country that Baring Brothers of London failed, thereby precipitating a monetary stringency in England that extended to the United States.

Enormous sums of English capital have been invested in South America within the last few years, especially in the Argentine Republic and Brazil. The great financial panic in the former has not put a stop to the "boom" in the latter country, which is a favorite field, at the present time for foreign investors and speculators. Railways are being built, and other similar improvements are being made, necessitating the expenditure of vast sums of money, and Brazil is consequently advancing rapidly in development as a civilized nation.

The railroads and other permanent improvements in South America, which are being brought into existence by foreign capital, will remain, even though financial storms do sweep over the country and wreck their promoters.

Such improvements and the development of natural resources which result from them, are great aids to civilization, and can scarcely fail in impressing the fact upon the minds of the people among whom they are inaugurated, the necessity of imparting stability to their institutions of government.

Thus the wealth of the Old World is being so used as to aid in promoting civilization in that portion of the New which stands in greatest need of help of that kind; and the results in this direction more than offset the losses consequent upon overdoing the field of investment.

A PROPOSED ADJUSTMENT.

THE proposition made by Chairman Nelson of the school board to that body, last evening, looking to an adjustment of the difficulty in regard to school taxes, embraces an element of equity that at least entitles it to deliberate consideration. Under the decision of the Territorial Supreme Court, the special school taxes were collected on the roll of the wrong year, 1890 instead of 1889. Hence the collection was illegal, and taxpayers are entitled to a return of the sums they have paid.

Col. Nelson's proposition is to regard