

their organs. But no one, looking over the history of Europe during the last half century, or even to the general state of things at the present moment, can doubt in which direction the main stream of opinion flows. Even in France the reactionary force begins to give signs of exhaustion; while in England the great organs of public opinion, even though the sympathies of their managers may be on the side of reaction, still do an unwilling homage to principles which are rooted in the deep convictions of the nation, and which will not fail, as soon as a real appeal is made to them, to respond to that appeal, and bring the reaction to an end. If the terrible strain laid on free institutions in America by the revolt of the Slaveowners has contributed to the prevailing mistrust of freedom, it now appears that free institutions will probably stand the strain, and that this cause of reaction also will cease to operate. We are told by politicians that when the present Government expires, a Conservative Government will certainly succeed to power. Be it so. A Government acting upon principle of any kind is more congenial and more advantageous to Liberalism, if Liberalism be sound, than cynical indifference. The tone of politics will be restored; and we can no more apprehend a repeal of any of the great liberal measures which have already been passed than we can apprehend that prize-fights will actually be legalized by Parliament, and celebrated under the patronage of the Queen. Whatever ministers come into office will find themselves placed, as before, at a