

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCT. 17, 1882.

AMERICAN ELECTIONS.

Reports of returns from the elections in the United States are not yet sufficiently definite to let the outside world know the exact results, but sufficient is now known to enable onlookers to judge of their general drift, and to gain a partial index to the state of political feeling among our neighbors south of the boundary line.

In a country like the United States, where industrial and commercial progress has been the secret of the nation's wonderful growth and prosperity, it would naturally be expected that questions intimately connected with trade would be the leading points at issue between the different parties who struggle for political power. The United States may be considered one of the purest non-military nations of the Universe, where a standing army of some 20,000 represents the military power of the nation of 50,000,000 in time of peace. The nation's statesmen can, therefore, have no military policy to pursue, and legislative efforts in the interests of the arts of peace must be the actions which will make such statesmen truly great.

If the student of political economy will start out to analyse the late election returns, and search for the causes which produced them with the foregoing conclusions fixed in his mind, he will meet with great disappointments. Trade questions seem to have had little, if any, part in influencing the voice of the different States, while sectional strife and fanaticism have evidently been much more powerful. That sectional feeling in the Southern States is still strong enough to prevent people there from looking after their real interests is evident from the decided manner in which Georgia recently pronounced for Alex. H. Stephens, ex-Vice President of the Confederate States. While manufactures and trade generally have made great onward strides in these States during the last few years, their representatives are yet too weak to have any great sway in a national election.

In moving northward into States which have not the difficulty of hatred of races and sense of conquest to contend with, a more reasonable state of political feeling might be expected, but these expectations

would again end in disappointment. Crossing the imaginary Mason and Dixon line into the populous State of Ohio, where manufacturing interests should be predominant, the elections have been fought, and fought bitterly, upon the question of "Beer or no beer," and fanatical Prohibition has tended to give a great victory to the extreme liquor party. In the purely agricultural States of Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas the same question absorbs all political attention, and the real interests of the farmers are forgotten in the bitter struggle. Away East, in the staid old New England States, matters are but little more explicable. Massachusetts, with its old hatred to slavery interests, casts an anti-Southern vote, while the adjoining State of Connecticut usually gives an opposite result, although in all trade matters the interests of both are identical. Even in the Empire State of New York, where one-half of the manufactures of the world are supposed to be represented, industrial questions take but little part in forming political opinion, and neither of the two great national parties in that State attempt to avow a clear commercial policy.

If we might be allowed to take a step back two years we could get a more accurate conception of the anomalous part great trade questions play in American national politics. The Republican party, claiming to be the party of Protection, nominated and elected an honorary member of the Cobden Club of London, England, the most influential Free Trade association in Europe; while Democracy, with its Free Trade associations, nominated a candidate who rated the tariff reform agitation as a purely local question. The facts in the case were that neither party possessed a definite commercial policy, and the question of tariff or no tariff is merely kept in stock as an argument for local demagogues. The anomalous position of the nation at large on this question is also obvious from the fact that tariff finds its strongest supporters in purely agricultural States of the West, where Protection on manufactured goods is no local advantage, but in reality an injustice; while several old manufacturing States give a steady support to the party advocating Free Trade.

Looking at American politics from any point, therefore, we are shut out to the opinion that the nation has no clear commercial policy at present.

In Canada the difficulties of contend-

ing races, and the fanaticism of would-be social philanthropists, happily have but little political influence. The decided manner in which the two great political parties of the Dominion split upon the question of Protection versus Free Trade, assigns to each the unquestioned claim to a clear commercial policy, and a country whose political welfare is discussed upon purely commercial principles has immense advantages over others, where rancorous feelings regarding imaginary social questions are predominant. Canada, therefore, has to be congratulated upon standing in this happy condition, from which her way is clear to commercial greatness.

PAPER MANUFACTURE.

We are pleased to note the first step in the North-West made towards paper manufacturing in the construction of Mr. McIlvanie's mill at Portage la Prairie, a description of which will be found in our issue of October 3rd, and we have no doubt but that institution will prove a great success financially. This mill, in which it is meant to manufacture wrapping and building papers only, is certainly a safe undertaking, when it is taken into consideration that raw material for such manufactures costs actually nothing, thousands of tons of straw and other fodder being burnt annually by farmers. The second step in this direction should naturally be of print paper manufacture from wood pulp, and a properly-constructed mill or two in the North-West could not prove anything else than profitable investments. This industry has made rapid progress in the United States within the last ten years, and in the Eastern Provinces of this Dominion eighteen different mills are now in operation, who turn out daily in the neighborhood of fifty tons of this paper. About two-thirds of these have sprung into existence during the last seven years, and those who were in existence before that have made material advance in the quantity they manufacture. The secret of the rapid growth of the industry in Canada and the United States lies in the plentiful supply of raw material at hand. Bass wood and poplar are the species of timber most used, and several manufacturers with whom we have conversed on the subject have a decided preference for the latter. Poplar is undoubtedly the most plentiful timber throughout the North-West, so that the