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THE FORTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY.

Few sovereigns have filled a throne for a longer period than her Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, that of Great Britain. She is now sixty-one years of age, and by the 20th of June she will have reigned over the British Empire for the unusually long period of forty-three years. The average reign of English sovereigns since the Conquest, omitting the Protectorate and disregarding regencies, is twenty-two years, and out of nine thirty-five or thirty-six sovereigns, only four have had a longer reign than that to which Queen Victoria's has already extended. Henry III. reigned fifty-seven years, Edward III. fifty years, Elizabeth forty-five years, and George III. sixty years. If the life of Victoria be spared to see two additional anniversaries her reign will have equalled in length that of good Queen Bess, whom she resembles more in the glories of her reign and in her wisdom as a sovereign, than in her character and disposition as a woman. If the wishes and prayers of her subjects could avail aught in obtaining for Victoria long life and happiness, she would live to leave behind a record more lengthened and glorious than any of her long line of royal ancestors. Few sovereigns have so endeared themselves to their people as has this noble and pure-minded woman, and few indeed have deserved such universal esteem and affection. While all parties who speak the sentiments of their soul, unbiassed by political feeling, must admit that Queen Victoria has been, from her eighteenth year up to this hour, the most loyal of Constitutional Sovereigns to whatever party could wield sway, that he, for the time being, possessed the confidence of a majority of the people's representatives in the House of Commons, yet on one or two occasions she has had to endure criticism and instructions as ill-natured as unjust; but at the same time she has had the satisfaction of seeing how promptly such attempts were frowned down by all classes of her people. Like all other persons, she has had her personal predilections, but these have never been permitted to influence her conduct as a sovereign of a free people. Even in the very beginning of her reign, at the time when the Melbourne Administration was forced to resign, and Sir Robert Peel was sent for as the coming man, who could tell him, that though she was sorry to part with her Ministers, of whose conduct she approved, and whom she esteemed, yet she cheerfully bowed to constitutional usage, and the same spirit has guided her public life down to the present moment.

We have seen at least an attempt made since the recent change of government in England to originate the idea that Her Majesty wished to subordinate the will of her people, constitutionally expressed, to her own royal will. This was first instituted in some of the organs of public opinion in England, but it has been more plainly and offensively expressed by an English writer resident in Canada, who loudly declares, no doubt in the political heat and train the 'prentice hand of our Canadian journalists in the higher walks of their profession. "If the Court," he remarks, "by betraying its unwillingness to accept Mr. Gladstone has brought upon itself something like humiliation, it may thank Lord Beaconsfield, who for many years has been instilling into it autocratic fancies, intoxicating it with slavish flattery and pandering to it in disgusting personal propensities and antipathies, the manifestation of which his English predecessors would have thought themselves bound by chivalrous sentiment, as well as by their duty as Ministers, to repress." This first paragraph is more unjust and less complimentary to Her Majesty than anything that has ever been penned by any of her subjects, unless by a Bradlaugh. It implies first, that Queen Victoria has the will, had she only the power, to be a despot; and second, that she possesses not the good sense and discernment to know when she is being made the victim of gross and slavish flattery. This may be pardoned on account of the peculiar idiosyncrasy of the writer, upon whose sensorium the term "royal" or "aristocratic" produces such irritation as to unhinge his judgment for the moment. By the "Court" is meant Her Majesty, by humiliation is implied that the Queen was forced against her will to accept of Gladstone as Minister, and we leave our readers and *Bystander* to settle the question between them.

No one can deny that the present reign has been as eventful as any that has gone before it, and Her Majesty, during the long rule, has witnessed as many great changes in the Governments of the world, and in the social condition of the people, as history has ever recorded, or crowded into the same space. Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and Turkey, have undergone remarkable transformations within this time—some of them as respects governmental forms, some as respects territorial change, and not a few as respects both. Revolutions have swept over some of the most powerful nations in Europe, and the proudest dynasties have fallen and disappeared before it, while under the happy reign of Victoria England barely felt the swell. Chartism, Repeal, Young Irelandism, and Fenianism, have each had its day, but none of these produced anything beyond a passing ripple upon the surface of society, and Feargus O'Connor, Dan O'Connell, Smith O'Brien, and all the rest, have strutted their brief hour on the stage and left the social atmosphere all the clearer and purer for the agitation they occasioned.

The social progress has been quite as remarkable as any other changes that the page of history will record. Science has contributed more during this reign to the progress of humanity, and to the productive powers of the people than in any other period of equal length in the history of the race. Of the natural forces more especially subjected to the will of man, heat and electricity must be allowed the first place. The one under the form of steam has in its infinite applications revolutionized the manufacturing and commercial interests of humanity; and though the wonders of the other already transcend description, yet one is justified in claiming, that the discoveries and practical applications of this subtile element are only yet in their infancy, and judgment and imagination alike fail in setting limits to the discoveries that may be made in this branch of science in the future, and what these may effect for humanity.

In speaking of the social changes that have taken place under Victoria's reign, one must not overlook the question of education. Though at the beginning of this reign, the wealthier classes were perhaps the best educated in Europe, yet the great masses of the people were as illiterate as those of any other nation claiming to be civilized. The parochial system had done much for the people north of the Tweed, but in England and Wales the state of popular education was simply a shame to the nation. Since that time, however, vast strides have been made, and now this question engages as much of the attention of the Government and ruling classes, as any other of those upon which social progress depends, and it is as liberally supported from the public treasury and local rates as in any of those countries which had the start of Great Britain in respect to time. Among the glories of Victoria's reign this will not be the least enduring, nor the least important factor in the general advancement of the English people.

While all parts of the Empire have made progress during the present reign, none have advanced with such rapid strides as the colonies, and among these Canada is entitled to the first place. In 1837 those colonies were of but little account, and now they are rapidly developing into a powerful state, second to few as regards territory and resources, while the promises for its future in wealth and population are of the brightest kind. Our people are the most loyal, and, taken altogether, perhaps the most prosperous part of her Majesty's subjects, and they will celebrate her birthday with a loyalty as ardent, and with a respect and affection as sincere and devoted, as any other part of her Empire. The Princess Louise will have no cause to complain of the enthusiastic and right royal manner in which the anniversary of the Queen's birthday is observed among her Canadian subjects, and in no place will the prayer—Long live the Queen—be more sincerely and devoutly uttered.

A NEW DEPARTURE IN "REFORM."

The question, How far may the removal of the late Hon. Geo. Brown affect the interests and well-being of the "reform" party, is one that must have presented itself in almost every quarter. And the inquiry is a natural one. If we except the period when the "reformers" were the warm admirers, the enthusiastic followers of Sir John Macdonald and Sir George Cartier, they were kept in antagonism to those two representative men mainly by the efforts of Mr. Brown. But will the efforts of those efforts be of a lasting character, or will they undergo rapid modification, now that their author has passed away? Answers to these questions will vary very much with the hopes and wishes of individuals. Some are already found to say that the party will gain strength, which is as much as to declare that Mr. Brown was a weak man, a hinderance to it. Those who can properly estimate the life and energy he put into the political body with which he was associated can scarcely concur in this position. And what ever his errors a great statesman among all classes he was its characteristics tone on many important matters. On the value of British connection; on the stability of the Senate, of which Mr. Brown was a member; on the integrity of the Bench; on the unimpaired confidence of the prevailing safeguards to property, person, and of society. On all such and kindred matters the tone of the Reform party as advanced by him was one which the large majority of the people approved of. But evidences exist that there will soon be a sloughing off, more or less marked, from such positions. Already the *Globe* has thrown itself in with the movement for the abolition of the Senate, though it professes to wish to see the change it now advocates gradually. If the conservative character which marked so strongly many of the positions of the Reform party is to be abandoned, if a career of hacking, hewing, and upsetting is to be ushered upon, it may be anticipated that many will be repelled rather than attracted. The argument in favor of the abolition of the Senate, which is the first blow upon existing institutions, is chiefly twofold. The first that it is expensive; the second that as the legislation of Ontario is carried on by the aid of one Legislative Chamber, the affairs of the Dominion could be equally well served through a similar simple process. The principal point at issue is not the cost, but the desirability of the second chamber. If it is useful as a balance, a counterpoise, a check on hasty legislation, its cost is a matter of secondary consideration. Constitutional privileges and safeguards should not be calculated by dollars and cents. True liberty is beyond price, and if the constitutionalism of Canada enforces and guards our liberties, it can scarcely be held to be too dear at any price. Those who appeal to the single legislative chamber of Ontario as an illustration of their wishes forget that it is not an absolute body. Its doings are held in check, first, by the duties to which it is limited by the terms of Confederation; and, secondly, by the power vested in the Dominion Government to disallow its legislation if occasion seems to demand. But who would control hasty legislation rushed through the House of Commons in moments of party excitement or popular clamor? The Senate has upon several occasions wisely interposed between the Commons and the country, in order that time might be given for the true state of public feeling to develop itself. It has also instituted many important measures, and the presence of so experienced a body of men at the Capital during the Legislative session must have a valuable effect upon affairs in addition to the legislation performed in assembled capacity. So far from the country having confidence in