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### The House of Lords.

The House of Lords question is coming to the front again in British politics. Sir William Harcourt, the Liberal leader, has been making numerous speeches of late, in which he has discussed public interests with great vigor, and his utterances concerning the hereditary branch of Parliament indicate an intention to make the question—what shall be done with the Upper House? the political issue of first importance. The Liberals have been much in need of some battle cry which would create enthusiasm and rally the full strength of the party, and the leaders appear to have reached the conclusion that there is no other question which can be so effectively used for that purpose. This probably means that Lord Rosebery is to become again an active factor in the party, and the appreciative references to his ability and political opinions, round in some of Sir William Harcourt's recent speeches, point in the same direction. Just what the policy of the Liberals in reference to the hereditary branch will involve has not yet been declared. It will probably be, however, a scheme for "mending" rather than for "ending." But whatever plan may be formulated, the grand aim, it may be taken for granted, will be to take away the veto power from the Lords, and thus establish the supremacy of the Commons. It is expected that the Ministerialists will seek to meet the attack upon the Lords by a reformatory policy such as has been lately suggested by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, namely, a greater infusion of life into the Peers, the weeding out of weak peers by the process of selection carried out among the Irish and Scotch peers, the introduction of the elective idea into the constitution of the House, and possibly the inclusion of colonial representatives.

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### The Austrian Situation.

The present condition of affairs in Austria is one that excites keen interest, and no one can tell what is to be the outcome of the conflict of racial and religious passions, of which the Empire of Francis Joseph is the theatre. The riotous and thoroughly disgraceful proceedings in the Reichsrath, of which some account was given in these columns last week, have been followed by the resignation of the Austrian Premier, Count Badeni. The Count is a man of great ability, and was cordially supported by the Emperor. He had also the support of a large majority in the Reichsrath (the Austrian Parliament.) But the liberal measures of the ministry toward the Zechs, Poles, Slavs, &c., who comprise two-thirds or more of the population, had excited against the premier the fierce opposition of the arrogant, and hitherto dominant, German party. The population of Vienna, where the Reichsrath meets, is principally German, and the imprisonment of German members of the Reichsrath, because of their unconstitutional and violent conduct in the House, had excited popular feeling in the city to such a pitch that Count Badeni felt that there was imminent danger of bloodshed, which could only be averted by his resignation. He was not disappointed in the immediate result. As soon as Badeni's

resignation was announced the popular excitement subsided. A new ministry has been formed under the leadership of Baron Gautsch Von Frankenthurn, who was Minister of Public Instruction in the late administration. Being of German nationality and at the same time possessing the confidence of the Hungarians as well as the anti-German elements in Austria, Baron Gautsch probably possesses some advantages over Count Badeni for leadership in the present crisis. Thus peace, it is hoped, may be preserved for the present. How long it can be maintained is doubtful. The Emperor Francis Joseph is a very able monarch, and his influence will do much to hold the kingdom together. But he is getting to be an old man now, and the task of ruling becomes more difficult. Whether or not the Empire can become sufficiently homogeneous for continued constitutional government without revolution and war seem doubtful.

The demonstrations of the Germans in Vienna against the Badeni Government have led to counter anti-German demonstrations of a much more serious character in Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. The people, deeply incensed at the forced resignation of Badeni, had also apparently been misled by false reports and excited by inflammatory articles in the newspapers. The streets of Prague were filled with howling mobs which bombarded with stones the houses occupied by Germans, the synagogues and business places of German Jews being especially the objects of their attack. To restrain the violence of the mob several battalions of troops had to be called out. In one instance a volley was fired into the crowd with fatal results. The constant cry of the rioters was "Down with the Germans!" "Down with the Jews!" Some 300 Germans it is said were more or less injured, and it was not safe for a German to venture on the streets, for anyone using the German language was attacked. Much damage has been done to the German University and high schools. Thousands of Zech miners from surrounding towns flocked into Prague to assist the rioters, and the outbreak grew to such dimensions that it was found necessary to place the city under martial law. Demonstrations of a less violent character have been made also in other places in Bohemia.

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### The London School Board Election.

The result of the recent School Board election in London is decidedly adverse to the Moderates and correspondingly favorable to the Progressives. The Moderates are virtually a clerical or church party and stand for education under Anglican influences. They are, however, divided as to the means of securing this end. A section of the Moderates, known as Diggleites, from their leader, Mr. Diggle, desire to make the public schools cheap affairs, so that they shall not come into competition with the church schools. This section appealed to the electors on the ground of economy. Another section of the Moderates, representing more directly the Clerical party, and known as the Cecilites, will have it that the children in the public schools must be taught at least so much of Anglican doctrine as is contained in the Apostles' creed. The Progressives, on the other hand, representing largely the Non-conformist and secular elements of the city, stand for the elevation of the school system and against the attempt to introduce sectarian teaching of any kind into the public schools. In the recent election the Cecilites elected ten members, and Mr. Diggle, who had on the old board a following of twenty-nine, has now only nine, so that the Moderates are left in quite a hopeless minority, and the church papers

speak of the results of the election as a calamity. This defeat of the Clericals in the London election will hardly encourage the government to proceed with an educational policy on lines similar to the bill of last year which at that time met with so unfriendly a reception in Parliament that it had to be withdrawn.

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### Hon. Mr. Emmerson.

On Thursday evening of last week Hon. H. R. Emmerson, Premier of New Brunswick, was banquetted by his political friends at the Royal Hotel, St. John. A large number of gentlemen more or less prominent in Provincial and Dominion politics were present, including the other members of the New Brunswick Government. The reception given Mr. Emmerson was a very enthusiastic one, indicating the high esteem in which he is held personally, as well as his popularity in a political point of view. In most of the Provinces the line of demarcation between government and opposition follows the line of cleavage which obtains between the parties in the broader arena of Dominion politics. In New Brunswick such is not the case, but ever since confederation, we believe, the province has had coalition governments. Whether or not this is more to be desired in the public interest than the conditions which obtain in the other provinces, is a question on which different opinions are expressed. The larger number of Mr. Emmerson's colleagues in the present government are of his own political faith, and either for this reason or because of the confidence which the new premier personally inspires, some Liberal newspapers which had opposed the administrations led by Mr. Blair and Mr. Mitchell seem disposed to give the present government a moderate support. Mr. Emmerson, however, asserts distinctly that the present is a coalition government, and that it does not wish to sail under false colors. The premier's speech, in reply to the reception given him, indicated much tact and ability. He took occasion to outline in a general way the policy by which he and his colleagues aim to promote the welfare of the province, which policy will include, as of first importance, the promotion of the country's agricultural interests. There can be no doubt that, speaking in general terms, Mr. Emmerson stands well with the province. He has a grand opportunity for public service, an opportunity which we trust he may use with large advantage to the country and great honor to himself.

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### Cuban Autonomy.

The advices which the Spanish Minister at Washington has received in reference to the scheme of autonomy, which Spain proposes to grant to Cuba and the more detailed information concerning it which Senor de Lome has thereby been enabled to give, leads the New York Tribune to say: "His expositions present the scheme in a far more favorable light than it at first appeared in, and amply justify the suggestion, already made, that the Cubans will do well to consider the Spanish offer carefully as a possible basis of settlement on terms advantageous to both parties. The scheme is not perfect. No scheme of government is. But it is a vast deal better than any other Spain has ever offered, differing from its predecessors not only in degree but in kind. Indeed, as expounded by the Spanish Minister, it seems to compare not unfavorably with that granted by Great Britain to Canada thirty years ago. It is assuredly much more generous to Cuba than the Cubans themselves asked a few years ago. The one important point not yet made clear is that of the debt. It is not to be supposed that Cuba would assume the whole or the major part of the indebtedness incurred by Spain in keeping the island in subjection. If Spain will be as just on that score as she offers to be on others, a settlement ought to be reached."