

accustomed rate. Such results, in face of the low price of money and the large sums on deposit forced to be idle, speak eloquently of a genuine and cautious trade with what funds have been employed. English trade is undoubtedly again on the increase. The American merchant and speculator not only "feels good," but quiescent and peaceful, restfully assured that his goods or stocks are wanted and will "fetch" his price any day he wants to sell. Canada, between the two, is free to act wisely—to do her own trade in her own way. It need not be a profitless one.

The British Parliament has just been opened with all the pomp and circumstance the Earl of Beaconsfield has been able to command. Once more the Queen has condescended to act, and act in person, and appear before her faithful Lords and Commons, and, of course, Conservative gossip will have it that this is done at the solicitation of her Prime Minister, and is intended as an open manifestation and declaration of Her Majesty's approval of the policy of the Government. But it will be difficult to convince the general public of Great Britain that the Queen has decided upon so important and disastrous a step as an open avowal of her sympathy with one party in the State. Her past record is beyond criticism in the matter of according favour to any party; the rule has been upon a purely constitutional basis, and whatever the Jingoos may say, those who understand the absolute fairness and prudence of Queen Victoria will know that her appearance at the opening of Parliament is due to her interest in public affairs, and her decision to once more take her place, not only in name but in fact, as the first Lady in the land.

But when pomp and circumstance of opening are over, and the two great parties meet face to face, the one to accuse and the other to attempt a line of vindication, it will probably be found that the Earl of Beaconsfield has exhausted himself and the patience of the country over the disastrous "spirited foreign policy," and the dishonest efforts which have been made to carve a "scientific frontier" out of the possessions of other nations. What can be said in just defence of the war in Afghanistan? It was begun by a shameful outrage upon the treaties England had made, and has been carried on with needless cruelty. English prayers were offered for the English soldiers suffering there, and everybody would sympathize with them and admire the courage of the men, but it might have been remembered by the pious that the Afghans had rights to defend, and nerves to suffer from sabre thrust or gunshot wound, and souls that needed saving. But, as a rule, British piety lends its name and influence to British policy, at least the piety of the Established Church does.

The Afghans fought for "home and country," they were beaten by the English and native troops, sent to punish them, of course; the Martini-Henry and the Gatling gave them no chance. But why did General Roberts take the hangman along with him? The forty-one men hanged at Cabul had no part in the murder of the British Embassy—it was not even charged against them—they were not taken in battle—they were hunted out of refuges sought in villages, and hanged because they had dared stand up and defend their land against an invader. Will Lord Beaconsfield defend the extreme measures of General Roberts, as he defended the blundering weakness of Lord Chelmsford in Zululand? Probably, for the Earl dearly loves an inconsistency, and doesn't mind an outrage, if perpetrated upon a people who cannot strike back.

But if the Liberal party is organized at last—and there is every reason to believe it is, with Mr. Gladstone as its recognised leader—the Government will learn that the day of political retribution is at hand. The English people are easily dazzled; they quickly take up a new cry and make it popular; when they have once set up an idol they grudge him no homage. But though the general sense of justice may be deadened for a time by the excitement caused by the stir of strong passions, it always asserts itself again in time to save the country from being irredeemably disgraced. The time has well nigh come, and the elections which cannot be put off but a few months, will show that the people have recovered their right mind. EDITOR.

## DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

When are we going to grapple with the great social problem involved in the word "Servants?" We have talked enough about it. It is everybody's topic. Even the weather hardly receives more discussion. Go where you will, meet whom you may, you have only to start the bare—only to ask "How are you off for servants?" and you are overwhelmed with experiences and lamentations. The burden of the whole is that the race of good servants has died out, that faithful and devoted service is not to be had for love or money, and that so far from improving, the outlook in this respect is becoming gloomier and gloomier.

It is not, perhaps, very easy to fix the point at which that social dodo, the "good servant" disappeared. Judging from records of the past, I am inclined to think that it was always far more rare than we of this generation are apt to think; but it may be taken for granted that the present complaint is well founded. It becomes important, then, to ask—Why is this so? Still more important to consider how the evil of the present state of things is to be remedied.

In seeking the cause of the great change which has come over domestic service, we must look, primarily, to the great upheaval which during the last half century has altered the entire aspect of society, and changed all its strata from the highest to the very lowest. When we say "servants are not what they were," we are only stating part of a case. The broad fact is that no class is what it was. Society is not what it was. The upper classes even do not occupy the position they did, but are hustled by the shoddy-ocracy, which outdoes them in everything except in the simple matter of "blood." The middle classes have felt the change, and developed into a position quite different from that they formerly occupied. The labouring classes have followed suit; they have asserted their strength, have combined to uphold prices, have insisted on dictating the conditions of toil, and so become a power in the land to which it has been felt necessary to give political recognition. In face of all this, was it at all likely that domestic service would remain unchanged?

The leaven leaveneth the whole lump. That which has revolutionized the country, is felt in its effects everywhere and by all. It is not necessary to seek far in order to find influences bearing directly on the position of servants. In the first place, there has come with increasing wealth and luxury a regular demand for household labour. Time was when in middle-class families the boys were apprenticed to trades, and the girls took an active part in household duties. Now the boys become clerks, or struggle into professions, and the girls devote themselves to accomplishments, to the frivolities of society, or give themselves up to elegant idleness. More servants are consequently wanted—they are in greater demand, and with the usual effect of such a state of the market, you have to give a higher price for a possibly inferior article. Then the cause of the increased demand is also, to an extent, the cause of the inferior supply. Stuck-up mistresses and lackadaisical daughters, who want to be "waited on hand and foot," as the phrase goes, cannot be troubled with training servants. They do not want the raw material. They very naturally urge that as they pay good wages they expect thoroughly trained and accomplished domestics. Very good, everybody wants the trained servant, and nobody will be at the pains to train her. What is the consequence? She "goes into service" a raw recruit from the cottage or the slum, and raw she is likely to remain. In the good old times, the mistress took a more active part in house affairs; she was much with the servant, and taught her much. Moreover, a bond of union was thus established, and it often happened that a girl remained in a family for many years, until, in fact, she was regarded as one of themselves.

Everything now pulls the other way. A girl got from a registry office comes into a house with a character on which little reliance can be placed—for "characters" are given with slight ingenuousness,—is treated with scant regard to her comfort or feelings; is snubbed "by the young ladies," and stigmatized as the "slavey" by the "young gentlemen;" and after a few months probation, gives notice and departs. A succession of these experiences makes up the history of hundreds of thousands of "situations." The beginning is unsatisfactory—the end inevitable. I hear ladies say that they never expect servants to stay with them. On the other hand, places are so abundant, it is so cheap to advertise, means for getting about the country are so readily available, that a good many servants rather make a point of changing often, if only for the sake of change and novelty. So the "good servant" era seems to have departed, and it is doubtful if it will ever return.

But this state of things cannot go on. It must be altered, or it will grow worse. While generally mistresses treat servants with less and less consideration, servants give themselves more airs, exact better terms, and demand fuller privileges. This antagonism, always growing, will end in a state of things like that which prevails in the United States, where there are no servants—only "hired girls," who owe no allegiance, acknowledge no inferiority, are bound by no ties, but simply come into the house to do the work—or as much of it as they choose—and depart whensoever they please. This is not a desirable state of affairs, but what can we expect? There are faults on both sides which militate against the old state of things. Good mistresses are as rare as good