

the people, finds such peaceful and adequate expression. The time was when a change of government could only be secured by revolution and bloodshed. Now, the appeal is to the final arbitrament of the ballot, 'not the bullet. Softly as the snow-flakes fall the ballots, as the people express their will, and governments come and go as they demand.

Of course with such great issues at stake, such strong convictions as are often held, there is intense interest and often heated discussion and possibly tumult and strife; but the abiding principle of the supremacy of law restrains and mitigates and renders innocuous the keenest political conflict.

It was through long ages of political evolution and education that these rights and liberties were secured—

"The blood of Vane,
His prison pain
Who traced the path the pilgrim trod,
And hers whose faith
Drew strength from death,
And prayed her Russell up to God!"

The menace of the commonweal is that party greed or guile will sometimes seek with filthy lucre to pervert this patriotic duty of the elector to party ends; but the secrecy of the ballot has in large part prevented the worst results of this profanation of a sacred trust. It has been wisely safeguarded to the utmost; even the hiring of a carriage may imperil an election. And yet we have had unhappy experiences of frauds in the polling booth, attack upon the very fountain of political parity and independence. We need to repeat the prayer of Whittier:

"Shame from our hearts
Unworthy arts,
The fraud designed, the purpose dark;
And smite away
The hands we lay
Profanely on the sacred ark.

"Not lightly fall
Beyond recall
The written scrolls a breath can float;
The crowning fact
The kingliest act
Of Freedom is the freeman's vote!"

It is another coincidence that the result of these elections maintains the *status quo ante* of the respective parties. However strongly we may contend during the campaign in Canada, after the elections we are all one people, united to promote the welfare of the land we love.

The only countries in Europe which are exempt from the educative influence of an election campaign, with its free discussion of national interests, and free criticism of the personnel of the Government, are the twin despotisms of Russia and Turkey. There no quizzical voter can heckle the candidate for his suffrage, no Opposition press can goad or gird at the administration, no turbulent hustings can disturb the power that be. The Cossack and the knout, the Janizary and the lance suppress all popular demonstrations. But sitting on the safety-valve is not the best way to run an engine; and these despotisms are slumbering on a volcano, which may explode with fearful disaster, like that of France in 1789, or of well-nigh all Europe in 1848.



CHRISTMAS IN THE ROYAL NURSERIES.

Heir of all the Russias (to Heir of Italy): "I say, young Piedmont, if you'll take an older man's advice, keep clear of these nasty jumpy toys. They get on your nerves."

—Punch, London.

Quietly, without salvo of guns or blare of trumpets, a great achievement of science has been inaugurated. The New York Subway, the longest and costliest tunnel in the world, twenty-two miles long, was opened by Bishop Greer, and the first day's earnings were given to charities—an augury of its success. It cost, with power apparatus, nearly fifty million dollars, and was completed, in spite of strikes and lockouts, within the allotted time, without "extras" or graft, and with a minimum profit to the contractors, and will become in