

It is not unlikely that the Presidential election may turn out well for Canada, for Garfield is an avowed friend of better commercial relations between the two countries.

Mr. Gladstone has certainly made a bad start in the work of government. The letter to the Austrian Ambassador—although by no means such a disgrace and disaster as the Tory Press tried to make it, was nevertheless a mistake. Then came the Bradlaugh mess, in which Bradlaugh has succeeded in making himself appear mean and contemptible. That was to have been expected, but the broader questions arise out of it; shall parliament permit an avowed atheist to take the oath? or admit him without his taking the oath? or, abolish the oath and ask of all members a simple affirmation? The first answers itself. It would be an insult to the British people to allow the man to take what they regard as a solemn oath making appeal to that which is highest and deepest in man, and what he regards as having no moral significance or power of binding.

But it is a settled fact that Bradlaugh must be admitted to Parliament, so that they must either make an exception in his case or pass a law that members shall not be required to take an oath in the name of God. The latter course would unquestionably be the better. All members of the House should be on an equal footing, and be under precisely similar obligations as to the faithful discharge of their duty; and as it is a purely political body it would be just as well for all practical purposes if the oath were abolished. For after all, oaths be they never so solemn in the wording are not found to be very binding. An honest man will tell the truth and do his duty without swearing in any name, and a rogue will lie and a rascal will deceive in spite of a thousand oaths. How often did certain of the United States Cabinet officers, members of Congress, and Senators, swear to support the constitution while they were secretly aiding the fast rising rebellion in the South? On the 20th of December 1848, Louis Napoleon became President of the French Republic, and swore "in the presence of God and before the French people" to "remain faithful to the Democratic Republic" and "to fulfil all the duties which the constitution imposed" upon him, but the solemn oath bound him to nothing, and never held his eyes and heart from his own interests for a single hour. It is notorious that sworn witnesses will lie, and sworn officers will prove corrupt, and on the whole it appears as if the balance of reason is opposed to oaths.

Sir Bartle Frere is another stumbling block in the way of Mr. Gladstone, and why he does not recal that whining, canting hypocrite is past finding out. Sir Bartle is the author of the Zulu war, which was a most inglorious and unprofitable affair from beginning to close, and why he should be maintained at his post as a reward for the mischief he has made is what the English radicals, and some others, cannot understand.

But Mr. Gladstone's policy toward Turkey is well calculated to succeed and bring him honour. Mr. Goschen is a man of great financial ability, and he is empowered by the Imperial Government not simply to act as Ambassador, but to overhaul the finances of the Sublime Porte, and compare Sultanic promises and Pasha practices as to the internal reforms, and insist that the latter shall at least approximate to the former. This time business is meant; no more brilliant hints to the Turk that English arms will protect him from the Russian, but the introduction and application of those practical politics which if acted upon four years ago would have prevented the Turco-Russian war. The Turks are already frightened at the outlook, and well they may be, for it is more than likely that the end of their empire in Europe is nigh.

Meantime Russia appears to turn her attention and apprehension westward, for she is fortifying her western frontier with great haste. Every possible preparation is being made to resist a German invasion; great citadels and forts and magazines are being built all along the line, the whole to be ready by the spring of 1882. These are serious premonitions and quite mysterious. What cause of quarrel can be found by either nation against the other is not plain, and but for our knowledge of the fact that the devil still lives and has a great deal to do with politics, we might venture to say that Russia is indulging in foolish alarms and gigantic extravagances. EDITOR.

TORONTO AND ABOUT.

Now that the "church scandal" has subsided, it appears the legal profession is the next important body to be shocked, one of their great men having become involved in a dispute disgraced himself and the profession by employing the most wretched witnesses the city could produce. I am given to understand the chief of the witnesses received \$50 to give the names of some of the worst characters about town to witness for our "learned friend." As an actual fact I saw this lurid wretch dressed in his Sunday suit, with a gold watch and chain, surrounded by half a dozen abandoned men, smoking and drinking opposite the Osgoode Hall, waiting for three days for the case to come off. The vestibule of the Court of Chancery was filled with tobacco smoke, and the stale odour of bad whiskey, in consequence of the presence of these men. Half a dozen times the police attempted to move the gang, but the jovial company simultaneously produced their subpoenas, flaunting them in the face of the representatives of the "peace" who, frightened, dared not compel the enforcement of the law, the men steadfastly refusing to move on. There is something peculiarly sorrowful in the fact of a man in an exalted position openly stooping to demean himself and the profession by such disreputable proceedings. If this thing had been done in a corner the public would never have known through the columns of the SPECTATOR of such a case, but such not being the truth, no language can be severe enough to censure such conduct.

Mr. Capriol, the moving spirit of the Huron and Ontario Canal, denies that there is anything mysterious about the affair. I may be mistaken, but it certainly has that appearance; for twelve months we hear scarcely a word about it, and yet the canal is to make a nation of Canada. I fancy this canal will be about as much real benefit to Canada as the Erie Canal is to Chicago.

"The largest travelling Circus in the World." Such is the flaming title of the startling advertisement of Forepaugh's great circus. Why are the proprietors of these circuses permitted to hawk around their frightened animals as they do? Where are the representatives of the Societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals? The exhibition of these miserable animals in their cramped cages is indecent and shocking, and a great slur is cast upon society in patronizing such cruelty. How can these exhibitions be other than cruel? The frightened beasts are trotted through the streets in their heavy iron cages, tossed from side to side at every jolt of the springless car, poked at with the sticks of curious visitors, and in fact are made to lead lives a thousand times more cruel than the worst treated street-car horse. Certainly the thing should not be permitted, and it is astonishing that any so-called moral paper can stoop so low as to advertise and eulogise every travelling menagerie that happens to pass this way.

In conversation with one of the city fathers lately I asked if he knew the disgraceful condition of the back streets; he smiled incredulously, and remarked that, as far as he knew, the streets were comparatively clean and neat. I told him of a street where the houses had no gardens in front of their doors, and where all the slops and vegetable parings and other refuse were thrown indiscriminately before the houses. I told him of a dozen thickly populated streets where all the sewerage was thrown before the doors. I told him of a dozen green pools in the city, from which a most disgusting and sickening odour emanated. I told him I had seen about seven dogs dead in the bay together near the water works wharf. I inquired if anything was to be done about keeping the tadpoles out of the supply pipe of the water works for the city from the reservoir. To all of my remarks, the answer was "Ha! hum! Just so!" "I have about as much as I can do to attend to my own business without going too deeply into these matters." Half the aldermen of the city have no business in the Council; they have as much as they can do to attend to their own business, and as for attending to the work of the city, "why, my dear fellow, that's out of the question."