

great shop-keeping headquarters of the "nation of shop-keepers." "Does it not seem a little odd," says the same writer, "that a foreign prince, in visiting the citizens, should go armed *cap-à-pie*, from his silver helmet to his golden spurs, preceded, followed and waited upon by soldiers?" Passing strange it is when we come to think of it. Centuries of "progress" and "the advancement of civilization" do not seem to have carried European nations so very far forward, in such respects, after all. Is it any wonder that many thoughtful Canadians are disposed to look with distrust upon the efforts that are being put forth by some among us, to cultivate a military spirit among our citizens, and even to implant it in infant minds in our schools and homes?

THE London *Spectator* of the 11th inst. had an interesting article on "The New Position of the Kings." It is noteworthy that just now the personal influence of the monarchs seems to be waxing rather than on the wane in Europe. William II., of Germany, comes at once before the mind as an instance in which the monarch, though nominally a constitutional ruler, is practically—in seeming, at least—autocratic, and rather glories in proclaiming the fact. The Emperor of Austria, too, has of late years increased in power, and exercises a very wide personal authority in all affairs of State. The same is true, to some extent, of King Humbert, who has contrived to make himself the arbiter of successive Cabinets. The Queen Regent of Spain, too, exercises great power in her Government, and can be, on occasion, practically autocratic. To what extent, if any, do these instances of the increasing strength of personal sovereignty contradict the prevalent notion about the constantly growing power of democracy? The *Spectator* argues, and, to our thinking, with much force and insight, that the facts referred to are quite in keeping with that notion. The paradox admits of easy explanation on two grounds. First, the increased kingly power is not dynastic, but personal. The people want strong leaders, and by a series of coincidences have, just now, in several States, found them in the reigning monarchs. "Let William II. try to reign for objects his people dislike—for a general policy of aggrandizement, for example, or for a policy of obscurantism"—and we should soon see what we should see. The *Spectator* regards the coincidence of several strong monarchs as accidental. But may it not be that this growing demand of the people for strong rulers goes far, in accordance with a well-understood law, to produce the supply? The modern monarch perceives that, in order to rule, he must study the people and win their confidence and admiration on personal grounds. Closely connected with this desire for strong rulers is the growing impatience of the people with the complicated movements of Parliaments, the slow response of representative institutions to the popular will. They tire of the endless discussions and partisan struggles, and are ready to take a short cut to the attainment of their ends. The late remarkable movement in the Swiss Republic, to the superficial glance, seems to be in the opposite direction; more profoundly studied, it is found to be due to the operation of the same democratic temper and tendency. The Swiss, staid and sturdy republicans that they are, feel the need of a stronger and readier instrument than their representative bodies. Hitherto the "referendum" could be used only on the demand of the National Council, or of a fixed number of the people, and only in regard to a law which had already been introduced and passed upon in the regular way. The people have now declared, by 169,000 votes to 117,000, that they will, when so disposed, of their own initiative, order a great reform. Henceforth, under the new decree, any fifty thousand voters have the right to submit a Bill of their own directly to the mass vote. If such vote is favourable, the Bill is declared a law of the Republic. Thus they have created a dictatorship of a thoroughly democratic kind, but quite as potential and capable of acting quite as despotically as any absolute monarch or personal dictator.

TORONTO has blackened its hitherto unsullied history as a model Sabbath-keeping city. The demonstration against the By-law prohibiting public speaking, backed up as it was by such scenes of violence as stone-throwing and the destruction of sign-boards, is no unimportant matter. On the policy of the By-law we waive discussion here: it is a moot point upon which there are probably as many opinions as there are holders of opinions. But the excellent manner in which at all events the attempt to uphold that By-law was carried out we unhesitatingly commend.

Law must be enforced, and especially must it be enforced in a democratic country where, naturally, there is no little restiveness under authority on the one hand, and perhaps here and there still more hesitancy in exerting authority on the other. The rioters, it is said, were drawn from the lower classes, and it is no doubt said truly. At all events whoever they may have been, organized force in the form of constabulary was quite properly brought to bear against them. The Chief of Police did his best and did well with the small numbers of men under his command. Should there be any recurrence of Sunday's scenes no doubt he will be prepared to cope more effectively with deliberate law breakers. Even if it is necessary to resort to the flats of the sabres of a troop of the Body Guard, the existing law, whatever its purport, must be sustained.

IN Europe the political sky is for the time being comparatively cloudless. This could not have been said of it a few months ago, when Russia was reported as massing troops on her south-western frontier, when Portugal was in a highly inflammatory state, and France was bickering over the British control of Egypt and the problem of the Newfoundland fisheries. Now the only specks on the horizon are the relation of Great Britain to the Dreibund, and the curious friendship struck up between the Gaul and the Slav; but these, for all one knows, may prove as capable of as great and rapid growth as was that famed cloud "as a man's hand" once seen from Mount Carmel. The pomp and circumstance with which the German Emperor's visit to England was so obtrusively surrounded were naturally subjects of anything but kindly comment across the English Channel; and the comment must have been all the less kindly since the pomp completely distracted attention from what has been referred to as the coquetting of the French and Russian fleets at Cronstadt—a little display intended, perhaps, as a set-off against a similar flirtation between the English fleet and the Emperor of Austria-Hungary at Fiume—a locality all too near Italy, that third member of the central European political confraternity, which, with her defensive allies, is such a thorn in the flesh to sensitive, easily-irritated France. However, the Dreibund is not yet a Vierbund, and England seems determined that the latter—openly, at least—shall not be. Quite naturally she takes care to be on the best of terms with the strongest and best organized continental military power; but as to entering into any formal and definitive offensive and defensive understanding with it, to this that terror to absolute monarchies, the House of Commons, would have much to say and would not hesitate to say it. France forgets this. She has a grievance, and like all individuals with such a possession she sees everything in the light of that grievance. The Balkan States happily are quiet, though what unquietness Russian agents may not there be quietly fomenting no one knows. The young king of Servia is to visit Russia; but then he is to visit Austria also, so that little significance can be attached to his tour. Besides he is very young. "Here where the world is quiet," with three thousand miles of ocean between us and these feverish international jealousies, it is difficult to view them in their true light. To us the social and political problems to be solved within our own boundaries seem tremendous enough to occupy our whole thought and all our resources. But then North American peoples at all events do not know what it is to have a neighbour, armed to the teeth, on the other side of an imaginary line. The man who will cast the horoscope of these hostile neighbours will be a bold one. Disarmament, resort to arbitration, a common family of nations, universal peace—these things are not yet to be in lands where the tread of hoplites is daily heard in the street, and where magazine rifles and smokeless powder are the topics of the hour.

If Christianity were universally adopted, all social evils would vanish; there would be few very rich persons; comparatively few would be poor, and those would be worthy of abundant sympathy and help, which they would receive. At a gathering of socialists at the grave of Carl Marx, celebrating the anniversary of his death, one of the speakers declared: "The three things which the world needs are solidarity, energy and self-sacrifice." Self-sacrifice is another word for disinterestedness, and this needs Christianity; for, as F. D. Maurice, the English rector, socialist, and friend of Kingsley, said: "Be very sure of this, that no human creatures will be found saying sincerely 'Our brothers' on earth unless they have said previously 'Our Father which art in Heaven.'"—From "*Christianity and Socialism*," by Dr. J. M. Buckley, in *Harper's Magazine* for July.

# OTTAWA LETTER.

WHEN the expected division on the Budget did not come off last week, the newspapers, as usual, attempted to make some party capital by insinuations of breach of faith. The simple fact is that like all other talk parliamentary oratory is very contagious, and it is almost impossible to stop a debate which affords such a convenient means of accumulating electioneering ammunition at the country's expense. A new membership, a large number of bye-elections, sure to come off as the result of the protested seats, and the present excited state of party-feeling, are quite enough to account for the extent to which the *Hansard* has expanded. From a gallery point of view the performance seems as meaningless as it is dreary. Member after member of the species known as "back benchers" rehearses the utterances of the leaders on his own side, at the best, perhaps, interjecting some minor point interesting his own constituency. The House is half empty, and beyond an occasional bit of applause from his own side, intended to hearten up a new man or to show an older hand that his friends haven't quite forgotten him, or an ironical "hear, hear" from an opponent who is noting some point for reply, nobody appears to take the slightest interest in the proceedings. The Speaker sits in gravity so solemn that he might almost be thought asleep; the very pages have a bored air and cease to play sly practical jokes on each other in the shelter of the throne. For the thousandth time one hears the suggestion of the spectator, who knows all about it, that "there ought to be a law passed limiting speeches to twenty minutes, except in the case of the leader on each side, who might be allowed an hour." The newspapers summarize the result with "two sticks" of laudation for the man on their own side and a line of disparagement for the man on the other. Yet, if you look a little deeper into things, you will find a method in it all. The game is played throughout just as moves at chess come from the particular opening adopted. There is a definite object, a scope for individuality and a good chance of blundering or mistaking the opponent's plan. It is not the House of Commons that is being talked to—not a vote will be changed there—not the Gallery—he who talks to the Gallery is of all parliamentary pretenders the most quickly detected and most sincerely despised; it is the Constituency. That body to which its member "feels it his duty to justify the vote which he is about to give" does not decide simply on the broad questions as set forth and replied to by the Minister of Finance and Sir Richard Cartwright. As the rival political organization will take good care that the messengers in the packing-room are quite as much occupied with despatching the antidote as they are with the speech of the honourable member for Torytown or Reformville, one speech begets another. And then, when the whips of both sides think that enough ammunition has been manufactured, they begin to consult as to having a vote. Here come in individual peculiarities. The man who must always speak; the timid member who has at last screwed himself up to the point of his maiden speech; the sanguine man who sees his way now to smash Foster or Cartwright, as the case may be; the man who has friends in town; the unexpected man, who sometimes does, and more often does not, happen to make a hit; the man who has been kept from speaking by almost superhuman tact on the part of his whip; the man with a theory, and many more. The long debate has familiarized, irritated, or encouraged them with talk, and talk now they must. So it goes on, until at last the leaders issue the fiat and a late sitting, with a vote sometime in the small hours, ends the first stage of the fight that is really meant to be fought out on the hustings. This finale, it is now, however, definitely understood, is to take place on Tuesday night. That the vote will show any diminution in the Government's majority is not at all probable.

A Monday, with its questions and private members' business, is quite refreshing after the dismal monotony of the Tariff. It is likely to be the last of the days for private business exclusively, as the Government proposed last week to take it for themselves, and yielded only on Mr. Laurier's statement that the end of the session was not yet within sight. Mr. Davin, who by the way lightened up the tariff debate last week, had another slap at his *bête noire*, Commissioner Herchmer, of the North-West Mounted Police, for alleged interference with his election, to which charge Mr. Amyot added one of tyranny and injustice to French Canadians. There has been a departmental investigation into these matters going on for some time, but it has not been held under oath, and Colonel Herchmer's desire for a formal enquiry under oath is to be complied with.

Mr. Kirkpatrick's motion for the bestowal of some mark of recognition upon the veterans of 1837-38 dealt with a delicate subject, and perhaps there might have been an unfortunate renewal of the old controversy over the rebellion, which, whatever the demerits of its methods, resulted in constitutional government for the old Province of Canada. The discussion was tending in that direction when six o'clock put an end to it and to the motion for this session. Besides the political and race issues involved, there is also a constitutional question whether such recognition does not devolve upon the Provinces, not the Dominion. So, except perhaps from the narrow point of view of Ontario local politics, such an ending was lucky.

Mr. Charlton's Sunday Observance Bill came back from