

THE constitutional struggle between the King of Denmark and his Government on the one hand and the majority in the Folkething on the other has passed into a most critical stage. The Lower House objecting to sanction either the extra military expenditure for frontier defences—which they allege are not needed—or the payment of large official salaries, the King has closed the Rigsdag, and proposes to raise revenues by Royal decree. This is a repetition of what happened last March, when the Rigsdag adjourned without agreeing upon the Budget, and the King similarly gave effect to the financial proposals of his Government by means of a series of Royal ordinances. This is perilously like the method of the Stuarts, and may easily end in a similar way. The Folkething are really contending in this matter for the control of the purse, which power they would obtain if the principle of Responsible Government were in active force in Denmark; for in a House of about a hundred members the Government counts only twenty adherents, while the Liberal Opposition has eighty. But the King will not recognize that Democracy has invaded his Kingdom, and so he ignores the right of the majority to rule, and refuses to dismiss his minority Ministry. The country possesses a constitution perfectly free in theory; and the Liberals, fresh from a new election, have a majority that entitles them under the constitution to rule; but the King withstands the operation of the law of Responsible Government. How long the resulting parliamentary deadlock will continue depends on the patience of the Danish people.

THE Musin-Godowski Concert on Monday evening was a most brilliant success: both artists were greeted with warm applause and twice recalled. A report of the whole performance will appear in our next issue.

THE *Globe* reproaches Protestantism with being "aristocratic," and says that it finds no place for "Lazarus and his rags." The answer of Protestantism will be that it does not breed lazzaroni any more than it breeds begging friars. It teaches industry, thrift, and self-respect. Nothing, surely, can be more democratic than the Protestantism which is embodied in the Methodist Church.

THE expulsion of the Poles from Prussia and the Germans from Russia is largely a measure of protection. The Prussian workmen look on the Poles much as Americans do on the Chinese, and do not like to be outdone by their cheap labour. On the other hand, the Germans in Russia are so much more skilful men of business than the Russians that they can make money faster and undersell them. These are the reasons why these people wish to get rid of each other.

A PROMINENT Polish merchant of Vienna points out in a contribution to the *Neue Freie Presse* that Austria, with her large Slav population and federal Government, is the natural refuge for his compatriots exiled from Prussia. At the time of the partition of Poland, he says, the portions of territory acquired by Prussia and by Austria were equally populous, containing each about a million inhabitants; while to-day, notwithstanding that Prussian Poland is the larger and more fertile district, the population there is less than two millions against six millions in Austrian Poland.

A GREAT meeting was held in Dundee lately for the purpose of thanking Mr. Jacks, M.P., who, as the resolution unanimously passed says, did resolutely protest in the House of Commons, "on the evening of the 22nd of January, against the use of the terms 'England' and 'English' in an Imperial sense, instead of 'Britain' and 'British,' in violation of the express conditions of the Treaty of Union." This is quite as weighty a reason for "Repeal" as any advanced by the Irish. But the English may plead in this case that they call the Empire "England," just as they call a ship at sea a "sail"—from its most conspicuous feature.

THE second reading in the British Parliament of a Bill giving the Parliamentary franchise to spinsters was carried, it seems, by packing the House. All its opponents were absent, and it passed by the votes of the Irish members, who allege that in the last election they lost two Ulster constituencies through women not having votes. In Ulster, it is said, whenever a Catholic ratepayer dies, the authorities put his widow on the tax rolls; but if a Protestant dies the place is given to his eldest son, who is entitled to vote. It was to redress this grievance—which, if the statement be true, is real enough—that the Nationalists voted for the second reading of the Bill; but the opinion is that it will not get to a third reading, and a more legitimate remedy will have to be devised.

THE Ontario Government has made a move in the direction of some of the suggestions made by the Liberal Temperance Union. Under a Bill

introduced by Mr. Hardy, special attention is to be given to the important subject of the suppression of unlicensed grogeries, and to the sale of liquor during prohibited hours. The experiment will be made in Toronto of charging some one with the responsibility of seeing that the law is carried out in these respects, by enlarging the powers of the present Inspector, and requiring him to devote special attention to those subjects. The license fees are also to be increased; but there is no intention, apparently, to make any radical changes at present beyond introducing the principle of punishing the taker as well as the giver, which punishment, however, is limited to offences committed during prohibited hours. The general principles of the Crooks Act are accepted as in accord with public sentiment; and although there are other important subjects—such as adulteration—which are not dealt with, it may be as well to hasten slowly in the present condition of public opinion and of uncertainty as to the relative functions of the Dominion and Provincial Legislatures on questions affecting temperance legislation.

THE evidence given by Mr. Giffen before the Royal Commission on Depression of Trade, whose first report has just been issued, shows that the increase of British trade in some respects has been, up to 1884, considerably greater than the increase in population. He gives statistics relating to the leading industries for the four quinquennial periods from 1865 to 1884, from which it appears that with regard to all of them the production, as measured by the population, has gone on developing with only slight and temporary relapses. Thus the output of coal for the five years including 1865 and 1869 was 3.39 tons per head of the population; and for the quinquennial period 1880-84, the tonnage rose to 4.43 per head. The average production of pig iron increased from 0.16 ton per head in the former period to 0.23 ton in the latter. The total consumption of raw cotton has increased since 1865 by sixty per cent., while the population has increased by only twenty per cent. During the same period the average yearly tonnage of ships built for British registration increased from 339,000 tons to 567,000 tons; and in addition to this the tonnage of ships which England built for foreign registration rose from 37,000 tons in 1865-69 to no less than 101,000 in 1880-84. In the former quinquennial period the value of net imports into the United Kingdom was £7 16s. 3d. per head of the population, while in the latter it rose to £9 14s. 9d., or at the rate of about twenty-five per cent. At the same time the value of the exports rose from £5 19s. to £6 12s. 9d. per head, or at the rate of about ten per cent. These last figures, we remark, are significant of the falling-off of foreign trade, for while the population has increased by twenty per cent. the exports have increased by only ten; and there is little doubt, we fear, that later figures would show a still further diminution.

THE Berlin correspondent of the *Times* hears that Colonel Arbuthnot, of the Government Arms Factory at Enfield, will shortly arrive at Solingen, which may be called the Sheffield of Germany, to take over a large consignment of sabres and sword-bayonets for the use of the English army. The correspondent says:—

This is an interesting fact in view of the authoritative statement in the *Times*, from Sheffield, that German manufacturers were guilty of supplying the steel out of which were fashioned in England those sword-bayonets which were lately tried and found wanting. I do not know what sort of military material they turn out at Solingen, but certainly the ordinary household cutlery which one meets with in Germany, from that place, is generally of a very 'cheap and nasty' description as compared with English ware; and the best proof of this is the fact that German goods are constantly palmed off on the market on the pretext that they are of British origin. In 1884 the Cutlers' Company petitioned Lord Granville respecting the fraudulent use of the word 'Sheffield' on cutlery in France and Germany; but his lordship's answer was such as to 'cause deep disappointment in the minds of the Company at the manner in which their complaint had been dealt with.' I may mention, as a set off to the compliment which is paid by the English Government to German industry, that one of the largest manufacturers of fire-arms in Germany—I mention no names, but I have it from his own mouth—draws his steel exclusively from Sheffield."

For the British Government to go to Germany for the supply of sabres and bayonets for the army, while British trade is universally stagnant, is surely carrying the theory of Free Trade to an extreme. It cannot be that British cutlers are unable to compete at all with foreigners: the preference given to the latter must come from some trifling difference in the price. But is it statesmanship to ignore the needs of hundreds of British workmen out of work, and go to foreigners in order to save twopence-halfpenny in the price? If the work were done at home the whole of the money would be saved to the nation, even though a little more might be spent out of hand, but done abroad, though this "little more" is saved, the rest is quite lost to the national store of wealth.