

Justy's Inspectors of Schools will tell us,—to "boyhood suffrage" and "girlhood suffrage." But there, again, it is difficult to draw the line. The development of intelligence is not amenable to the almanac and the "rights of man"; are of much earlier date than the "age of reason." It will be difficult, therefore, to exclude "infant suffrage," and if, as there seems no doubt, the ballot is adopted, we for our part see no reason why a baby should not, as soon as the necessary ceremonies of introduction into the world are gone through with, have a white and a black ball placed in either hand, the vote being determined by the ball which is first dropped to the ground. Nay we will undertake to say that votes so given would be fully as intelligent, and more respectable in a moral point of view, than many a vote given under the present system,—at St. Alban's, for example. Again, it is a fact well known to physiologists, that existence, and the sense of it, do not commence at birth; and it may be a question whether in a perfect system of representation it would be altogether fair to disfranchise human individuals in the antecedent state, merely because they are unavoidably prevented from coming to the poll, or whether they may not be permitted to exercise their franchise by proxy, a double vote being allowed to such members of the "womanhood constituency" as may be from time to time "as ladies wish to be who love their lords."

From these considerations it must be evident to the meanest capacity, that the National Reform Association is very far indeed from having exhausted its subject, and that many a "conference" will have to be held, before anything like "finality"—poor JOHNNY RUSSELL—can be arrived at. In the meantime we cannot draw these remarks to a close, without calling the attention of our readers to the singularly polite and charitable tone which pervaded the debate of the Reform Conference, and the spicy amenities by which the staleness of the subject was occasionally relieved. Imputations of dishonesty, of wilful falsehood, and the like, were freely bandied from Reformer to Reformer; and in the choice of epithets vigour rather than courtliness of expression was consulted. But in this too, we fear, that the Reformers of every shade who attended the Conference, are as yet a great way off from the point of perfection to which their system admits of being developed. If any one shall doubt this, we beg to refer him to a Parliamentary dialogue between two Representatives of the model Republic, which will be found in another column, under the head of our Transatlantic intelligence; and from which, owing to the solidity of the humour which pervades it, we cannot venture to transcribe more than the *simile*—which appears to fit our Parliamentary Reformers even better than the "Honourable Gentlemen from North Carolina"—of "the boy who turned round so fast, that the hind part of his breeches was on both sides."

THE HUMBLER COURSE.

In the speech in which Lord Derby introduced himself to England as its Prime Minister, he told us that, not being able to command a majority in the House of Commons, it would not be in his power to strike out and follow up any imposing line of policy. Three things, however, he promised to do. First, he would do as he was bid. On the great question of commercial policy, which for the last five years has divided or appeared to divide parties, he was to take the opinion of the nation and be guided by it,—a promise the more remarkable, as it was pretty certain that the national verdict would be contrary to his own expressed opinion. Next he would devote himself to carrying out measures of plain practical utility, not involving any great religious or political principle, but mere material convenience or benefit. Thirdly, he would act as a drag upon democratical progress. The picture is, as Lord Derby himself said, a somewhat humble one. It differs greatly from the semi-historical, semi-poetical idea which the mind naturally forms of the First Minister of a great country. The phrase suggests the idea of great projects embodying great principles, spreading over great extent of space and time, and by their very magnitude, stamping on the nation which he rules a certain general policy and character. Such have been some of the Ministers we read of, especially among those who have wielded the power of an absolute Sovereign, and have contrived to impress him with their own ideas. We do not say that Lord Derby is a man of this cast; but if he does not aim at a course of onward and independent action, it is evidently not from any inherent want of bold aspirations, but because he finds the humbler course is forced upon him by the circumstances of this age and country.

Lord Derby is right. Burleigh, Buckingham, Stratford, and Clarendon were men who, with their different degrees of wisdom and success, governed. Statesmen now do but administer. The Reform bill of 1832 finished the work which was inaugurated at the Revolution of 1688. The Statesman who possesses his Sovereign's confidence in the present day can neither command nor nominate the House of Commons. That House rules him, and is itself ruled by public opinion. By this public opinion he is accordingly hemmed in, in every direction. His policy must continually either embody or fence with it. He must be level to its capacity, divine its wants, neither lag much behind, nor advance much before it; respect its prejudices, and be decorously attentive to its tastes. If, with all this, he can preserve his internal independence, and calmly forecast remote consequences—if he can really command that multitudinous aggregate of opinion on which he must seem to support himself,—if he can be at once deep and clear, sound and plausible, popular and true, he is the kind of man who does not appear often in an age, and whom we should certainly be at a loss to find in the present. It is the fashion to sigh for what is called a strong Ministry. Elderly gentlemen who remember the days of Mr. Pitt, are apt to originate complaints of this kind. Lord Lansdowne was rather pathetic on the subject last year in the House of Lords.—For ourselves we confess we are inclined to view such a phenomenon as belonging to a past age, more or less of a mediæval kind, and in the present generation indicating rather a taste or tendency than anything that can possibly occur. How is the Queen's Government to be carried on?—asked the Duke of Wellington. We fear the answer must be that, till some ideal Minister, who has not yet appeared above the horizon, shall have attained his meridian, the Queen's Government will be carried on by Ministers who will get majorities when they can, and be content with minorities when they cannot; will bring forward measures because they are popular, and withdraw them if found to be unpopular; will think it a merit to bow to the sense of the House, and, unless turned out of office by a specific vote of want of confidence, will only leave it with the hope of showing that others are still more incapable of governing the country than themselves.

It is a melancholy prospect, and a man will ask what politics are worth, if this is all that they come to? The question is natural, and the answer, we fear, must

be a disappointing one. Politics have lost much of their height and dignity by that course of events which has given us the compensating blessings of constitutional freedom. They furnish an exercise for many admirable and high qualities—eloquence, tact, decision, inventiveness, industry, practical knowledge, may have their full development in the conflict of parties and the service of the public. They do not furnish an adequate object for that lofty species of self-devotion with which people consecrate themselves, as it were, to the service of a person or an idea. They have not the independence which is necessary for the satisfaction of a great intellect, nor that specific religious purpose, which is necessary to realize the ideal of a Christian. The politician is the servant of the public, trustee of its interests, and bound to administer them on the principles on the principles of that motley body for whom he acts. The religious policy of a Charlemagne or an Alfred might concentrate itself on a definite creed, and work positively and effectively towards a great and definite result through the agency of a definite body. The religious policy of a Peel or a Russell will involve a breach of trust towards those who differ from him, when he seeks to give a disproportionate development to his own belief. The Christian Statesman of the present day may make good ecclesiastical appointments, and give opportunities of spiritual usefulness to those persons or bodies who will use them. He may also relieve or protect the communion to which he belongs from injustice, and remove obstacles to its development; but to these negative functions his powers are generally limited. More than these the nature of the public service seems to prohibit.

What then is left? Pretty much what Lord Derby has laid down. The promotion of the physical welfare and convenience of the people, and the retarding of the progress of that democracy which for centuries, under whatever name and subject to whatever limitations, has advanced—is still advancing, and, although so retarded, will not be turned back. The office is not the highest imaginable; it has in it its elements of compromise and management, and a dispiriting absence of life and progress. Yet it has also elements of greatness. If we cannot minister to religion by honouring and advancing her, it is something in times of disunion and indifference to be allowed to liberate and protect her. It is something to ease the workings of society; to promote the health and comfort of the poor, to remove discontents, to reconcile differences. It is something also—and this is the characteristic of that party of which Lord Derby is the head—to regulate that extension of power which is probably inevitable, but which, if slowly and cautiously effected, may prove a happy development of our existing constitution;—while, if rudely precipitated, it is capable of sweeping away our existing institutions, and with it what remains to us of religious habits, of mutual reverence and subordination, and all those finer elements of character which give beauty and stability to our social system.

On Friday morning, Viscount Galway, one of the new Lords in Waiting, was re-elected for the borough of East Retford and hundred of Bassetlaw without opposition.

The reports relative to the coming election continue of satisfactory omen to the Conservative cause. At Bristol, on Monday, a densely crowded and very influential meeting of Conservative electors determined almost unanimously to throw the question of "protection" overboard, and bring forward a gentleman who, "while advocating a liberal commercial policy, will support Lord Derby's Government in maintaining sound Conservative principles." Mr. Stephen Blair, the Protectionist member for Bolton, has also abandoned Protection, and issued an address to the electors, declaring that, although he is disposed to give a "fair trial" to the Government of the Earl of Derby, he will oppose any attempt to reimpose a duty upon the importation of foreign corn. H. W. Wickham, Esq., of Kirkcaldy, has issued an address to the electors of Bradford, as a Conservative opponent to the present two liberal members, at the same time stating, in the most explicit terms, "my firm adherence to that system of enlightened and wise policy, convinced as I am that the permanent interests of this great country are inseparably bound up and promoted by its fullest development." At a meeting of the Chatham electors, Sir Frederick Smith expressed his intention to support the Derby Administration, but he would oppose any attempt to re-impose the duties on corn. Mr. H. C. Stuart, who resigned his seat for Dorsetshire at the last general election, in consequence of his Free-trade opinions, comes forward again as a supporter of the Derby Administration on all points except Protection. Mr. W. P. Price seeks to be the colleague of Mr. Hope for the city of Gloucester, on the same interest. Mr. Robert Lowe, well known at Oxford University, and as a legislator at Sydney, comes forward under the auspices of Lord Ward, for Kidderminster. He declares himself a friend to well-considered plans of reform, yet attached to the "Conservative principle of seeking to work out the progress of society through existing means, rather than sacrifice the good we possess in the pursuit of speculative perfection"—a warm supporter of the "enlightened policy of the late Sir Robert Peel"—and will, to the utmost of his power, "oppose the re-imposition of import duties on corn, whether under the name of protection or the mask of a source of revenue." The sitting member, Mr. Best, has in consequence deemed it necessary to commence a canvass. Mr. Best, when returned in the room of Mr. Godson, declared himself a Protectionist, but he now merely expresses sympathy with the distresses of the agriculturists, and is persuaded that "no relief to agricultural distress is to be effected by the re-imposition of duties on the importation of corn." Mr. Beckett announces his positive intention of asking for re-election from the Conservatives of Leepo declaring without hesitation that he should think it his "duty to oppose any attempt for the reversal of a policy which has been attended with so much public contentment, and produced so great an increase in the comforts and enjoyments of life amongst the great body of my fellow-countrymen." Mr. John Stuart retires from Newark, to make way for a free-trade candidate acceptable to the Duke of Newcastle. The electors of North Nottinghamshire are also seeking a candidate of similar principles to his Grace. Mr. Grant will succeed Mr. Home Drummond in the county of Perth. Mr. Sidney Herbert stands again for South Wiltshire and intends to try and carry a second Free-trade Conservative with him.

The Ministerialists will find a seat for the Attorney-General at Bridport. Mr. Adeane takes the place of Mr. G. F. Young (who remains with Scarborough) to contest Mr. Townley's seat for Cambridgeshire. Sir T. Herbert is the Government candidate for Dartmouth, in place of Mr. Moffatt. Mr. Waddington, retires from Maldon to seek the hardly purer air of Harwich. Mr. Willoughby disputes Mr. Phillimore's claim to succeed Mr. F. Peel, at Leominster. Sir Stratford Canning

remains in the East, and the Tories of Liverpool have found candidates nearer home in Mr. Forbes Mackenzie, the new Treasury whipper-in, and Mr. Charles Turner, chairman of the local docks. It is considered probable they may succeed in securing the seat at present occupied by Sir T. Birch, 1,100 Roman Catholic electors declining to vote for so staunch a supporter of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. Sir James Graham was solicited to take his place, but declined. Mr. Henry Pownall, the Middlesex magistrate, is a second Protectionist candidate for Salisbury.

We are sorry, for the credit of English Statesmanship, to record this week another series of wanton attempts to embarrass the Government, by forcing Ministers to answer questions which no one has a right to ask, and which the country at large has no real interest in having answered at this time. We heartily wish that Ministers had steadily refused to waste any time or thought upon these factious questioners, beyond informing them, once for all, that Her Majesty's Government was engaged in the legitimate, the highest, and the most pressing duties of all Governments,—viz., the duties of the Executive; and that, when the due performance of these duties required fresh legislation of Parliament, the fact would be made known in the usual way. For our own parts, we are strongly inclined to believe that, if the time and energies now spent in the House of Commons, were employed out of it, in putting existing laws in force, and in the fulfilment, by each member, of the respective duties and responsibilities of his position and station, the nation would reap more substantial benefit, in a single year, than in ten Sessions of that Parliamentary talk, and political crotchets which have so increased and multiplied since the Reform Bill.

MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS.—Lieutenant Col. the Hon. Edward Wilbraham, Private Secretary to the Earl of Derby; Mr. Spencer Percival, grandson of the Prime Minister of George III., in same capacity at Home Office; Mr. George Harris, at Foreign Office; Mr. John Slaney Pakington, son of Sir John, to the Colonial Office; the Hon. F. S. P. Pelham, to the Duke of Northumberland, First Lord of the Admiralty;—Thomas Peregrine Courtenay, Esq., to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Lord Chancellor has conferred the appointment of Principal Secretary on Mr. Simons, the reporter of the long series of cases heard before the late Vice Chancellor of England.

SCOTLAND.

DOMESTIC.

THE GREEK CHAIR IN EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY.—Professor Blackie, of Aberdeen, was elected on Tuesday by the Town Council of Edinburgh to succeed the late Professor Dunbar in the Greek Chair of the University of that city.

IRELAND.

DOMESTIC.

IRELAND.—The shortest and the lightest assizes known in the County of Tipperary for a long series of years closed on Saturday, without a conviction of murder, or indeed for any serious crime.

The Limerick papers state that there has not been a single labouring man or woman, able to work unemployed in that part of the country for several weeks past. Emigration, nevertheless, proceeds at as great a rate as ever, and the price of berths in emigrant ships has been considerably raised in all the Irish ports.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

FRANCE.

Ten days before the opening of the legislative session the French Government has produced its budget for the year. The estimates, the appropriation of which the Chamber is not allowed to control, are in the form of half-a-dozen gross totals, apportioned amongst the different branches of the public service. Accounts so made out cannot of course be checked; nor is it intended that any one should have power to check them. The public curiosity will never be gratified by learning how much it costs per thousand to transport *proscrits* to Cayenne, or what is the lowest figure at which you may bargain for a *coup d'état*. As to the budget of receipts, it is much the same as that which was laid before the deceased Assembly on the eve of its dissolution. It calculates upon a deficit, for which it makes no serious attempt to provide; now that to an expensive army is added an expensive court, an able financier than M. Bineau might acquiesce as quietly as he in the impossibility of making both ends meet. In other respects it seems to be open, like the reduction of the Five per Cents., to no very strong objection except one which Louis Napoleon cannot be blamed for disregarding. It is not likely to be popular. A budget which lays a tax on liquors retailed in *cabarets*, "to be drunk on the premises," is not a budget for the million.

Difficulties, the nature of which we explained some weeks ago, still beset the Government of Denmark. These difficulties have lately reached a crisis. The Ministry has yielded to the pressure from without; it has surrendered Schleswig to German ascendancy, and it has just escaped the danger of being crushed by the counter-pressure from within. The national spirit in Denmark is stout and stubborn; the interference of the great German Powers is keenly and jealously resented, and the painful recollections of the late war serve only to make the people feel more acutely the mortification of giving up that which they struggled so hard and suffered so much to retain. In short, the Danes would draw the sword again, if their Government would let them, to-morrow. The Government will not let them, and steps were accordingly taken to impale it upon the horns of the common constitutional dilemma. An address of want of confidence was introduced by large majorities in both Chambers; but the difficulties of the situation, and the impossibility of forming a Cabinet prepared for resistance, seem to have been too strongly felt, and it has eventually been withdrawn. Lord Malmesbury, we trust, will not forget that Great Britain has charged herself with some responsibility here. We have had a hand in disarming Denmark, and it is our duty to see that she is fairly used.

We gather from official statements in an Austrian paper that Prince Schwarzenberg's hasty threat of retaliating on English travellers is not to be really enforced. The passport regulations affecting them are not to be interfered with. The Austrian Government insinuates that its language has been misconceived. No—it was much too plain to admit of being misunderstood.

The French papers report that a Bishopric is to be created to the new penitentiary establishments of French Guiana. The new dignity is to be entitled Bishop of Cayenne.

MISCELLANEOUS.

"Bleak House" is likely to provide a comfortable corner for the author. It has had the largest sale of any of his serials so far, though a diminution was rather looked for, owing to the long time he has been out of that particular periodical field. The first impression of 25,000 was swept up by the trade at once; 10,000 were put to press immediately after; and probably by this time a similar issue is being prepared, if, indeed, not already disposed of. Take the whole issue at 40,000, and say half is clear profit (a very moderate calculation), there's £1,000 a month, from this source alone, saying nothing of the value of the copyright (retained by himself) for reprinting in the collected edition hereafter.—*Liverpool Albion*.

A THRIFTY CURATE.—The Rev W. Mattison was Curate of Pattardale for 60 years, and his income from the Church, was only from £12 to £18 a year. He married a respectable and comfortable lady who was the best wife, and the best housewife and midwife in the neighbourhood. She brought him four children. It is said that, at the little church he buried his mother, and married his father, and buried his father. He christened his wife, when an infant, and published his own banns. He christened and married his own children, and educated his son until ready for the university. So industrious was he in his habits that he assisted his wife to card and spin the tithe wool. He had a school, which brought him in the small income of only five pounds a year. He lived to the age of ninety-six and died worth £1,000.

ROMANISM AT HOME.—"There is in all the worship of the Roman Catholics a great mixture of reverence and irreverence. The bowings and kneelings and oscillations were numerous; and I could not help looking at one little six-year-old child, as if I loved him, who, with a sweet innocent gravity, left his mother's hand as she walked down the church, and dropped behind for a moment, to give a hearty *smack* to every holy thing which he passed. On the other hand many made long parentheses in their prayers to retail the news to their neighbours, or to beg for charity of the stranger. One old woman, nearest the altar, and just in presence of the Priest, was plying distaff and reciting her prayers simultaneously. Dogs you might suppose to be sacred animals from the number that frequent the churches; and the baskets of vegetables that stand on the floor would furnish forth a small market. It must also be confessed that the great majority of worshippers appeared to be repeating, mechanically, a series of words with the smallest possible attention or semblance of devotion."—*Letters from Italy*.

THE JUDGE AND THE BIBLE.—During the Assizes just terminated an incident occurred which attracted little notice at the time, but is deserving mention in our columns. In the course of a trial before Mr. Justice Talford, it became necessary to pass a Testament from one portion of the Court to another, in order to the swearing of a witness. One of the parties to whom the book was delivered to be handed on to its destination, thinking to save time, and not regarding the irreverence of the act, threw it some distance, and the Testament fell on the floor. This attracted the attention of Mr. Justice Talford, who, with a look which will not easily be forgotten by those who witnessed it impressively declared that he could not have the sacred volume treated with such levity. "It is God's book," said the learned Judge, "and is entitled to the utmost reverence."—*Wiltshire Mirror*.

Dr. Rae, commanding the United States expedition, has written to the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, stating that they had, during last summer, surveyed 500 miles of unexplored coasts in the arctic seas, reaching lat. 70° 30' N., lon. 101° W., on Victoria Land, about eighty miles west of the magnetic pole, were they were arrested by ice for nearly a fortnight, and, despairing of being able to push on farther, commenced their return on the 19th of August:—

"On our way to the Coppermine River, two pieces of wood the one oak and the other pine, were picked up. The former appeared to be a stanchion, in the upper end of which there had been a hole, through which a chain had evidently passed. The wood on one side of the hole had been torn away, as if by pressure against the chain. The piece of pine looked like the butt-end of a small flag-staff, and had certainly belonged to one of her Britannic Majesty's ships, as there was a piece of line and two copper tacks attached to it, all of which bore the government mark."

The *Times* asks, does it not appear at first sight a strange result of the terrible statistics of society that, upon an average, one person out of twenty of the inhabitants of this luxurious metropolis is every day destitute of food and employment, and every night without a place for shelter or repose? And adds, after recapitulating the various classes of charities in the metropolis, that, notwithstanding all these efforts, it is a lamentable fact that in this very town of London alone, the centre and core of British civilisation, 100,000 persons are every day without food, save it be the precarious produce of a passing job or a crime.

BEAUTIFUL FIGURE.—Two painters were employed to fresco the walls of a magnificent cathedral; both stood on a rude scaffolding, constructed for the purpose, three hundred feet from the floor. One of them was so intent upon his work that he became wholly absorbed, and in admiration stood off from the picture, gazing at it with intense delight. Forgetting where he was, he moved backwards slowly, surveying critically the work of his pencil, until he had neared the very edge of the plank upon which he stood. At this critical moment, his companion turned suddenly, and almost frozen with horror, beheld his imminent peril; another instant, and the enthusiast would be precipitated upon the pavement beneath; if he spoke to him, it was certain death—if he held his peace, death was equally sure. Suddenly he regained his presence of mind, and seizing a wet brush, flung it quickly against the wall, spattering the beautiful picture with unsightly blotches of coloring. The painter flew forward, and turned upon his friend with fierce imprecations; but startled at his ghastly face, he listened to the recital of danger, looked shudderingly over the dread space below, and with tears of gratitude blessed the hand that saved him. So, said a preacher, we sometimes get absorbed in looking upon the pictures of this world, and, in contemplating them, step backwards, unconscious of our peril, when the Almighty dashes out the beautiful images, and we spring forward to lament their destruction, into the out-stretched arms of mercy, and are saved.

A GREAT MAN.—Every man is great as a man; for he who possesses the divine powers of a soul is a great being, be his place in society what it may. He may be clothed in rage—may be occupied in the lowest business—may make no show—be scarcely known to exist; but yet he may be more truly great than those who are more commonly so called; for greatness consists in the force of soul—that is, in the force of thought,