

one of the most wholesale acts of tyranny ever perpetrated under a Government having a form of freedom—the expulsion of the Poles. The nation is now trembling with anxiety caused by the precarious health of the aged Emperor. In the course of nature he must soon pass off the stage, and with him will probably pass away the *regime* of the man of blood and iron, leaving the great German people free to enter upon a new career of political freedom and progress.

In the East Russia, Austria, and Turkey are all yet standing with hand on sword-hilt, watching the outcome of the little affray between Servia and Bulgaria. The prospects now seem to be that a settlement may be patched up, though the probabilities are that the powerful intriguers behind the scenes will not be long in inaugurating other moves in furtherance of their respective designs, but full of menace to the peace of Europe.

Spain, unhappy Spain, is on the frowning brink of another precipice. Whether the forces of order and conservatism may prove able to save her from the threatening danger, or some eager and ambitious hand cause her to topple over, remains to be seen. If the long regency during the minority of the child-Queen can be tided over and peace and order preserved, the event will be a marvel and the omen good for the future of the distracted and poverty-stricken peninsula.

France, too, has passed through the throes of what barely escaped being an internal revolution, though subsequent events seem to show that it was meant but as the protest of the people against the disastrous Tonquin policy, and the general tendency of the government to meddlesomeness in foreign affairs. The French Republic is being shaken together somewhat violently at times, but the result is on the whole hopeful for its future stability.

On our own continent the great Republic may be said to be again firmly consolidated in a union which bids fair to be abiding. Politically her prospects were never better. The firm hand of her model President has so upheld and strengthened the hands of the reformers that the old, vicious Civil Service system has probably received its death blow, and all the forces of political corruption are reeling under the shock. If the great heart of the people continues to beat true, and the quickened national conscience refuses to be again lulled to sleep by the siren allurements of the agents of corruption, this year will be marked in history as the beginning of a new era of honesty and purity in American politics.

Canada, too, is having its own sensation, and that of the most pronounced kind. The questions which are agitating the whole country, as it has seldom before been agitated, are unfortunately so interwoven with political partyism that they can scarcely be touched upon in a neutral journal. It seems in the opinion of many that the future of the Confederation is trembling in the balance. And yet we may be permitted to doubt whether the

agitation is so deep and dangerous as is generally supposed. Both parties are interested in magnifying it and are diligently fanning the flame, the one in the hope of gaining, the other in the dread of losing, office. The opening of the Dominion Parliament, which, it is said, will take place next month, will be looked for by many with curiosity, and by some with deep anxiety.

England has but narrowly escaped, and if the political prophets and wiseacres may be trusted, only for a little time escaped, being drawn into a conflict, with the great empire of Russia. The struggle, if it comes, or when it comes, will be little better than one of life and death for each. The year, too, has seen the Soudan fiasco, in which many brave men and millions of money have been sacrificed in an expedition which was not only fruitless, but which the Prime Minister, during whose regime it was undertaken, now admits was a mistake. The last few weeks have brought the large and valuable addition of Burmah to Britain's already great Indian empire, and thus while increasing largely her vast Indian territory and probably her commerce, has also added to the magnitude of the tremendous question, to which no statesman can as yet give even a probable answer, what is to be the future of India? At home too, Great Britain has been the scene of a political commotion which will be little less in effect than a revolution, however events may turn. Two-fifths of her people have just for the first time handled the freeman's great weapon, the franchise, and handled it in a manner which shows a spirit for which few gave agricultural laborers credit. The Government has henceforth to reckon with three great parties instead of two, the third being by no means insignificant in numbers and really powerful by reason of the solidarity which makes it a mere voting machine controlled by the single hand of Parnell. The general result is that among the great problems, which 1885 bequeaths to the future, and in case of most if not all, to the immediate future, are not only that of local self-government for Ireland, and possibly Scotland, but reform of procedure in Parliament, reform or extinction of the House of Lords, the great land question with its adjuncts of primogeniture and entail, Free Schools, and Church Disestablishment. It may safely be predicted that no period of England's eventful history is more deeply interesting or better worth the attention of the student than will be that of 1886 and the following years.

ADJUDICATION OF OUR ARITHMETICAL COMPETITION PRIZES.

Last spring, it will be remembered, we offered prizes for the best set of twenty-five questions in arithmetic, suitable for fourth class, twenty-five for third class, and also for school-room humorous anecdotes. We announced that they were to be sent in before a certain date, but when that period arrived we found the number of papers received was so meagre that we extended the time. The competition, ultimately, in arithmetic for fourth class was very fair, but not equal to what we might have expected from the teachers of the Dominion; in