

even the delegates are not free agents, and have no more real power of choice than the members of the Electoral College in the United States. Either a candidate is sent to them with a *cong  d' lire* somewhat similar to that issued to a Dean and Chapter by the Royal authority in England, the meetings nominating delegates being often parked, oftener still taken by surprise; or the Conventions are manipulated by crafty intriguers: the result often is that even the majority is not 'fairly represented.' In this City, more than once, Reformers have been heard to protest against the nomination made by their leaders, but in vain. To them it was the choice of Hobson, 'this man or none,' and, in the end, they were wheeled into line and constrained to vote reluctantly for the man they would never have voluntarily chosen. Such abuses of political influence and authority as these would be impossible under the proposed scheme, and it would have the further advantage of preventing the exclusion of valuable men on either side the House, by the caprice of a small majority or plurality in single constituencies. It is to be hoped that the entire subject will receive careful and intelligent consideration next Session; meanwhile it may be as well to warn the newspaper reader against the idle attacks of those who know nothing of the 'personal system,' and are equally unacquainted with its logical basis and the method of its practical operation.

The annual debate on the Tariff was exceedingly flat and tedious. It is perhaps going too far to allege, as the Government journals have done, that Sir John Macdonald is not in earnest in his advocacy of a National fiscal policy; but he has certainly afforded some ground for the insinuation. Nobody knew better than the right hon. gentleman that the crucial vote, if it had been taken on his amendment to the resolution to go into Committee of Ways and Means must necessarily have been a party division. It could only be construed as a motion of non-confidence; indeed the amendment bears upon its face the proof, either that Sir John was unfortunate in phrasing it, or was careless whether he attracted support or repelled it. No adherent of any Government could be reasonably solicited to vote for a motion which de-

clared—'That this House regrets that the financial policy submitted by the Government increases the burthen of taxation on the people, without any compensating advantage to Canadian industries' and so on. The occasion was inopportune, as Mr. Wood must really have felt when he introduced his amendment to the amendment; because, although it does not launch forth into the bold and bald censure of the Opposition leader, it could not help being in some sort, a motion of want of confidence. To resolve 'that the interests of the country would be better served' by a policy essentially different from that deliberately adopted by the Government, is surely tantamount to declaring that the Government policy does not deserve the confidence of the country. It was Mr. Wood's misfortune that he could hardly have framed his amendment in a more acceptable way; but the fact that Messrs. Blain and John Macdonald of Centre Toronto were unable to give it their support, is a sufficient proof that the one motion, from a party point of view, was only less objectionable than the other.

The debate was a very dreary one from the beginning, and it is certainly not our intention to pursue its course even in outline. Had the motion been a substantive motion—introduced without any ulterior party objection as the affirmation of a principle, the turn of the debate and the result of the divisions might have been different. Over the entire discussion there hovered a suspicion of insincerity on one or both sides. The arguments were stale and trite, the temper of the House was listless and languid, and the result, in consequence, eminently unsatisfactory to every lover of his country. Even the platitudes of Mr. Mills were refreshing to read, in comparison with the residue of the debate, because, whatever may be said of his reasoning, he was at least in earnest. Generally speaking, the reverse was the case with the purely partisan speakers. They either sheltered themselves under the form of the motion, opposing it whilst they were strong adherents of the principles it enunciated, or making *ad captandum* appeals in its favour with a view of laying up political capital against the day of reckoning. The election which is, in any case, not far distant, looms up before the politician's vision, magnified by