

tutional Governments, the accountability of the people's representatives and the forms of Parliamentary procedure supply the most effectual safeguards against ill-considered legislation.

The tension of public feeling in England produced by the quarrel between Lords and Commons has had its counterpart in that caused in the United States by the closeness of the voting in the Presidential election. The danger of conflict has, however, passed away. The better sense and feeling of the people has prevailed. There is now no room for a reasonable doubt that Cleveland is fairly elected. The pivot on which the election turned was the vote of the State of New York, a state in which, happily, the intelligence of the people is so high, and respect for legal and constitutional forms so sincere, that a resort to either fraud or violence was from the first improbable. The late announcements that both Blaine and the Republican Committee have resolved to accept the issue is only what was to be expected.

The election has been one of the most remarkable, and we may add, the most hopeful, that has ever taken place in the United States. For the first time, probably, in American history, the personal character of the candidates was with an influential body of electors the chief point of interest. The power of "the machine" has been broken. The "divine and inalienable right of *bolting*" has been vindicated. The Independent Republicans turned the scale by voting for the Democratic candidate. They did so on the high ground of principle, in the interest of national morality. They declared by their action, that no bonds of party allegiance should harness them to the triumphal chariot of a candidate whose record they believed to be bad and whose principles and methods they regarded as irredeemably corrupt. Few will doubt that had the Republican Convention nominated an able man of irreproachable character he would have been elected by a sweeping majority, or that Cleveland's pluralities would have, on the other hand, been much greater, but for the dark blot on one page of his early history. The leaders of both parties have been taught a lesson which, it is to be hoped, they will lay to heart. A not improbable result would be the uprising of a third great party, free from the corruption and degeneracy of both the old ones, and based on purer and more patriotic principles.

In Canada there is happily no one question of supreme importance agitating the minds of the people. The announcement, should it be confirmed, that President Stephen is returning from England without having found money for more than the partial construction of a single branch road in the North-West, will cause serious disappointment and, it may be feared, discontent amongst our fellow-countrymen, in that great country. Curiosity is still on the *qui vive* as to the "public business" which, it is said, has been occupying the attention of the Premier, conjointly with the consultation of his medical adviser, in England. Probably we shall have to wait till the opening of Parliament for an authoritative explanation. Writers in the press still keep prophesying

change of some sort in the relations of the Provinces to each other and of the whole to the Empire. That the Confederation has not thus far developed the strong Canadian feeling many hoped for and prophesied, is, unhappily, too obvious. It is somewhat discouraging to a Canadian loyalist to find so many, especially amongst the younger men, who really do not seem to care a fig for retaining either the bond of union between the Provinces or the connection with the Mother Country. One thing impresses itself on the mind of an onlooker, though it has not, we believe, been distinctly pointed out. Each of the various nostrums offered for the cure of our commercial and political ills logically carries with it the idea of absolute freedom on the part of Canadians to shape their own destiny. In other words, they make practical independence the necessary starting point. To be constantly digging up the roots of a plant is not the best way to promote its growth. It any statesman or party can devise a means of cultivating amongst us a true love of our own land, a deep and abiding Canadian sentiment, they will have deserved well of their country.

Special Articles.

THE BIBLE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

After a period of comparative quiescence, one of the Toronto dailies has taken up the vexed question of the "Bible in the public school," and one of the advocates for the introduction, Rev. Dr. Laing Dundas, furnishes a letter of thanks to the editor for the stand the latter has taken on the question. Dr. Laing also recounts his reasons for his former and present advocacy. Dr. Laing further makes an attack upon our educational system because the Minister cannot see as he sees upon the subject. Without assailing Dr. Laing's reasons, I have a point or two to which I should like to call his attention. In the first case, were the Government to prescribe the Bible as a text-book in our schools, I presume that Dr. Laing would have something more than mere bible *reading*. He would, doubtless, have our teachers give explanations of the various portions of scripture coming up for consideration. If he did not, I much fear we should have boys leaving school with much the same ideas with reference to the parable of the sower that many of their fathers have left to the church.

He also urges that in case a Roman Catholic should not care to take part in the exercise he might leave the room, as provided by law. Now, I think that Dr. Laing must admit that the reason for the Catholic pupil leaving the recitation room would be solely one of doctrine, for, we cannot suppose that he would infer that because the pupil was a Roman Catholic he would not wish to listen to a moral lesson. Now, granting that the pupils of this particular sect absent themselves on a question of doctrine, on the same logic why should not pupils of the Episcopalian or Methodist denominations absent themselves while a Presbyterian teacher is giving his explanations, or *vice versa*? For, try as we may, early training and prejudice cannot fail to leave their impress upon our teaching.

Further, should the State prescribe religious instruction in our schools, to place our teachers in a just position with the ratepayers of their sections they (the Government) must prescribe of what this religious instruction shall consist, for how otherwise is a teacher to reconcile the various elements in his section to the style of his instruction unless that instruction has the stamp of departmental authority, when, should his teaching clash with the pre-