

The great, and growing evils connected with the present mode of election to the Presidency of the United States are causing much thought and argument as to the possibility of finding a better way. Discussion is particularly active since the recent election. It seems to be felt on all hands that the time for a change has come. The disturbance of trade, the paralysis of industry, the carnival of corruption and bad feeling which are the quadrennial outgrowth of the present system, are injurious to all interests, business, social and moral. No less than eleven different methods that have at various times been advocated are given in a recent number of the *North American Review*. The plans which seem at present to meet with most favour are, election by the State Legislatures, and election by direct electoral vote. The chances are largely in favour of the adoption of the latter method, which is sure to be popular. Three out of five prominent writers, who discuss the question in the last number of the *North American Review* are in favour of it. How such a mode of election can be kept free from the evils which are so damagingly connected with the present system does not yet clearly appear.

New heat has been added to the discussion which has been so long going on between the vivisectionists and the anti-vivisectionists in England, by a late incident. The advocates of vivisection heralded exultingly a recent operation performed by a surgeon, in removing a tumour from a patient's brain. It was alleged that the ability to localize exactly and so reach the tumour was due entirely to the information gained by Dr. Ferrier's experiments upon the brains of twenty living monkeys. An unexpected turn has since been given to the controversy by the death of the man from whose brain the tumour was removed. The *London Spectator* says that far better guidance to the location of brain tumours is afforded by *post mortem* examinations, and that following this guidance Dr. MacEwan, of Glasgow, has successfully removed several such tumours. The *Spectator* adds that, so far from its being the case that the experiments of Dr. Ferrier were not cruel, it appears that they were very cruel, though anæsthetics were freely used, and that the twenty monkeys were "transformed from gay, intelligent, affectionate creatures into miserable sufferers, robbed by one operation after another of all evidence of mental capacity, sitting in abject melancholy while they lived, with hands clasped upon their heads, and generally dying of meningitis, and the dreadful distress which always attends that disease."

There seems to be a deepening impression in the minds of thinking Canadians that our country is on the eve of important change of some sort. Else why this constant discussion of the various possibilities of the future—Independence, Imperial Federation, Annexation? A writer in the *Mail* doubts the necessity or wisdom of thinking of immediate change. He sees no reason why we may not go on well enough with the present relations of the provinces to the Dominion, and the Dominion to the Mother Country. But such a view seems to ignore at least two important facts, viz., the strong and growing discontent of some, if not all, the provinces, and especially of

the Maritime Provinces, with the existing union, and the almost utter failure of that union thus far to develop anything worthy of the name of a Canadian national sentiment. We deplore the fact, having hoped for better things, but the people of the different provinces of the Dominion seem as much provincialists, and as little Canadians to-day, as they were twelve or fifteen years ago. The Eastern provinces have never merged their Nova Scotia or New Brunswick patriotism in Canadian patriotism. The people of the great western prairies are already crying out with emphasis, "Northwest first," while to speak as if Ontario and Quebec were bound together by any living bond of sympathy, seems almost like irony. To look difficulties and even failures fairly in the face, is not pessimism but patriotism. In this as in so many other cases it is much easier to point out the malady than to apply the effective remedy. How Imperial Federation or Independence would help to draw the provinces closer has not been made clear by the advocates of the one or the other. Even should the former enable us to obtain better trade relations with our rich neighbours to the south, it is a question whether the increased prosperity might not act rather as a disintegrating and centrifugal force than as a bond of closer union amongst the Provinces. That it would necessarily lead to annexation is often asserted but lacks demonstration.

In view of the prominent part taken by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and other American divines, in the recent presidential election, considerable interest attaches to a discussion in the February number of the *North American Review* on the question "Should Clergymen be Politicians?" The negative is maintained by Rev. Dr. H. J. Van Dyke, jr., the affirmative by Mr. Beecher himself. Neither paper strikes us as particularly strong. Mr. Van Dyke concedes that all clergymen have the same duties, rights and privileges as other citizens, including the right of free thought and speech; the duties of obedience to law, loyalty to government, and the exercise of their active powers for the highest welfare of their country; and the privilege of voting on all questions of public interest as reason and conscience dictate. He goes on to argue, not very consistently, that the clergyman in politics is superfluous, disloyal and injurious; superfluous, because he has no special training or fitness for this sphere of activity; disloyal, because he is using his influence in a state which should be unsectarian to bind a particular church to the support of a particular party, and consequently that particular party to the support of that particular church; injurious, because when he lowers the pulpit to the level of the stump, and attempts to lead the church as a religious organization into the train of any candidate for office, he is doing a great and irreparable harm to the cause of religion. Mr. Beecher on the other hand contends that any procedure which puts clergymen into a class by themselves and seeks to free them from contact with the ordinary duties of humanity is most pernicious; that no man has a right to be exempt from the political duties of the citizen, least of all the clergyman; that two elements are needed to exalt politics from the low level at which it now exists, the in-