

the other hand, the contractor or merchant, or other dealer who contributes, and takes care to let the Minister know that he contributes to the party funds, is, in accordance with the principle laid down by Premier Abbott in a speech from which we have before quoted, investing that money with a view to future transactions, or in other words offering what is equivalent to a bribe. Ordinarily the nice sense of propriety of a conscientious trustee, in the Government or in private life, should render any such transaction impossible. But, unhappily, the evidence before the Parliamentary Committees has made it but too clear that not all Ministers of the Crown, and but an exceptional few of those who have had dealings with them, have that nice sense of propriety. Hence the need the law should become their schoolmaster in ethics. Of course all such cases as those in which a clergyman, or other private individual, has to choose between buying in the cheapest market and offending a friend or parishioner, come in a different category. The man is spending his own money and is at liberty to follow his own inclination or conscience. We are by no means sure that there may not be cases in which the higher law of the Sermon on the Mount may require us to buy in the dearer rather than the cheaper establishment.

ANOTHER address to the Queen in which both parties concurred deals with the question of Canadian copyright. The provisions of the Copyright Act that was passed two years ago, but which, for want of the assent of the Mother Country, has not come into operation, are well known, and need not be rehearsed in detail. There can be no doubt in the mind of any one who understands Canada's peculiar position in reference to this matter, that the provisions of the Act of 1889 are "such as are required in the interests of the people of Canada." The address adds that these provisions have not been shown to be in any respect unfair as regards any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. The only part of the Act to which exception can well be taken is the provision that if the British publisher fails to publish the work in Canada within one month after its publication elsewhere, any person domiciled in Canada may obtain a license, but not the exclusive right, to publish it, on condition of paying a royalty of 10 per cent. of the retail price to the author. This can hardly be objected to by the British author, if he understands his own interests, as it secures to him, in either event, as large a return as he is likely to receive in any other way. The real objector is, no doubt, the British publisher, who would like to have the sole control of the Canadian market, without being compelled to publish in Canada. But the necessity of some such provision to secure justice to the Canadian publisher, under the unique conditions in which he is placed, must be obvious to any unprejudiced mind. In any case the day is past when the Canadian market for any commodity can be kept as a preserve for the British producer or merchant. We do not believe that, in this case, the Home Government will be able to hold out against the strength of the Canadian case. Should the event prove otherwise, Canada will hardly acquiesce without a struggle.

SOME wise man has observed that there are three distinct stages through which every great reform has to pass on its way to adoption. These are the stage of contempt or ridicule, the stage of sober discussion, and the stage of popular favour. The friends of Imperial Federation have some reason to hope that their idea is approaching the second of these stages. The question has found its way into the great magazines. There is, however, one feature of these discussions which must be rather disheartening to any but the most ardent believers in the project. The magazine writers seem to be almost all on the sceptical, if not positively hostile, side, and their lucubrations are, in the main, devoted to showing either the difficulty or the utter impracticability of the project. Lord Brassey's article in the *Nineteenth Century* is scarcely an exception, inasmuch as it puts forth as the immediately feasible part of the scheme, and that which demands first attention, the very proposal which is likely to meet with the most serious objection in the colonies, especially in Canada, viz.: that of colonial aid in the support of the army and navy. Of course this in some shape would be (Sir Charles Tupper to the contrary notwithstanding) a first corollary of Federation, but it is one which will bear discussion in Canada only when the advantages of the proposed compact shall have been so clearly demonstrated that the colonies cannot in con-

science declare themselves unwilling to pay for them. We do not propose, however, to enter just now into the general discussion. We refer to the question merely to point out to the advocates of Imperial Federation the necessity of agreeing upon at least a few rough outlines, or general principles, as a basis for further discussion. A little while ago they were constantly met with the criticism that they had no tangible scheme, since no one had attempted to define what Imperial Federation means. Premier Abbott still urges that objection as an excuse for having no opinion on the subject, though he saw fit, in the resolution on which we comment elsewhere, to leave a place for the introduction of preferential customs regulations, should these be found practicable. It must be admitted, however, that of late several influential advocates of Imperial Federation have come forward with more or less definite proposals. The difficulty is that the leaders seem to be wide as the poles asunder in their opinions as to what is desirable and practicable. Lord Brassey, as we have seen, regards as cardinal the very thing which Sir Charles Tupper discards. Lord Roseberry, probably the most influential advocate of the idea in England, goes farther and rejects the two leading features of Sir Charles' outline. He pronounces both colonial representation in the House of Lords, or in the British Privy Council, and an imperial customs-union, impracticable. Lord Roseberry holds that the question depends for the present on conferences at frequent and stated intervals. Lord Brassey quotes with seeming approval Lord Salisbury's opinion that attendance at such conferences would involve grave inconvenience to colonial statesmen, an opinion in which most colonists will no doubt heartily concur. And so the discussion goes on, leaving us farther than ever, apparently, from having definite proposals to discuss. Meanwhile it seems hard to resist the force of Lord Brassey's observation that to make a united empire we must have both a *Zollverein* and a *Kriegsverein*—both a tariff-union and a war-union—while the way to either is hedged across by most grave if not insuperable obstacles. Nevertheless it is, from the Canadian point of view, most desirable that the discussion be pushed to a conclusion favourable or unfavourable as soon as possible. We do not see how any thoughtful person can doubt that one potent contributory cause to the lamentable lack of growth revealed in the Canadian census, is the colonial status with its disabilities.

MR. GLADSTONE'S article in the *Nineteenth Century* wrought out in a mathematical formula the basis of his confidence and that of the party he leads, in a speedy return to power. His speech at the recent meeting of the National Liberal Federation has the same confident ring. It is, moreover, of special interest as setting forth unmistakably the intentions of the party in regard to a number of questions of home policy, though the cabled extracts give us but little of the criticism of Lord Salisbury's administration of the Foreign Office, which the correspondents have been promising us. That is probably reserved for another occasion. First and foremost, Mr. Gladstone confirms the assurances that have been from time to time given by his lieutenants, that Home Rule for Ireland is still at the top of the programme. It has indeed for some time past been evident that those who hoped that the Parnell quarrel would lead to the indefinite postponement, if not the final abandonment, of the Home Rule project, were reckoning without their host. The sudden death of Mr. Parnell, news of which has just arrived, will probably simplify rather than complicate the problem, and expedite rather than retard the Home Rule movement. It is now clear that the British nation is, unless something unforeseen should occur to change the whole current of events, now within measurable distance of an Irish local Parliament. Whether this means internal peace and unity, as so many hope, or ultimate dismemberment and ruin, as so many fear, the future must decide. It is not unlikely that it may mean neither, but just a transference from one shoulder to the other of a burden that must in the nature of things always be hard to carry. Apart from this the Liberal programme is not wanting in important and even startling announcements. Disestablishment in Wales and Scotland; payment of members of Parliament; and the "one-man-one-vote" electoral franchise may be mentioned as among the most important. But by far the most noteworthy thing in Mr. Gladstone's speech, if the brief cable extract rightly interprets its spirit, is his singularly plain language in reference to the House of Lords. His ominous intimations in regard to what may

happen in case the Lords take Lord Salisbury's hint and attempt to block the wheels of the Home Rule car, are, we suppose, the Liberal answer to the Premier's suggestion. Both threats seem, if a colonial onlooker may venture to say so, strangely ill-advised. Both certainly tend to increase the difficulties which beset the course of the Upper House. The very fact that the Lords are exposed to such influences—for no doubt both threat and counter-threat are intended to influence the action of the Upper House in advance—go far to show that its usefulness as an independent branch of the national Legislature is at a pretty low ebb. Meanwhile speculation as to what the approaching struggle may bring forth in British politics gives way to wonder at the perennial vitality and vigour of the octogenarian statesman. Never before, probably, in all the history of Britain, did an uncrowned king so sway the multitudes by the magic of his voice and personality.

THE Sigi incident has at last been officially explained, the explanation being in substance that it was merely an ordinary military manoeuvre on the part of the Mediterranean fleet, performed with the full consent of the Sultan. This explanation, like that of the Porte touching the Sultan's concession of the Russian claim to send vessels of the Volunteer Fleet, though in reality transporting men and munitions of war, through the Dardanelles, may be taken for what it is worth. Both are no doubt correct so far as they go. Whether there was not in both incidents more than appears on the surface of the respective explanations may well be doubted. The relations in time, first of the Turkish concession to the fall of the Turkish Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, in consequence, as it was regarded in Constantinople, of his too great friendliness to the British policy in Egypt, and second, of the Sigi manoeuvre to that concession, seem too significant to have been the result of mere accident. But be that as it may, these events have thrown a flash of light on what are regarded by many as the most dangerous features of the European situation, so far, at least, as Great Britain is concerned. The resolute words to which they gave occasion in that portion of the British press which is believed to reflect Lord Salisbury's views, and the angry responses of the Russian press on finding Great Britain still inflexible in her insistence on the enforcement of the Treaty provision which shuts the Russian Black Sea fleet out of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, reveal a state of feeling which may, we might almost say must, lead to war between the two nations the moment that changed circumstances of any kind may give Russia hope of success. It is not yet known how much of truth there may be in the rumours of violations of territory and advance-guard skirmishes on the Afghan frontier, but it is certain that the attitude of Russia in the East is one of perpetual menace and England's one of perpetual vigilance. What is Russia's chief motive in this? Is it that she really covets India, or a portion of it for its own sake? Or is her persistent pressure in that direction simply due to the fact that she regards India as the vulnerable heel of the British Empire, which she hopes some day to wound as a means of forcing Great Britain to give way in regard to the Dardanelles question. Assuming, as Russia herself intimates, that the latter is the real motive, the grave diplomatic question arises whether it would not be both to the advantage of Great Britain and in the interests of European peace to repeal the old Treaty and give the Russian fleet free access to the Mediterranean and the Ocean like other Powers. England's chief aim is no doubt to safeguard her route to India. But if the freedom of the Dardanelles would take away the motive of Russia's designs upon India and her hostility to England, the voluntary concession of that freedom would be a far more effectual safeguarding of British interests in India. Apart from this purely selfish view of the situation, there can be no doubt that Russia's exclusion from the Dardanelles is a very great hardship to her, and one such as no other nation would submit to a moment longer than compelled by necessity. The *Spectator*, representing no doubt the view of an influential section of British opinion, admits the force of this view, and complains only that Russia seeks to effect her purpose by underhand machinations instead of by straight-forward diplomatic pressure. "We see no wisdom," says the *Spectator*, "in refusing to the Russian nation a freedom of motion enjoyed by every other Power in the world, and would willingly see the Dardanelles declared part of the open sea, but that is no reason for enduring a violent breach of laws deliberately passed by Europe to prevent certain dangerous contingencies." There is much reason