

schools. Under the circumstances it seems highly probable that the Archbishops will recommend making a virtue of necessity and patronizing the public schools, trusting to special Church agencies, such as those above mentioned, for the religious education of the children. Such a decision will but be in accordance with the traditional wisdom which marks the policy of the Church of Rome.

TO a people accustomed to full responsible government, the mixture of absolutism and constitutionalism that prevails in German politics is not a little puzzling. One of the latest developments is that in which the Emperor declares personally at a public banquet that the Government does not intend to adopt the proposal for a two-years' instead of a three-years' term of military service, though the two-years' term is approved and advocated by Chancellor Caprivi, the head of his Government and the man of his own appointment. And yet, it appears, the Chancellor, whose official authority is thus coolly set aside, does not feel called upon to tender his resignation, or to conclude that his usefulness is gone. The question itself, apart from the personal considerations thus introduced, cannot fail to be fraught with great interest for the long-suffering people. One can well understand how it is that every party in the Reichstag, with the single exception of the ultra Conservatives, favours the shorter term of service. The question will play an important part in the next elections. It can hardly be doubted that the Emperor will have to give way in the end, for with all his autocratic impetuosity he is too shrewd to persist in opposing the will of the great majority. Among other indications of the progress of democratic ideas is the strange spectacle of Prince Bismarck posing as the advocate of reform in regard to this and other questions. Autocracy evidently loses some of its charm when its former staunch defender is no longer in a position to direct the movements of the Royal arm, but rather finds its force exerted against himself and his views.

#### THE POLITICAL SITUATION—IV.

I HAVE pointed out in the past three numbers some of the evils which exist in the present political system of this country—the greatest of all and the origin of all being a lack of healthy public opinion. What is the remedy? This, indeed, opens up a fruitful theme, and one beset with difficulties.

Under a system of popular government it goes without saying that frequent changes of administration are necessary to a healthy development of public affairs. Party government may be good or may be bad, but we have it, and must make the best of it. Nearly all that is said against party government by such distinguished writers as Prof. Goldwin Smith is directed rather against the abuses of it than against the abstract principle. Under a proper condition of things each political party is bound to adopt principles and to make records that shall command the respect and favour of the people, and therefore, when each is making a ceaseless struggle for power, both are bound to be careful and circumspect in their actions. Of course all the checks and safeguards are destroyed when public opinion becomes dead. No politician has any motive to honourable and patriotic conduct whenever it is manifest that the people, or a majority of them, can be induced to support charlatans or allow corrupt or dishonest men to remain in office.

Frequent changes of government are obvious, as has been said in the public interest. It is impossible for any body of men to be in power for a continuous period without getting lax in their ideas of public duty. That is the innate tendency of mankind. Besides, long terms of office induce the members of government to get the notion that they not only have a divine right to rule, but that instead of being servants and trustees they are actually the masters, and all favours are to come from them. This is subversive of the whole theory of popular government, and it is in the interest of the people to have it clearly understood that Governments are not heaven-appointed rulers, but mere instruments of power subject to the will and control of the electorate.

Again, long terms of office tend to get public matters running in a rut. A department gets mouldy in time under one management, unless, indeed, the administrator is a man of more than ordinary wisdom and capacity, which is not too often the case. Frequent changes are necessary in order that new ideas and fresh energy be infused.

Once more; the civil service is enormously benefited by changes in the administration. The tendency of all administrations is in the direction of bureaucracy. Red tape grows in proportion to the length of the period of uninterrupted rule. The members composing the civil service are chosen by the political party in power, either solely for political services or with that an element in the appointment. In course of time the civil service thus becomes a

hive of partisans, gradually gaining the impression that the world was made for the saints, and that they are the saints. Nothing is to be done except according to the humour or caprice of a deputy or chief clerk. All the little favours of Government are reserved for their own favourites. A change of government makes a wonderful stir in this community of public servants. The partisanship and favouritism quickly disappear. Their own fate begins to loom up as a deeply interesting question, and they are instantly on their good behaviour. Useless men who have no political claims upon the new comers are quite sure to go to the wall, hence the struggle to be useful. The beaten path of routine has to be departed from under the influence of the radical spirit of the new head. So far as the civil service is concerned, and this means practically the machinery of Government, it is of enormous advantage to the public that changes in government should occur every five or ten years at least.

But there is yet another cogent reason for frequent change of government. Both political parties contain their quota of able and ambitious men, who exercise a wide and powerful influence upon their political followers. These men have ideas of government which would be useful to the public. They have also worked out policies which could with advantage be put to the test of experience. It is unfortunate for the country to be deprived of the advantages of the services of all its capable men. Besides, repeated defeats and a protracted term of opposition tend to make a party discontented, and this discontent will in time develop into pessimism. Nearly one-half of the people will become dissatisfied with the country and its institutions. The certain remedy for this is frequent changes of government. Then each party in turn takes the responsibility of government. Affairs are kept active by the changes which are constantly occurring, and both parties have a common interest in the good government of the country.

It is also to be remembered that the political arena is constantly developing men of radical tendencies, and these, if left out of office, may constitute a disturbing element in the nation—carrying their extreme views to such length as to breed disorder and mischief among the people. Nothing tends so much to bring these violent radicals into a reasonable frame as to throw upon them the responsibility of practical government. It is a misfortune to any country to have a large body of men in Parliament and a large body of the electorate permanently discontented, and this is bound to occur if one party is allowed to hold the reins too long.

If we turn to other countries where popular government is in full operation, we see almost invariably that changes of government take place every few years. In England it is rarely in modern times that any administration holds office for more than five or six years. The people in their collective capacity recognize the enormous advantages of frequent change. In the United States the same incidents prevail. We have a Republican President for a term and then a Democratic executive. We have a Republican House of Representatives for one term, and then a Democratic House. This constant change will inevitably occur under normal conditions in every country where the will of the people has full play.

In Canada the present Government has been in office continuously for fourteen years, and before the time for which the present Parliament was elected will have expired they will have been in power seventeen years. This is too long, and, unless a man is altogether blinded by partisanship, he must recognize that for a variety of reasons there is an absolute necessity for a change. The best interests of the country require it.

Such a change would have taken place before this if there had been a sound and healthy public opinion in Canada. In other words, it would have occurred if the popular will had been exercised with freedom. But the striking feature of the political system which Sir John A. Macdonald built up, and which is so well carried forward by the men whom he left behind, is that the power of the Government is exercised to the verge of absolutism for influencing the public to support the administration. Under the theory of popular government the people ought not to be in the slightest degree affected by supposed favours which the Government can bestow. Public works should be constructed solely in accordance with public need, and regardless of the political preferences of the people residing in the vicinity. For the Government to say directly or indirectly that the only way that railway facilities can be obtained is by voting for Government candidates is to strike down popular government, and offer the greatest insult that can be given a free people. If public opinion were right, this could not be done. It would not be tolerated for an hour. And yet no fair observer can doubt that the present Government has carried the last two general elections, and the preponderance of the bye-elections, almost entirely by dint of the power of patronage. They say in effect to the protected interests: "Rally round us and furnish us with campaign funds, and we will uphold and increase your monopolies." They say to individual constituencies: "Send men to support us, and we will build your wharves, improve your harbours, subsidize your railways and construct your public buildings." This is not government of the people and by the people. This is despotic government, whereby the Cabinet becomes the master, not the servant, of the people.

No one doubts that there is looseness and corruption in the present administration at Ottawa. No one can

venture to question that they have established a system of favouritism which menaces the free institutions of our land. They have the franchise under the control of a body of carefully-chosen partisans. They have carved up the constituencies to suit their exigencies. They have created a Senate almost exclusively of partisan adherents. They have the judiciary—the most vital institution in the State—constituted almost exclusively of political sympathizers. They have gathered about them great corporations, whose aim is personal profit and aggrandizement rather than the public good. Under these circumstances, it seems to me that the duty of the people—the majority of them—who are not especial recipients of Government favour, is to reflect seriously as to whither we are drifting. Popular government in Canada will become a travesty and a farce if a Government can by these means maintain themselves perpetually in power. I believe, quite irrespective of any questions of fiscal policy—which are, in this regard, only secondary—that the interests and well being of the country require a change of Government at the earliest possible moment. It is needed to purify the public service and to teach the men governing the country that the people, and not they, are the rulers.

J. W. LONGLEY.

#### FORCE AND ENERGY—III.

BUT it is sure to be objected to what I have written on the subject of Force, that Newton did not himself believe in gravitation. It was, indeed, on it as on a sure foundation that he reared and proved his immortal work, marshalling in orderly array suns and planets and satellites, and from whose rule of law no heavenly visitant, however wildly eccentric, has ever ventured to revolt; for they are all alike tethered to their several orbits by inexorable law. "Every particle of matter in the universe," he indeed wrote, "attracts every other particle of matter by a force directly as its mass and inversely as the square of the distance." But it is to-day denied by many that matter does attract matter at all (indeed, I quite lately read a whole work intended to disprove it), and that even Newton, when he said in so many formal words that it did so, did not believe that it did so actually, but that this seeming attraction, which the very relations of things appeared to demand absolutely, was owing to something else, he knew not what; for that, when writing in reply to Bentley, "the slashing Bentley," the great theologian and critic, who was not, perhaps, quite satisfied at the turn things were taking, he averred, "that gravity should be innate, inherent, and essential to matter, so that one body can act upon another at a distance through a vacuum without the mediation of anything else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to another, is a great absurdity." Now, whatever may be our estimate of this conclusion, the case as here stated is not the case with which Grant Allen has to do. His case is not at all that of one body acting upon another through a void, but the totally different case of a body acting upon another through the medium of the omnipresent ether, so that the verdict supposed to be implied in the declaration of this transcendently able man is scarcely relevant. The difference of the effect of a medium or no medium comes home to us, when we consider what would be the effect of trying to convey a message across the ocean (not to speak of conveying it through a wholly void space) without the medium of a conveying or, rather, a directing wire, "by and through which," as Sir Isaac Newton says, "action and force may be conveyed." And why may not the ubiquitous, elastic ether be such a medium?

Thus, it seems to me that the particular objection of Newton, far from being destructive of the statement that, under circumstances the exact opposite to those postulated by him, matter cannot influence matter at a distance (and we know, as in the case of the electric telegraph, that it can) is wholly nugatory. But, to speak scientifically, nothing can be said to be at a distance absolutely, but only relatively, if the universe is regarded, as it truly is, as a unit, and as having nothing, near or far, that is unrelated to, or not intimately connected with, everything else. "All are but parts of one stupendous whole." It must, indeed, be admitted that when Newton affirmed that "every particle in the universe attracts every other," he uses the words in only an accommodating sense, unless, indeed, he was subsequently swayed by adverse arguments, or by the consideration of supposed consequences; for that, while his after words affirm that no particle in sun or moon does really attract any particle on earth, yet the assumption that, in some inexplicable way, it does so, so fully and perfectly supplies the exact needed hypothesis to make everything work smoothly and harmoniously without a jar anywhere, that the statement had to be made though the explanation was not forthcoming. Everything seemed to necessitate such a formula as squares everything and leaves nothing to be accounted for, and, if so, surely such an affirmation must be somehow true.

Now, Newton, as I conceive, had a belief in an ether, but whether he thought of it as we do to-day, or whether his belief amounted to a settled conviction, I am not in a position to say. However, he did theorize on the subject of gravitation, supposing that it might be accounted for on the hypothesis that the ether within gross matter was less dense than elsewhere, and that the denser ether of space pressing on the more tenuous ether (but why should it press at all, unless we assume the prior existence of this