

right. Mr. Blaine supposes that this pretension was set up in order to obtain the concession to Great Britain of free navigation of the Mississippi; but it does not seem logical to insist on the permanent character through all circumstances of one provision of a treaty while holding that another of a similar character has lapsed by change of circumstances. In the same treaty that recognised the right of United States fishermen to use the Colonial fisheries, the navigation of the Mississippi, from its source to the sea, was declared to be free and open to the subjects of Great Britain as well as to the citizens of the United States; but the observance of this provision it appears, according to Mr. Blaine, could not be insisted on by Great Britain in 1814, because in the meanwhile the Mississippi had been found to be wholly within the territory of the United States. So that geographical error voids a treaty, giving the loser liberty to withdraw from it at his pleasure, while war waged by a beneficiary on the power that has voluntarily made a treaty concession does not. Mr. Blaine censures United States statesmen for ever entering at all into the Treaty of 1818, on which the Fishery Question now depends, and desires to repudiate the treaty, in order to fall back upon that of 1782. But we fancy the war of 1812, with its natural effect on such treaties as that of 1782, is a hard fact to overcome; and, if overcome, there would still remain the ratification of the 1818 treaty by the States to be explained away. For this treaty has been lived under for nearly seventy years, and its practical recognition, as well by ratification as by the several subsequent treaties relating to the fisheries and based on it, puts Mr. Blaine's pretensions quite out of court.

THE net upshot of the elections in the United States appears to be a Republican gain, which will leave the Democrats a bare majority in the House of Representatives. As the Senate remains Republican, the legislative deadlock will continue, and the time of Congress will be wasted as before. There appears to be a relaxation, for the time at all events, of the party ties, which shows itself in the success of two or three Labour candidates, as well as in the large vote polled by Mr. George at New York. The Free Traders have lost two of their leaders, and have narrowly escaped the loss of a third, so that the day of emancipation from Protectionism is yet far distant. The public money will continue to be squandered by hundreds of millions to prevent the appearance of a surplus which would render revenue needless, and the reduction of the tariff inevitable, while corruption will infallibly attend on waste. It seems that this result is due largely to the Labour Vote, which was cast on the side of Protection, so that there are limits both to the Labour Reformer's hatred of monopoly and to his practical application of the maxim that Labour has no country. From the results of these off elections, in which play is given to all sorts of secondary motives and influences, not much can be gleaned as to the chances of the next Presidential contest. A year hence the opposing forces will be falling into line for the great battle. Mr. Hill, a "Bourbon" Democrat, and a thorough-going specimen of the corrupt wing of the Democratic Party, begins to show strength as a possible competitor against Mr. Cleveland for the Democratic nomination. Still we look forward to seeing, when the time comes, a fair fight between honest government, worthily represented, in spite of inevitable shortcomings, by Mr. Cleveland, and all the other influences, not less worthily represented by Mr. Blaine; while our confidence in the good sense and the moral soundness of the American people, notwithstanding the sinister infusion of foreign elements, leads us to cherish a sanguine hope that Mr. Cleveland will win.

RENAN has brought out a strange addition to his theological works in the shape of a drama, *L'Abbesse de Jouarre*, the plot of which is the seduction of an Abbess at the foot of the guillotine. Such a combination of the lascivious, the sacrilegious, and the horrible would never have entered into any brain but that of a Frenchman. Something of this kind was always lurking in Renan. There is in his "Life of Christ" a trail of Parisian amative-ness, not to say pruriency, which is hardly less repugnant to our taste and feelings than his suggestion that in his restoration of Lazarus to life Christ was guilty of a deception. Renan's Christ is manifestly not a transcript of recorded facts, but a divination the trustworthiness and value of which depend upon two factors, Orientalist erudition and spiritual insight. Renan's Orientalist erudition cannot be questioned, but our confidence in the infallibility of his spiritual insight may be somewhat shaken by the publication of *L'Abbesse de Jouarre*.

MR. BRIGHT has of late rendered inestimable services to his country; but is his letter in favour of Russia wise? The cultivation of Russian enmity by the Jingo has been fanaticism and folly. England and Russia ought to have remained as they once were—fast friends. There is no

reason why their Asiatic empires should not exist side by side in peace. Nicholas himself, whatever he may have been in other respects, was perfectly well disposed towards England, and the quarrel with him was the sinister work of Palmerston, Louis Napoleon, and Lord Stratford de Redclyffe. To keep Russia from reaching an open sea is hopeless, nor has England any more interest in doing it than have the other Mediterranean Powers. The wisest course would have been to take the measure of the situation and come to a settlement, while a moderate man and a friend of peace, like the late Czar, was on the Russian throne. All this we heartily believe. But the Czar is now manifestly and flagrantly in the wrong. As a wrong-doer he must be withstood, unless the cause of nations is to go by default. The British Government is apparently trying, under circumstances of great difficulty and peril, to withstand him. It is hardly a moment for giving moral aid or comfort to the enemy.

BRITISH politics seem to be fast shaping themselves on the American model. Conventions are now held to settle the party platform on each side. The other day the Conservative Convention was held at Bradford: now the Radical Convention is being held at Leeds. The first result of the Radical Convention is the declaration of what may probably be taken as a final breach between the Radicals and the Liberal Unionists, or, as they may perhaps more succinctly be termed, the Liberals. The Radicals are now thoroughly committed to the dissolution of the Union with Ireland. They are virtually committed to a good deal more: for we should like to know what answer, on Gladstonian principles, they could give to a demand for separation on the part of the people of any Province in India, of the Maltese, or even of the native inhabitants of Gibraltar. This surely is an instructive chapter in the history of Party. For Mr. Bright was perfectly correct in saying that not twenty members of the House of Commons, outside the Parnellite section, were in favour of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. By mere party antagonism and blind following of a party leader, all the rest of these men have been drawn into a position in which they are leagued with a foreign conspiracy for the dissolution of the Empire. Nobody who has had any intercourse with them can fail to be aware that two or three years ago they would have repudiated with indignation the opinions which they have now, by no process of genuine conversion, but by the mere turn of the faction fight, been led to embrace. Not a few of them vehemently disclaimed upon the hustings in 1885 the policy to which they bind themselves, body and soul, in 1886. Such was sure to be the consequence of a division on Mr. Gladstone's Bill; and for that reason it was that some friends of the Union were inclined to deprecate a division, if it had been possible to avoid it by shelving the Bill. A junction of the Liberals with the Conservatives, to form a strong Government, and to save the nation from dismemberment and the Empire from dissolution, is the natural response to the Radical manifesto. Unless all patriotism has departed, and the spirit of the country at large has sunk to the level of that of the factory hands, such a Government ought to rally to itself support enough to sustain it for many years. But to bring the junction about there must be an end of Lord Randolph Churchill's borrowed nonsense about "Tory Democracy" and of attempts of the Primrose League to revive the "Tory" Party. Toryism is the creed of Bolingbroke and Eldon, and is no more capable of being revived or adapted to the present day than the worship of Woden. Peel's wisdom had weaned his followers from it, and led them into the position of rational Conservatism in which they were strongly intrenched, with every prospect of a long continuance in power, when the great leader was struck down by Disraeli, and the party, bereft of its chiefs by the rupture, and wrecked by its desperate adherence to the Corn Laws, was flung into opposition, with brief and precarious intervals, for forty years. If Toryism means anything now, it means an unholy alliance between a reactionary aristocracy and a mob, against moderation and rational progress. This intrigue has been tried, and, like other intrigues, has proved weak as well as profligate. Liberal Conservatism, combining reform of the House of Lords, reform of the Church, the extension of local government, and a generally progressive policy with Union, property, liberty, and opposition to social revolution, is the only ground on which it is possible to stand. On that ground it is possible to stand firmly and long. If parties are to continue, they must henceforth be Liberal and Radical. A Liberal party, even Mr. Chamberlain, in his present frame of mind, and since his excommunication by the Leeds Radicals, might join.

A FRENCH paper points out that the passion for gambling is so great in England that even in wedding notices it is necessary to state that there are "no cards," in order to put a check upon the national tendency to gamble on all occasions.