

turers this is only reasonable, as it simply gives them a fair opportunity to compete in the foreign market with the products of other countries which, like England, have a free-trade policy, or like the United States, admit raw material for manufacture free. But from the point of view of the Canadian consumer it is simply a decree that he shall be compelled to pay a certain percentage more for every manufactured article he purchases than we would have to pay for the same article if he lived in some other country. From the point of view of the Canadian tax-payer it means that he is to be compelled to pay a certain percentage more of yearly taxation in order that the manufacturer may be enabled to sell his products more cheaply to a foreigner than to said tax-payer. Thus in both ways one is sharply fined by his own Government for the crime of being a Canadian, or rather for continuing to live in Canada. Is it not also a further anomaly that in a country which lays so much stress as Canada has done in the past on the right of popular self-government and financial control, the Cabinet Ministers can, by a simple vote in Council, take indefinite sums of money from the national treasury and hand them over, for no value received (directly at least) by the country, to a few individuals engaged in certain lines of business! Of course the representatives of the people have given the Ministers this power. That makes it still stranger.

Contrary to the forecast telegraphed over ocean, Lord Salisbury, in his reply to Lord Rosebery's denunciation of the Lords, did not, so far as appears, offer any counter proposal in the shape of a method for the reform of that body. His failure to do so is explained on the very reasonable ground of want of time to consult with other Conservative leaders, before making so important an announcement. Meanwhile it is most significant that nearly all the newspapers and correspondents admit the imperative necessity of some such announcement, in order to enable the party to withstand the strength of the popular tide. With strange inconsistency, those who have all along sturdily maintained that in throwing out the Home-Rule and other Radical bills the Peers really represented the sentiment of the majority of the English people, now cry out that the Conservative leaders must lose no time in promulgating a scheme for popularizing the Upper Chamber by means of a large admixture of the elective element. Even Mr. Smalley, the steadfast advocate of the view above stated, cables to the *New York Tribune* that "there ought to be reform," that "the hereditary principle is vicious," that the present constitution of the Upper House is defective and dangerous, and that it must be reformed if it is to sur-

vive. And yet, is it not in virtue of that hereditary and irresponsible principle that the Upper House has been able to check the Radicalism of the Commons, and so carry out the will of the majority and save the nation from disruption? Destroy or overweight that irresponsible element by an elective one and what reason is there to suppose that the electoral body will be less radical in the Upper House than in the Lower? It is hard to understand the argument.

In addition to the usual election of state and municipal officers the people of New York State have to vote this fall on an amended constitution submitted for their consideration by a Constitutional Convention held last summer. The proposed amendments number no less than thirty-one, two of which are to be voted upon singly, the remaining twenty-nine in a group. The two amendments to be voted on singly are a canal amendment, allowing the issue of state bonds for the improvement of canals when a majority of the voters approve such issue, and an apportionment amendment, which provides, among other things, that neither New York nor Brooklyn shall ever have more than one-third, or the two combined more than one-half, of the members of the legislature. We have not room even to enumerate the other twenty-nine proposed amendments. Some of them are, however, of great importance, *e. g.*, the prohibition of riders on appropriation bills, and of the giving of passes to public officers; the prohibition of public gambling in any form; the requirement of ninety days' citizenship, instead of ten, as a prerequisite to the use of the franchise; the prohibition of appropriations of public money to sectarian schools; the simplification of the judiciary system, with a view to prevent the delays inseparable from the existing system, etc. The amendment which evokes the most opposition from many of the better class of papers, is that prohibiting the employment of prison labour, except on work for the State. This would, it is averred, result in keeping most of the nine thousand prisoners of the State in enforced idleness, with all its attendant evils. This is a concession to a short-sighted labour policy which would be not only prolific of evil, but contrary to the most enlightened economical and ethical science of the age.

The death of Alexander III, of Russia, has called forth a strain of eulogy which has spread with electric speed, and with but here and there a note of discord, over the two hemispheres. The difficulty in estimating the real merits or demerits of such a man arises chiefly from the difficulty in deciding what place should be given to early training in determining

character and what allowance made for lifelong environment. Measured by any lofty standard of righteousness, the autocrat who could turn a deaf ear to every appeal of the millions under his sway for even a modicum of personal and constitutional freedom; who could send his subjects by tens of thousands to a living death in the wilds of Siberia, on the merest suspicion of disaffection towards his government or disloyalty to his person; who, though a man of ability and culture, could spend his life within sight and hearing of all the great nations of Europe, in every one of which, save his own, the people enjoy to a greater or less extent the blessings of freedom and self government; and who, utterly unaffected by all these influences and by the teachings of history, experience and religion, could refuse to lighten, by the weight of a hair, the intolerable burdens under which those whom he called his people are groaning—measured by such a standard, it is hard to recognize whatever of good there may have been even in him, or to regard him otherwise than as a monster of iniquity. On the other hand there seems no reason to doubt that in his home, and in his relations to those about him who had his confidence, he shows himself possessed of many estimable qualities and domestic virtues. It will always be to his lasting honour that, while for many years he held the peace of Europe and the world in his keeping, his influence has been uniformly on the side of peace. This simply means that when he might have made of all Europe a slaughter-house, with some hope of extension of his own possessions, he refused to do so. The question then is, who of us, with his antecedents, in his circumstances, taught from earliest childhood to believe in his own divine right to rule with absolute authority over the bodies and the souls of the millions under his way, would have done better?

It is doubtful whether history can furnish a case in which greater power for good or evil has been placed in the hands of a single person than that which has now fallen to the young man who is just commencing his career as Czar of Russia. It is not wonderful, under the circumstances, that so little should be certainly known touching the character and views of Nicholas. Rumour ascribes to him a singular lack of kingly ambition, and a strong tendency towards liberalism. But even were these statements known to rest on a reliable foundation, it would be very unwise to rely upon the predilections and enthusiasms of youth, in such a case. The child may be father to the man, but it by no means follows that the heir apparent is father to the absolute emperor. The possession of irresponsible and unlimited power would be a terrible test of the theories and purposes of any man. The