

The mythical St. George, who is supposed to have killed a dragon to the saving of a most beautiful Princess once upon a time, and to have done some other truly wonderful things which caused him to be elected as Patron Saint of England, will have his day of celebration on Friday next; and on the same day we specially rejoice that Shakespeare was born into the world. I am glad to see that some Montreal professional and amateur artists intend to give an entertainment altogether Shakespearean, in Nordheimer's Hall, in the evening of that day. Madame Vincent and Mr. Neil Warner have secured good help, and the programme is attractive. As the celebration of St. George's day bears in the direction of charity for the English poor, and the birthday of Shakespeare is to be taken advantage of to present some of the great dramatist's greatest pieces in prose and poetry before the people, I think both should draw largely.

I can hardly imagine anything more harebrained and foolish than this projected trip of fifteen Canadian cricketers to England. What can they hope to do there against the English teams? Daft and his men had child's play here against any twenty-two that could be got together, but the fifteen propose to meet even better teams than Daft's, and that on equal terms. It is not even in the way of criticism to say that Canada cannot possibly produce good cricketers, as it is understood in England. The winter is too long and the summer is too hot for that. During six months of the year play is impossible, and during three months more the ground is baked so hard that good bowling is out of the question. If skaters, or curlers, or lacrosse players were going over there would be some sense in the movement, but our cricketers can only hope at the best to get mildly laughed at.

One feature in the English elections has been very prominent, the preponderance of oratory on the Liberal side. Mr. Gladstone was amazing in the display of what marvellous power lies in speech, and it is hardly too much to say that it seems to have cowed the Conservative party and struck the Earl of Beaconsfield dumb. While the Great William was filling the ears and mind, and capturing the judgments of the people, the Prime Minister, who was wont to be so brilliant when occasion demanded, was comparatively silent. With the exception of a feeble speech or two in the House of Lords, and that worse than feeble manifesto sent to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on the eve of dissolution, no effort was made to meet the many and important charges brought against his policy by Mr. Gladstone. What was the cause of that reticence? Was the Earl relying upon the continued prevalence of Jingoism? or did he feel that much speech would only call more attention to the weakness of his policy? Probably both brought some influence to bear upon him. Since his elevation to the sacred place of the aristocracy he has failed to keep himself *en rapport* with public opinion, and because *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* spoke in rapturous language of his wisdom and strength, he was deluded into the belief of personal and party security.

But besides and beyond Mr. Gladstone, the Liberal oratory has been of an exceptionally high order. Mr. Bright has spoken again with that earnest and commanding eloquence which used to amaze the House of Commons and convert the country. Lord Hartington has more than maintained his reputation for sound common sense, and has surprised even his friends by the force of his electioneering speeches. Mr. Forster spoke with all his old straightforwardness, and a good deal of newly got polish. Mr. Lowe was a little less brilliant, and very much less bitter, so that on the whole there was a clear gain on the side of improvement. After the great lights are passed the lesser lights may be spoken of in the same manner. Judging from newspaper reports to hand, it is plain that in the matter of speaking, the Liberals have improved upon themselves, and left their opponents literally nowhere.

Did the cause they had to vindicate lend force and charm to their words? Doubtless. No unprejudiced reader of their speeches can fail to be struck with the intense moral earnestness which characterised the speakers. It was more than a bid for office; it had the ring of honest deep conviction; it was a plea for national honour; it was a protest against immorality under the name of "interest;" it was an

argument for justice in the name of right, and once more the great British public, true to its truest instincts, responded in a magnificent declaration for morality.

The Liberal Cabinet should be a strong one and do some good work. Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, Lord Granville, Lord Derby, the Duke of Argyle, Mr. Forster, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Goschen; these are strong men, all of them, and with Mr. Gladstone as Premier and Chancellor of the Exchequer, the country would have one of the most powerful governments it has had for a quarter of a century.

Lord Lytton will probably resign the Viceroyalty of India when the Conservative Government goes out of office, and it is just as likely that Mr. Layard will find it necessary to rest awhile after his spell of hard work for his beloved Turk. In one aspect of it those retirements are good—for both Lord Lytton and Mr. Layard have thoroughly identified themselves with the Conservative policy. Lord Lytton went out to India with the understanding that if the chance should occur to pick a quarrel with the Afghans he would embrace it at once, and if it did not come about by fair means it was to be brought about by foul means. He succeeded only too well. Mr. Layard sided with the Turks against Russia, and did all a vigorous man in such a position could do to involve England in a war with Russia; he ventured to encourage the Turks to expect material help in money, if not in men, from England, and wrote home despatches which were often fierce diatribes against Russia. But it is to be earnestly hoped that these two cases will be regarded as exceptional, for it will be a sad thing for Great Britain when the civil service is at the mercy of ever-changing parties. Hitherto our Imperial politicians have kept themselves at a great distance from such degradation, and they will have to be careful now that a necessity is not erected in a precedent.

Prince Gortschakoff is dying. It is of a broken heart, they say, but that same heart has held together for a long time and through many disappointments. For twenty-four years first Minister of Russia, and ruling according to his own autocratic notions, the late troubles in Russia must have caused him profound sadness. The rule of the people was what he could not understand, and the attempt to reduce the Czar to the position of a good servant pressed upon him heavily. Throughout all Europe the old *regime* is passing away. A revolution is taking place, very quietly, but very surely.

This from the *World* is cheering, as manifesting the British public will be able to have meat cheaper than they can now get it:—"The success which has attended the importation of meat from Australia has naturally given great comfort to the colonists. The success of the experiment tried by the Strathleven was conspicuous, and we can ourselves bear testimony to the excellence of the mutton after it had been out of the refrigerators more than a week. If this result could be attained in one cargo of meat, why should it not be attained in any number? That is what our Australian friends are asking themselves, and are conjuring up bright visions of future untold wealth coming to them as the consequence of the development of this new branch of trade. These anticipations may be exaggerated, but they have a solid basis to rest upon. Already steps have been taken here to form a joint-stock company with a sufficient capital to develop the trade on a large scale. Although Australia is a good way farther off than America, the meat is produced more cheaply in the former country, and the cost of freight ought not to counterbalance the advantage thus gained. If, as we are told, thoroughly good beef can be had for 2d. per lb., and the costs of transport are covered by other 2d., what is to prevent the meat being sold at 6d.? If the butchers are allowed to get hold of it, they will buy up all the supplies that enter the market, and sell it again as fresh home-meat at their own exorbitant prices. This should be prevented—as it might—by establishing special depots for its sale, and thereby competing actively with the butchers, who would then be forced to reduce their charges. If the enterprise is well managed it will be a mighty boon, both for England and her great colony, by opening up a new source of food-supply to our consumers, and by stimulating other enterprises among the colonists, supported by the proceeds of their sales of meat. Thus enterprise keeps widening out. Yet a wise continental economist, during the days of our business depression, wrote page upon page to prove that the world's enterprise was exhausted, and that our 'definitive crisis,' as he called it, was final!"

EDITOR.