

locked up in the stony breast of the Sphinx? Of extra-parliamentary utterances there has been abundance. Sir Wm. Harcourt has completed what has happily been termed his Oxford "trilogy" of melodramatic speeches. In the last, success was mainly achieved by rhetorical blue-fire. Comparing the Premier to Hannibal, and himself to Fabius Cunctator, "who saved his country by delaying," he warns the Liberal party against the example. Varro, who was driven to defeat at Cannæ—Varro cannot be identified with certainty, but it must be either Gladstone, Bright or Leatham. Sir William is a very brilliant man in his way, but, like Polonius, he uses too much art, and will never succeed in securing popular favour, charm he never so wisely. People admired the impetuosity of the late Lord Derby, the tedious Whiggery of Lord John Russell, and went into ecstasies over the *bonhomie* of Lord Palmerston. They can still admire the fervid earnestness of Gladstone, and the plain and manly straightforwardness of Bright. Even Mr. Disraeli's government by conundrums is not distasteful, because it sets the nation guessing and "giving it up," until people are amused and satisfied with themselves and their entertainer. Sir William arouses no feeling of pleasure or enthusiasm in any one, and may as well be counted out of the running. The appointment of Lord Lytton as Viceroy of India may be incidentally mentioned as the Premier's latest "change of programme" in that series of sleight-of-hand entertainments for which, in showman language, he is justly celebrated.

It is difficult to give any exact account of how matters stand in France; yet it may be safely affirmed that the Left have had the best of it in the last Senatorial elections, as they had in the former ones. The only thing certain is that the Republic will be firmly established, so far as the Second

Chamber is concerned. What ulterior dissensions, intrigues and negotiations may do it is impossible to say, but this is a most important fact to begin with. Should the electorate follow suit and choose a Republican Assembly, thoroughly committed to an earnest support of the Constitution as it is, the existing state of things may last until 1880 at all events. The new Chamber, if in accord with the Senate majority, will not be speedily dissolved, because the President cannot turn the former out of doors without the consent of the latter. We shall see how the new machinery works in a month or so.

From Eastern Europe the news continues to be exciting and by no means reassuring. The Montenegrins have been threatened by the Porte, and are said to have been assured of support from Russia if they will bide their time. Servia threatens to send Prince Milan about his business because he does not directly espouse the insurgent cause, and it is said that Crete is again in commotion. The news from Herzegovina is so conflicting that one does not know what to believe. The Cretans are evidently not the only liars at present under the Sultan's rule; and one thing only seems clear, and that is that the insurrection is not only obstinate, but hydra-headed. Meanwhile Count Andrassy's circular has obtained a more or less emphatic approval from the Powers, and, if we may trust the telegrams, almost as emphatic rejection from the Grand Vizier. What service it can be of to the Slavs, even if accepted by the Porte, it is difficult to see. The Sultan could not carry out the proposed reforms if he would, and would not if he could. Perhaps, after all, the object is to amuse all parties until the opening of spring, and then the Count's master will probably make a more intelligible and decisive move.