

which have elicited from that great organ of public opinion no fewer than six editorials, and which have done so much to make Canada truly known to the British people. The estimate in which Mr. Parkin has been held may be judged by the fact that he has been offered by both of the great parties a sure seat in the House of Commons; and that chiefly on the ground that his Colonial knowledge would be useful in Parliament, and that he would thereby have a better platform from which to preach the importance of the unity of the Empire throughout the United Kingdom. He has refused the offers, because he and his friends believe that his becoming a party man would interfere with the cause to which he has devoted himself and which is higher than party. Such devotion is indeed rare and will be appreciated by all who admire disinterested patriotism. But the fact that such offers have been made, are not merely tributes to Mr. Parkin's rare powers of speech. They are significant of the trend of public thought in the Old Land. It is now being seen that the problem of Imperial Unity must be solved, and that it can be solved only by practical measures, though in accordance with the genius of our race these will have to be taken one at a time. A still more significant proof of the trend of thought is the approaching Conference of statesmen from South Africa and Australasia in the heart of North America, all meeting as fellow-citizens and brought together by a common sentiment for the flag that represents to them so much. Mr. Parkin ought to be at that Conference and we trust he may be.

A smart cable correspondent waxes sarcastic at the expense of the British "Nonconformist conscience," which is just now disturbed over the prominence of Lord Rosebery as a patron of the turf. There may or there may not be, reason for dissatisfaction on moral grounds, when the Prime Minister of Great Britain wins renown as a winner in the Derby, but there should be no doubt in the mind of anyone who knows what he is talking about, as to the honesty and sincerity of the average Nonconformist, in protesting against the example thus set before the youth of England, as demoralizing and pernicious. Nor do we know any reason for the assumption that this view is confined to Nonconformist circles. Many of the clergy and laity of the Established Church have been very active in the anti-gambling crusade which finds so deplorably wide a field for its operations in the Mother Country. But our present point of view is the political. To many middle-class Englishmen, and Scotchmen and Irishmen, too, the contrast between the tastes and pursuits of the old Premier and the new, as seen in their recreations, is striking. To some it is no doubt even painful. This may be, as above intimated, the result of their narrowness of view, but neither the term "hypocritical" nor

the term "puritanical" applied to them or their views will alter the fact that they constitute a very powerful element in British politics, and were one of the main sources of Gladstone's strength. There can be no doubt that the moral convictions of a religious people form, other things being equal, a much more potent and reliable source of strength in politics than the self-interested support of the publicans, or any other class who make no pretensions to disinterested or altruistic motives. Just to what extent the race-course can fairly be held responsible, as a contributing cause for the gambling propensity, which is generally regarded as one of the worst vices of the day in England, is a question on which there is much room for difference of opinion. But that Lord Rosebery, by reason both of his opportunism in politics, and his flippancy in the discussion of what so many regard as serious moral questions, is in danger of losing the prestige without which no one can long remain a leader of the great Liberal party of Great Britain, seems too plain to admit of doubt.

The right of a court to punish for constructive contempt, and the right of Parliament to discuss the verdict of a court, or the character and actions of a judge, not under impeachment, were two of the questions involved in the discussion called forth by Mr. Davies' resolution touching the Ellis case, in the Commons last week. From the point of view of law and practice, it is pretty clear that Sir John Thompson and his supporters had the best of the argument, in regard to the first question. Under existing laws it can scarcely be doubted that the Supreme Court of New Brunswick was within its right in punishing Mr. Ellis for having imputed corrupt motives to one of the judges. At the same time, the conviction left upon most minds will probably be that both the law and the procedure which make it possible that a judge may answer a bold and specific charge of gross personal misconduct or corruption by having the accuser fined and imprisoned for contempt of court, is unsatisfactory in the extreme. If the accusation was unfounded, it is a sad miscarriage of justice that the reputation of the judge was not vindicated before an impartial tribunal, and that many persons may consequently continue to believe him guilty. Assuming, on the other hand, for argument's sake, that the charge was true, and that the accused sought opportunity to establish it in a court of justice, everyone must feel that the guilty has escaped and an innocent man, whose act was deserving of praise rather than blame, has been punished. It may be proper to add that while this hypothetical argument applies to both the judges who were aspersed by Mr. Ellis, the reference is mainly to the one who has since retired from the bench. As to the right of Parliament to discuss the matter, the answer

is surely found in the discussion itself, unless the court in question act on the Premier's opinion and institute proceedings for contempt against the Commons. To the lay mind, the proposition that the people's representatives may criticise either the characters or the doings of any body which they have created, sounds very much like an axiom. On the whole the results will, probably, be that the power of a court to punish summarily for contempt, for an action not committed in actual session, will speedily fall into disuse, even if the statute in that behalf be not amended, and that a case like that which was the origin of the whole trouble will scarcely occur again.

We have more than once had occasion to call attention to the grand purpose and work of the Montreal Volunteer Electoral League. The current number of the *Canadian Magazine* has an excellent article by Herbert B. Ames, the President of the League, describing the origin, growth, and mode of operation of this organization, which, as our readers know, did yeoman service at the late municipal elections in Montreal. With the result of the League's efforts in this election our readers are, no doubt, to some extent aware. By thorough organization and systematic work, the League was able to purge the voters' lists of hundreds of names which had no right there and were largely used for fraudulent purposes; to secure the nomination of good candidates; to effect the identification of numerous personators and no doubt to prevent hundreds of attempts at personation which would otherwise have been made; in a word, to bring about the purest election and the return of the largest number of upright councillors, recorded in the modern history of the civic affairs of that city. A detailed account of the work done in what was recognized as one of the most corrupt wards of the city is given by way of illustration. Much hard, honest, persevering work was required, but as a result, "a comparatively young and unknown man, for whom little could as yet be claimed beyond an honourable name, a clean character, and moderate ability," was elected by a majority of 655 over the ward's old representative, a ward politician of the most unscrupulous kind, who had been returned so often by an interested and powerful clique that the ward had come to be recognized as a kind of pocket borough. The article is well-written, and as suggestive as it is readable. One can hardly read it without being convinced of the truth of the view which seems to have been tacitly adopted as the working principle of the League, viz., that "in nearly every civic community the good element plus the indifferent outnumber the bad." It also shows with what effect the "machine" itself, in honest hands, may be made an effective agency in promoting pure elections and good government.

Speaking of personation as a favourite method of electoral fraud, one is reminded of the strange affidavit which has lately