

franchise they will faithfully endeavour to give effect to the views set forth in the resolutions adopted, shows how the political creeds of many, unsettled by the agitation, are crystallizing into new forms under the influence of the new forces which are at work. Whatever may be the final outcome it can hardly fail to be interesting and important.

IF it may be accepted as an axiom or an established canon in ethics and sociology that the bestowment of a given faculty or power is an indication that nature designed it to be used and cultivated, woman's new-born activity in public affairs needs no other warrant. The first Conservative authority in Great Britain has lately paid a high tribute to the capacity of the women of England for politics, in the naive confession that the Government and party of which he is leader hold office by favour of the Primrose League. The leaders of the Opposition are bearing still more unequivocal witness to their belief in the potency of the same influence by their active exertions to secure, if possible, an equally effective organization of female auxiliaries on the Liberal side. Reasoning on similar principles the most inveterate objector to woman's appearance on the public platform would probably have been forced to yield his convictions or prejudices had he attended the meetings held by the Canadian branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in this city last week, and come under the spell of female eloquence as there displayed. To select a single instance, exceptional only in degree, not in kind, no competent critic among the thousands of both sexes who listened night after night, for nearly two hours at a time, to the glowing eloquence of Miss Willard, however he might differ from her views and conclusions, could deny her right to a place in the foremost rank of living orators. Her voice has too marked a tendency towards the American nasal twang to be altogether pleasant, but in the qualities of unhesitating fluency, unflinching good taste, powerful, refined and often elegant diction, and clear logical directness, as well as in the power to enliven with apt illustration and pierce with thrusts of quiet but effective sarcasm, she has certainly not many superiors even among the best orators of the other sex. In presence of the evident singleness of purpose of most of the ladies who take part in these meetings, and in the absence of anything suggestive either of the mannishness and loss of the feminine graces, or of the hysterical impulsiveness and gush which some of us were prepared to expect, it may as well be frankly admitted that the new movement is justifying itself, and that woman's enthusiasm in matters of politics and morals is likely to prove as permanent as it is confessedly powerful.

TURNING from the form to the substance of the addresses of Miss Willard and her associates, it may be said that their arguments are neither less nor more cogent than those of the best of the prohibition advocates of the other sex. That the evils and miseries wrought by intemperance are incalculable, and that some remedy more potent than any which has as yet been found is greatly needed, all must admit. It is with regard to the nature of this remedy and the mode of its application that differences of opinion arise. The orthodox prohibitionist takes the short cut. Alcoholic drinks of all kinds are poisons, more or less slow, but always sure in their operation. They are destructive physically as well as intellectually and morally. Their effects are evil, only evil, and that continually. The duty of society, of the people, the State, the Government is therefore clear. Let the axe be laid at the root of the tree. Stop the use, the sale, the production of the cause, and the cure is assured. What Miss Willard and other enthusiasts of her class fail or refuse to see is that there is another side to the question. They forget that to a very large, intelligent, and respectable class of the community the commodities in question are an article of daily diet, regarded by them as not only harmless, but beneficial, and almost indispensable to comfort and health. These notions may be all wrong. Those who hold them may be under a mischievous delusion. But none the less will they regard sudden prohibition as an arbitrary and monstrous trespass upon their personal rights. Where such citizens are in the majority prohibition is of course impossible. Where they are in the minority they constitute, in most cases, too powerful a minority to be dealt with in so summary a fashion. Those who choose, as multitudes of high-minded abstainers do undoubtedly choose, to adopt Paul's principle and deny themselves of that which they regard as harmless or useful to themselves, for the sake of multitudes of weak ones to

whom it becomes a snare and a curse, are worthy of the highest honour. But have they any right, moral or political, to try to compel others, who do not see their duty in the same light, to take this lofty ground? This is, it seems to us, at present the crucial question for advocates of prohibition, and it is a question which unfortunately they, for the most part, seem disposed to evade or ignore.

REVERTING for a moment to the consideration of the place of women in public movements of a social or political character, the question arises as to whether nature has set any definite boundary to the sphere within which the sex may properly operate in these directions. This question is brought just now to public attention in a very significant manner. A number of English ladies of high social position, intelligence and influence, have issued an "Appeal against Female Suffrage," in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. The appeal is ladylike in tone and does not lack cogency in argument. The first and probably most effective plea is based upon the physical unfitness of women to take part directly in the more arduous duties of the State. These ladies argue that the State administration in its commercial and military aspects rests, in the last analysis, upon force, and that as men, not women, must be relied upon to supply this force, so the former, not the latter, ought to have the power of deciding directly upon all questions involving its possible application. This argument certainly has some weight, though it seems open to the retort, which the advocates of female suffrage will, we dare say, not be slow to make, that, as a matter of fact, the legislators and members of the Executive who in modern times decide questions of peace and war, do not often supply in themselves any portion of the physical force employed to carry out their decisions. The "Appeal" thus falls back from the high grounds of *right* upon the more familiar arguments deduced from the effects the use of the political franchise would have on family life and woman's relations thereto. Practical difficulties, both numerous and formidable, are also forcibly presented. The conclusion which these representative and thoughtful British women seemed to have reached is that in the moral and social spheres, and in such semi-public positions as those of members of School Boards, Boards of Guardians, etc., woman has abundant opportunities of usefulness, but that in these the limit of her proper aspirations in such directions is reached. There is undoubted force in these contentions, though they suggest the obvious criticism that objections no less strenuous would, not many years ago, have been urged against woman's claim to the municipal franchise and election to municipal offices. The reply of the female suffragists will now be in order and we may be pretty sure will not be long in forthcoming.

DURING the past week or two there have been multiplying signs that the inevitable European struggle may be near at hand. If it be true that Russia has officially proposed to form a military convention with Servia, and that the latter is likely to enter into it with alacrity, the *casus belli* would seem to have presented itself. Austria has on many occasions made it pretty clear that she will not remain a passive spectator of any alliance which would have the effect of strengthening Russian influence at Belgrade, or in any of the Balkan principalities. On the other hand, Germany's unwonted sternness with Switzerland in the matter of the police spy, and the reported demand that the little Republic shall cease to furnish an asylum to political refugees, looks very much as if Bismarck were preparing for eventualities in another direction, in a manner which bodes no good for the independency of the little States which intervene between the great Empire and its inveterate foe on the West. After so many false alarms it would be worse than idle to indulge in any predictions, but, on the other hand, it requires no special prescience to foresee that it is impossible for the present state of affairs to continue much longer. The mere financial strain of keeping so many myriads of armed men in unproductive idleness, while the fabulously expensive implements of modern warfare are being constantly multiplied, is greater than the resources of either of the Powers can bear. Russia, in particular, must be coming near the limit of her borrowing capacity, especially if the German money market is to be closed against her, and Russia holds the key of the situation and will, there is little doubt, make the first move. If it be true, as reported, that she is making peremptory demands upon Turkey for the accomplishment of certain reforms

promised but hitherto neglected in Turkish fashion, the fact affords another indication that the Muscovite autocrat is now arranging preliminaries.

THERE is, perhaps, no historical myth more constantly repeated by Anglophobists in the United States, or more credulously accepted by many of their hearers, than the statement that at one period during the great Civil War the British Cabinet, led by Lord Palmerston, seriously entertained the idea of recognizing the Southern States. This myth is, it appears, embodied in a recent work entitled "Twenty-eight Years in Wall Street," by Mr. Henry Clews, of New York. A copy of the work which was sent to Mr. Gladstone has called forth from him some favourable comments on other portions of the book; but an emphatic assurance, in reference to the statement in question, that the Cabinet never, at any time, dealt with the subject of recognizing the Southern States "excepting when it learned the proposition of Emperor Napoleon III. and declined to entertain that proposition without qualification, hesitation, delay or dissent." As almost the sole surviving member of the Cabinet in question, and the one who acted as its spokesman on the occasion, Mr. Gladstone's denial is explicit, emphatic and conclusive. It will be accepted by all fair-minded Americans as the end of controversy in the matter, and will act, it may be hoped, as a healing balm for the old sore.

THE American International Conference, which is to meet in Washington in October, is likely to be very successful, so far, at least, as numbers are concerned. Mexico, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chili, the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela have already signified to the State Department of the United States their acceptance of the invitation. It is expected that the Conference will be composed of about forty delegates, ten of whom will represent the United States, and that the meetings will be continued for several weeks. The great object of the Conference, as described by an American exchange "is to compare views in respect to questions and measures of common interest to these American nations, and make such recommendations as in the judgment of the Conference are adapted to promote this interest. No treaty powers, or powers of any description beyond those of consultation and advice, are vested in the delegates to this Conference. One of the important questions which the Conference will consider is that of arbitration for the settlement of international difficulties without a resort to war; and it is earnestly to be hoped that a uniform system to this effect will be proposed, and that thereafter the respective nations represented will give to it a binding character by treaty stipulations. Commercial questions affecting the interests of trade will also be considered, and recommendations made accordingly." The progress of the Conference will be watched with great interest from this direction, and if it shall succeed in accomplishing any one of the great objects contemplated, or even in making progress in that direction, Canadians may well regret that they have no part in deliberations which may have a most potent bearing upon the future of their continent. The Conference being merely for consultation and without enacting power, it is not easy to see any good reason why the Dominion might not have been authorized to take a part in it.

MEXICO has not generally been supposed to be in advance of other modern States, either in the quality of political sagacity or in the higher endowment of a sense of justice. In her recently formed treaty with Japan she has, however, earned the honour of being foremost in both these respects. She has been the first to forego the oppressive and humiliating restrictions to which Japan is subjected by foreign nations. Under this Treaty the annoying consular jurisdiction is definitely renounced, and the Japanese tariff regulations are freed from the intolerable interference to which they are subjected by other treaty Powers. From this act of enlightened justice Mexican commerce is likely to reap a large reward. Mexicans alone, of all Western peoples, are henceforth to be permitted to travel without restriction in all parts of the country; to reside and establish themselves as traders anywhere in the interior, instead of being confined as they have heretofore been, and as other foreigners still are, to the coasts; to possess land; to form business partnerships with native capitalists, and to engage in enterprises from which people of other nations are still debarred. The American and, no doubt, the English, will watch develop-