

delivered in New York City a couple of weeks since, on the Place of Independence in Politics, contained some home truths which could be profitably meditated upon by Canadians, as well as by his own countrymen. Mr. Lowell does not condemn political parties as such, but regards them as necessary adjuncts of popular government. The chief strength of his criticism is directed, in a manner worthy of the author of the *Biglow Papers*, to the moral aspects of the question, and against the intrigue, chicanery, and the other forms of corrupt influence which now, by confession of all parties, play so large a part in the politics of the Union. While he admires the "splendid complacency" of his countrymen, and even finds "something exhilarating and inspiring in it," he deplors the lack of "leaders in statesmanship." "An adequate amount of small change will give us the equivalent of the largest piece of money, but what aggregate of little men will amount to a single great one, that most precious coinage of the mint of nature?" Mr. Lowell does not think the nation has lost the power of bringing forth great men, but he evidently thinks there is a deplorable lack of such at the present moment. He emphasizes the necessity for frank and fearless discussion of public questions, and this duty can be done, he avers, "only by men dissociated from the interests of party. The Independents have undertaken it, and with God's help will carry it through. A moral purpose multiplies us by ten, as it multiplied the early Abolitionists. They emancipated the negro, and we mean to emancipate the respectable white man." Mr. Lowell's brave and honest words are most timely, and may hereafter win the recognition and gratitude of many who now denounce their author as un-American. He is anything but that. His admirable and memorable speech at Birmingham four years ago stamped him as an American of the very highest type.

REPORTS from Sofia indicate that the Bulgarian Government continues its armaments. The work of fortification at Varna, Bourgas, and other points on the Turkish frontier is being pushed forward with great vigour, and ammunition is being distributed throughout the country. Replying to a statement in the *Tirnovska Constitutia*, the organ of M. Karaveloff, to the effect that the day will come when the difficulty will have to be settled by an appeal either to Russia, or to Austria, and that, meanwhile, "it would be dangerous for any patriotic Bulgarian to take his stand outside of the Berlin Treaty, according to which Treaty Prince Ferdinand is simply a usurper," the *Svoboda*, the organ of the Bulgarian Government, replies defiantly that Prince Ferdinand will hold his own in Bulgaria, in spite of all attacks, and independently of Austria, as well as of Russia. It says, moreover, that Prince Ferdinand is fully persuaded that his election will eventually be sanctioned by the Great Powers. Thus it would seem that all the elements of danger in connection with the Bulgarian situation are still active, and an eruption may occur at almost any moment.

"How much longer?" is the touching question which the dying Emperor of Germany is said to have put to his physicians, after a paroxysm of difficult breathing, the other day. The incident, like so many others that obtain currency, may not have occurred, but there can be no doubt that the Emperor's struggle with the disease that is gradually sapping his life is a brave and manly one. The change he has caused to be made in the expression used in the public prayers on his behalf from "His Majesty Emperor Frederick," to "Thy Servant, Frederick, the Emperor," though trifling in itself, indicates sterling good sense as well as a pleasing humility. It would now seem that a large part of the sensational stories about the alleged struggle for supremacy between the Empress and Prince Bismarck is apocryphal, and that there is no misunderstanding between the two sufficient to prevent frequent and cordial consultations during the sad crisis through which the Empire is passing. It is very likely that the German people are not superior to national jealousies, and that these may, under the present circumstances, be directed against the Empress and the English, but it seems highly improbable that these feelings have reached anything like the acute stage represented in the press despatches. The Germans are not a wealthy people, and may not unnaturally dislike the idea of provision being made for the support of the English Empress, on the magnificent scale to which the members of the Royal household to which she belongs are accustomed. But the Germans are too well accustomed to bearing heavy burdens at the dictate of Royalty to be likely to revolt at the comparatively small one thus forced upon them.

SOME remarks on the state of affairs in France would seem to belong appropriately to an outlook over the history of the past week, but nothing short of an inspiration, utterly independent of current events, could enable

one to prophesy with the least assurance what a day may bring forth in Paris. Mr. Lowell, in the course of the speech referred to in another paragraph, took occasion to say that the French, like his own people, "have gone into the manufacture of small politicians." The history of a day's proceedings in the French Chamber affords a striking illustration of the aptness of the criticism. Almost in the same breath that august body seems to have declared its confidence in M. Floquet's Ministry, and decided in favour of an immediate revision of the Constitution, which Premier Floquet, on behalf of the Ministry, had just declared to be inexpedient. In an Anglo-Saxon nation the fact that M. Boulanger has gone into the duelling, and his followers into the rioting, business would be deemed sufficient to discredit him as a leader, and prove him the charlatan which he protests so warmly he is not. M. Boulanger is said to have informed the correspondent of a New York paper that his policy was to remodel French republican institutions after the American pattern, whereas they were now built on "the hybrid English model which is wholly unsuited to the French character." But there seems too much reason to doubt whether M. Boulanger knows enough about the American political system to be entitled to pronounce upon its adaptability to the genius of his countrymen, or the French people have the stability of character necessary to the permanent and successful adoption of either British or American methods.

THE REMEDY FOR INTEMPERANCE.

It may be questioned whether the present is an age of faith, but there can be no doubt that in morals it excels all its predecessors. War is still waged, but it comes at longer intervals and much is done to soften its horrors: extreme poverty is not unknown, but it rarely fails to meet alleviation: the relations of the sexes are better regulated, and woman placed on a higher plane than she has ever before attained: pestilence no longer claims its millions of victims, and the intemperate use of strong drink is more and more condemned by the world at large. In regard to the last named, however, more controversy has arisen than on any other question of a like kind. It has always been and is still alleged that alcoholic drinks are useful when used in moderation, and on the other hand it has been as strongly repeated that they are not only useless but actually hurtful save in so small a number of cases as to be unworthy of consideration, and that consequently their manufacture and sale should be suppressed by the infliction of fines and imprisonment; and the quarrel is not yet settled even in the most moral and religious communities.

There are some points of the drinking question, however, which are settled. Nobody defends the wage earner who spends a large part of his income on drink, beats his wife and children, and reduces them to poverty. Nobody defends the richer man who resorts to a bar-room six or more times a day, treats and is treated, and though possibly sober—for there are men incapable of becoming drunk—yet spends money which ought to go towards the advancement of his family, and keeps himself in a state of bibulous excitement injurious to his health and to whatever intellect God has given him. Nobody now defends the man who drinks his bottle of port at dinner, as was the custom of the fathers, or partakes of five or more kinds of wine at one sitting. Even in England where the climate renders liquor less noxious than in our exciting North American atmosphere, heavy drinking and the mixture of liquors has gone out of fashion. No one defends the farmer who takes his jar of whiskey home from market and makes his solitary house, unobserved by neighbours, a hell upon earth. Nobody defends the young fellows who congregate about the roadside tavern, race horses, play cards, and drink till they are unable to make their way home. But there are still respectable citizens who love their kind and would fain do them good, who yet allege that they find benefit from a moderate quantity of stimulant, and question the propriety of asking them to abandon their glass of wine, spirits, or beer, in order to aid in putting down drunkenness.

When people speak of "Prohibition" in Canada, they do not mean that no alcohol is to be sold. Not in Maine nor Kansas is its use entirely forbidden. It is sold under restrictions more or less severe. The Canadian Scott Act permits the sale under a certificate. This gives the licensed M.D. and one or two other persons prominent in the community the power of determining who shall or who shall not drink intoxicants. There can be no doubt that the Act wherever introduced with the general consent of the community has produced beneficial results. But it is imperfect in its working; there is a strong desire to repeal it whenever the law permits, and in the meantime to render it inoperative. The abrogation of the Act in Halton, Bruce, Dufferin, Huron, Norfolk, Renfrew, Simcoe, Dundas,