

political agitation, the action of the social and economical forces can scarcely fail before many years are over to make an end of the hereditary House of Lords.

In the *Contemporary Review* Miss Emily Pfeiffer pleads elaborately for Female Suffrage. Amidst the biddings of the parties in England against each other for votes, it is not by any means unlikely that Female Suffrage may prevail. But Miss Pfeiffer seems before the end of her second page to have given her case away. The backwardness of women compared with men in the political race she ascribes to the burden of maternity. She may with equal truth trace to the same impediment their backwardness in war, in seamanship, in all those industries which entail severe and continuous exertion, or are attended with dangers. But does she see any reason for hoping that the burden of maternity will ever be laid down? Why then invite the sex to competition in walks of life or spheres of activity in which it must always be heavily weighted. Why give its aspirations a hopeless direction? Nature has assigned it a part in the social and domestic organism distinct from that of the male but perfectly coequal. Widows and spinsters Miss Pfeiffer says are the best representatives of their sex, because they are free. This is in the style of Mr. Mill, the prophet of the whole movement, who speaks of marriage as slavery, nay as the worst of all slaveries, inasmuch as the slave has no hope of a change of master, and who carried into effect his own doctrine by appropriating, though platonically, the affections of another man's wife. Of the double life, the writers of this school have no conception; nor have they any conception of love as an effectual safeguard against illusage apart from law. Is a mother unkind to her child because no statute forbids her? Does a polite host use his legal power of kicking his invited guests out of doors? If man is the immemorial oppressor of woman, how have women obtained the privileges which Miss Pfeiffer cannot deny that they possess and would be unwilling to resign? This suffrage, which man is accused of tyrannically withholding from his partner, how long and by what proportion of the male sex has it been enjoyed? Has it not, as well as all other powers, been exercised by the men for the benefit of their wives and children as well as for their own? Have not male legislatures obeyed the wishes, or what they imagined to be the wishes of the women? Have they not abolished the headship of the family, declared that in questions of inheritance the wife's most distant cousin is nearer to her than her husband while they declare the contrary where it is the woman's interest, and relaxed the Divorce Law till in the United States the family is seriously threatened with disintegration? Not only does Miss Pfeiffer accuse the ogre man of "riveting political bonds" upon his partner, and of making her "an outlaw"—an outlaw, it may be remarked against whom it is not easy, before a jury, to get justice—but she is inclined to lay upon him the blame of tight lacing and small shoes; though if she desires a unanimous declaration of the male sex against those modes of self-torture, she can have it without a political revolution. She desires us to mark the humanizing influence of woman in the past, and still more widely at the present day; we do mark it and rejoice in it while we note that it is independent of political power, and would perhaps have lost some of its efficacy had it been tainted with anything political. Political power, it cannot be too often noted, is neither the only sort of power nor the highest. But Miss Pfeiffer spurns the guardianship of affection. She wants "to have the weapons in her own hands." She and her sisters, if they follow her leading, may find that the weapon depends for its force on the strength of the hand, and that they have entered the political arena only to find themselves weaker men.

THE Cobden Club has reprinted Cobden's "Three Panics." In a literary point of view it could not have done better, for the pamphlet is a model of pamphleteering. The special object of the Club, no doubt, is to stop the navy panic, got up by the *Pall Mall Gazette* and to arrest the naval expenditure into which, under the influence of the panic, the nation is being hurried. It is very likely that a caution is in season. The panic was evidently a stroke of journalistic enterprise, and naval architecture is now in such a constant state of flux, owing to the rapid progress of invention, that if the navy were to be rebuilt in accordance with each new improvement no money would be left for anything else. But the position taken by Cobden with regard to war and military expenditure is unfortunately one to which it is impossible in the present state of the world to adhere. His confidence in the sovereign efficacy of commercial relations, under the Free Trade system, as a guarantee of peace, though not baseless, was exaggerated, and inspired counsels which, had they been followed by the nation, would have led not to peace but to war. He saw with an evil eye, if he did not actively oppose, the Volunteer movement, a movement purely defensive and in all its aspects, social and even sanitary as well as military, entirely

healthy. He failed to see in it the practical antidote to conscription. To propagate good-will and mutual confidence among the nations, to substitute rivalry in the arts of peace for rivalry in arms, to extend the jurisdiction of diplomacy and arbitration in settling international disputes, and thus to pave the way for the reduction of the bloated armaments with which Europe has been cursed and the earnings of the people have been devoured since the baleful era of Napoleon, are feasible as well as philanthropic objects for a statesman. But no nation can at present afford to disarm. Civilization cannot afford to disarm: it would become the defenceless prey of barbarism which no commercial influences touch and which knows no international law but conquest. The Chinese are purely industrial: they have no military profession, no sense of military honour, no sentiment by which a soldier can be sustained; they are the ideal community of Cobden and Herbert Spencer; and the consequence is that they are three hundred millions of sheep: a helpless prey, with all the fruits of their industry, to a few thousands of French wolves. Cobden was incensed because the English people would not place blind reliance in the pacific professions of a potentate who had proved himself the best of rulers and of men by consenting to a commercial treaty. Yet every fresh revelation of the character of the French Emperor and his gang, including the recent disclosures of their enormous peculations, shows that that they were most reasonable objects of suspicion, and that, had the fell necessities of his dynasty given the word, Louis Napoleon would have sprung without warning upon England, as he sprung on Germany, as he had sprung on Austria, as, in spite of his reiterated oaths of fealty, he had sprung upon the French Republic. It is perfectly conceivable that when the result of the Plebiscite had shown that the throne of the Bonapartes was in danger, and urgently needed a renewal of its glories, the military precautions against which Cobden wrote, and the exhibition of spirit which he viewed with aversion, may have determined in the council of the Tuileries the question between avenging Leipsic and avenging Waterloo. No one who watches the actions of the French Government or studies the organs of French opinion, not excepting the works of historians, in which a calmer and more moral spirit might be expected to prevail, can imagine that the volcano of Chauvinism has ceased to burn or that French lust of war and conquest is extinct. It would be madness to present to Gallic ambition and hatred the tempting spectacle of an unguarded England. Those who have no disposition to commit burglary must still provide their doors with bolts and their windows with bars.

### THE RIEL REBELLION.

THE wildly exciting events of 1869 and 1870 in Manitoba are fast fading from the common contemplation of her people and becoming matters of early history only. There is a story current at the foothills of the Rockies about an Englishman who arose early and left his host's house one sunny morning, intending to walk to a neighbouring hill and back before breakfast, anticipating all the time how delicious the bacon and eggs would taste after a brisk constitutional. He walked rapidly in the fresh morning air until the briskness wore off, and then trudged along until the sun approached the meridian, and yet the hill seemed just a stone's-throw away from him, but no nearer than when he had first set out. The constitutional had become a pilgrimage, and at high noon he faced about, and reached home late in the evening, famished and exhausted. Next morning he tried a less ambitious stroll, and his friends, suspecting what had happened, watched him until he reached a tiny stream, when to their surprise, he proceeded leisurely to undress as though preparing for a plunge. In answer to their inquiries he related his experience of the day before, and seemed genuinely in doubt whether the crossing of this apparently narrow stream was to be a repetition of Byron's feat in the Hellespont or not. If it is a characteristic of the Western horizon to be "so near and yet so far," it is equally characteristic of the historical horizon of Manitoba to seem remote after the passing of a very few years. The doings and sufferings of the Earl of Selkirk, the massacre of Governor Semple and his party, the bloody struggles of the rival fur companies, the floods—all these events seem to have receded into a shady antiquity, although 1812 and 1815 saw the most of them. This is partly owing no doubt to the ancient atmosphere with which the actors in our early history—the quiet-living French on the banks of the Red River—seem to surround themselves. The main causes, though, which have been operating to produce this effect during the last few years, are plainly the incoming of an entirely new population, and the substitution of one of the most intense commercial fevers ever known for the excitement of the Rebellion. Owing to this tendency of comparatively recent events to crystallize themselves into history, it becomes less difficult perhaps to call them into review and come to some conclusions respecting them.