

personality at the head—a man capable of creating enthusiasm, a man to put in the balance against the Earl of Beaconsfield. Mere criticism served the purposes of Opposition very well, but it will not carry an election. The present Prime Minister is before the public as the embodiment, the life and soul of a policy, and the Liberals must have a great and enthusiastic leader or they will inevitably be sent back to carry on their work of criticism. That is to say, they must place Mr. Gladstone again at the head. They have no other alternative. The eyes of the people turn to Mr. Gladstone. Lord Hartington's manifesto is barely discussed, while Mr. Gladstone's speech fill every paper. Not around Lord Hartington, but around Mr. Gladstone, the popular enthusiasm gathers; and when it was reported a few days ago that the noble Lord would not be able, on account of ill-health, to conduct the present campaign personally, if there was any feeling of disappointment, it was not very marked.

Austria has declared for the Earl of Beaconsfield because Mr. Gladstone has declared against Austria. If I know anything of the temper of the English people, this will help the Earl not at all. It is a kind of suggestion which the British do not relish. And they know that Mr. Gladstone was correct when he said: "Austria has ever been the unflinching enemy of freedom in every country of Europe, and there is not a spot on the whole map where one could place his finger and say, 'There Austria did good.'" The court at Vienna is to-day more despotic than the court at St. Petersburg. Austria has never even made an honest effort towards liberal institutions and free government. No wonder that the Emperor disapproves of Gladstone's foreign policy, for the "spirited foreign policy" of the Earl has served the purposes of Austria most admirably.

These elections in Great Britain are of interest to us, because they must have some, perhaps great, effect upon the colonies—more especially upon Canada and Australia. If the Conservatives should be returned, it is not impossible—not even unlikely—that some step will be taken to consolidate the Empire. Not imperial federation—that can never happen; but the mother-country might very well take more active interest in the colonies. But if the Liberals should be returned, I for one should not be surprised at an official hint that as we have closed our markets to England, and denied her free-trade creed, we might as well begin to think of taking care of ourselves altogether. Mr. Bright would have ample opportunity for pouring out the vials of his wrath upon us, and there is scarcely a prominent man in the party who is known to care three straws for colonial connexions. Perhaps Sir Alexander Galt will be able to enlighten their darkness and stir up their affections on our behalf; but it will take a very clever man to prove to the British that the colonies are a source of strength or of wealth to them.

Mr. Theodore Martin has much honest and laborious work in writing the "Life of the Prince Consort" to order, and well deserves the K. C. B. lately conferred upon him.

Mr. Parnell is doomed to disappointment wherever he goes. With visions of magnificent triumphs he came to this continent, and the first few days brought to him sundry shocks which suggested the suspicion that the American people were not likely to fulfil his sanguine expectations. At last they spoke out and said: Money for the starving to buy food? Yes; but money for political agitation! No. Mr. Parnell fought against the depressing influences which American common sense was bringing to bear upon him, but it was weary work and required a good deal of strong speaking to keep his own and his followers' spirits up. And now another disappointment has happened to him; he has returned to his kith and kin and fellow-men, and they do not welcome him as their darling hero at all. Sensible men stand aloof from every demonstration got up to do him honour, and the agitator, when he sees of what clement his following is made up, he can hardly be proud of himself.

The Jesuits, driven out of France, have decided to take up quarters in Monaco and Jersey. A great many people hope they will like their new home and stay there.

THE BUDGET DEBATE.

The Budget speech of the Finance Minister was looked forward to with considerable interest, and not without a certain amount of anxiety; everybody felt that the country was committed to the change of policy inaugurated last year, and that probably not sufficient time had elapsed to give it a fair trial. Of course the opponents of the N. P. were prepared to demonstrate that it was an utter failure, and there were many even amongst its supporters who feared that the Minister might not be able to present a favourable exhibit of the year's finances. The statement, however, submitted by Sir Leonard Tilley will have a reassuring effect, as on the face of it, it is a better show than was generally anticipated.

Last year the estimated deficit was two millions dollars; the actual deficit would have been much more but for the fact that over a million and a quarter dollars of customs and excise duties belonging to 1879-'80 were collected in the year 1878-'79. The expenditure in the present year, including supplementary estimates, will amount nearly to \$25,000,000; the revenue will amount to \$24,450,000,—so that the deficit for the year will not largely exceed \$500,000.

It must be confessed that this is just one of the puzzles which "no fellow can understand," and the arithmetical problem savours somewhat of the old story of the man moving a dollar from his left-hand pocket to his right, and fancying himself so much the richer; nevertheless, Sir Leonard assures us that a more hopeful and trustful feeling prevails throughout the length and breadth of the land, and that he has confidence in the future of our finances.

The Finance Minister spoke cheerily of the return of prosperity, and went into a long array of facts and figures, with a view of proving that good times had again come, instancing particular interests which, as he alleged, were more prosperous; the importer, the farmer, and those engaged in the lumber trade were all contented and hopeful, but Sir Leonard's modesty induced him to admit that "he did not say it was all owing to the National Policy," adding that "he had no fears for the future of the country, its prosperity, he felt, was assured."

The speeches of Sir Richard Cartwright and Mr. Mackenzie were thoughtful and masterly reviews of the position from their own standpoint, dealing some very damaging blows to the statement of the Finance Minister; it is to be regretted that both gentlemen treat the subject in the spirit of *doctrinaires* and utterly ignore the course of events; they believe firmly in the justice and efficacy of their own free trade principles, and therefore, every one holding a different opinion must be wrong.

The task of replying to Sir Richard Cartwright was especially undertaken by Sir Charles Tupper, which was done in a speech of considerable length, and it must be said in common fairness, too much marred by a coarseness of vituperation and invective which would have been better omitted.

The "rank and file" who have taken part in the debate were all passably fair representatives of the "hum" and "boom" class of literature with which we have been tortured for many months past.

The debate was enlivened by a repetition of the "empty house" argument, this time in Hamilton, it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to see the relevancy of this logic; the writer is old enough to remember that during a period of scarcity and want in England, the late Duke of Wellington said in the House of Lords that he did not believe in the alleged scarcity, for on his way down to the House he had counted *twenty-seven* turkeys hanging at his poulterer's, but then the good old man was in his dotage—oddly enough this is the *very number* of empty houses which the member for Montreal West counted in his peregrinations.

The supporters of the Government claimed everything, past, present and to come, as the result of the N. P.; sugar, cotton and other factories which have started into life, and a clock factory which is "just going to begin." Even the good harvest, which Sir Leonard had the good taste to admit as contributing towards our return of better fortunes, was claimed by the thick and thin men as a portion of the N. P.

The few changes proposed are chiefly matters of detail, and are intended to simplify the practical working of the tariff; they are framed rather with the view of removing difficulties, than in any change of policy.

The debate has dragged its slow length along, the whole affair presenting a foregone conclusion, and with the exception of the speeches of the four chiefs—Sir Leonard Tilley, Sir Charles Tupper, Sir Richard Cartwright, and Mr. Mackenzie—the addresses have scarcely risen above mediocrity, but the even tenor of its way has been rippled by a few of our legislators (it would be rude to point) making themselves ridiculous.

Since the foregoing was written, a field-day has taken place, Mr. Thomas White and Mr. Charlton being the belligerents. As might have been expected, the hon. member for Cardwell delivered a trenchant oration satisfying himself, at least, that everything in connection with the National Policy was an immense success. Mr. Charlton on the other hand said, that the hon. member for Cardwell had not a reputation for making assertions that were in all cases reliable. The City of Montreal made itself heard too, in the person of Mr. Coursol, who addressed the House in French in favour of the N. P., and the end is not yet, the debate having been again adjourned by a Lower Province member.