

# THE SPEAKER

A Review of Politics, Letters, Science, and the Arts.

REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE]

[FOR INLAND AND FOREIGN TRANSMISSION.

VOL. IV.—No. 92.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1891.

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THE SPEAKER is on sale every Saturday morning at the Railway Bookstalls and principal Newsagents' of the United Kingdom.

Copies are delivered to Subscribers by post early on Saturday in all parts of the Kingdom.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS BY

CASSELL & COMPANY, Limited, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London.

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# THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1891.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE annual meeting of the National Liberal Federation began at Newcastle-on-Tyne on Thursday under circumstances of the most promising character. The attendance of delegates was very large, the speakers at the opening session of the Federation and the preliminary meetings included many of the leading members of the party, and the enthusiasm displayed was all that might have been expected from a militant body, gathered on the eve of a great battle in which they are confident of victory. MR. MORLEY'S speech on Thursday afternoon, though it suggests to the *Times* the manner of "a third-rate Dissenting minister"—a sneer unique in its maladroitness—was just such an address as might have been hoped for under the circumstances; whilst the reception given to MR. GLADSTONE on his entrance into the town in the evening proved that the community as a whole was in hearty sympathy with the Liberal delegates and their leader. MR. GLADSTONE, by the way, had on Thursday delivered a touching and beautiful address at Glenalmond College, full of delightful reminiscences of the early days of that institution and of the ripe wisdom and abounding sympathy which in his case have accompanied old age. He was to address the Liberal Federation last night, but of that speech we can say nothing here. Elsewhere we have dealt with the programme of the Federation; here we need only note the fact that Home Rule now, as heretofore, occupies the first place in it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT'S vigorous handling of MR. EDWARD DICEY, whose scandalous paper in the *Nineteenth Century* has been read with disgust even by persons sympathising with him in politics, may possibly have been unnecessary, but was certainly well-deserved. MR. DICEY'S reply to SIR WILLIAM in the *Times* of Tuesday has all the faults which would naturally be expected from the author of the paper in the *Nineteenth Century*. It is flippant, vulgar, and foolish. The satisfactory point about it is that it affords ample testimony of the fact that MR. DICEY has smarted under the castigation he received. Of his bad taste in the production which was the original cause of offence it is hardly necessary to speak. When a man openly speculates upon the death of a political opponent, who is happily still in the enjoyment of good health, and urges his confederates to base their political movements upon the hopes which he thus seeks to inspire, he has only himself to blame if he is held up to public contempt and reprobation. It is perhaps unfortunate that SIR WILLIAM was unable to distinguish between the two DICEYS; but then it is not often that two persons of the same name can be found whose distinguishing characteristic, so far as politics are concerned, is their venomous hatred of a particular statesman.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER, the member for the Penrith division of Cumberland, has been appointed Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in place of SIR JAMES FERGUSSON, the new Postmaster-General. MR. LOWTHER is a man of ability, but his appointment is a surprise, and the public will look for its justification rather to his relationship by marriage with LORD SALISBURY than to his personal merits.

OUR contemporary the *British Weekly* is alarmed at the suggestion which it reads into our recent article on the English Church in Wales, that disestablishment need not be accompanied by disendowment. We certainly had no intention of conveying any such idea. Obviously, the Welsh Church, having ceased to be a national corporation, could have no claim to funds made over to it in that character. What we suggested was that the Welsh people might "probably" be inclined to pay a heavy price in compensation for the change that they desire. This is not unlikely, and it is possible that it might involve the abandonment of the great churches which we declared to be extremely "regrettable," and a scale of allowances for the loss of endowments on the over-liberal basis of the Irish Act. Practically, the Irish Church was re-endowed after disestablishment, and it is quite possible that the unfortunate precedent might be followed in Wales. As to the churches and cathedrals, we are inclined to favour a very sensible suggestion by MR. H. W. CROSSKEY in the *Fortnightly Review* of June, 1877, that churches built previous to the Church Buildings Act of 1818 should be regarded as "ancient parish churches, and be retained as national property, and that the voluntary modern churches should be left to the new Episcopalian body which would be formed as the result of the Act of Disestablishment."

AMONG the events of the week has been the return to Ireland of MR. JAMES STEPHENS, the founder and organiser of the Fenian movement. MR. STEPHENS has for many years past been a mere cipher in the political world. Such errors as he committed when he took an active part in organising rebellion in Ireland have been amply atoned for, and no one now can desire for him anything but a peaceful evening to his life. The true history of the Fenian movement has not yet been written. The men connected with it unquestionably committed many errors, not the least grave being the manner in which they ignored the superior force of the Power which they challenged to combat in the field. But there was nothing connected with the Fenian conspiracy of which those who at the time were engaged in it had any reason to be ashamed. It had nothing in common with the dynamite outrages of a later date. The men concerned in it were prepared to risk, and in many cases did risk, their lives in an open struggle with the Power which they regarded as their enemy, and though they failed, and rightly failed, those who are now seeking to redress the grievances of Ireland by legitimate and constitutional means cannot point the finger of scorn at them.

THE egregious proposal of the *Times* that the Chartered East African Company should receive a guarantee of interest on the capital cost of a railway to Uganda has been badly received even among Unionists; but we do not suppose that we have heard the last of it, for LORD SALISBURY in his Glasgow speech indicated clearly that he himself favoured such a scheme, although at that time he had been unable to beat down the opposition of the Treasury officials. SIR WILLIAM MACKINNON and LORD SALISBURY no doubt perceive that the only chance of inducing the public to part with its money is to create a belief that such a railway will kill the slave trade, and this view was ingeniously

but fallaciously urged by LORD SALISBURY, on the ground that experience showed that a railway killed all competing forms of transit, from which the obvious inference is that the proposed railway will carry slaves, for it is only by doing the business of rival carriers that a railway drives them out of the field. The *Times* is very angry with SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT for refusing to allow the trifling vote for the survey for this line to pass as "non-contentious" business at the end of last session, for, as it ingenuously explains, the great advantage of passing the vote would have been that it would have committed the country to making the railway! So that the business was contentious after all. We have little doubt that SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT will stick to his guns. The proposal offers a good test case for threshing out the doctrine of the *Times* and its Jingo friends that any body of peerage-hunters and baronetcy-hunters who can induce a Government office to give them a so-called charter, are thenceforth entitled, in order to stave off insolvency and extinction, to draw on the taxes of their country for any sums they may choose to specify. As there are four Chartered Companies in all, and as the doctrine of the *Times* involves a possible liability of hundreds of millions sterling, the sooner the question is debated and decided the better for us all.

THE London County Council is about to suffer a heavy loss. At the first meeting after the recess, held on Tuesday, SIR JOHN LUBBOCK and SIR THOMAS FARRER announced their intention to retire from their offices as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. It would be difficult to conceive a heavier blow than the loss of the services of such men to the Council at the present moment. The manner in which the work of the Council has been assailed and misrepresented in the reactionary papers, above all in the *Standard*, and the deadly enmity manifested towards it by all the opponents of municipal reform, have done much to cripple its powers and authority since it came into existence. The people of London made a great bid for liberty three years ago, when they elected a Liberal County Council. But too many of them apparently forgot that the present Government had deliberately handicapped the Council in the interests of the City Corporation, the Vestries, and the other corrupt and incompetent bodies who have so long mismanaged the affairs of the metropolis. It was no part of LORD SALISBURY'S policy to give the people of London, any more than the people of Ireland, the right of managing their own affairs, and he started the County Council on its career laden with fetters.

THE result has been that the Council has never had fair-play. Its blunders have been exaggerated in the most absurd fashion; no allowances have been made for the limitations imposed upon its authority by the Tory Ministry, and even its successes have been misrepresented or under-rated. If it is now to lose the services of such men as SIR JOHN LUBBOCK and SIR THOMAS FARRER, we greatly dread the result. Its one chance is that the Liberal element in London shall rally to its support, and insist that the good work which it has begun, and which, despite overwhelming difficulties, it has already carried on with considerable success, shall not be abandoned. The National Liberal Federation has pronounced strongly in favour of the establishment of real self-government in London, and everyone who knows what the municipal life of all the other great towns of England is, will support the demands of the Federation. But the friends of corruption, gluttony, jobbery, and privilege, in London affairs, are numerous and powerful, and they will do their best to wreck the County Council when the next election takes place. If they succeed, the government of the greatest city of the world will continue for years to come to be a bye-word and a reproach among men.

THE Stock Markets are still under the influence of the surprise sprung upon them by MR. JAY GOULD last week. There has been generally very much less business doing than for five or six weeks. It is true that on Thursday an attempt was made to revive the speculation in South African Gold Shares; but it is doubtful whether it can succeed for any length of time, for there is no real change in the position in South Africa. The market for inter-bourse securities is supported by Paris. The German and Austrian Bourses are weak; English investors have for years past been doing little in the department, and for the time being the course of the market depends entirely upon Paris. In preparation for the Russian loan everything possible is being done in Paris to keep up prices, and there appears no doubt that the loan will be a very great success, although it is reported that the two Berlin banking-houses which were to have invited subscriptions in Berlin will withdraw from the syndicate. Possibly if they do, that will make the loan even a greater success in Paris, for the hostility of Germany will make it more than ever a patriotic duty in the eyes of investors to subscribe. In the American market, as we have said, there is uncertainty and hesitation, as nobody knows what MR. JAY GOULD may do and everyone is afraid that he has some fresh surprise to spring upon them. Apparently, however, the hesitation will not last long, for the economic conditions of the United States are so favourable that everyone is convinced that prices must continue to rise. It needs, therefore, only influential leadership to start another boom; and it is hardly likely that MR. GOULD will attempt to run counter to popular feeling at home and abroad. The Argentine Market on Thursday was disturbed by the issue of a decree abolishing gold contracts and requiring those who had insisted on them either to accept a composition or to give two years' time.

THE Directors of the Bank of England did not raise their rate of discount on Thursday, as, perhaps, would have been the wiser course. Within a fortnight over three quarters of a million sterling in gold have been withdrawn for New York, and in less than two months about a million and three quarters sterling have been withdrawn for Germany, making together roughly about two and a half millions sterling. Considerable sums, though small in each particular case, have been withdrawn for other countries, and there is every probability that the American demand will continue for months, and will become very large. In a short time, therefore, unless steps are taken to prevent it, the reserve will become so small that apprehension will spring up. Apparently, however, the Directors think that it would be useless to do anything, as the other banks are not prepared to support them, and without such support, they cannot keep up rates in the outside market. Indeed, when the Bank rate was raised last week the open market rate fell from 3 per cent. to 2½ per cent. in the course of a couple of days, and though it has recovered since it is not yet 3 per cent. This week the large Stock Exchange settlement and the end of the third quarter of the year caused a special demand for money, so that applications had to be made to the Bank of England. Next week there will be none of these temporary requirements, while the interest upon the National Debt will be paid and of course will increase the supply in the open market. The probability, then, is that rates will remain low, that the Bank of England will do nothing, that the withdrawals for export will become large, that suddenly in consequence apprehension will arise, and that then there will be a very sharp advance in the Bank rate, disarranging business and checking trade. Meantime, the silver market continues quiet. There is little demand for any country and no speculation, and the price, therefore, is barely 45d. per ounce.



## THE FEDERATION AND ITS PROGRAMME.

THE National Liberal Federation, like all public bodies dealing with controversial questions and exercising great powers, has many critics and not a few foes. Born in the days when Mr. Chamberlain and an ambitious clique at Birmingham were seeking to subordinate the Liberal party to their own personal ends, it had naturally to encounter, in the first instance, the hostility of all those Liberals who were not prepared to take the law from the prophet of the Midland town. It has travelled far since those days, has overcome many of the prejudices excited against it in the beginning, has made friends of old foes and broken with old allies; but it still has to face the fire of criticism and to encounter a certain amount of hostile sentiment even within the borders of Liberalism. That Mr. Chamberlain and his handful of followers are no longer at one with it need not be said. It is not of Mr. Chamberlain that we are thinking, however, when we speak of the present-day critics of the Federation. Like all other human institutions, as it has grown old it has acquired some of the characteristics of age. There was a time when it was looked upon as the most dangerous and revolutionary political organisation in the United Kingdom, and when good Liberals of the old school fairly shivered with apprehension when they saw that it had issued another manifesto or held another meeting. Nowadays there are Liberals among us who complain that it does not go far enough, that it is prudent and almost timid in counsel, and that it exercises a restraining influence upon the more ardent spirits of the party. It is not so long since the name of Mr. Schnadhorst conjured up visions of terror, not merely in the Conservative imagination, but even in that of good Liberals. To-day even the Tories know that Mr. Schnadhorst is no conspirator; and whilst all do justice to his sagacity, his devotion to great principles, his statesmanlike prudence in action, there are some among us who think that he carries caution to an extreme, and who chafe under what they imagine to be the curb he has placed upon them.

It is natural, and indeed inevitable, that this change should have taken place. If it had not done so, then the National Liberal Federation would long ago have exhausted its power of usefulness and fallen into public contempt. The fact that it is now regarded not only without fear, but with confidence, by the overwhelming mass of Liberals affords the best possible proof of the fact that it truly represents the centre of the party, its average opinion, and its general drift. That to the ardent young men who are coming up full of enthusiasm and inspired by fine visions of the millennium towards which their eager eyes are turned it should appear to be lagging behind is natural, and is right. It moves cautiously because it moves with the main body of the Liberal army. In a campaign one does not see the Commander-in-Chief and his staff riding with the scouting parties. Their business is to guide and guard the army as a whole; not to make rash incursions into the unknown territory of the enemy, but to advance as becomes those upon whom a great charge is laid, with prudence and decision, never forgetting that it is not only in front that danger is to be apprehended. By all means let the reconnoitring parties lead the way. They are doing good work in the fashion in which such work has always been done by our political and social pioneers; but they have no right to gird because those upon whom responsibilities of which they know nothing are laid move with more cautious footsteps. It seems, then, to be altogether right and proper that, whilst the great bulk of the Liberal party throughout Great

Britain show an unbroken confidence in the Federation, the men who by nature, or training, or in virtue of their youth, are naturally best fitted for pioneering work should show some impatience of the pace at which it moves. If it went *their* pace, we may rest assured the majority of the party would not be slow to take alarm.

The chief purpose of the meetings now being held at Newcastle is not to impose a programme upon an unwilling party, still less to set limits to the objects which any section of that party may seek to attain, but to affirm clearly and unmistakably what are the tasks to which the energies of those composing the Federation are at this moment being devoted. And if we may judge by the resolutions with which the Federation is dealing during its two days' meeting, the work the Liberal party has now in hand is certainly wide enough and advanced enough to satisfy all but a very small section of its members. Ever since the memorable day in 1886 when the Federation cast off the yoke of Mr. Chamberlain, its first purpose has been to strengthen Mr. Gladstone in his attempt to put an end to the ancient feud between England and Ireland. To-day it can affirm that the case for Home Rule stands higher than it ever did before, and immeasurably higher than it stood when the Federation last met at Sheffield, with the ruinous disclosures of the Divorce Court ringing in its ears. Since then the Irish people have passed through one of the sharpest crises to which even they, in their chequered history, have been subjected, and have passed through it with success. They have shown, as the Federation affirms, the "steadfastness, sound judgment, and moderation" which constitute the highest of all political virtues, and have brilliantly justified those who have refused to believe that the people of Ireland alone among the many branches of our race are unfit to exercise the rights of self-government. At the Newcastle meeting, the National Federation, representing the Liberal party of England, have reaffirmed the terms of that treaty of alliance which was signed between Irishmen and Englishmen on the day when Mr. Gladstone, reversing the calamitous policy of generations, brought into the House of Commons a Bill for giving Ireland the control of its own domestic affairs. At no time since then has the treaty been in any real danger, save from the treachery and selfishness of the man who was so long the Irish leader. The members of the Federation are not likely to meet again before the General Election which will give voice to the national judgment on the question at issue. It is satisfactory to know that, in the resolution they passed concerning Home Rule, they were able to take higher ground than at any previous meeting in declaring their devotion to a cause with which English as well as Irish Liberalism is now indissolubly associated.

But, behind Home Rule, what are the subjects to which the Federation invite the attention of their supporters? The disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England in Wales, the full enfranchisement of London by the enlargement of the powers of the County Council, the amendment and completion of the system of Free Education, the reform of our registration and electoral laws, so that each man shall be the equal of every other in voting power and that Parliament shall no longer be a preserve of the wealthy, and the reconstitution of village life, so that the rural labourer shall no longer be divorced from the soil, form the main features of a political programme which, if it errs at all, does not err on the side of meagreness. Yet even this list of great measures of reform by no means exhausts the full programme of the National Federation, in which

is included such further questions as the reform of the land laws, the popular control of the liquor traffic, the equalisation of the death duties, and the "mending or ending" of the House of Lords. There is no need to discuss these and the many minor questions to which the members of the Federation have committed themselves. They constitute the platform of the Liberal party, and a bare enumeration of them will suffice to show not only how solid and substantial, but how wide that platform is. To those who think that English Liberalism is played out, or that beyond Home Rule it has nothing to offer to the nation, we cannot do better than recommend a careful perusal of the Newcastle resolutions and of the speeches by which they are supported. Let us say also that those who have lately built their hopes upon a possible disunion in the Liberal ranks ought to learn from Newcastle how slender is the foundation on which they have built.

#### A WORD TO MANCHESTER.

THERE cannot be much doubt that if the genuine electorate of North-East Manchester, instead of an arbitrarily selected portion of it, were able to give its verdict on Thursday next, Mr. Scott would be elected by a decisive majority. The chief doubt as to his success arises from the fact that under our delightful system of registration the worker's life carries with it the daily danger of electoral disqualification. The working-man of the towns is necessarily a migratory animal, and as things stand it might very well happen for him to pass the best part of his life without ever becoming a qualified citizen. The evil is not so great in Manchester as in London, where the fraud of "successive occupation" acts as a perpetual bar to working-class enfranchisement. Still the chances are that many scores and hundreds of men whose votes would have been given to Mr. Scott for his English or Irish programmes, or for both, will be baulked of their will, either through inability to find their way through the registration tangle, or through the dodges of the party agent. We hope that the cry of the disfranchised Manchester voter will speak trumpet-tongued to the National Liberal Federation. It points to one of the most vital morals of the contest, whatever the result may be. Should it meet with no response, it will mean, on the very best issue for which the Liberal party can hope, the loss of many seats at the next election. No party can afford to suffer such a permanent disablement; and one of the very first tasks of the next Liberal Government should be to adapt the franchise to the end which it has never secured, namely, of satisfying the conditions of working-class life.

We have said that if North-East Manchester could put its true mind into its approaching verdict—instead of, as it were, a selected fragment of it—Mr. Scott's success would be certain. Probably there never was an election in which one candidate more completely represented the ideal choice of a constituency. Mr. Scott is the representative of the flower of Manchester culture, enlightenment, and good sense. The great paper which he so finely conducts has no superior in the English press for scholarship, accuracy, generous feeling, and breadth of interest. Year by year and day by day it preaches to Cottonopolis a gospel both of sweetness and of light, in a spirit at once strenuous and refined. Mr. Scott himself is not only a man of intellectual distinction, but he is one of the most active citizens of the great community which takes from him much of its best leading. The Irish voters owe to him one of the ablest

presentments of their case which have been made through the medium of the Liberal press. Nor have the claims of labour, new and old, and the policy which lies behind them, been ignored. Even the Fabian Society has no quarrel with Mr. Scott, and we do not understand why the advanced sections of the working-men need hesitate to support him. Both in regard to Irish land and the eight hours question, he stands on the ground which marks the last permeation of political opinion by moderate collectivist ideas. His organ has always given a conspicuously fair representation to later Radicalism, and it has been one of the steady stand-bys of Trade Unionism in its later troubles. It would be difficult to select from out the entire body of Liberal candidates a man more typical of the new spirit in politics, more intellectually competent to interpret its best side.

The contrast between Mr. Scott and his Conservative opponent ought to strengthen the desire of the electors of Manchester to maintain its old traditions of political enlightenment. Sir James Fergusson is a candidate for such honours as his party have been pleased to bestow on him in no scanty measure. He has had a creditable enough career, which is, so far as we know, unadorned by a single act or profession of independence, a quality that would be out of place in a gentleman who is prepared to serve his country in any sphere to which it pleases the Conservative Premier of the day to call him. He now proposes to serve it in the double capacity of Postmaster-General and director of nine great companies. On this point we do not take the extreme view of the party which makes it a high crime in a member of Parliament to earn his living while he attends to the national business. It is not an easy task to double the two occupations, but unless this is permitted we must point out that, at all events until we have paid members of Parliament, it restricts the national choice of representatives to men of leisure, and therefore of fortune. But there is a mean in all things; and a gentleman who professes, at the sufficient salary of £2,500 a year, to undertake the control of the most gigantic commercial organisation in the country, is hardly in a position to superintend the management of a large number of industrial corporations. Sir James Fergusson succeeds as Postmaster-General a man of no small capacity, who endeavoured, like him, to unite City and Post Office work, and who broke down hopelessly under the attempt. The department which commanded the services of a man of the highest administrative talent like Mr. Fawcett cannot be adequately served in the remnants of leisure which such business preoccupations as those of Sir James Fergusson permit. Mr. Sydney Buxton's return has given dramatic proof of the scandal of divided duty which the Pigott exposure revealed in the case of the Attorney-General. It would be an appropriate rebuke of an impossible system if the business men of Manchester were to send back Sir James Fergusson, with the polite reminder that he is not in their opinion free to do justice to his new responsibilities.

It cannot be denied, however, that the Postmaster-General is an accommodating candidate. In theory he represents the high-and-dry Toryism of which even his own party is ashamed, but his practice is singularly pliant. He has persuaded an eccentric body, styling itself, without apparent sense of humour, the Manchester Conservative Temperance Association, that he is a satisfactory representative of the temperance cause, and he has rallied the entire local drink interest to his banners as the champion of the down-trodden publican.

"I'm an eclectic: ez to choosin'  
"Twixt this an' thet, I'm plaguy lawth"



says the Biglow "candidate," but Sir James Fergusson's attitude on the temperance question puts to shame all older traditions of the policy of Mr. Facing-both-ways. On Ireland, the endeavour to represent Mr. Balfour in one breath as the stalwart upholder of law and order, and in the other as the beneficent genius of the Irish people, is equally thin. One thoroughly dishonest pretence will, we hope, be well exposed before the election is over. Sir James insists that the Government are willing to grant equal rights of self-government to Ireland and to the rest of the United Kingdom. If that were so, we might be prepared to welcome the Irish Local Government Bill of 1891 as a tardy redemption of Sir James Fergusson's pledges in 1886. But nobody should know better than Sir James Fergusson that the title of "equal rights," as applied to the draft of the measure, is a dishonest fiction. The Irish Bill will be a pale shadow of the English Bill, incomplete as that measure has proved. Sir James Fergusson's concealment of this vital point affords a fair moral measure of his candidature.

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#### RUSSIA AND INDIA.

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WE are gratified to receive private information that one of the most distinguished officers in the British Navy, who has carefully examined the Suez Canal, and who is a strong Conservative in politics, has given it as his deliberate opinion that our argument against the Suez Canal route to India in time of war is entirely sound. He says that there are parts of the canal where the scuttling of a ship would inevitably block the passage for a much longer time than the difference between the two routes. The Suez Canal, then, being out of the question, Constantinople ceases to have any bearing on our possession of India, and the presence of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean concerns England less than any Continental Power. But does Russia contemplate an invasion of India? Can any such design be reasonably regarded as within the sphere of practical politics? "It is not at all our interest," says the confidential memorandum communicated to our Government by the Russian Government in June, 1877, "to trouble England in her Indian possessions." That is the question. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, the very worst that can be charged against Russia; but is it her interest to invade India? It is the settled belief of a large section of Englishmen that Russia is pursuing her conquests in Central Asia for the purpose of pushing her frontier to some convenient point from which she may be able to invade India. In considering the possibility of such an enterprise, it is necessary to remember that the conditions of warfare have greatly changed since the Oriental expedition of Alexander the Great. A modern army requires very different means of transport and commissariat from that which would have sufficed for the days of spearmen and archers. The last Russian campaign against Turkey lasted nine months, and required the service, from first to last, of upwards of 400,000 soldiers. Yet Turkey lay close to the Russian frontier; no hostile population intervened, and no physical barriers of any moment had to be surmounted. We may confidently assert therefore that no prudent strategist would undertake the invasion of India from any base of operation open to Russia with an army of less than 500,000 men. But let us make an enormous concession to the alarmists, and reduce the numbers of the invading host by half. An army of 250,000 would require, according to the estimate of military experts, a transport service of some 200,000 camels, as many

horses, and about 500,000 camp followers. Lord Salisbury wittily observed, some years ago, that Russophobia was chiefly due to the study of small maps. A man placed his forefinger on the Indian frontier and his thumb on the Russian, and concluded that the distance between them could be easily traversed. He might have added that the study of physical geography would prove an even more effectual antidote to Russophobia than the study of large maps. Anyone who has seen a map in physical geography of the series of formidable mountain ranges which divide British India from Asiatic Russia has no difficulty in realising the impossibility of a Russian invasion of India under the present conditions of the problem. The analogy of previous invasions fails utterly. India was then a mere geographical expression. It was split up into rival nationalities and factions, and an astute invader had no difficulty in acting on the rule of dividing and ruling. The races and principalities of India are now soldered into one homogeneous power under British rule, and if any of them perchance sigh for independence, none of them is so stupid as to believe that independence could be achieved by a successful Russian invasion. "Jamie, Jamie," said the "Witty Monarch," when his brother informed him of a plot against the King's life, "no one will assassinate me to make you King." No Indian potentate or tribe will help to overthrow British rule in order to put Russian rule in its place.

In case of a Russian invasion of India, therefore, we might safely depend on the loyal co-operation of the teeming millions who own our sway there. Russia could make no dash at our Indian Empire were she ever so piratically inclined. It would take her months to mobilise her army, with its necessary equipment, before she began her march through the defiles of the mountain ranges that lie between us. We should therefore have timely notice of her intentions, and we should employ the interval in stirring up disaffection in the rear of the Russian army and harassing her advance to our frontier. But let us assume that we should be quite unsuccessful in such efforts. Admit that the Russian army reached unmolested the débouchure of the passes that lead to India. It would find us there fresh and ready to fall on its advancing columns before it could meet us in battle array—behind us boundless resources in men and money, plains seamed by railways, and an ocean owning our undisputed sway. Defeat to the Russian army under such circumstances would be ruin. Its prestige gone, swarms of enemies would rise up behind and around it, and we should see a repetition of the French retreat from Moscow. And the blow of so great a disaster would not only shake the Russian dominion in Central Asia; it might imperil the existence of the Imperial dynasty. Yet numbers of able and clear-headed men on all other subjects have succeeded in persuading themselves that Russia seriously contemplates an enterprise where success would hardly be possible and failure would be disastrous.

So much as to the difficulties of a Russian conquest of India if Russia wished it. But does she wish it? Does her national development lie in the direction of India? Clearly not. What she needs is a free outlet to the ocean. At present her navy is barred from the ocean for half the year by ice, and for the rest of the year by treaty. She is supposed to aim at the possession of Constantinople. In the interest of the races who are the residuary legatees of "the Sick Man," we should be sorry to see Russia enthroned on the Bosphorus; but the Russophobists ought to desire nothing better. Russia has no motive to vex us in India except for the sake of

checkmating us in Turkey, and we have no motive, from the point of view of British interests, to interfere with Russian aggression on Turkey, except for the purpose of preventing her from troubling us in India. But let Russia extend her dominion over some of the fair lands which are now withering under the blight of Turkish rule, and will anybody out of a lunatic asylum imagine that she would turn her back on the buried treasures which lay at her feet in order to waste her resources on the perilous stake of an invasion of India? Every sane man who has seriously considered the subject in all its bearings will echo the declaration of Prince Gortchakoff in 1877, that so egregious an absurdity belongs to "the domain of political mythology." We may therefore dismiss as chimeras of the imagination all rumours and surmises of a Russian invasion of India. Doubtless, Russia will use her position in Central Asia to vex us in India so long as we trouble her either there or elsewhere. But if we let her alone, every motive of self-interest will tempt her to cultivate friendly relations with us. She has invited us repeatedly to extend our frontier to the Hindu Koosh and meet her there as friends. We believe that this would be bad policy for us; but the invitation proves that Russia is not afraid of our advance in her direction. Our alarm at her advance, on the other hand, is both undignified and mischievous. These periodic panics about Russian aggression can hardly fail to make some of our Indian subjects suspect that our fear is an accurate measure of the inability of the Empress of India to cope with the Czar of Russia. As a matter of fact, we have less cause than any nation in Europe to quarrel with Russia. Our respective interests coincide, and a friendly understanding between us would be of incalculable benefit to both.

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#### THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE QUESTION.

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THE article in THE SPEAKER on "The True Function of Woman" has provoked a lively correspondence in our columns. We are severely taken to task for "crude generalisations," "unproved dogmas," "assertions for which next to no proof is offered, and which have been refuted over and over again," and for an endeavour to "insert into the Liberal programme a slice of Comtist absolutism, namely, the political suppression of women." Perhaps we may venture to suggest that the restriction of the franchise to men was not the invention of Comte, and that it is needless to insert in any programme a principle which lies at the foundation of our social system. "A Radical Woman" accuses us further of desiring to "retain half the human race in practical serfdom," a piece of emotional rhetoric which may be taken seriously when it is shown in what respect the position of Englishwomen resembles that of serfs, and how the adoption of female suffrage in this country is to emancipate "half the human race." Our correspondent is very angry with what she calls an "assumption of insight into the workshop of Nature, or—as the case may be—into the desigus of the Almighty." We are sorry to excite irritation in the mind of any woman by the simple reminder that she is a woman. It needs no particular "insight into the workshop of Nature" to know that the organic difference of sex has created distinct spheres for men and women. It is scarcely a "crude generalisation" to assert that the function of most women is to be mothers, and that to this function are attached a number of duties which must absorb the energies of a woman during the most important period of her life. Moreover,

the time when a woman's health demands the utmost care, and when she is liable to emotional conditions which may be illustrated from the ordinary experience of any medical man, does not seem specially designed for the exercise of an independent judgment on national affairs. So far from ignoring, as "A Radical Woman" suggests, "the average wife's and mother's everyday life," we take that life as the crucial test of the proposal to give women absolute equality with men. How are "the petty cares, the tedious details of household supervision—too often the sordid economies," to qualify "the average married woman" for the service of the State? "One kind of governing," we are told, "is not so distinct from all other kinds as to demand a wholly different set of qualities"—that is to say, domestic management is not different in kind from national administration, and the vivid personal interest of mothers in their own households is a qualification for a broad view of the problems which engage the minds of politicians. We take leave to maintain that this conflicts with common experience, and that the duties of "the average married woman" leave her no scope for political training. Moreover, it is possible that her husband, without any brutal assertion of authority, may hold that divergent political opinions are an undesirable basis for family life. If Norah Helmer were to leave her home and slam the door, simply because she had discovered that she differed irreconcilably from her spouse on a question of national policy, would this be a vindication of womanly independence? Or would a husband's refusal to allow his wife to be canvassed be deemed illegal under a reformed dispensation?

We are well aware that these suggestions will be treated as masculine flippancy by some of our correspondents who have not quite realised all the bearings of this claim for political equality between the sexes. But "A Radical Woman" is much too able not to see that marriage creates a condition in which that equality cannot easily be asserted. This we take to be the real meaning of the significant reservation in favour of women "who find an exclusively home life but little to their taste and show small aptitude for its special functions and duties." Is it for a minority, then, that we are to revolutionise the franchise? Are they to enjoy a political privilege by virtue of their distaste for the functions and duties of the great majority of their sex? So it seems from the "demand that they shall not be debarred from occupations which are congenial to them, and in which they can render service to society—including political service—in deference to crude generalisations about woman's tendency to sentimentalism and unproved dogmas about her 'essential constitution.'" The disinclination of some women for the duties of motherhood is to be a complete answer to the dogma that the chief function of woman is to carry on the race. If we were to suggest that this is a piece of feminine inconclusiveness, we should be charged by Miss Wilkinson with "an intention to affront women"; but we are compelled to say that it is no argument for putting a political premium on spinsterhood. Why should women exercise all the rights of citizens when they have no desire to marry? Why should a woman who has no taste for home life be politically superior to "the average wife and mother"? And how is this remarkable franchise to be conferred? Is a simple declaration of inaptitude for the special functions and duties of woman to satisfy the revising barrister? Or must the claimant pass an examination in masculine subjects? And if a voter should marry after all—not a very wild hypothesis—is she to forfeit the franchise, or may she retain it on

stating that she has no intention of occupying herself with the interests of home life? These are a few of the complications which will arise if we adopt the illogical expedient of establishing the equality of men and women, by creating a privileged class of female electors. It is surely a little too much to ask us to abandon any coherent basis of Parliamentary representation, and to penalise motherhood by admitting a minority of childless women to a share in the national government, on the plea of providing them with a congenial vocation. We are twitted by "A Radical Woman" with having allowed that some women have done good work in organising the "industrial energies" of others. If we were to propose that, on this account, they ought to have a special franchise, the idea would be as consistent with the Constitution as Sir George Grey's entertaining scheme for filling a Legislative Chamber with ladies.

It is not agreeable to find ourselves in conflict with earnest women who have the cause of Liberalism at heart, but we are forced to point out to them the realities of their position. The franchise for a privileged section of the female population is as inadmissible as any of the "fancy franchises" which beguiled statesmen in the earlier days of Parliamentary reform. The franchise for married as well as unmarried women would lead us eventually to womanhood as well as manhood suffrage. It is no immoderate computation to say that there are three-quarters of a million more women than men in these islands: so that womanhood suffrage would give an enormous preponderance of electoral power to the sex who are physically incompetent to take any part in the national defence. Does "A Radical Woman" seriously believe that Englishmen are going to adopt as a constitutional principle the colossal incongruity of endowing women with the control of our military and naval resources? What is the use of railing at the "unproved dogma" of sex, when everybody knows that if the existence of the Empire were at stake, not a female elector would be of the smallest service in the field or on the sea? Civilisation has not yet abolished the arbitrament of force, and while men are liable to be called on to defend their country, they are not likely to place the choice of peace or war in the hands of women. It is true that the State is "an aggregation of families," but the head of the family is the man. He is the protector of the home, and his manhood is the bulwark of the State. And there is no great nation in the world, however democratic, which shows the smallest symptom of a desire to abandon this fundamental principle of society.

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#### ACCIDENT INSURANCE.

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TO an Englishman there is much that is significant, and not a little that is humiliating, in the report of the International Congress on Accidents to Workmen which has just concluded its labours at Berne. We have by this time grown accustomed to the loss of the lead in labour legislation, and England, mother of Factory Acts, now humbly follows in the wake of Switzerland, Germany, and even Austria, in the protecting, by appropriate collective action, the weak against the strong, the individual against the grinding oppression of the mass. But it might have been thought that, in the matter of provision against accidents to workmen, at any rate, we could still show a pattern to the world. Nowhere in Europe is there so much machinery used or such rapidity of motion or locomotion obtained as in this country. Nowhere,

outside of the United States, are industrial accidents in all probability so numerous in proportion to population as in England. Nowhere is the pecuniary value of the effective workman so large. Scarcely anywhere, owing to our peculiar doctrine of "common employment," is the law on the subject of employers' liability so unfavourable to the workman. It may be inferred that in no country is the annual loss to the community from workmen's accidents so great as in England. Yet in the International Congress just completed, England has taken, not the foremost, but almost the last place, and almost every country in Europe has shown more interest, taken a larger part, and contributed more importantly than the one which ought, in our view, to have out-distanced all the rest.

The Congress was composed, not of politicians or delegates from working-class organisations, but mainly of official experts on the points at issue. The three hundred representatives who met at Berne were nearly all experienced officials, either of the State, or of those employers' associations which have lately attained so high a degree of organisation in Germany. Not a single representative of any Socialist or Labour organisation took part in the proceedings. Yet to this most securely guarded conference of experts, Lord Salisbury's Government chose to be represented only, on a kind of watching brief, by an officer of the Board of Trade, who, however well versed he may be in commercial treaties, does not claim to possess, on this subject, either technical knowledge or official experience. The consequence was that Mr. Bateman took practically no part in the proceedings, and England's contribution to the proceedings was virtually nothing at all.

It may not uncharitably be inferred that Lord Salisbury, since Berlin, has had enough of Labour Conferences. Continental Governments are discovered, to our surprise, to be much more eager to secure life and leisure to the proletariat than we are ourselves. Faithful party adherents warn us that further concessions, even if all Europe makes them at the same time, will seriously offend our large industrial supporters. Our railway magnates, cotton kings, and coal barons are content to let things alone. Even the safest representatives at an International Congress have a dangerous habit of being ashamed to resist the voice of Europe. And hence, lest the voice of Europe should persuade us against our will, we are, apparently, to have as little as possible to do with the matter.

Meanwhile, at home, we are quarrelling about amending an hopelessly inefficient Employers' Liability Act by rival Bills about which it is difficult to be much more hopeful. But whilst we have been wrangling, others have been studying, and Europe now possesses, particularly in Germany, a whole literature upon accidents, medical aid, compensation, and insurance relating to working men engaged in industrial occupations, which, apart from that relating to superannuation and sick pay, is, we make bold to say, not in the possession of any public department in England, nor has been made a subject of study by any English statesman.

The Congress set an excellent example to similar bodies by discussing much and resolving little. The members were practically unanimous in believing that, whatever might be the legal rights of the workman against his employer, he should receive, for every accident suffered through his work, an indemnity from an insurance fund, to which he and the employer and the State should contribute. The able and powerful papers contributed by the German representatives, officials and employers alike, demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Congress the absolute necessity of

a compulsory and State-aided scheme, if it were really desired that the injured workman should receive anything like an adequate indemnity for his wound. The Congress appears to have been convinced, in addition, of the practical necessity of working this accident fund in conjunction with a fund for sickness. Finally, the Germans succeeded in carrying the Congress to the point of contemplating the combined action of sick and accident insurance with the German scheme of superannuation benefits and ordinary sick pay in chronic cases.

Now it will not do to dismiss the practically unanimous conclusions of these three hundred experienced officials and technical experts as altogether without relevance for this country. We, too, have accidents to workmen, by which not they alone, but the whole community, suffers enormous annual loss. In spite of all the efforts of our Trade Unions and Friendly Societies, many thousands of injured workmen are neither provided for by their colleagues nor indemnified by their employers. It may be, as our capitalists assert, that any extension of their civil liability would be likely to involve their businesses with destruction and their fortunes with ruin. But an extension of compensation to injured workmen is one of the foremost demands of the steadiest of the Trade Unionists, and a demand which cannot permanently be resisted. If a thorough extension of employers' liability is objected to, some scheme of national indemnity may have to be tried instead. We can no longer afford to regard a maimed or crippled workman in the workhouse, or begging his bread in the streets, as a necessary incident of our industrial supremacy. It must be now obvious to the most superficial observer that politics are coming more and more to be made up of such subjects as working-class insurance, instead of either reforms of democratic machinery or dynastic intrigues. The Spanish Ministry thought the recent terrible railway accident a fit subject for a special Cabinet Council, and the fate of English Ministries may yet come to depend on their treatment of a colliery explosion. After all, as Carlyle expressed it, the workman is but the conscript on whom the lot falls, and, fighting our battle, is so marred. This social interest and common liability it is that the Berne Congress has just unanimously asserted.

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#### SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD.

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THE speculation which began a few weeks ago in American railroad securities is now extending to South African gold shares; but whereas there was a good cause for recovery in the former there is none for that in the latter. A number of wealthy operators have made much money owing to the rise in American securities; and as many of them hold large quantities of South African gold shares, which for two and a-half years have been practically unsaleable, they think the present a favourable opportunity for endeavouring to induce the public to buy from them. Whether they will succeed remains to be seen. It is to be hoped that the public has not yet forgotten the lesson taught a couple of years ago. When it became known that gold was found extensively in South Africa a wild gamble arose in the shares of the companies. Those that had previously existed were rapidly run up to extravagant prices, and unscrupulous promoters succeeded in floating new companies in surprising numbers. The promoters themselves, the issuing houses, and the investing public did not take the trouble to inquire whether gold in paying quantities existed in the

lands that were thus offered for sale. It seemed to be quite sufficient that the lands in question were situate in districts where gold had been found. After a while there was the inevitable collapse. Shares which had been eagerly bought at many pounds apiece dropped in a few months to as many shillings, and several other shares could not be sold at any price. The losses in many cases were ruinous, and great distress followed in South Africa. The price of land fell with the prices of shares, and many of the South African banks found too much of their capital locked up in advances to speculators who were no longer able to fulfil their engagements; in consequence, some of the banks became bankrupt, and all have been involved in serious difficulties. No real improvement has yet taken place. It is true that adversity has not been without its lessons. In some cases shareholders have bestirred themselves to get rid of incompetent and dishonest directors and managers. In other cases directors, who had erred rather from want of knowledge and skill than from dishonesty, have learnt experience. And in several instances, therefore, the position of the companies has been greatly improved. The capital has in not a few cases been greatly reduced, earnest efforts have been made to develop the properties, costly and powerful machinery has been bought and set up, and there is a fair prospect now that some of the companies have an era of solid prosperity before them. But the majority of the companies are still worthless, either because no gold exists in the lands owned by them or because they have extravagantly large capitals, or because they have spent their working capital and at present have not credit enough to borrow afresh. All competent observers on the spot agree on these two points: firstly, that some of the companies are now well managed and are working with very satisfactory results; and secondly, that the majority of the companies are still confronted by difficulties that it is very improbable they will be able to overcome. Lord Randolph Churchill is not the only visitor who has testified to the richness of the fields, to the reforms that have been effected in many cases, and to the utter worthlessness of too many of the companies. It will be well, then, for investors to bear in mind that the greatest care and the most thorough inquiry are necessary if they would not throw their money away, and that, so far at all events, the rise that has taken place is due to speculation pure and simple.

There is no question at all that the South African gold-fields are rich. The field which is best known in this country, and which has attracted by far the largest amount of British capital, is that of Witwatersrandt; but there appears to be good ground to believe that gold exists in other parts of the Transvaal as well as in Swaziland and Mashonaland. In the Witwatersrandt, more particularly, the output of gold has steadily increased year by year. For example, in the first eight months of the present year the production very nearly equals that of the whole of last year. But the increase, it should be carefully borne in mind, is due to improvement in the management and to the introduction of costly and powerful machinery, not to greater richness in the ores crushed; on the contrary, there is a very marked decrease in the yield of gold per ton, and this was what was to be expected. When mining first began gold was found at the very surface; and as the surface soil, having been long exposed to atmospheric influences, was soft and friable it could be worked without costly machinery. Therefore the ordinary labourer was able to pick up large quantities of the metal, and the managers of companies were in a position to select the ore which yielded the largest



results. They were tempted to do this because they desired to float so many new companies in London. When they were able to show that a ton of quartz yielded on crushing several ounces of gold the public eagerly subscribed to the companies. But now surface mining has come to an end. In many cases shafts have had to be sunk to a depth of several hundred feet, and from the bottom of the shafts galleries have had to be run right and left long distances, far under the surface. That alone makes the cost of working far greater than it was a few years ago. But further, the deeper the mines are sunk the harder the rock is found to be, and therefore the more powerful and costly is the machinery that is required. Over and above this, there is great difficulty in obtaining skilled European labour. Very high wages have to be paid to carpenters, smiths, and the like; but even the high wages do not succeed in keeping the workmen. Perhaps, however, the most formidable difficulty the companies have now to contend with is the absence of railway communication. The cumbersome and costly machinery has to be carried long distances on bullock carts through a country without proper roads, which adds so enormously to the cost of the stamps that even when the mines are fairly rich, they do not return an adequate profit on the working. It is true that railways are now being built, and by-and-by they will reach the gold-fields. Then it will be possible to bring up machinery at a reasonable cost, and there is no ground to doubt that then the well-managed companies which have rich claims will prove profitable. But, in the meantime, it cannot be hoped that there will be a great increase in the output; above all, it is certain that the cost of working will not be materially reduced. It follows, then, that the present speculation has no solid basis. The capitalist who takes the trouble to inform himself, and who can afford to wait for a good return on his money, may be able to buy just now on very favourable terms; but the ordinary public would do well to wait until railway communication is established, and proof is given that the mines are really as rich as they are represented to be.

Lord Randolph Churchill ventures to say in one of his letters that the South African gold-fields will prove to be the richest in the world. That remains to be seen; but that they are rich no one who has taken the trouble to inform himself seriously doubts, and that great advantage will result from developing and working them is clear. If the production is large, settlers from this country and from the Continent will be attracted in large numbers; even now the foreign element is very powerful; by-and-by it will probably largely outnumber the Boers. Then the European settlers will insist upon having a voice in the government of the country, and a more enlightened and progressive policy will be adopted. After a while agriculture will extend, other mines will be worked, and the country will reach a high degree of prosperity—gold-mining, as in California and Australia, ceasing to be the principal industry. Meanwhile a large out-turn of gold will enable the companies to provide themselves with all the powerful and costly machinery they require. It will also make it possible to raise capital for the construction of railways, for the building of towns, and for the extension of the area of cultivation. All that will give employment to our own manufacturers, and thus it is reasonable to hope that a considerable trade will grow up. Furthermore, a large increase in the annual production of gold will have a most beneficial influence upon the Money Markets of the world. The scramble for gold which has so seriously affected us of late, depressing trade for years together, and causing a

heavy fall in the prices of commodities, will come to an end for a while at all events, and it is not improbable that there will be a considerable recovery in prices. If so, a rise in prices will stimulate every branch of trade; and as trade in the older countries expands and improves, there will be more capital available for investment in South Africa. All the mines of every kind will be explored and developed, and other industries will grow up. But we would repeat that the small investor ought not to be dazzled by the prospects that are likely to be held out to him in the immediate future. Gold-mining is proverbially a precarious industry, and the investor, unless he is very careful, is much more likely to lose his money than to make profits. At the same time, if he is very careful and does not shrink from trouble in informing himself correctly, he may now invest on very satisfactory terms.

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#### CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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THE most sensational event of the week in foreign politics has been the suicide of General Boulanger. The "Brummagem Bonaparte" has made a dramatic ending to an ignominious career. So completely had his popularity even in Paris passed away, that his death is an event which has not the smallest political importance, and the interest of it is chiefly psychological. Perhaps the moral which should be written on the tombstone beneath which Madame de Bonnemain lies, and which is now stained with the blood of General Boulanger, is that no man should attempt the rôle of a Pretender unless he has physical courage as well as moral audacity. Boulanger knew no shame. If he had only been ashamed of being a coward, he might have made his mark in history. And yet of what do we speak, and how much do we really know? The man who fled like a poltroon from arrest, because he feared he might be killed in prison, has since "done justice upon himself" with an unflinching hand.

The good M. de Blowitz has been surpassing himself this week (he performs the feat about fifty times in the year). The death of the Grand Duchess Paul of Russia having made it necessary that the Czar and Czarina should return without delay to their own country, in order to pay the customary honours to the dead, M. Blowitz has explained in the *Times* with what eagerness the Czar seized the excuse thus furnished in order to avoid a meeting with the German Emperor—a meeting which, under the circumstances, would have been distinctly embarrassing. The explanation was ingenious, and was accepted by the readers of the *Times* with perfect satisfaction; nor is it likely that their faith in the prophet of Paris will be diminished by the announcement, which has since been made, that a meeting between the Czar and the German Emperor will, after all, take place within the next few weeks. Speaking generally, there is nothing new in the position of Continental politics; but the uneasy feelings which prevailed a few weeks ago, and which were so largely due to the panic-mongers of the press, are beginning to subside, and confidence in the maintenance of peace has been strengthened by speeches from M. Ribot and General Caprivi, both optimistic in tone.

The refusal of the two Berlin firms who had originally undertaken to present the Russian loan to the German public to place it on the Money Market has given great offence at St. Petersburg, and is the one disquieting event of the week.

The visit of the Austrian Emperor to Bohemia has been marked by much enthusiasm, and a drawing together of the two contending nationalities is confidently expected. The explosion of two bombs under a bridge near Reichenberg, over which the



Emperor was to pass is not regarded as a serious attempt at assassination.

Between twenty-five and fifty thousand persons are estimated to have been present at the great ceremony in St. Peter's on Tuesday. The Pope is described as showing extreme exhaustion. No wonder, if, as is stated, he spoke a kind word to every one of the three thousand pilgrims who had defiled before him on the previous day; but to speak only a word to three thousand persons in five hours would be a feat beyond Leo's falling strength.

The Marquis di Rudini is now expected to make his "programme-speech" at Rome on October 15th. M. Lazzatti will probably on that occasion elaborate the financial and economic programme of the Government.

The Congress on Accidents to Workmen, which concluded at Berne on Saturday—at which, by the way, England was quite unrepresented—is referred to in another column. Statistical and Literary Congresses have been sitting in Vienna and Neuchâtel.

A memorandum by the Financial Commissioner seems to indicate that there are in Upper Burma two millions of people without means of purchasing food, and that even if they had money there is no food for them. More trouble is expected from the Tsawbwa of Wuntho.

There is no new development in China, but the Peking authorities are filled with the most laudable intentions.

News of Captain Younghusband—who is even reported to have been killed by the advancing Russians—is still awaited.

There is no confirmation of a reported revolution in Guatemala. Chili is quiet, and Mr. Egan seems to have succeeded in allaying the suspicions excited by his recent conduct.

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#### THE CHIEF PILLAR OF LIBERALISM.

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I DO not believe that even yet the leaders of parties in England are fully alive to the vast and preponderating force which the labourers' vote is going to be in the future political history of this country. I don't know any political entity that is more misunderstood—except by those who have gone much among them—than the labourer. I remember the first time I made his acquaintance; it was at the historic Spalding election, at which Mr. Halley Stewart practically began the great record of Liberal victory at the bye-elections. I went down to the campaign in fear and trembling. A resident all my life in towns, and for nearly twenty years a Cockney by adoption and habit, I knew nothing of the labourer save in caricature and in fiction. I had spoken a short time before to a very intelligent member of the Home Rule Union, engaged in the work of lecturing and providing lecturers for the rural regions on the Home Rule Question. "The first thing," he said, half jocosely, half seriously, "we tell our lecturers is that they must forget all their lofty style of speaking on political subjects; that they must begin by remembering that the labourers they are going to address are ignorant, not only of politics but of everything else—including geography; and the very first thing they must do is to state that Ireland is an island; that an island means a piece of land surrounded by water; and that, therefore, Ireland is not like an English county whence the Irish labourers can cross over to lower English wages and cut English throats." By the way, let me make the remark in passing that even political lies come under the reproach of there being nothing new under the sun. You will find in Macaulay a long account of the trepidation and, if I remember rightly, the bloodshed which were caused in the reign of James II. by a report that the Irish savages were coming over to slaughter law-abiding Englishmen."

These were the views with which I started on my

journey to the Spalding division. I can never forget that first meeting of labourers I addressed. I will not weary your readers by a description of personal feeling, which is apt to bore and cannot help appearing egotistic. Suffice it to say that, in the course of a somewhat varied experience, I never remember to have addressed an audience more ready, responsive, and intelligent, than this audience of Lincolnshire labourers. I have had to speak to audiences of labourers many times since; I know no audience which it is easier or more satisfactory to address. My experience in Spalding set me a-thinking, and this is the conclusion I have come to with regard to the labourer; That in many respects he bears a curiously close resemblance to the small Irish farmer. And first, in this respect, that the hard necessities of his lot have made him a much keener and better politician than a great many that consider themselves his betters. Compare the labourer, for instance, with the farmer. I have had electioneering experience of the latter category also. I well remember during a bye-election we were followed in one town from meeting to meeting by a Tory farmer. I shall never forget the face of that unmitigated ruffian. Red and swollen with beer-drinking, with racial hatred, with brute prejudice and intolerance, it inspired in me a feeling of loathing and disgust that I remember distinctly to this day. The Tory farmer had but one argument; and that was to drown the voice of a political opponent with shouts. In short, in political method, every Tory farmer that I have ever met seemed to be on the level of the civilisation and culture of Dahomey. The chief political doctrine of the Tory farmer that I have ever discovered is a belief in Protection; and a vague hope that if only the Tories had the power they would restore it; which is, indeed, quite true—except that even a Tory majority can never have sufficient power to do that.

But to return to the labourer: his hard lot has set him, like the Irish farmer, thinking; and he has reached political conclusions which, to us at least, who believe in popular doctrines, appear to be sound and just. And the second resemblance between the English labourer and the Irish farmer is, that they both look—and justly—to legislation for vast and immediate relief of some at least of the grievances of their lot. Everybody knows that the legislation of the last ten years has put millions of money directly into the pockets of the Irish tenantry: or, perhaps, to be a little more accurate, has kept millions of money from leaving their pockets. Surely, everybody can see that, when we have established in England popular Parish Councils with the power to deal with the charities and the allotment, a large amount will also be given—or rather restored—to the agricultural labourer. Furthermore, when the Liberal majority comes to seriously deal with the Land Question, and especially with the Allotment Question, they will do their work very badly indeed if they do not add a vast amount to the resources, the comfort, and the chances of the labourer. To the labourer, then, in England, as to the farmer in Ireland, politics is not a pastime or a struggle for abstract principle; it is a struggle for material, visible, attainable advantage. Of course, politics has its higher and more passionate side with the labourer as well—the hatred of wrong, the resentment of injustice; sometimes, the strong sectarian feeling that rages between church and chapel in rural England. Finally, the English labourer is like the Irish farmer in being simple, straightforward, and single-minded in his political views. Both classes know what they want, and go for it straight. In the English towns, you have never a class wholly united in one great object, or even on half a dozen common objects. The town dwellers, even of the same class, get divided by fads and side-issues; vaccination, nationalisation of the land, and so on, and perhaps some incident of foreign policy—painful and tragic, like the death of Gordon, but altogether outside the great and fundamental struggles

of principle between the two parties. But in the county districts, the labourer has two or three plain issues upon which, and upon which alone, he will fight, or even think—at least, for the moment; and therein he shows, to my mind, his political judgment, and enormously strengthens his power as a dominating political factor.

I think, from what I have seen in county constituencies, then, that the labourer can be relied on, if only he get the chance, to be the mainstay and centre of the Liberal Army of the future. It may seem exaggeration, but I am convinced that, with proper organisation, with a good programme, with suitable candidates, and with good agents, we could win every single county seat in England at the next election. There are some things more wanted, and first among these I would put a good labourers' newspaper. The reader will smile—and naturally—at the cry of the journalist that there is nothing like leather. But has there ever been any vast class in a community that has been stirred to its depths in modern time without the agency of a newspaper? Irish Nationalists date modern Ireland largely from the day when Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and a few other young men started the *Nation* newspaper. What is wanted for the labourer is some great organ which will give expression to his dumb thoughts and aspirations, which will present in microcosm the hardships, the tyrannies, the daily life of the villager in every part of the country, and in that way, and by the infection of communication, infuse fire and ardour and a united movement into the class throughout the whole country. I know that much good work is already being done by Liberal journals in several county towns; but the class wants to be brought into communication all over the country, and this can only be done by a journal issued from the metropolis. Such a journal would not interfere in the least with the local journal—the two would supplement each other. I know also that there are one or two labourers' journals already in existence, but they have not a large circulation. All practical journalists, I think, will agree with me that a class paper for the poor with only class news has never a chance of paying. The poor, of course, are interested in the affairs of their own order, but they want all the rest of the news as well. The poorest of our population can now get ten or twelve or sixteen pages of a newspaper, with a full record of the whole week, for a penny; and so long as they can do that, they are not going to spend the one penny they can afford on a newspaper which gives them nothing but a brief and scanty record of their own class. The true way to make a good newspaper for the labourer, or any other class of working men, is to give them—first, a large supply of news, and then let the leading columns be the expression and advocacy of their views and interests.

And, finally, to retain the labourers' vote it is necessary that the Liberal party should take their case in hand much more seriously than it has ever yet done. I don't like to speak harshly of the General Election of 1886; it is so easy to be wise after the event. But most people who are acquainted with the agricultural constituencies say that one of the many reasons why the labourers' vote was so light on the Liberal side at that election was that there was a feeling of discouragement and disappointment that the great majority, which the labourers had helped to create, had dissolved without doing anything for the labourer. The mistake must not be repeated. It is not premature even now to speculate on what the great Liberal majority of next election will do with itself. I am strongly of opinion that that majority will act most unwisely if it allow itself to be dissolved until it is able to take to the labourer some good and strong measure of relief, at least honestly and courageously attempted, if not accomplished. Radicals are getting tired of the House of Lords being allowed to dictate to Liberal Ministries the length of their existence and the season of their appeal to the nation. There is a

strong and widespread, though, perhaps, still vague, hope that the second next election may bring to the front the final conflict between the voice of the nation and the arrogance of a hereditary chamber. I trust, if that struggle should come, there may be joined to the other forces making for a spring-tide of stormy feeling against the House of Lords an agricultural population, which the Liberal party has made happier and more prosperous, or which a Tory party and the House of Lords have exasperated to the fever pitch that makes revolutionary change possible. T. P. O'CONNOR.

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#### MR. GLADSTONE AT NEWCASTLE.

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##### A JOURNALIST'S REMINISCENCE.

IT is not of the visit which the Liberal leader is at this moment paying to the great city on the banks of the Tyne that I have to speak, but of one which he paid to the same place just nine-and-twenty years ago. There are probably few among those who will cheer Mr. Gladstone to-day when he receives the honorary citizenship of Newcastle who joined in the welcome given to him in the same city in October, 1862. Yet those who do so can bear testimony to the fact that even then Mr. Gladstone's presence excited the people of the northern town to a display of enthusiasm of a very remarkable character. How it came about that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he then was, received an invitation to a public banquet at Newcastle, in which the leading Liberals of the north of England were to take part, it is difficult now to state. The step had probably something to do with that awakening of political feeling on the banks of the Tyne which was then taking place. In the previous year Lord Russell had been entertained in the Newcastle Town Hall by a great gathering of northern magnates, but the celebration in his honour had been essentially Whiggish in its character, and the Radicals of Northumberland, determined not to be outdone by the Whigs, proffered Mr. Gladstone an invitation to a similar entertainment in 1862. The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Gladstone, upon whom the hopes of the Radical party were then just beginning to be fixed, went to Newcastle to receive what he himself described as the most magnificent welcome ever tendered to him. I can still remember the scene in the ugly Town Hall on the night of the banquet, at which he was the honoured guest, and can still recall the melodious accents of that wonderful voice then heard by many of us for the first time. Even then Mr. Gladstone seemed to be an old man, though he was still only advancing to his prime. But the record of work which lay behind him was so long and varied, his achievements had already been so great, that there was not one of us who joined in the welcome he received when he rose to speak, who in his wildest dreams could have imagined that nine-and-twenty years afterwards Mr. Gladstone would be standing in the same building, not merely to receive another mark of honour from the citizens of Newcastle, but to hear their voices encouraging him on the eve of another great political contest in which he was to take the leading part. The speech which he made in response to the toast of his health was one of historic interest, and upon one passage in it the people of Great Britain immediately fastened. It was that in which, referring to the civil war then raging in the United States, he made his famous declaration that Jefferson Davis seemed to him to have made a nation. I can remember how, when he used these words, even those who were under the spell of his eloquence lapsed into silence, and ceased for a moment to applaud. Of all the many utterances of his public life it was, perhaps, that which gave the most just cause of offence to the party of which he is now the leader and the idol. But the offending, such as it was, was nobly atoned for at no distant date, and the remem-

brance of that ill-omened declaration in the Town Hall of Newcastle has long since been obliterated.

It was on the following day, however, that the greatest demonstration in Mr. Gladstone's honour took place, and, in its way, it was almost unique. The River Tyne Commissioners, an important and most useful public body, invited the great Minister to survey the Tyne from Newcastle to its mouth. A vast flotilla of steamboats accompanied the vessel reserved for Mr. Gladstone and the principal guests, and the banks on both sides of the river were lined by enthusiastic crowds. From first to last his progress was a veritable triumph. At the great piers in progress at Tynemouth and South Shields he went ashore to receive addresses of welcome from representatives of various public bodies, and on the return journey to Newcastle he was entertained at a sumptuous banquet and again right royally toasted. Nowhere else in the United Kingdom is the presence of human energy of no common order more clearly indicated than on the River Tyne below Newcastle. There is hardly an inch of the way where great factories, coal staithes, docks, and wharves, do not meet the eye; there is not a spot where one cannot see the signs of man's industry and enterprise. Mr. Gladstone admitted that he was fairly astonished by all that he saw before him, and, even accustomed as he was to the vast commerce of Liverpool, he was impressed by the scene presented on this river where manufacturing industry lives side by side with mercantile enterprise, and where one seems to have been suddenly plunged into one of the great workshops of the world. Mrs. Gladstone was his companion, and I can well remember the words she spoke on that memorable day, expressive of the delight with which she had witnessed a scene that was then new to her, and of the joy with which she recognised the cordiality and enthusiasm of the greeting given to her husband. Since then he has had many a reception surpassing in its magnitude that which was given to him in 1862 on his visit to the Tyne, but he can have had none which impressed him more deeply. It was almost the first occasion upon which he, the representative of one of the Universities and but recently a member of the Tory party, found himself the object of a great popular demonstration of confidence and affection, and I have reason to know that the recollection of it has never been effaced from his mind. Newcastle in this, as in many other public works, "showed the way," and thus heads the list of those great English towns in which Mr. Gladstone has received that welcome which in other days was reserved for kings and conquerors. One may be sure that his first visit to the place has been recalled to his mind during the present week; nor can one doubt that although the lifetime of a whole generation has elapsed since that visit took place, the feelings with which the sturdy men of the Tyne regard him are as warm and enthusiastic to-day as they were in that bygone year.

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DR. SPENCE WATSON.

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THE good old city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne has legitimate reason to be proud of the circumstances under which the meetings of the National Liberal Federation are being held within its walls—and there are still literal "town walls" at Newcastle—during the present week. Not only is one of the most distinguished members of the Liberal party—the man whose utterances, next to those of Mr. Gladstone himself, are most eagerly awaited—one of the Members for Newcastle, but the President of the Federation is himself a Tyneside man, born and reared within sound of the sonorous bell of St. Nicholas—the time-honoured "major," which performs on the banks of the Tyne the functions allotted to Big Ben on the banks of the Thames. Dr. Spence Watson's political career synchronises with that growth of modern Liberalism which dates from the agitation for the

Household Suffrage Bill of 1867. The agitation, it need hardly be said, was carried on for years before a successful issue was reached, and nowhere was it carried on with greater vigour than at Newcastle. The Liberalism of the people in that ancient city had long been conspicuous, and had possessed a singularly robust character. In the days of the old Reform Movement, Newcastle had sent famous orators into the field to do battle against the rampant political corruption, and these had set forth demands going far beyond the limits of the Reform Bill as it was carried by Parliament. The Chartists were a powerful and ardent body in the local life of the town, and such a man as Charles Larkin, the Newcastle surgeon whose eloquence entranced multitudes and alarmed an Administration, long kept alive in the place the tradition of that fervent movement on behalf of the rights of men. But gradually, under the influence of the middle-class constitution of the time, the political life of Newcastle, so far as its Parliamentary representation was concerned, lapsed into a state of lethargy. Newcastle was Liberal, in the sense in which the word Liberal was used in those days. In other words, it was Whig; and a Whig solicitor of immense local influence was popularly believed to carry the representation of the borough in his pocket. At all events, for many a long year no man was allowed to sit for Newcastle who was not a member of some old Tyneside family. He might have brains and Liberal instincts in addition, but family name and influence were indispensable. Twice attempts were made to throw off the galling yoke of the solicitor (who was also town clerk). The first occasion was in 1857, when the local Dissenters brought down from London a gentleman named Carstairs as their candidate. Mr. Carstairs was a worthy man of somewhat Pickwickian aspect, who, having acquired a fortune in India, was ambitious of a seat in the House of Commons. What chance he might have had under more favourable circumstances it is impossible now to say; but he absolutely killed his prospects on his first appearance at a public meeting of the electors by beginning his address with these remarkable words: "Electors of Newcastle-on-Tyne, four-and-twenty hours ago I hardly knew that such a town as this existed"! It is needless to say that an ancient community steeped in old traditions, time-honoured prejudices and a liberal self-esteem, made short work of Mr. Carstairs after this simple confession. It was not the Dissenters, but the Radicals—name abhorred in those days—who made the next attempt to break the Whig domination. Their leader was Mr. Joseph Cowen, Junr., and they imported into the town Mr. Peter Taylor, of Leicester, then comparatively unknown in politics, and ran him against a strong local candidate. He was beaten at the poll: but on the nomination day he had an overwhelming majority in the "show of hands" at the hustings, and it was made evident that, if household suffrage had been in force, he would have been triumphantly returned. The Radicals groaned under their ill-success, and worked harder than ever to obtain the extension of the suffrage; but it was not until, learning something of the wisdom of the serpent, they found a candidate who had local influence of his own at his back—the late Sir Joseph Cowen—that they were at last able to break the power of the mighty, and to secure a representative who was neither a needy place-hunter nor a Whig aristocrat.

Honour to whom honour is due! At that time the leavening spirit in Tyneside Liberalism was Joseph Cowen—"Young Joe," as he was called, to distinguish him from his father. He and Robert Spence Watson have travelled far apart since those times; and to-day the man who was once the leader and the idol of the popular party in Newcastle sits moodily in his tent whilst the Liberal army is in the field. But neither Dr. Watson nor any other Newcastle Liberal who was his contemporary will refuse to acknowledge the debt he owes to Mr. Cowen.

Sympathy with oppressed nationalities abroad was the key-note of Tyneside Liberalism in those days—ay, and not oppressed foreign nationalities alone. Under the inspiration of Mr. Cowen's generous eloquence the cause of Ireland made many friends on the banks of the Tyne in the days when its friends were but few in the land. For years the Lecture Room at Newcastle was one of the few public gathering-places in England where any man who represented an oppressed race, any victim of tyranny or cruelty, even though he was an Irishman, was certain of receiving a warm welcome and a respectful hearing. Among all the cities of the Old World, Newcastle held, in the minds of such men, a peculiar place. Thither went Garibaldi, when he was the simple captain of a merchantman, to receive the sword of honour for which the sturdy Radicals of Newcastle subscribed long before he had become famous by his raid on the Two Sicilies. Mazzini, Kossuth, Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Felice Orsini, Dr. Bernard, and many another patriot who was proscribed in his own country, entered Newcastle as a conqueror and a hero, under Mr. Cowen's auspices. And the young Liberals of the town became filled with a generous sympathy with the oppressed throughout the world. Their hearts beat in unison with the Italians of Lombardy and Naples, with the Poles and the Hungarians, as well as with those Germans and Frenchmen who were seeking to substitute constitutional for despotic forms of government. It was a source of pride to them in those days that Mr. Cowen was forbidden to enter any of the great States of Central Europe, and that there was not a Continental despot on whose black books his name was not inscribed.

Young Robert Spence Watson was at this time in the fullest sympathy with the man who seemed to be his natural leader, and to this day, as many know, he remains true in his heart to the victims of foreign despotism. None was more enthusiastic than he in the great contest which resulted in the return of Mr. Cowen to Parliament in 1873, and for some years afterwards Mr. Cowen had in him his warmest and most useful supporter. But when the Jingo fever spread throughout the land, and it seemed as though England were about to be involved in a wicked war for the purpose of propping up the decaying power of the Turk in Europe, there was a fierce struggle in the breasts of the Liberals of Newcastle. Mr. Cowen had taken sides with the Jingo, and not a few of those who had loved him and followed him most gladly, now sorrowfully turned away from him. Some, indeed, embittered the situation by using that language of sharp reproach which springs naturally to the lips of outraged affection. They had loved and honoured the man who seemed to them to have suddenly betrayed them; and the greater their love and honour had been, the more keen and bitter were now their reproaches. Dr. Spence Watson was not one of these. Unswerving in his resolve to follow Mr. Gladstone in the great conflict of opinion in the years between 1876 and 1880, he was still mindful of the services which Mr. Cowen had rendered to the Liberal party in the past, and hopeful of a time when the existing differences might be healed. It was not to be. The moment came when Dr. Watson had to choose between loyalty to his own conscience and friendship for Mr. Cowen. He could not and did not hesitate; and the earnest Liberals of Newcastle, who, by the defection of the man they idolised, had found themselves as sheep without a shepherd, hailed the young lawyer with acclamation and followed his leadership with gladness. Since then the power of Liberalism in Newcastle has been steadily growing. The good seed sown by Mr. Cowen in the old days has not been lost. Your Newcastle Liberal still has sympathies and views and aspirations which travel far beyond the limits of his own country; but in all that concerns the affairs of the United Kingdom he is sound in his devotion to Liberal principles, and

has resolutely turned his back upon the plague of Jingoism. As for Dr. Watson, he is an ideal leader of a party. A man who has travelled in many lands and seen much, a scholar, a man-of-letters, an excellent speaker, an enthusiast whose judgment is always cool—above all, a Liberal whose instincts are naturally right at all times, and on all questions—he seems born for the position he has held now for several years in his native town, as well as for that higher position which he occupies this week.

#### THE COUNTY COUNCILS AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

“WHAT shall I do with it, sir?” she said,” was a rustic difficulty which might serve as a motto for the County Council meetings for the consideration of the grant in aid of technical instruction. It is £713,000, a sum equal to a penny rate throughout the country! Though its use for technical education is permissive, only the continuance of the grant will probably be conditional upon its being mainly so applied. The County Councils, with the important exceptions of those of London and Middlesex, are practically unanimous in allotting the greater part of the funds placed at their disposal to technical instruction, and thirty-eight of the sixty-one County Councils are devoting the whole of their share of the grant to this purpose. Committees of the Councils are now busily engaged in considering the details of schemes of instruction, and the applications for aid which are pouring in on all sides from educational institutions.

The most important feature of these schemes is the prominence which is given to provisions for instruction in agricultural districts. This is quite as marked a feature in the schemes for Lancashire and the West Riding as in those of the non-manufacturing counties. Among the hundred and one applications received by the Lancashire committee from educational institutions, not one came from the rural districts of the county. Fortunately, the committee had the sense to perceive that this very circumstance emphasised the backward condition of these districts, and a considerable share of the fund will be allotted to the salaries of peripatetic lecturers on agricultural subjects, to the establishment of a migratory dairy school, and so forth. The West Riding has a still more extensive scheme of agricultural instruction, in which it is probable that the other Ridings may join. The Yorkshire College, Leeds, will form the central institution for agricultural teaching, with a chair of agriculture and lecturers in special departments of the subject. By the Act of March, 1891, the aid of County Councils is no longer restricted to institutions within their own administrative district; so that the Yorkshire College, which is in the County Borough of Leeds, is eligible for assistance from the West Riding fund, and even from those of the North and East Ridings. There will be a staff of peripatetic teachers connected with the college, and plots of land will be obtained in various parts of the county for conducting practical experiments on the use of chemical manures. Another important feature of the scheme will be the provision of classes for schoolmasters, attendance on which will, it is hoped, qualify them for, at all events, the more elementary part of the specialised instruction in the principles of agriculture which it is hoped will become a part of the regular work of continuation schools in the country districts. The provision of scholarships will absorb a considerable portion of the funds. These will be, first £1 to £10 scholarships for young students passing from elementary to continuation schools; and secondly, more valuable scholarships, up to £60, to enable students to attend the technical schools or university colleges. The sons of farmers will probably have a preferential



claim for these scholarships, and the needs of those desiring to become teachers will also receive special consideration. At the College of Science, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a complete agricultural department is in like manner being organised, which will stand to the county of Northumberland in the same relation as that of the Yorkshire College to the West Riding. The cost of this department, exclusive of extension work, is estimated at £1,600 or £1,700 a year. Northumberland receives £11,000 from the Government fund for the current year, and if, as there seems reasonable ground to believe, the Government grant to the County Councils will be continued in future years, the County Council would be in a position to bear no inconsiderable portion of this expenditure in return for the services which such a central organisation would confer on the whole county.

The problem of agricultural instruction presents itself in a somewhat different form in counties where no such central institution exists. Devonshire is an example of such a county, in which the first attempt has already been made to grapple with the problem. The scheme adopted in Devonshire for the present year has taken the form of an extensive system of local lectures undertaken by the University Extension Organisation of Oxford and Cambridge. Lecturers have been at work in thirty-eight centres. The courses are on mechanics and chemistry, and their object is to arouse interest in the movement throughout the county and to pave the way for the appreciation of more specialised instruction. Of the more specialised instruction applicable in rural districts that in dairy work has so far met with the most general support. This is no doubt due to the success which has attended the dairy schools conducted during recent years in various districts, notably at the well-known dairy school of Kilmarnock, and the migratory dairy school established three years ago by the Bath and West of England Agricultural Society; and it has been repeatedly demonstrated that a short course of instruction at these institutions enables pupils with a previous knowledge of general dairy-work to make butter of such superior quality as to obtain two-pence or threepence per pound weight above the current price of the butter of the district.

In many counties travelling dairy schools are already at work, and are uniformly appreciated. The cost of carrying on these schools is high. The Hampshire County Council, for instance, are spending £900 on dairy instruction. In other counties the estimated cost is about one-half the above figure, but this is where a large part of the expenses are borne by the localities visited—a bad principle, we think, as it generally results in the benefit of the travelling dairy being available only in neighbourhoods where some wealthy proprietor takes an interest in the subject. The districts which need the teaching most are often passed over, as there is no one to guarantee the requisite share of the expenses.

In Gloucestershire, the School of Cookery and Domestic Economy has received from the County Council a share of the Government fund, and in this and other counties the instruction of women is receiving material assistance from the new fund. We note that a petition has been forwarded to the County Councils from the Oxford Association for the Education of Women, and other bodies, suggesting the foundation of County Scholarships, to enable girls to pass from places of elementary education to colleges at which more advanced instruction can be obtained.

The question of inspection and examination will demand careful attention as the schemes of the County Councils come into operation, in order that there shall be a sufficient guarantee that the money expended is properly applied. The Science and Art Department and the City Guilds Institute will have a share in this work; but there is an evident disinclination to follow the system of testing

by the results of individual examination, and a report on general efficiency will probably in many cases be taken as the basis of future grants. The Technical Education Committee for the West Riding have given very definite expression to their distrust of the method of payment by results, and anticipate in their report the probable need for the employment of a special inspector acting on behalf of the County Council. The arrangements which may be made for inspection and examination can in any case only be regarded as provisional, until England possesses a comprehensive scheme of secondary education such as already exists in Wales.

It is an important question for the County Councils to decide, whether the non-county boroughs shall receive aid on the same terms as the rural districts, or whether the money shall be handed over to the Town Councils. The Lancashire County Council has decided to keep the fund in their own hands, and in other cases it is probable that the Town Councils will be required to adopt the Technical Instruction Act and levy a rate as a condition of receiving grants from the fund to administer for themselves. The county boroughs receive a share of the fund allotted to the whole county, and their wants are therefore attended to by their own Councils. In Sheffield, where the Technical Instruction Act of 1889 was adopted, the funds placed at the disposal of various educational institutions in the borough in 1889 and 1890 resulted in a very marked increase in efficiency all round. The success which attended the experiment has decided the Education Committee to recommend the allocation of the whole of the new fund to the same purpose, in addition to levying a farthing rate. The technical school is to receive £5,800, the School Board £500, on condition that three-fourths of this sum be devoted to district evening classes and continuation schools; and among the other grants may be noticed one of £160 to the Yorkshire Ladies' Council of Education. In Bristol, the Education Committee proposes to devote a considerable proportion of the fund to scholarships at the Merchant Venturers' School and other institutions, and allots a sum of £300 towards the formation of a school of cookery. Among the subjects suggested for evening classes are shorthand and book-keeping, and £100 is voted for a course of popular lectures on the nursing of the sick and similar subjects.

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#### FRENCH LITERATURE.

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THERE hung on the walls of Burlington House, two or three summers ago, the portrait of a pretty lady, clad in a grey morning costume obviously "composed" by Worth or Pingat, sauntering along an evidently mundane sea-beach—Étretat, say, or Trouville. Very few people paused to inspect this portrait, for it happened to be a work of art. Those who did pause found that the lady was described as Madame la Comtesse de Martel, and for the most part they went unenlightened away. Yet it would be only slightly extravagant to say that this lady of whose name they were ignorant is one of the most astonishing talents of the century. Mme. de Martel comes, to begin with, of an astonishing stock. She is the great-granddaughter of a Mirabeau—not "the" Mirabeau, but "the other" Mirabeau, Mirabeau-Tonneau. And her talent is even more "lordly and surprising" (as Swift said of some opponent's language) than her ancestry. For she is "Gyp." Now to be "Gyp" is a really brilliant achievement. *Ne fait pas ce tour qui vult.* For to be "Gyp" is to be at once a *Parisienne parisienne*; a cynic philosopher; an aristocrat-democrat; a keen observer of the "half-world" from the point of view of the "world," and of the "world" from that of the "half-world;" a wit; a mistress of dialogue; and the incarnation of modernity in petticoats. Some there are who, if asked to discover the quintessence of modern Parisianism, would



find it in M. Renan; others in M. Rochefort; others in "Grosclaude"; others in M. Paulus of the cafés-concerts. But we are for finding it in "Gyp." In her you have the *esprit gaulois* thrice distilled. Anything, therefore, less English it would be impossible to conceive. One forbears to inquire in what guise she would present herself to the keepers of the Nonconformist Conscience. As the Scarlet Lady, doubtless. But she is, nevertheless, what Mr. Christopher Newman would call an immense fact. Her popularity among readers of both sexes and in both hemispheres is out of all questioning. Hedda Gabler reads her in Christiania, and Féedora Romazoff in St. Petersburg, and Mr. W. D. Howells' young ladies (secretly) in Boston. Her most successful book—she has published some scores—has reached its seventy-fifth edition. For the jaded Londoner she offers a quicker route to Paris than the Club-Train. You open one of her books in Piccadilly, and straightway you are transported to the Boulevard between the Madeleine and Tortoni's. You sniff the asphalt, you hear the *camelots* shrieking "Le Soir-r-r! ach'tez l'Soir-r-r! dix centimes!" at the restaurant door. And you have accomplished the journey for just three francs fifty.

It is a rude shock to one's gallant instincts to have to reflect that this fascinating personality must now be considered as "of a certain age." For "Gyp" has recently taken to analysing the rising generation—an infallible sign that the analyst belongs to the risen. Her study of French girlhood—"Loulou"—was one of her best things. This wayward heroine was a little convent-bred aristocrat who obstinately persisted in remaining a child of nature, in scandalising her papa by conversing affably with street-arabs, in admiring *chocolat Marquis* and M. Andrieux, in detesting "good form" and M. Floquet. One loved this terrible infant, and profoundly pitied the man she was destined to marry. To "Loulou" we now have a pendant in "Monsieur Fred" (Calmann Lévy), a study of French hobbledchoyhood. The boy, however, is as detestable as the girl was charming. Fred is a little monster of perversity, innate viciousness, cynicism, and ignorance. He is just nineteen. When he is twenty-one he will be the Duc de Nevers. Meanwhile he is qualifying himself for his position by trying to pawn the family order, given to his ancestor by Henri Trois—by lying through thick-and-thin to his mamma the Duchess, by intriguing with his mamma's lady friends, and by spending with ladies whose profligacy is only worse than theirs because it is frankly mercenary the evenings which he is supposed to devote to his mathematical tutor—in his own slang, the "répétiteur de math"—who is coaching him for his "bachot." His only advantage over some of our own golden youth is that he does not marry the music-hall singer to whose cult he is devoted. He is also a shade better than they in his intellects. For he has been to the Français and can mimic great tragedians:—

*La Duchesse.*—Mais M. de Santander est un homme charmant! . . . il était de la suite de Don Carlos! . . .  
*Monsieur Fred* (déclamant pompeusement à la Mounet-Sully, en montrant ses dents).—"Oui, de ta suite, ô roi, de ta suite, j'en suis."

He has even read Lombroso on criminology:—

Cette dame a—à mon gré—trop d'yeux et trop de cheveux pour une personne seule. . . . Lombroso vous dira que c'est un signe certain de criminalité originelle . . .

Nay! he has enough brains to make a shrewd house-agent:—

As-tu fait valoir toutes ses qualités, à l'appartement? . . . as-tu dit qu'il a deux sorties, et que de nulle part . . . de nulle part, entends-tu bien . . . on ne voit la tour Eiffel? . . .

On the whole, there is no gainsaying that this rising hope of the old French nobility is an odious little cad. One pities, too, his partner for life, as one pitied Loulou's. There is a bitter taste of irony in the concluding sentence of the book: "Monsieur Fred est tout-à-fait mûr pour le mariage!" Is this a true picture, one wonders, of the French aristocrat

of to-morrow? If so, the Republic stands sufficiently excused. The Puritan moralist will find the book an excellent opportunity for improving the occasion; but the average sensual man (and woman) will prefer to regard it as a piquant *chasse* to their coffee. And yet . . . and yet . . . one wonders, with a vague disquietude, what sort of books "Gyp" will write in her old age—if "Gyp" can ever grow old.

Among the current Parisian topics which Monsieur Fred and his friends discuss are the songs of Mademoiselle Yvette Guilbert, and the sermons of the Abbé d'Hulst. Further information about these notorieties of the hour may be gleaned from M. Hugues le Roux's "Portraits de Cire" (Lecène, Oudin). The title of his book, M. le Roux is careful to explain, is not fantastic. He gives us a series of portraits of contemporaries—literary, artistic, theatrical, and ecclesiastical—in wax, not "bustified" in bronze. Rather, they represent the art of the Interviewer devulgarised, leavened with easy erudition, keen criticism, apt literary allusion. Here we see short-sighted Alphonse Daudet writing with his nose against the paper, and Guy de Maupassant in his habit as he lives, the clown Chadwick at home, and La Belle Fatma in her booth at the fair of St. Cloud. But we see them all through the spectacles of a scholar and a gentleman. M. le Roux dissects his trivial subjects as gracefully and good-humouredly as the short-faced man dissected the trivialities, the Beau's heart and the Belle's fan, of the Augustan age. The theatrical ladies are, of course, the most amusing: your French journalist (M. le Roux is a distinguished contributor to the *Temps*) seems, lucky fellow, to act as Father Confessor to them all. And the fashionable preachers—there appear to be a good many rivals of the Rev. Charles Honeyman in Paris just now—are not bad fun. About the "littery chaps" there was less that was new to be told; they are already public property; and M. Rochefort's tuft or M. Renan's nose is as well known over here as on the Boulevards. We learn, however, for the first time, perhaps, that M. Guy de Maupassant—contrary to expectation, for he strikes one as a born writer—did not take to writing because he couldn't help it, but out of sheer ratiocination. A clerk in the French Admiralty, he pined for fresh air and liberty, and convinced himself, by logically working the question out, that the only way to attain these desirable ends was through literature. "But," he says, "I am certain that I was no more born to write than for any other business. The truth is that never once in my life have I found any pleasure in literary work. Literature has never been for me anything but a means of enfranchisement." Contrast with this the irresistible "vocation" of M. Hugues le Roux himself, who actually took a lodging opposite the house of M. Daudet, in order that he might bombard his literary idol with manuscript stories, and letters beginning "*Monsieur, je suis le petit Chose.* . . ." For the rest, let it be said for the benefit of grandmotherly library committees that the "Portraits de Cire" of M. le Roux are like those of a greater showman, Artemus Ward: they are "moral wax-figgers."

MR. HENRY JAMES.

WHATEVER may be the fate of *The American*, Mr. James should have no regrets over last Saturday. For it was not until he made his first appearance in London as a playwright that the full extent of our admiration for him as a novelist became apparent. We mean no malice in saying this. The art of this novelist has always been so quiet and so serious that noisy demonstrations of delight in it have an air of "bad form." Somehow the reader feels, at any rate, that Mr. James would consider them "bad form." This may be a mistake. It may be that Mr. James has been yearning, all this while, for louder appreciation, and his admirers have

been, as the small boy said of his sister, too infernally well-behaved. We ought all perhaps to have cried "Modernity!" and joined in Mr. W. D. Howells' hallelujahs. But by this time, at any rate, Mr. James should have no doubt that the admiration felt for his work and the interest with which it is followed are both sincere and widely spread. Why has his new venture been watched so eagerly? Surely not because we are all on thorns until our British drama is revived and made intelligent. We doubt if the popular desire for this revivification be at all commensurate with the talk about it. Anyhow, it is not large enough to account for the real pains which all the critics have taken to write remarks of some value on last Saturday's performance. And most of them have admitted this. To be sure, there is one gentleman who enhances the intrinsic worth of his remarks by spreading them over many papers, and who believes, or professes to believe, that *The American* was intended to tilt against the old traditions of the stage: or, to put it in his own words, "As in the self-assertive opinion of the young gentlemen of the 'cock-sure school,' the poor old British drama is supposed to be in a very bad way, it has been decided to call in medical advice. The first remedy prescribed is a dose of Dr. James's powder." The humour of this is more conspicuous than its truth. Everyone who knows Mr. Henry James knows him for the most modest of men. He is also, on all questions relating to his art, extremely slow to dogmatise and extremely swift to sympathise. To imagine him charging in among our playwrights as a lively ball among ninepins, or standing up, a "forward impudent," and telling them "You know nothing of your trade, and by your leave, I'm going to show you how a play should be written," is quite too far from the mark. As a matter of fact, Mr. James has been struck with the notion of mastering a second trade, a trade which lies close beside his own but hardly overlaps it at all. Being a sound and careful workman in his own trade, he probably did not expect to write a perfect play at the first attempt. If he could do that, he would probably decide next day that a playwright's art was too easy to be worth following. Nor did he set out with any intention of making our drama "literary." Mr. James may have his faults, but after all he is a more intelligent creature than Mr. Jones. Indeed, if possible, he is too keenly aware of his own limitations.

No; the audience in the Opéra Comique were eager and full of expectation over this experiment, simply because Mr. James has always been an artist, and therefore everything he does is bound to be interesting. He is not the sort of man who can repeat an easy triumph and quiet his soul with the praise of reviewers. Probably there is no living writer with a stronger, more domineering, artistic conscience. He has always been trying to improve on himself, driven, as by a daemon, to experiment and explore. *The American* may, as some assert, be a failure: but one failure of this sort is worth, of course, a hundred successes by Messrs. Sims, Pettitt, Buchanan & Co.

But really the public has been paying Mr. James this week, in a half-hesitating manner, the tribute of a very deep regard. Even where there is little regard, we find respect. It is only illiterate papers now which utter the complaint that "nothing happens" in his novels. The Philistine or Cockney reviewer has dropped his scornfulness and now contents himself with "knowing what he likes" and finding the "Aspern Papers" or "The Tragic Muse" not much in his way. So long as their manners have improved they may be pardoned for their insensibility; for even Touguéneff, with all his generous appreciation of other men's work, was unable to like Mr. James's novels—*tarabiscotée* was, if we remember, his word for the style of them. But by a large number of our younger writers Mr. James's work is regarded with something very like enthusiasm: and it seems a pity,

almost, that his own modesty should have made his admirers so shy. He is *too* English, perhaps; too much afraid of being taken for a mere man of letters. It is not the same sort of fear that Congreve displayed when Voltaire called upon him; but is rather a natural dread of being made ridiculous by the zeal of his disciples. But the worth of few men has to wait long for applause, nowadays: and we have learnt this week to what a surprising extent the deftness and delicacy, the honesty and thoroughness of all his work are known and valued in this country.

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#### OPEN QUESTIONS.

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##### VII.—HOW SHOULD OUR AGES BE SETTLED?

IT is no business of mine particularly, but I have noticed that hardly anyone ever looks exactly the age that he or she is. Everybody looks either younger or older than the reality. There are some ages which nobody, within my own experience, ever looks at all. I have never heard of anyone appearing to be twenty-six: I have heard a man guessed to be twenty-three or twenty-four, put down positively at twenty-five, or allowed the choice between twenty-seven and twenty-eight; but nobody ever guesses twenty-six. Yet twenty-six is a real age; there is nothing offensive about it. I have tried being twenty-six, and rather liked it than not. Still fewer are perfectly content with their real age, if, indeed, there are any such. To think of one's moral mistakes is to wish, of course, to be younger; to think of a coming happiness is to wish the opposite. Many of us would give a good deal sometimes to be one day younger; it happens more rarely that we would give as much to be one day older; we mostly have more to repent than to expect. Every girl looks forward to the day when she will wear her hair up; every woman looks backward to the day when she wore her hair down. At some time between the periods she has passed the perfect time, the age that suited her best, but she has passed it unconsciously. It seems as if we must pass that point during a night's sleep—one of those nights from which we wake discontented but with the vague idea that we have dreamed happily; for we can never remember a day on which we could sit down and say that we wanted never to be any older nor any younger. Indeed, the logical result of such conscious happiness, combined with the certainty of future deterioration, would, of course, be suicide. We may feel sure that no one both looks the age that he is and is the age that he wants to be. To put it briefly, we are all the wrong age. Why is this?

It may possibly be because we are so much more mathematical than our circumstances, and the time-test is wrong. If a man looks twenty and wishes that he was thirty, why should we not find the mean and call him twenty-five, instead of being satisfied for merely arithmetical reasons that he is thirty-two? If he really looks twenty and really wishes he was thirty, he is probably nearer to the average of men at twenty-five than to the average at his nominal age of thirty-two; and if he has the quality of twenty-liveness, it is absurd not to own it. But there are difficulties in the way of this method of fixing an age; we should have to settle exactly how old each person looked. A jury of women might decide the apparent age of men; and a jury of men might decide for the women. The male jury would, of course, have police protection. Even then there would be difficulty, for a woman's apparent age depends to some extent on the thermometer. She always looks older on a cold day. Then, too, there are the mysteries of dress, of which it would be profane to speak. The time-test is unsatisfactory enough; it puts us all at the wrong age, but it is of no use to abolish the time-test unless we can suggest something else.

We might, perhaps, leave the fixing of age to individual choice. The practice would consort well with our native freedom. It is, I know, a common jest that even now, after a certain age, a woman generally does defy the arithmetic and fix her age for herself. This is not so, for there are always too many other women who know all about her; but it is a practice that would consort better with our freedom than our intelligence, for we are always reluctant to exercise individual choice about anything. Opinions are only pardonable when they are copied, and a preference must be general before an individual can use it. The whole question would be settled by items in society papers. If we were told that the smartest people were now chiefly in the thirties, we should fix our age accordingly. If a leader of society decided to be octogenarian, we should not dare to adopt the age of innocence—a year and six months. It is of no use to leave this, or any other question, to individual choice, because we have already decided the individual choice is in bad taste. We feel that if we do not herd, we are lost.

We cannot abolish Time, but we might possibly ignore it. This would, however, be no real remedy. It would not decide what our age was; it would only forget it. When a man feels younger than he is, looks older, and, for different reasons, would like to be both, he cannot be expected to be satisfied with the nominal, delusive age that custom allows him. The time-test is unsatisfactory; but at present I do not quite see what to substitute for it.

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#### THE DRAMA.

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“OH! What a mess I’m in,” cried the Chevalier Walkinshaw on a famous occasion. This week I am like the Chevalier Walkinshaw. I have to criticise a gentleman who knows all about me (“me” is here a philosophic euphemism for the others) beforehand, who has not only discounted all I am going to say, but has already said it himself more skilfully. For Mr. Henry James, who understands everything, also understands that nothing which calls itself criticism. He knows, like the corybantic hymnologists, what it is to be there. “He contented himself with saying that there was no reason a theatrical critic shouldn’t be a gentleman, at the same time that he often remarked that it was an odious trade, which no gentleman could possibly follow.” Quite so. An odious trade it is. Who says this? None other than Mr. Peter Sherringham in the *Tragic Muse*. I was bound to bring in Sherringham. That, again, Mr. Henry James foresaw. And, you see, I have done it. But the trade is odious, not because it is ungentlemanly, but because it is so terribly hard to follow. I read the other day of some little hole-and-corner theatre in Paris, wherein they had printed over the proscenium the conspicuous device: “Art is easy, Criticism is difficult.” Some thought this a trick to soften the heart of the press-gang. Others, that it was an impudent paradox. For my part, I proclaim it a profound truth. It consoles me. They ought to blazon it on the act-drop of the Opéra Comique forthwith.

The peculiar difficulty, as I say, of criticism when confronted by the art of Mr. Henry James is to find judgments which Mr. James himself has not anticipated. I, for one, shall not set out on any quest so hopeless as that. It would be like hunting the Snark. With what grace I may, I shall resign myself to the necessity of having to tell Mr. James what he knows, and has said already. This will be teaching one’s grandmother to suck eggs, or, if Mr. James prefers the Gallic idiom, loutish Jean instructing his curé. “*Connu! Connu!*” I shall seem to hear him objecting to all my appreciations. Ah, yes! It is an odious trade.

*Connu!* the dogma that the novelist should never turn dramatist. To pass from the art of

two dimensions to the art of three, from the novel with its leisurely pace, its wealth of minute detail, its broken lights, its ductility, its vague and shifting moods, to the play, all foreground, glare, hurry, brutal definiteness, this is to pass from the free ambient air into a stifling prison. It has been already said by Mr. Gabriel Nash. “The dramatist shows us so little, is so hampered by his audience, is restricted to so poor an analysis. What can you do with a character, with an idea, with a feeling, between dinner and the suburban trains? You can give a gross, rough sketch of them, but how little you touch them, how bald you leave them. What crudity compared with what the novelist does!” Had he been his homonym the archangel, Gabriel could not have spoken more truly. When one hears that a novelist has taken to play-writing, one leaves a card of condolence on his family. It is as though one learned he had taken to drink or Psychological Research.

*Connu!* the dogma that dramatised novels will never do. We can all rattle through the long list of good novels which have made bad plays. And we have our reasons, pat. The very fact that you first write your story as a novel shows that the novel was its proper form. Squeeze it into dramatic shape, and you deform it. Your best things sink in, your worst things bulge out. That brilliant bit of dialogue—you cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing it. And lo! your action stands still and your characters have become “talky.” That plot which was so plausible, with four hundred pages for its narration, or was, maybe, a negligible quantity in the total impression produced by your book, now cuts a sorry figure under the fierce glare of the footlights. The plain man in the pit is puzzled or incredulous. No, no. Dramatise from life at first hand, not at second hand, out of a novel. . . . I have said this sort of thing so often and with such conviction that I begin to suspect it must be false. (Here, for a moment, I go a-hunting the Snark.) After all, scores of good plays have been made out of novels. The most famous of the younger Dumas’ plays is a dramatised novel, so is the best of Jules Sandeau’s, so the best of Charles Reade’s, so the best of Daudet’s. If you come to that (for the novel, I suppose, includes the *nouvelle*) so are many of the best of Shakespeare’s. . . . But stay! None of these were novels of analysis, like *The American*. How, if you please, is Mr. James, or anyone else, to synthetise analysis? One thinks of Jack Tar’s recipe for making a cannon. You take a hole and put some metal round it. I open Mr. James’s novel at random, and alight on this passage:—

Newman, after he had seated himself, began to consider what, in truth, was his errand. He had an unusual, unexpected sense of having wandered into a strange corner of the world. He was not given, as a general rule, to anticipating danger, or forecasting disaster, and he had had no special tremors on this particular occasion. He was not timid and he was not impudent. He felt too kindly towards himself to be the one, and too good-naturedly towards the rest of the world to be the other. But his native shrewdness sometimes placed his ease of temper at its mercy; with every disposition to take things simply, it was obliged to perceive that some things were not so simple as others. He felt as one does in missing a step in an ascent, where one expected to find it. This strange, pretty woman, sitting in fire-side talk with her brother, in the grey depths of her inhospitable-looking house—what had he to say to her? She seemed enveloped in a sort of fantastic privacy; on what grounds had he pulled away the curtain? For a moment he felt as if he had plunged into some medium as deep as the ocean, and as if he must exert himself to keep from sinking.

I do not offer this chance extract as a *κρήμα ἐς ἄει*. But it is such things as this that give the true note of Mr. Henry James’s talent. Frankly, to read them gives me, in my everyday moods, more pleasure than to read the masterpieces of the immortals. I hear the modern man speaking to the modern man. The speaker is immeasurably my superior; yet I straightway feel myself on the same plane with him. What he expresses, I seem capable, some day or other, of feeling myself. But dramatised this passage, and all my pleasure goes. Newman becomes merely a lanky gentleman in obtrusively new kid gloves. I can no

longer peep into his mind. The inhospitable looking house becomes a few square yards of tawdry canvas, with no grey depths. And where is the pretty lady's fantastic privacy, invaded as it has now been by a whole crowd of intruders from the stalls and the pit?

Unable, then, to achieve the impossible, to synthesise his analysis, Mr. James has had to fall back upon the mere story-telling element of his book, never the strongest element of his work, certainly not a strong element in *The American*. And how does the story, in Christopher Newman's own phrase, pen out in the play? Its central motive remains, a little weakened to be sure, but still there. I mean the motive of bringing in the New World to redress the balance of the Old, of letting a draught of fresh Western air into the musty Faubourg, of reading the Declaration of Independence in the Rue de l'Université. Obviously, all that the dramatist has to do here is to bring into sufficient relief and sharp contrast the buoyancy, imperturbability, openness, essential goodness of his American hero, and the ferocious family pride, the flinty hardness, the sordid selfishness of the Bellegardes. This he does—I had almost said overdoes. Newman is firmly planted on his feet in a really delightful first act (*chez* Mlle. Noémie Nioche), wherein the author's nimble, urbane, discreetly joyous wit finds free play. Miss Adrienne Dairolles was evidently born to play Noémie, who a generation or two earlier would have been Mimi Pinson, and has now narrowly escaped being a Demoiselle Cardinal. And Mr. Edward Compton shows us with a pleasing gust and *brío* the outer man of Christopher Newman—though why that outer man should be clothed in a garment of chocolate faced with sky-blue remains a mystery known only to himself and his tailor. As for the Bellegardes, we are left in no doubt as to what manner of people they are. Mr. James puts the dots on their "i's" with great vigour. Or the players do, for him. As the Marquise, Miss Bateman may, as has been said, look like Queen Bess, but she behaves like Bloody Mary. Is she not a little too stiff, a little too automatic, a personified passion rather than a person? I can imagine this Marquise of hers figuring in some old Mystery-Play of *The Seven Deadly Sins* as Gammer Pride. The gentleman who plays the Marquise's eldest son is in such deadly earnest as to get more than once perilously near caricature. I submit to Mr. Henry James (though, of course, this again is one of the things which he knows already) that, for stage use, these Bellegardes want slightly toning down.

For every crisis of the struggle of Chicago Sense-and-Sensibility with the Pride-and-Prejudice of the Faubourg, we have a corresponding act—an act to show the Bellegardes accepting Newman as Claire's future husband, an act to show them casting him off, and an act (here the story of the novel is made to execute a right-about-face) to show Claire herself rewarding Newman with her hand for his magnanimity in surrendering the document which he has held *in terrorem* over her family. It cannot be said that these acts show the usual weakness of a novelist's stage-work. They do not sacrifice action to conversation. There is plenty of action. In fact, there is too much of it. Thus in Act II. we have several love scenes, one or two family councils, a quarrel and a challenge. In Act III. we have more family councils, a duel "off," a prolonged death-agony "on," and alarms and excursions for minor personages. In Act IV. we have family councils again, revelation of terrible secrets (it is Miss Louise Moodie who is entrusted with the important part of the old housekeeper, or, rather, turnkey of the Bellegarde skeleton-closet, and she plays it admirably), paper-chases after compromising document, games of hide-and-seek behind doors and on balconies—in short, the last act is of itself a whole drama of intrigue. What, Mr. James? All this "between dinner and the suburban trains?" *Allons donc!* as our dear Gabriel Nash would observe.

And I think Gabriel would be likely to ask "what has become of Claire de Cintré?" She, I think, has suffered more than any of the other characters in transit from book to play. She becomes vague, unexplained, rather a *ficelle*—a string to pull Newman by—than the "live woman" of the novel. If there is any actress who could have shown us the other Claire—the real Claire—Miss Robins is she. I only wish the author had given her the chance.

After all this petty fault-finding (yes, yes, criticism is an odious trade), I am going to allow myself a little burst of emotion. I want to say how delighted I am to join in the chorus of welcome which has hailed Mr. Henry James's appearance in the play-house. In one act, at least, of *The American* we can foresee what fresh, delicate, subtle stage-work Mr. James is soon going to give us. We shall see it, I am sure, in more acts than one, when he gives us, as he will, a story that has never been a novel, but has been designed *ab ovo usque ad mala* for the stage. Nash and Sherringham, too, are as elated at the prospect as I am. I can see the pair now, unfolding their napkins over that "small but immaculate" table you wot of. Nash is talking of the "belittling, coarsening conditions of the drama," over his dish of eggs with asparagus-tips; and, Sherringham retorting "*commu, commu!*" is stabbing him indignantly with a long roll. But you will find them both, depend upon it, applauding heartily at Mr. James's next play. A. B. W.

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## THE WEEK.

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THE statement that SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN and MR. GILBERT had settled their differences and were engaged in the production of another comic opera of the recognised Savoy type is authoritatively denied. Most persons would, doubtless, have been glad if the report had been confirmed, but, as it is, we may hope that there is still to be found among English literary men a talent which, if it be not exactly the same as that possessed by MR. GILBERT, will, at all events, not be inferior to it.

MR. J. M. BARRIE, whose three-volume novel, "The Little Minister," will be produced in a couple of weeks, is now engaged in superintending the rehearsals of a play which he has written for MR. TOOLE, and which will be produced by that gentleman at his theatre at Christmas next.

BJÖRNSTJERN BJÖRNSSON'S famous play *En Handske* has recently appeared in Russian translation. It has been received with much interest in the leading literary circles in St. Petersburg, and the traits of similarity between the Norwegian play and TOLSTOI'S *Kreutzer Sonata* have, naturally, been the cause of considerable comment. Efforts are now being made to bring BJÖRNSSON'S play upon the stage in the Russian capital.

THE last of the privately printed opuscula of the "Sette of Odd Volumes" is by their necromancer, MR. HERON-ALLEN. It is a charming little volume of ballades and rondeaux. Club-life, bachelor comforts, loves not too deep for ballades, form his subjects. MR. HERON-ALLEN is well suited by the restrictions of this dainty, artistic form of verse; its difficulties do not, as a rule, hamper him; occasionally he amuses himself by adding to them, as, for instance, when he finds and uses four different rhymes to "darling." There are echoes here and there, as, for instance:—

"It is not mine to chaunt my Lady's praise;"

and, in another place,

"Time shall not wither nor deface  
Your beauty."



But, as a whole, the collection is graceful and pleasant, and some of the prettiest lines are to be found in the concluding rondeau. Only ninety-nine copies have been printed.

IN November the year of the *Century Magazine* begins, and the publishers have already issued part of their programme for 1892. There will be four serial novels, viz.—“The Naulakha, a tale of West and East,” by RUDYARD KIPLING and WOLCOTT BALESTIER—the latter, a young American author and Mr. HEINEMANN’S partner in his Continental enterprise; a new study of fashionable American life by MRS. BURTON HARRISON; “The Chosen Valley,” by MRS. HALLOCK FOOTE; and “Characteristics,” by DR. WEIR MITCHELL. EMILIO CASTELAR will write on Columbus, ARCHIBALD FORBES on the Paris Commune, and BILL NYE on himself; and a series of “Papers by Famous French Musicians” will be contributed by GOUNOD, SAINT-SAËNS, REYER, and MASSENET.

A TRANSLATION of an important Italian work on genius, “L’Uomo di Genio,” by PROFESSOR LOMBROSO, is being prepared for the “Contemporary Science Series” (SCOTT). The work deals with the causes of genius; the influence of race, of heredity, of climate, of great cities; the mental and physical characteristics of men of genius in literature, art, politics, religion; and goes fully into the much-debated question of the relation between genius and insanity. Who is the authority who has supplied additional material for the English edition? MR. J. F. NISBET?

THE first number of *The Bookman* has appeared during the present week, and is full of promise, though the paragraphs of gossip which it contains are in some cases of very unequal interest. There is ample room for a monthly journal devoted to literary affairs. It is indeed surprising that we should have had to wait so long the appearance of such a periodical. Moreover, anything is to be desired which will tend to break down the monopoly so long enjoyed by the *Athenæum*, that curious trade circular, which arrogates to itself the functions of a literary critic. The first number of *The Bookman* contains many interesting articles, the most striking of which is the account of MR. THOMAS HARDY’S “Wessex” and the spots identified with his admirable stories.

IT is sad, very, that MR. ANDREW LANG should find himself unable to appreciate the humour of MR. BARRY PAIN; but every man to his taste, and MR. PAIN will doubtless be consoled for MR. LANG’S lack of appreciation by the fact that the greater public are buying his book and enjoying it. Nor will the consolation be lessened when he peruses the example of “genuine humour” which MR. LANG has presented to his readers in *Longman’s Magazine* by way of a foil to MR. PAIN’S jesting. No human being exists who has been able to discover wherein the humour lies in the story which MR. LANG has given to his readers to show them what wit of the old school really was. MR. LANG is no doubt an admirable judge, but like most judges, he would be more fortunate if he forbore to illustrate his judgments. The next time he attempts to extinguish a young writer he will do well to refrain from the attempt to show how much better he himself can joke, or sing, or tell tales as the case may be.

NOT the least important event in the publishing world during the week has been the appearance of the first number of the illustrated edition of MR. GREEN’S “Short History of the English People.” Hitherto the publication of standard works in serial parts has been almost the monopoly of a

single firm. It would appear, however, that MESSRS. MACMILLAN have now entered the field in rivalry to MESSRS. CASSELL, and certainly it must be admitted that they have made a strong start with this edition of GREEN’S History. The illustrations and typography of the work are admirable, and the notes accompanying it seem to be all that could be desired. The book well deserves the widespread popularity which it is certain to attain.

THERE is no more interesting article in the magazines of the month than the little paper by MR. LECKY on “Carlyle’s Message to his Age,” which appears in the *Contemporary Review*. The “modern man” is inclined to disparage CARLYLE, and to ignore the influence which to this very hour he exercises not only upon the thought but upon the practical work of this generation. MR. LECKY, who is no blind admirer of the author of “Sartor Resartus,” has set forth clearly and concisely a few of his many claims to the respect and admiration of his fellow-countrymen, and in doing so has himself laid the reading world under a debt of gratitude. “The greatest modifying force of our age” was the description which an English statesman once applied to CARLYLE, and no one can read MR. LECKY’S paper without admitting the truth of the phrase.

It has been generally accepted for thousands of years that the iniquity of the father is often visited upon the children, but we have no scriptural or natural law which requires that one brother should be as excellent in the quality he professes as another. A current criticism of MR. FREDERICK TENNYSON’S last volume is, however, based upon some such idea. “As regards style,” says a reviewer in one of the monthlies, “there is a certain diffuseness for which the admirably balanced poems of the poet’s brother would hardly have prepared us.” No man, not even the Laureate, can be his brother’s poetical keeper.

WE hope MR. LECKY’S “Seville” in *Longmans* is not a specimen of his best, nor of his second-best, poetical style. The tolerable passages are an echo of “L’Allegro,” thin and commonplace, while such verses as—

“Let thy Northern sisters boast  
They can work and win the most,”

follow Touchstone’s “right butter-woman’s rank to market.”

THE resemblance between DICKENS and DAUDET patent to every reader, is only partially the result of a study of the former by the latter; nor is the fact that they frequently select the same material sufficient to explain similarity in point of view and parallelism of treatment. A writer in the *Cornhill* points out that the chief reason for this fundamental likeness may perhaps be found in the history of their early lives. Thrown, both of them, when little more than children, on their own resources, driven to earn a precarious livelihood and to consort with the poor and out-at-elbows, they endured slights which their self-respect was long in recovering, learnt by bitter experience what kind of life the poor lead, and, by a happier chance, how unselfishly helpful the members of that great class are to one another.

MR. ROBERT STANNARD, C.E., who died last week at Brighton, at the residence of his son-in-law, MR. GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA, was the last survivor of those who were connected with the historic Liverpool and Manchester railway. He was born in the neighbourhood of Chat Moss, and it was his father who supported GEORGE STEPHENSON, and overcame

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY’S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.



the difficulties of constructing a railway across the Moss after STEPHENSON had despaired of accomplishing the feat. ROBERT STANNARD, the elder, conceived the idea of making a bottom to the Moss by the ingenious plan of laying down, "herring-bone" fashion, whole plantations of larch trees, and by tipping earth on the foundation was thus formed. But this was not all. GEORGE STEPHENSON was so faint-hearted about its success, that he refused to spend more money over the scheme, and it was his friend, ROBERT STANNARD, the elder, who found the money to carry it out—with what result all the world knows. He also invented a kind of snow-shoe or "patten," for the horses to wear while working on the Moss, which is exhibited to this day in Manchester. All these little details SMILES, in his "Life of George Stephenson," has omitted to give, but they were made generally known to the public about three years ago by SIR HENRY ROSCOE, M.P., and ALDERMAN BAILEY at a meeting held in connection with the Manchester Ship Canal.

MR. STANNARD'S son was a lad at the time of the Chat Moss difficulty; but, boy as he was, he had already announced his intention of becoming an engineer, and he never lost a chance of following close to GEORGE STEPHENSON'S heels and listening to the many anxious conferences held between the two engineers who were not only bound together in business, but by the additional tie of a firm friendship. From that time his whole mind was given to railway construction, and early in life he became remarkable for his zeal and practical knowledge. Before he was twenty he was singled out by MR. BRASSEY as his manager for a large section of the Paris and Rouen Railway; and a few years later by BRUNEL, with whom he was very closely associated. For the last thirty years of his life he was a principal representative of the firm of MESSRS. LUCAS & AIRD, and has either carried out or advised upon all the most important railway contracts undertaken by that firm. He died almost in harness, since he retired from active life through ill-health, brought about by over-work, barely two years ago. He has directed that the level and theodolite left him by GEORGE STEPHENSON, and which the pioneer of railways used at Chat Moss, be offered to the South Kensington Museum to be placed by the side of the "Rocket," which his father, ROBERT STANNARD, the elder, rode the day MR. HUSKISSON was killed. He has also left many interesting notes and sketches of railways, past and present, which will be utilised by his daughter, MRS. GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA, who is writing a little biography of her father.

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON is announced to deliver a series of public addresses on "The Great Modern Poets, Artists, and Musicians," on Sunday evenings during October, at Newton Hall, Fetter Lane, at seven o'clock.

OF three popular lectures on the art of engraving, to be delivered at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, by MR. LOUIS FAGAN, of the British Museum, on Tuesday nights, October 20th and 27th and November 3rd, the first will deal with line engraving, the second with the master-etchers, and the third with mezzotint, especially as applied to the representation of types of English beauty portrayed by Reynolds. Many photographic reproductions will be exhibited by oxy-hydrogen light.

AN "Anonymous Art Exhibition" will be opened in Stockholm early next year. The Academy appears to view with favour this original experiment, and the general art society of Sweden has agreed to house it. The exhibition will, no doubt, prove rich in surprises.

### THE CONSPIRACY ABOARD THE MIDAS.\*

"ARE you going home to England? So am I. I'm Johnny; and I've never been to England before, but I know all about it. There's great palaces of gold and ivory—that's for the lords and bishops—and there's Windsor Castle, the biggest of all, carved out of a single diamond—that's for the Queen. And she's the most beautiful lady in the whole world, and feeds her peacocks and birds of paradise out of a ruby cup. And then the sun is always shining, so that nobody wants any candles. Oh, words would fail me if I endeavoured to convey to you one half of the splendours of that enchanted realm!"

This last sentence tumbled so oddly from the childish lips, that I could not hide a smile as I looked down on my visitor. He stood just outside my cabin-door—a small, serious boy of about eight with long flaxen curls hardly dry after his morning bath. In the pauses of conversation he rubbed his head with a big bath-towel. His legs and feet were bare, and he wore only a little shirt and velvet breeches with scarlet ribbons hanging untied at the knees.

"What are you laughing at?" he demanded.

I was driven to evasion.

"Why, you're wrong about the sunshine in England," I said. "The sun is not always shining there, by any means."

"That only shows how little you know about it."

"Johnny! Johnny!" a voice called down the companion ladder at this moment. It was followed by a thin, weary-looking man, dressed in carpet slippers and a suit of seedy black. I guessed his age at fifty, but suspect now that the lines about his somewhat prim mouth were traced there by sorrows rather than by years. He bowed to me shyly and addressed the boy.

"Johnny, what are you doing here—in bare feet?"

"Father, here is a man who says the sun doesn't always shine in England."

The man gave me a fleeting, embarrassed glance, and echoed, as if to shirk answering,

"In bare feet!"

"But it does, doesn't it? Tell him that it does," the child insisted.

Driven thus into a corner, the father turned his profile, avoiding my eyes, and said dully—

"The sun is always shining in England."

"Go on, father; tell him the rest."

"—and the use of candles, except as a luxury, is consequently unknown to the denizens of that favoured clime," he wound up, in the tone of a man who repeats an old, old lecture.

Johnny was turning to me triumphantly, when his father caught him by the hand and led him back to his dressing. The movement was hasty, almost rough; and it did not puzzle me the less because I heard a sob in the man's throat as they moved away. I stood at the cabin-door and looked after them.

We were fellow-passengers aboard the *Midas*, a merchant barque of near on a thousand tons, homeward bound from Sydney; and we had lost sight of the Heads of Port Jackson Bay but a couple of days before. It was the first week of the new year, and all day long a fiery sun made life below deck insupportable. Nevertheless, though we three were the only passengers on board and lived constantly in sight of each other, it was many days before I made any further acquaintance with Johnny and his father. The sad-faced man clearly desired to avoid me, answering my nod with a cold embarrassment, and clutching Johnny's hand whenever the child called "Good morning!" to me cordially. I fancied him ashamed of his foolish falsehood; and I, on my side, was angry at it. The pair were for ever strolling backwards and forwards on deck, or resting beneath the awning on the poop, and talking—always talking. I fancied the boy was delicate; he certainly had a bad cough during the first few days.

\* The story of this conspiracy has been told before by the writer; but with some mistakes which he tries here to put right.

But this went away as our voyage proceeded, and his colour was rich and rosy.

One afternoon I caught a fragment of their talk as they passed, Johnny brightly dressed and smiling, his father looking even more shabby and weary than usual. The man was speaking.

"—and Queen Victoria rides once a year through the streets of London, on her milk-white courser, to hear the nightingales sing in the Tower. For when she came to the throne, the Tower was full of prisoners; but with a stroke of her sceptre she changed them all into song-birds. Every year she releases fifty; and that is why they sing so rapturously, because each one hopes his turn has come at last."

I turned away. It was unconscionable, to cram the child's mind with these preposterous fables. I pictured the poor little chap's disappointment when the bleak reality came to stare him in the face. To my mind his father was worse than an idiot, and I could hardly bring myself to greet him, next morning, when we met.

My disgust did not seem to trouble him. In a timid way, even, his eyes expressed satisfaction. For a few days I let him alone, and then was forced to speak.

It happened in this way. Soon after passing the Cape, we had a day or two of total calm. The sails hung slack and the *Midas* slept like a turtle on the greasy sea. In the seams the pitch bubbled, and to walk the deck bare-foot was to blister the feet. The sailors loafed about and grumbled, with their hands in their pockets, or huddled forward under a second awning that was rigged up to protect them from the flaring heat.

On the second day of the calm, shortly after noon, I happened to pass this awning, and glanced in. Pretty well all the men were there, sitting or lounging; and in their midst, on a barrel, sat Johnny, with a flushed face.

One of the seamen—a fellow name Gibbings—was speaking. I heard him say—

An' the Lord Mayor'll be down at the docks to meet us, wi' his five-an'-fifty black boys, all a-blowin' on their silver trumpets. Pretty's the music they make, sonny . . . ."

The whole crew then, it seemed, was in this stupid conspiracy. I determined, for Johnny's sake, to protest, and that very evening drew Gibbings aside and rebuked him.

"Why," I asked, "lay up this certain, this bitter disappointment for the poor boy? Why talk to him as if he were bound for the New Jerusalem?"

Gibbings stared at me out of his honest eyes, and whispered—

"Why, sir, don't you know? Can't you see for yourself? It's because he is bound for the New Jerusalem: because—bless his small soul!—that's all the land he'll ever touch."

"Good Lord!" I cried. "Nonsense! His cough's better: and look at his cheeks."

"Ay,—we knows that colour, on this line. His cough's better, you say. You just wait for the nor'-east trades."

I left Gibbings, and after pacing up or down the deck a few times, stepped to the bulwarks, where a dark figure was leaning and gazing out over the black waters. Johnny was in bed; and a great shame swept over me as I noted the appealing wretchedness of this lonely form.

I stepped up and touched him softly on the arm.

"Sir, I am come to beg your forgiveness."

Next morning I joined the conspiracy.

After his father I became Johnny's most constant companion. "Father disliked you at first," was the child's frank comment; "he said you told fibs, but now he wants us to be friends." And we were excellent friends. I lied from morning to night—lied glibly, grandly. Sometimes, indeed, as I lay awake in my berth, a horror took me lest the springs of my imagination should run dry. But they never did. As a liar I out-classed every man on board.

But, by and by, the boy began to punctuate my fables with that hateful cough. This went on for a week; and, one day, in the midst of our short stroll, his legs gave way under him. As I caught him in my arms, he looked up with a smile.

"I'm very weak, you know. But it'll be all right when I get to England."

But it was not till we caught the trade-winds, as Gibbings had foretold, that Johnny grew visibly worse. In a week he had to lie still on his couch beneath the awning, and the patter of his feet ceased on the deck. The captain, who was a bit of a doctor, said to me one day:

"He will never live to see England."

But he did.

It was a soft spring morning when the *Midas* sighted the Lizard, and Johnny was still with us, lying on his couch, though almost too weak to move a limb. As the day wore on, we lifted him, once or twice, to look—

"Can you see them quite plain?" he asked; "and the precious stones hanging on the trees? And the palaces—and the white elephants?"

I stared through my glass at the naked rocks and white-washed light-house above them, and answered—

"Yes, they are all there."

All day long we were beside him, looking out and peopling the shores of home with all manner of vain shows and pageants: and when one man broke down another took his place.

As the sun fell, and twilight drew on, the bright revolving lights on the two towers suddenly flashed out their greeting. We were about to carry the child below; but he saw the flash, and held up a feeble hand.

"What is that?"

"Those two lights," I answered, telling my last lie, "are the lanterns of Cormelian and Cormoran, the two Cornish giants. They are standing on the shore to welcome us. See—each swings his lantern round, and then for a moment it is dark; now wait a moment and you'll see the light again."

"Ah," said the child, with a little sigh, "it is good to be—home!"

And with that word on his lips, as we waited for the next flash, Johnny stretched himself and died.

Q.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

### "THE TRUE FUNCTION OF WOMAN."

SIR.—The sphere of women's influence and activity is confined within limits imposed by social usage no less than by legal enactment, which, I take it, the supporters of the *status quo* do not desire to see relaxed.

Now, either women are naturally unadapted for the exercise of those functions which your correspondents deny them, or they are not. If they are, what can be the sense of excluding them from occupations which they are naturally incapable of following? and if they are not, what reasonable ground can there be for depriving the community of the benefit of those services which they are admittedly able to render?

The fact is, the true function of woman is exactly what woman chooses to make it. As long as legal restrictions and social conventions interpose themselves between her and the untrammelled exercise of her abilities, so long must we be content to remain in ignorance of what that function is.

The discussion of what women may and ought to do will remain the most idle and unfruitful possible, until we have copious and irrefragable proofs of what they have done and can do.

The propriety of confining women within the narrow limits of their domestic life is a matter which ought to be determined by the taste and temperament of individuals, not by exclusive and unjust restrictions.

The number of women who are able to find sufficient outlet for their energies in the care of husband and children, and the details of household management, is less than it used to be, and the number of those who care little or nothing for these things increases day by day; this may be a matter for regret, but it is the truest wisdom to look the fact fairly in the face and to make provision for its existence, not by useless appeals to a domestic ideal, which is less in accord with the general sentiment of mankind than it used to be, but by a prompt recognition of the evils

of which it is the expression, by the entire and instant removal of those disabilities by which the sexes are legally differentiated and by the cultivation of a broader and more generous public sentiment.—Your obedient servant,  
September 28th, 1891.

J. P. SLAGG.

SIR.—I read with great regret and some indignation your article on Frederic Harrison's address on "The True Function of Woman" in your issue of September 12th. It is difficult to understand why the domain of politics differs so vitally from all others. Women manage their homes, train and teach their boys and girls; they are authors, artists, doctors, nurses, farmers, etc., and they manage businesses of all kinds, frequently not only earning their own living, but maintaining parents or children. It is idle to say that all this can be done without either intelligence or practical shrewdness; and yet we are told that the moment a woman turns her attention to public affairs, her common sense will desert her, and she will be drowned in a flood of sentiment. To look round on any community and to observe the part which women play in it, and the part which men play, seems enough to convict the writer of the article either of a total blindness to the facts of the case or of an intention to affront women. I confess that the latter suggestion seems the more probable one. Such an attitude on the part of professed Liberals is enough to crush out all hope of that intelligent co-operation between men and women in all affairs, whether of the family or the State, which to many thoughtful people seems to promise a satisfaction and completeness not to be found in the action of either alone.

While women are every day becoming more and more conscious of their own powers, and are every day giving fresh proof of them in different directions, it is futile to attempt to shut any door in their faces. The only effect of such an attempt will be to create discord where there should be harmony, and by placing obstacles in their way to give them one more opportunity of refuting the charges brought against them.—Yours faithfully,  
ANNIE WILKINSON.

SIR.—Mr. Burne-Jones's letter in last Saturday's SPEAKER says that "ladies" seem to be pursuing a dignified silence while this discussion is going on about the habits and characteristics of their sex. Do you not think that the silence really arises from a feeling of despair?

Each writer of these various letters no doubt has before his mental vision, as he puts pen to paper, some female relative unknown to the general public, but who forms the basis for his philosophy of the sex. Now, in order to allow these disputants to judge the question dispassionately, we should have to undertake the stupendous task of finding out who that female relative is in each case, and then of forcibly removing her from his range of vision. You will agree with me, I am sure, that under these circumstances, it is better to let the controversy take its own course.

Meanwhile, may I be allowed to recall to your memory an incident of the Law Courts. The other day a wily counsel introduced Mrs. —, who was possessed of considerable personal attractions, into the witness-box, to be sworn. The learned judge looked down at the wily counsel with a shake of the head and a look of disapprobation.

"Mr. —," he said, solemnly, "I know you're doing this just to prejudice me!"

Does this suggest to you that there might be a very instructive discussion on the "instinctively emotional" temperament of what is called the "sterner" sex, or do you think the *tu quoque* argument too primitive a weapon of warfare?—Faithfully yours,  
ELLEN S. H. RITCHIE.

39, Banbury Road, Oxford, September 30th.

SIR.—To many of us who desire women's political and social enfranchisement, Mr. Frederic Harrison's late disquisition upon our "true function" has seemed more curious than important. The Positivists are thoroughly consistent. The social despotism which they advocate forms an integral part of a coherent system which embraces the whole of life and politics. But the ease is altogether different when our only Liberal weekly endeavours, through an unsigned, and, we suppose, "authorised" article, to insert into the Liberal programme a slice of Comtist absolutism, namely, the political suppression of women. It is true that the writer of your article on "The True Function of Woman" endorses Mr. Harrison's view with some qualifications, but these are only such as any sane person must inevitably make who occasionally descends from Utopia to look common facts of life in the face. In all essentials his sympathies are with Mr. Harrison. Though your writer is probably in the habit of describing himself as a Liberal, his mode of reasoning belongs altogether to the worshipper of authority. He would retain half the human race in practical serfdom, on the ancient and well-worn plea that its natural constitution renders it unfit for freedom. His assumption of insight into the workshop of Nature, or—as the case may be—into the designs of the Almighty, is simply an

arrogant method of stating his personal tastes and predilections. The article is packed with assertions for which next to no proof is offered, and which have been refuted again and again.

It is interesting to note that this writer, in his contempt for women, is led to prove, or rather to assert, too much for his purpose. Regarding the government of the home as woman's primary function, he would also have her engage in charitable enterprise, especially the "organisation" of other women's "industrial energies." But to grant her the franchise would, he thinks, be to let a "perfect flood of emotion" into political life. Is there, then, no risk in handing over operations of charity, including the delicate and difficult task of organising the industry of women, to our "superfluously sentimental" sex, whose imagination, according to this writer, so far exceeds its reasoning powers? Surely nothing has been more convincingly proved than the need of self-restraint and "practical shrewdness" to temper enthusiasm, in the successful organisation of philanthropic enterprise. Yet he sees no objection to turning upon it that "flood of emotion" which he apprehends as a serious danger in politics.

Further, one would think that a creature so incapable of reasoning, so entirely at the mercy of emotion, as this writer's average woman, must even be ill adapted for the special career which Mr. Harrison and he mark out for her. I cannot imagine that she would be capable of governing her household or training her children efficiently. The State is, to a great extent, an aggregation of families. One kind of governing is not so distinct from all other kinds as to demand a wholly different set of qualities. Defects which absolutely unfit women for the service of the State would, in a great measure, unfit them for the government of the home.

Mr. Harrison's eloquent description, so much admired by your writer, of Woman and the Ideal Home betrays a defective knowledge of the average wife's and mother's everyday life. That is by no means given up to the exercise of the emotions and affections. He seems to ignore the petty cares, the tedious details of household supervision—too often the sordid economies—which engage so much time with women who do not belong to the wealthy and leisured classes. To receive the worship of her husband and the caresses of her children, to radiate a strictly feminine kind of culture and refinement as she "queens it" in her artistic drawing-room among the objects of art that have been collected for her and the graceful embroideries of her creation, would seem to be the principal functions of Mr. Harrison's ideal woman. That elegant female may be an everyday phenomenon in the Positivist Society, but hers is not the condition of the average married woman outside it—though, indeed, some of us would doubt if this glorified queen-bee kind of existence would be altogether enviable.

Your writer's theory as to the "part which nature primarily intended woman to play," needs to be confronted with the patent fact that among women, as among men, there exists a wide variety of capacity, both moral and intellectual. We are all acquainted with women, and not a few of these, who find an exclusively home life but little to their taste, and show small aptitude for its special functions and duties. I do not care to inquire if these women are of a higher or lower sort. We only contend that it is bad economy to force them to choose between inaction and functions for which they are indifferently fitted. We demand for them the privilege freely to engage in any kind of independent activity, either public or private, for which they feel they have a vocation. We demand that they shall not be debarred from occupations which are congenial to them, and in which they can render service to society—including political service—in deference to crude generalisations about woman's tendency to sentimentalism and unproved dogmas about her "essential constitution." Surely one of the chief problems of the future is how we may best utilise every variety of human capacity in the interests of the individual and of society. Experience points to freedom and equality of opportunity as the surest way—at least, that is the opinion of Radicals—and no Radical woman who deserves the name asks either for coddling or for suppression—only for a "fair field and no favour;" but this THE SPEAKER would deny us.  
A RADICAL WOMAN.

Champéry, Valais, September, 1891.

#### SIR W. LAWSON AND THE DRINK TRAFFIC.

SIR.—In your issue of last Saturday Sir Wilfrid Lawson says, "What we object to is the present system of making people drunk by Act of Parliament." Though his words seem to imply it, Sir Wilfrid does not—I assume it—charge the British Parliament with designedly causing intemperance. No; it is only responsible by permitting things to be done which of necessity eventuate in intemperance. To diminish intemperance, to promote sobriety, the following should be—on the part of promoters—the "agenda":—

1. To reduce the number of public-houses. The labouring classes are quite entitled to their "drink;" but if five licensed houses supply the demand, why license ten?

2. To prohibit the holder of a "grocer's licence" selling liquor for consumption on his premises. It is illegal already, but still generally done because of ineffectual police supervision.

3. To see after the "quality" of the "stuff" sold—a thing rarely done. It is frequently not the "quantity" but the "quality" of the stuff sold that causes intemperance.

4. To punish, and largely, all who give to those who have already imbibed sufficiently deeply.

5. To see after the "police," who so very frequently go about with closed eyes.

6. To disallow late hours—say, to close all *purely* drinking houses—houses supplying liquids without solids—at nine p.m.

September 28th, 1891. SACERDOS HIBERNICUS.

"THE NATIONALISATION OF CATHEDRALS."

SIR,—I do not desire to inflict on you an everlasting controversy on cathedrals; but "Scrutator's" letter again reminds me that the abundant criticism of the article in the *Contemporary* has mostly been directed to small details rather than to principles. "Scrutator" says that Mr. Gwatkin is a thorough Churchman, and that Sir George has been a clergyman, though he pursues a layman's career. But the point I made in regard to Mr. Gwatkin was that, be his reasons for remaining a layman what they might, the authorities were vehemently desirous of finding a clergyman for the position he fills so admirably, but that, though they hunted high and low through Cambridge, they could not find one, that eventually they got an Oxford man, and that when he obtained his bishopric, they had perforce to fall back on the layman whom they ought to have appointed long before. As for Sir George Stokes, what more remarkable proof of my main point could be given than that he prefers the wider and freer scope of a layman's career as compared with that of a clergyman?

Let me sum up the moral of the controversy as I see it. The Church will be disestablished or it will not. In either case the difficulty presents itself: "What is the nation going to do with its cathedrals?" Will it, in the event of disestablishment, follow the precedent of the Irish Church, and (as Mr. Goldwin Smith suggests in the *Nineteenth Century*) give over to a mere sect, which will have lost its corporate and national existence, the cathedrals and the parish churches, to say nothing of the glebes? Then it will have given away a national inheritance for a fanciful ideal of religious equality, worth nothing from the point of view of practical politics. Or suppose, again, that the Church withstands the assaults on her association with the State. Then we must either develop the Arnold and Stanley ideal of a really national church which would enrich, "like a dome of many-coloured glass," the varied social, intellectual, and religious life of the time, or we must submit to the spectacle of a powerful ecclesiastical corporation monopolising the most imposing historic monuments and using them and its endowments for sectarian ends. I showed that it would not be so difficult partially and cautiously to secularise the cathedrals; and I have been reminded, since the *Contemporary* article was written, that the rubric excluding laymen from the ministry was not passed till 1660. Surely the spirit of the age, as well as the most enlightened school of modern church theology, is favourable not to widening but to narrowing the bonds between what is "secular" and what is "sacred." The mediæval Churchman mingled the two in his conception of the use of religious buildings; while the modern man perpetually finds himself asking Emerson's question, "Which is human, which divine?"—I am, sir, yours faithfully,  
H. W. MASSINGHAM.

CROMER.

MISGUIDED persons, who abused  
"The sunless summertide," have used  
A strange misnomer;  
As they would find if they had seen  
East Anglia's sunshine, and had been  
With us at Cromer.

No child of wisdom understands  
How anyone in foreign lands  
Can be a roamer,  
Who might instead fly Eastward-ho!  
And feel the soft sea-breezes blow  
The sands at Cromer.

The corn-fields fringe the ocean there,  
Like some mermaid's golden hair  
Who comes to comb her  
Bright locks where sea and shore are wed:  
And poppies mark with letters red  
The days at Cromer.

The sea is blue as sapphire-stone,  
And every wave upon its zone  
A snowy foamer:

The land seems robed in purple plush,  
For crimson heather loves to flush  
The moors at Cromer.

In telling tales of such a land  
I would that I could find to hand  
The pen of Homer,  
That I might raise poetic steam,  
And hymn—with justice to the theme—  
The praise of Cromer.

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,

Friday, October 2nd, 1891.

THE volume of verse by the late Miss Amy Levy which Mr. T. Fisher Unwin has just reprinted under the title of "A Minor Poet" raises a melancholy but important question. In common pity and common charity a critic might well pass by the grave of this young poetess, and say no harder word than that "she chose to die." Even when we open this book and learn from the first poem—which gives its name to the collection—that her end came in no blind fit of impatience, but was merely the conclusion, put into practice, of that sad syllogism in which she summed up human existence, we might still forbear from comment if we could believe hers to be an isolated case, the mistake of one unquiet spirit lost in solitary paths. To keep silence in that case would be wise as well as kind.

But nobody who reads many modern books can believe this. Miss Levy's case is by no means solitary: it is rather symptomatic just now—one in a great epidemic of hopelessness which has infected whole tracts of literature. On every hand one hears protests from middle-aged critics against this pervading and desolating pessimism; and, though it is a genuine grief to me to find myself on the side of the middle-aged, I cannot help it, because I believe them in this matter to be in the right. Nor does it seem unwarrantable to take Miss Levy's *apologia pro morte sua* and strip it to its lowest terms in an honest attempt to show that the reasons for despair which she found so convincing are, in reality, counsels of narrow selfishness, of indolence, and of poor work, and, in themselves, quite despicable.

The motto at the head of her poem asks—

"What should such fellows as I do,  
Crawling between earth and heaven?"

—and the Minor Poet, who is about to take laudanum as a protest against the intolerable weight of living, soliloquises as follows—

"I am myself, as each man is himself—  
Feels his own pain, joys his own joy, and loves  
With his own love, no other's. Friend, the world  
Is but one man: one man is but the world.  
And I am I, and you are Tom, that bleeds  
When needles prick your flesh (mark, yours, not mine).  
I must confess it; I can feel the pulse  
A-beating at my heart, yet never knew  
The throb of cosmic pulses. I lament  
The death of youths' ideal in my heart;  
And, to be honest, never yet rejoiced  
In the world's progress—scarce, indeed, discerned. . . ."

I make no comment on this, beyond saying that, when a man views the wide world and his fellow-creatures in this light, we may expect him very shortly to be complaining that his environment does not suit him; and so it happens in this instance. The hero tells us he is

"a note  
All out of tune in this world's instrument,"

and proceeds to hint that the fault lies with his fellow-men, who are a trifle too gross for him. He is, in fact,



"a dweller on the earth  
 Yet not content to dig with other men,  
 Because of certain sudden sights and sounds  
 (Bars of broke music; furtive, fleeting glimpse  
 Of angel faces 'thwart the grating seen)  
 Perceived in Heaven. Yet when I approach  
 To catch the sound's completeness, to absorb  
 The faces' full perfection, Heaven's gate,  
 Which then had stood ajar, sudden falls to,  
 And I, a-shiver in the dark and cold,  
 Scarce hear afar the mocking tones of men:  
 'He would not dig forsooth; but he must strive  
 For higher fruits than what our tillage yields;  
 Behold what comes, my brothers, of vain pride!'"

And, upon my word, it seems that the "mocking tones of men" are pretty much in the right.

For observe that the man confesses to have sought nothing but his own satisfaction in it all. The notion that his brothers and sisters, too, have glimpses of Heaven, or should be encouraged to have any, never dawns on his understanding. He wants the place all to himself. Nor does it even occur to him that the way might possibly lie through the hearts of these fellow-mortals. They are assumed to be dull, negligible brutes, digging for low vegetables. In dealing with self-absorption of this sort it is difficult to avoid a theological tone; and to speak in terms of theology would appear to our opponents a *petitio principii*. You see, our views of life have changed so very much since Coleridge wrote—

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
 All things, both great and small."

When a critic gets down to the bed-rock of first-principles—and that is where we find ourselves—he can do little more than state his belief and refer those who are curious about his reasons for it to the moral philosopher or the divine. My own belief is that to be selfishly absorbed in the welfare of one's own soul is rather ugly and excessively foolish. Possibly men have lived, before now, in the world who were too good for their environment—men whose souls were so priceless that it was worth their owners' while to neglect all else for the purpose of cultivating them. But the temptation to rank ourselves with these splendid creatures should only, I think, be yielded to after deep consideration; for the chances favour a mistake. It is rash to cry out, with Miss Levy,

"There is no place for me in all this world;"

and it is even more rash to assume, without quite a large quantity of evidence, that the fault lies with the world.

Everybody nowadays seems fallen into a sweat about his own soul. He or she—for Ibsen's Nora is an instance, of course—seems so anxious that it should develop properly; and people run about in a truly terrible flutter, and call their environment all manner of hard names when it appears to obstruct this development at all. It is not even a new game. Augustine played it with Christianity, and impartial minds may judge if he improved on the Gospel. But what, after all, does it matter?

It matters this much at any rate: it is bound to result in bad work, for the simple reason that it is so contemptibly easy. As in life and writing it is easier to be brutal than human, ugly than beautiful, diseased than healthy—for a pound of unripe fruit will do more mischief to a man's stomach than he can cure in a year—so it is easier to be self-absorbed than catholic; and the easiness of the feat may account for the number of studies of the artistic temperament that have lately been given to a world which probably (and wisely) does not care two straws for the artistic temperament. Why on earth should the healthy men and women whom we see be hustled

into sympathy for Dick Heldars and James Colthursts? Why should we, who aspire to be artists—that is, to paint the world, with its joys and sorrows—be for ever neglecting our business and prating about our own joys and sorrows instead? The simple reason is that it comes so much easier than the study of our fellows.

But Miss Levy's book is instructive because in it this creed of self-absorption is courageously pushed to its final absurdity. If a man is really "all out of tune with this world's instrument," and cannot develop himself to his mind, and really believes it of supreme importance that he should, the conclusion is that all things are hopeless and he had better follow the "Minor Poet's" example and take poison. Or, to put it differently: No man is responsible for his entrance into this world and if he chooses to dislike the place and disclaim the responsibility of living in it, that is his concern. As I say, to contest this we must go deeper than criticism; but the critic can, at any rate, ask one question, "If life is hopeless, why go on writing about it?"

A. T. Q. C.

## REVIEWS.

### THE LONDON PROGRAMME.

THE LONDON PROGRAMME. By Sidney Webb. London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1891.

IN view of the coming General Election, the book before us is a most opportune publication, constituting as it does a complete text-book of the London Liberal Programme. It is, like everything from Mr. Webb's pen, very readable, lucid, and interesting; and should be studied, not only by all London politicians, but by provincial politicians as well. For, indeed, while professedly treating of London problems alone, many of the reforms advocated apply equally to other towns; while some, such as the question of registration, for instance, are of Imperial interest.

It is well, however, that London should have a special programme and a special appeal. Deprived, until quite lately, of any real self-government, even now the self-government that has at last been vouchsafed to her, is trammelled and curtailed in every direction. As Mr. Webb well puts it:—

"The London County Council is often assumed to correspond roughly (outside the City) with the Town Council in a provincial borough. But it is a municipal authority without any of the powers and duties which take up nine-tenths of the time of a provincial Town Council. It has nothing to do with paving, cleansing, or lighting the streets; waterworks, gasworks, markets, and tramways are completely outside its province; its police form an army as alien as the Irish Constabulary; it is functionless and almost powerless in valuation and assessment; it does not collect its own rates; it has no more control over the Thames than over the tides; it is neither the sanitary nor the burial authority; and it cannot even prepare or supervise the registration of the voters who elect it.

"It is, in fact, simply a cross between the county justices and the Metropolitan Board of Works; and its chief occupations are a strange hotch-potch of lunatic asylums and the fire-brigade, main drainage and industrial schools, bridges and baby-farms."

Further than this, while hampered in its action by all sorts of absurd restrictions on its power, the Representative Body of London is harassed and harried in the House of Commons—to which, by the way, no appeal should be necessary. The London Tories, defeated in their attempt to capture the County Council at the polls, vent their spleen by mortifying and maltreating it as far as they dare in the House.

People sneer—provincials, who have themselves enjoyed fifty years of self-government, sneer—at the lack of interest that Londoners take in their own affairs. But corporate interest cannot be evoked without the existence of a centre, of some rallying-point. How could the interest of local citizenship be evoked by the existence of the vestries or by



that vestrified vestry, the Metropolitan Board of Works? The thing was impossible. But already, with the change of system, the interest of Londoners in their municipal affairs is being awakened. And if, and when, they are at last allowed really to govern themselves, they intend that their great municipality shall outvie in intelligence, activity, and zeal, that of Birmingham, of Manchester, or of any other large town. To turn this prolonged apathy into really acute interest, Londoners must be given both freedom and power. They must have, not only the rudiments of Municipal Home Rule, but real self-government. That which is still lacking who runs may read in this little volume: London as it might be and ought to be, is contrasted with London as it is.

Mr. Sidney Webb's political proclivities are so well known that it may be some old-fashioned politicians will be "put off" his book by imagining that it was yet another propagandist manifesto of those "economic bushrangers, the young men of the Fabian Society." This is not so. On this occasion Mr. Webb writes more as a Radical than as a Fabian, and, except on one subject, leasehold enfranchisement, every reform that he advocates is, as far as we can see, included, or, at least, about to be included, in the authorised programme of the Liberal party: is certainly included in the programme of every Liberal and Radical in London. We do not mean, of course, for a moment to insinuate that Mr. Webb is in any degree false to his Fabian faith. But "collectivism"—the "promotion of the interests of London as a whole rather than those of individual Londoners"—is, as regards municipal matters, as dear to the heart of the Liberal as to that of the Fabian.

And what are these essential reforms? London Radicals are not red and revolutionary, they are a moderate and peaceable set of persons. Their principal desire, as far as London is concerned, may be summed up in a word—a free hand to the great central representative Body of the metropolis. Give this body, say they, the largest possible power of dealing with all questions affecting citizenship in London. Give it full power to deal with the water question, the question of lighting, the question of food supply—both as to provision and as to supervision. Give it power to deal, by way of ownership, of supervision, and if necessary of administration, with the tramway question. Give it power to solve the difficulties of the housing question. Make it responsible for "law and order" in its own area. Give it power to deal with the large group of financial questions classed under the head of local taxation and rating—including the problems of "unearned increment," "betterment,"\* "ground values," and "a municipal death duty." And, in connection with this question of equalisation of taxation and relief of burdens, London's heritage in the City Companies should be brought into the common stock.

So far as regards the Central Body. But local government in London must be reformed at the bottom as well as at the top. The Vestries and the District Boards must be placed on a popular and truly representative basis; and the new local body, though independent and with real responsibilities of its own, should be directly in touch with the County Council Body. Again, for Poor Law purposes, London should be unified into a representative Poor Law Council, so that equality of rating, equality of treatment, and greater publicity, may be brought about. Three other points. The Thames, like the Clyde, the Mersey, and the Tyne, should belong to the citizens of London, and be controlled by a representative body. The carrying trade of the greatest port in the world should no longer be left at the mercy of a single class—capitalist or labour—but, as at Liverpool, Glasgow, and Bristol, should be controlled in the interest of the community at large. A "Hospitals

Board" is necessary for the sake of the efficient and economical administration of our London hospitals. Finally, registration reform is more urgently needed in London than anywhere else.

To this platform we could add two other planks not mentioned by Mr. Webb—the pauper alien must be kept out; the benefits of the Factory Act must be genuinely extended and properly applied to workshops, domestic or otherwise. One thing further. It should be laid down as a fundamental principle in regard to the administration of London affairs that the different public bodies should, both in regard to the labour they themselves employ, and in regard to their contract work, take care that a "fair wage" shall be paid, and moderate hours of work prevail; thus setting a good example to other employers of labour.

A word on the question of leasehold enfranchisement, to which we have already incidentally alluded. Mr. Webb, as a Fabian (supported as he is in this view by Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and a few other "logical" Radicals), objects altogether to what is called "leasehold enfranchisement," on the ground that we ought to municipalise our land and not merely add to the number of freeholders. This is true. At the same time we agree rather with the view of some of the London Radicals, who, when the question lately came up in the House, first voted for Mr. Haldane's amendment—practically municipalisation of land—and then, that amendment being lost, voted for the principle of leasehold enfranchisement as a protest against the existing land system in London. The amendment embodied the Ideal—as yet but a counsel of Perfection. Municipalisation of land, or even "municipalisation of the unearned increment," is not yet within the range of practical politics; and meanwhile the present leasehold system—the absorption of the property of the tenant by the freeholder or middleman—is a crying evil. Leasehold enfranchisement deals, we admit, with only the fringe of a great subject: it is inadequate, but it is not necessarily retrograde. To introduce the thin end of the wedge into the land monopoly of London would be surely a satisfactory move; while the subsequent application of the principle of municipalisation of land would thereby be in no way retarded or endangered. The opposition, if opposition there were, on the part of the new freeholders, would be of no avail against public opinion when educated up to the necessary point.

However, we will not quarrel with Mr. Webb over this point, which, after all, is a very minor matter. With his "London Programme" as a whole we are most heartily in accord, and we cordially echo his eloquent words:—

"The hope of the future for dense urban communities admittedly lies in the wise extension of collective action. By himself the typical Londoner is a frail and sickly unit, cradled in the gutter, housed in a slum, slaving in a sweater's den, and dying in the workhouse infirmary. Collectively he is a member of the greatest and most magnificent city which the world has known, commanding all the latest resources of civilisation, and disposing of almost boundless wealth."

#### HOSMER'S "HISTORY OF ANGLO-SAXON FREEDOM."

A SHORT HISTORY OF ANGLO-SAXON FREEDOM, the Polity of the English-speaking Race, outlined in its Inception, Development, Diffusion, and Present Condition. By James K. Hosmer. London: Walter Scott. 1890.

THIS book, though it has only a London publisher's name on its title-page, is an American book, and was printed at Boston, Mass. It is the fact that the book is American—very essentially American—that gives it its value. Mr. Hosmer, a professor in Washington University, St. Louis, is one of those who are doing their best to teach the severed branches of the English folk to understand their true relations to one another. No object can be worthier; and every man who does anything towards it should be received with a cordial welcome. Towards such we cannot afford to be fastidious. In a book written

\*In connection with these financial questions, Sir Thomas Farrer's little volume on "Mr. Goschen's Finance," recently reviewed in these columns, should be consulted.

with such a purpose there may be faults of style, there may be slips of detail in matters of fact, and yet the book may be likely to do thoroughly good work. We do not expect its matter to be new. A German critic would of course turn up his nose at it; here is *Nichts neues*, and that is enough. But the ready scribe of the Gospel, who brings out of his treasure things new and old, is a higher and more useful character than the German critic. There are many fields of work, and that in which Mr. Hosmer is engaged is pre-eminently one of them, in which the best work that can be done is to say the same truths over and over again. The more mouths that utter them, the more shapes in which they are uttered, the better. The minds of a great part of the English people in both hemispheres are utterly confused as to the important facts who they are themselves and in what relations they stand to their parted kinsfolk. And there are not a few in both hemispheres who make it their deliberate business to lead them astray. In such a case we want all the prophets we can get, even though some of them may be minor prophets. One gets a hearing in one place or from one kind of people, and another in another. And as long as their prophesying is essentially true, we can, under the present distress, forgive smaller matters. We talked some time ago about Mr. Fiske; we are now talking about Mr. Hosmer. We are not sure whether, in strict order of time, we ought not to have talked about this book of Mr. Hosmer's before some books of Mr. Fiske's; but it does not matter. On the whole, we like Mr. Fiske's way of putting things better than Mr. Hosmer's; but as long as they both put forth essentially the right things, there is room for both, and for plenty more. Neither Mr. Fiske nor Mr. Hosmer could abide the standard of the German critic; but neither of them is the worse for that. Neither of them is writing a dissertation for the degree of Ph.D. If he were, it would of course be his business to say something that nobody had ever said before, to make some sharp guess, to put forth some ingenious paradox, which may haply be admired till the next candidate puts forth some other paradox more ingenious still. Our American fellow-workers aim at something better; they have not to devise new guesses, but to repeat old truths. They have to go on saying the same things, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. When there are so many that sow tares, the more that sow wheat the better. When so many need to be preached to, great must be the company of the preachers. We cannot afford to discourage any, though there is perhaps none to whom we may not now and then be able to give a useful hint.

Mr. Hosmer certainly comes nearer to "high falutin'"—at least he talks in a bigger way—than Mr. Fiske. And one could almost have wished to get rid of the rather misleading terms, in the title-page, "Anglo-Saxon freedom" and "English-speaking race." One's first feeling is, Why not plain "English" at once? "English-speaking" is a form which can be needed only if we wish to take in Irish and negroes; and, whatever English, Irish, and negroes make, it cannot be a "race." Yet if the English beyond the Ocean can be more easily persuaded that they are English by calling them by some other name and not "English," it may be a bit of the wisdom of the serpent to call them by that other name. In this way one can, by an effort, bring oneself to swallow the formula of "Anglo-Saxon freedom" where one wants either the simpler "English" or the wider "Teutonic." It is harder to accept Mr. Hosmer's favourite formula of quotation; "Says a modern English authority;" "Said Gladstone at Oxford;" "Wrote a poet;" where "says," "said," and "wrote" are the first words in the sentence. It needs some self-restraint when we find the Norman Conqueror turned into "a prince from France," and when he is made to land at Hastings, even though it be to point a contrast between him and Louis-Napoleon Buonaparte. We heartily wish Mr. Hosmer would not talk

about "serfs" in England, a word which was never in use in England in either French or English. The *servi* of Domesday are not "serfs," but slaves. And we should be sorry to guarantee the minute accuracy of all Mr. Hosmer's statements about English affairs, in which there is very little sign of any handling of original writers. But one can forgive a good deal to one who so thoroughly has the root of the matter in him as Mr. Hosmer. Let us take a characteristic specimen of Mr. Hosmer's matter and manner, in its strength and in its weakness. He is still on the continent of Europe, among "Primitive Saxons." He quotes a highly wrought passage of J. R. Green, starting from the text, "All England lay in that oldest home;" then Mr. Hosmer takes up his own parable:

"All America lay in that oldest home no less. The blood and fibre of the whole great English-speaking race, in fact, is derived from those Elbe and Weser plains; government of the people, for the people, by the people, which is the breath of its life wherever that race may be scattered, is the ancient Anglo-Saxon freedom."

It is thus seen to be quite to the purpose when Mr. Hosmer, in his first chapter on "The Primitive Saxons," begins with the sentence "On the 30th of April, 1789, Washington, as the first President of the United States, took a solemn oath to maintain the Federal Constitution." Mr. Hosmer's object is to trace the steps, in the oldest England on the European mainland, in the middle England in the European island, in the newer England in the new world of America, by which the presidential oath of Washington grew out of the state of things which Green, with somewhat of lively fancy, pictured in the older Saxon and Anglian lands. Mr. Hosmer goes diligently through all the intervening ages, dealing with the constitutional aspect of things, first in England, then in England and America, then in England, America, and the rest of the English world. He does this in the kind of way at which we have already hinted—a way which, in point of scholarly treatment and finish, leaves much to be desired, but which cannot fail to be useful to those to whom it is immediately addressed. After his historical sketch—a sketch, as he says, "taking in eighteen hundred years, from the Germans of Tacitus to the present moment," he goes on to discuss "the Future of Anglo-Saxon Freedom." Here he has to fight an oft-fought battle against those in either hemisphere who fancy that the amount of foreign immigration into the United States has destroyed their English character. It is only in America that such a question can need to be seriously argued. In England there is a large amount of ignorance and dislike; but it hardly gets beyond ignorance and dislike; there cannot be said to be any definite doctrine to dispute against. In America it is otherwise. The foreign settler in America is ready to become "American," whatever meaning he attaches to that name. He does not like to be told that he can become "American" only by in some sort becoming English. And even a New Englander of the purest Puritan blood does not always like to be called "English," though he may allow Mr. Hosmer to call him "Anglo-Saxon." He does not like to be called "English," because he thinks that so to call him denies or depreciates his political nationality; he does not grasp the existence of a higher nationality, which, while leaving his political nationality untouched within its own range, overrides it for higher purposes. And there is moreover a more curious feeling than all, which Mr. Fiske, Mr. Hosmer, and their comrades have often to strive against. We have known Americans feel offended at any setting forth of the essentially English character of American institutions. They answer, "You deny us all originality." Their share in the common English, the common Teutonic, heritage is thought less precious than the supposed credit of having invented something new. The best answer to this kind of talk is to take our stand at

the year 1789, to compare the revolution which ended that year in America with the revolution which began that year in France. The French Revolution had just that kind of "originality" which is denied to the American. The French Revolution, as far as could be done, cut loose all ties between the past and the present. The American Revolution preserved those ties in a way which, under the circumstances, was wonderful indeed. Which answered best, the conservative revolution or the destructive one?

From the assertion of the essential unity of the English folk under all difficulties Mr. Hosmer goes on to ask two questions, which he puts thus:—

"1. Does the English-speaking race respect and love the freedom which it has inherited? 2. Has the race within it any proper feeling of brotherhood?"

It is not quite easy to see what Mr. Hosmer means to be the answer to the first question. The chapter consists mainly of extracts from various writers, British and American, setting forth the essential unity of the English folk on both sides of the Ocean. The last chapter also contains a good many extracts, chiefly from writers in Great Britain and the still dependent Colonies of Great Britain, which may be commended to the notice of those who babble about Imperial Federation without telling us what it is, without explaining how the two exactly opposite ideas of "empire" and "federation" are to be reconciled. Such talkers, when they talk of a federation of the Queen's dominions and a federation of the English-speaking people as if they were the same thing, just forget that the majority of the Queen's subjects are not English-speaking, and that the majority of the English-speaking people are not the Queen's subjects. Mr. Hosmer has brought together from various parts the sayings of men who have not forgotten those two simple facts. They see that a union of the "Anglo-Saxon," the "English-speaking" people, is no union at all if the "Anglo-Saxon people," the "English-speaking people," of the United States, are left out. But they see also that a political union of any kind between the older and the newer England is out of the question; and while they look forward hopefully to a union of another kind, they see the difficulties in the way even of that. Mr. Hosmer states some of them strongly and clearly:—

"As for a union, only one purely moral is possible or desirable. . . . Should the will for such fraternity be felt, there is no power of nature or man which could interfere to prevent it. Had we but the will! We nurse too carefully old prejudices; we remember too long ancient injuries. We train our children, as we were trained ourselves, to execrate all things British, to think only of England's tyranny. Do we not know that more than half of England were, in the Revolution, really on our side, regarding our cause as their own?"

This last refers to what Mr. Hosmer has said in a former chapter about the state of feeling in England at the time of the American War of Independence. He quotes an American writer for the saying that "the American Revolution was not a quarrel between two peoples, but a strife between two parties in one people—Conservatives and Liberals." This is hardly an exhaustive account of the case; but it has a strong element of truth in it. If not the mass of the nation, if not the whole of any party, yet some of the wisest men in England at that day undoubtedly looked on the cause of the American Colonies as their own cause.

We welcome Mr. Hosmer as one of the supporters of what, though in another shape, is essentially the same cause in our own day. We could wish that Mr. Hosmer would, in another edition, chasten his style a little, that he would get some competent scholar to revise his minuter statements of fact in the earlier ages. But even as he is, his hearty and generous advocacy of doctrines which, in his country, it needs some boldness to maintain, cannot fail to help on the object which is common to him and to us.

### THE QUAKER AS CRUSADER.

BRITISH FOLKS AND BRITISH INDIA FIFTY YEARS AGO: JOSEPH PEASE AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES. By John Hyslop Bell. Manchester and London: John Heywood.

THIS book is in some degree typical of the Quakers of whom it treats. Modest, if not unattractive, in its title and appearance, it improves steadily on nearer acquaintance, and introduces us not only to some of the best men of whom England has reason to be proud, but to the struggles and success of a policy which has gone far to create and to justify our Empire. It contains an account of the efforts made between the years 1833 and 1811 to improve the condition of the native races of India, and especially to abolish the slavery which then existed amongst them. The chief actor in this campaign was Joseph Pease, of Darlington, the most distinguished of a numerous family, the members of which still maintain in various walks of life the talents and virtues of their ancestor. Edward and Joseph Pease carried on a large woollen manufacturing business in Darlington. The junior partner had been for some years the travelling member of the firm, so that he had large opportunities of becoming acquainted with the life and occupations of the people. He retired from business in middle life and devoted himself to public affairs. The keynote of his character was benevolence. He had a passionate hatred of cruelty and oppression, a horror of war and slavery. He was never tired of inculcating the duty of loving all men and fearing no man.

The year 1833 witnessed the first fruits of the reformed Parliament in two Acts, one for the abolition of negro slavery in the West Indies and other British colonies, and the other for granting a new charter to the East India Company for another twenty years. These victories only whetted the appetite for future conquests. Slavery must be abolished throughout the world, in North America, and, above all, in our own dependency of India. Great hopes were raised by the accession of Queen Victoria. The women of England prayed that her coming to the throne might be marked by the immediate and complete emancipation of female slaves. To attain any alleviation of slavery in India, it was first necessary to dispel the ignorance of Englishmen. The terrible famine in Bengal of 1838 presented a favourable opportunity. The mortality had been terrible. Newspaper correspondents wrote that the inhabitants of some of the larger cities were compelled to abandon their evening drives from the impossibility of avoiding the effluvia of putrid corpses. Joseph Pease organised an agitation, and obtained the assistance of O'Connell. Meetings were held in Birmingham and many other large towns. Specially notable was the meeting of the British Association at Newcastle in 1839. The abolitionists then adopted as their programme the emancipation of the slaves of our Eastern Empire and the granting of land to Indian labourers, in order to supplant in the British market the slave-grown cotton of the United States. New recruits appeared in the persons of Jonathan Backhouse, Thomas Wemyss, and the young William Forster, and societies for the protection of the natives of British India were formed at Darlington and many other places in the North. At length, in May, 1839, a central association was set on foot in London under the name of the "British India Society for bettering the condition of our fellow-subjects, the natives and inhabitants of British India." At the request of Joseph Pease, Thomas Clarkson accepted the office of President. Quakers, as was natural, formed the backbone of the movement, but the meeting was attended by an army of Indian princes, of eminent Anglo-Indians, by members of Parliament, notably by Mr. Charles Villiers, who is still amongst us. As was natural, the promoters entertained a sanguine hope that all abuses of Indian Government would be swept away at once. Many of them, alas, still remain. Lord Brougham argued eloquently that India should be controlled by the voice of its

representatives, and O'Connell depicted in glowing language the lightning speed with which the enthusiasm for righting wrong would flash from one corner of the Empire to the other.

The second part of the programme, the extinction of the American cotton market, was strongly supported in the United States, where the belief was held that cotton was the strongest anti-abolition influence of the country. An American wrote: "Were English and French manufacturers supplied with Indian or Egyptian cotton, the demand for slaves from Virginia and Maryland would cease." The movement, however, soon encountered the opposition which was a sign of its success. At Darlington itself it came into conflict with the Chartists, and the motion for the amelioration of the Indians was lost because the working-men present objected to petition a House of Commons in which they were not represented. This critical condition of things spread to London. A split occurred as to whether the opium trade was properly within the sphere of the society, and the organisation was nearly given up. Thomas Clarkson, however, and Richard Cobden, were not men to be dismayed by a first rebuff. On June 12th, 1840, the first "World Anti-slavery Convention" was held at Freemasons' Hall. The "friends of the slaves of every nation" met almost to the number of five hundred. Haydon has left us an historical painting of the memorable scene. Of the one hundred and thirty-two portraits which the picture contains, fifty of them were members or associates of the British India Society. The concluding prayer of Clarkson's was responded to by deep-toned utterances of "Amen, Amen." The success of this movement gave new life to the British India Society. The American abolitionists cheered to the echo O'Connell's glowing appeal to "raise the shield of humanity around the natives of India in order to vindicate our common Christianity, and promote the blessings of peace and prosperity in that long-oppressed quarter of the world."

The Society now began to attract the attention of the East India Company. Joseph Pease held important communications with James Cosmo Melvill, who was, perhaps, the most influential member of that corporation. Melvill expressed the strongest sympathy with the entire abolition of slavery in India. The centre of gravity was shifted to Manchester, the fittest town in England to decide all questions connected with the cotton trade. John Bright lent his youthful eloquence to the cause, a fact which has been neglected by all his biographers. In November, 1840, Clarkson could assert cheerfully that the cause was gaining ground. The general election of 1841 seemed at first likely to inflict a serious blow upon the society. The whole Whig party appeared to be doomed. The new Parliament was evidently Protectionist, whereas the friends of the Indians were almost to a man Free Traders. The best course seemed to be to grasp the nettle. This was done by forming a close alliance between the British India Society and the Anti-Corn-Law League embodied in a regular treaty signed by Joseph Pease and Richard Cobden. This combination was not, however, of much advantage to the weaker organisation. The advocates of India had to bear their full share of the odium attaching to Free Traders, while the introduction of Indian topics into Free Trade speeches was tolerated with impatience. The effect of the Afghan war upon India had been very serious: her treasury was exhausted; she had lost fifteen thousand men and fifty thousand camels. In this state of things any proposal for improving the revenue was likely to be listened to. Efforts were made to push the growth of cotton in India. The South Durham British India Society presented an address dated May 20th, 1843, urging this policy on the board of directors. Joseph Pease who presented the address was referred to the secretary for a reply. With startling and dramatic effect the secretary produced an Act dated on the previous seventh of April abolishing slavery within the territories of the East

India Company. We are told by Mr. Bell that "the suddenness of so stupendous a communication produced a dreadful shock. Every nerve in Joseph Pease thrilled with the sudden conflict of his emotions." In giving to the South Durham Society an account of this memorable interview, he wrote: "With inexpressible pleasure in his countenance, Mr. Secretary Melvill handed me the Act of the President of the Council of India abolishing slavery throughout that vast Empire, remarking: 'You have had something to do with this,' well knowing it belonged to himself, though he did not choose to acknowledge it. But, my friends, let us not deceive ourselves. The work for the redemption of the slave has not been the work of man. To Him whose compassion faileth not, whose tender mercies are over all the workmanship of His holy hands, we ascribe the praise."

Joseph Pease died on March 16th, 1845. He bequeathed to each of his five sons and grandsons a copy of the law of 1843, which he regarded as the crowning happiness of his life to have witnessed. His friend, Thomas Clarkson, followed him six months later. This admirably written book contains not only the record of a noble life, but an example of the means by which great reforms are conceived and carried out under free institutions.

#### MORE OF MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF.

THE LETTERS OF MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF. Translated from the French by Mary J. Seifano. With Portrait, Autograph Letters, etc. London: Cassell & Co. 1891.

THE publication of a selection from the correspondence of Marie Bashkirtseff was inevitable. The tragedy of inordinate desires revealed in the Journal and her early death had excited the curiosity we all know. Eugénie de Guérin's letters had followed her Journal: the inference was plain. The difficulty was that one who was accustomed to deposit regularly her self-confessions in her Journal would naturally transfer appropriate portions of it to her private letters, and that anything which was not a repetition would be merely trivial. The dilemma has not been escaped, though the variations on the old themes of the Journal are sufficiently entertaining. By way of preface we have the brief notice of François Coppée, contributed originally to the catalogue of her works exhibited in 1885, in which the accredited poet of the humble, simple poor is "stupefied" at the pile of masterpieces of literature in their original languages which he found lying on the table of the young well-to-do *mondaine*, who was so highly delighted when a painting of hers fetched four guineas at a sale at the Hôtel Drouot, and whose attainments might possibly, in case of need, have qualified her for the post of a governess, if only she could have obtained pardon for the originality of her English as displayed in these letters.

We miss the terrible tenacity of purpose which marked the Journal so strongly. Doubtless her fierce determination to be a genius, to win admiration and notoriety one way or another, to have the two hemispheres at her feet, to gain the suffrage even of the crowd whose individual members she so haughtily despised, was best reserved for self-confession. What is new in this volume are the letters addressed to the literary gods of the moment, corresponding in date to the fits of enthusiasm noted in the Journal. Stendhal and Balzac were inconveniently dead, and so escaped. What their successors thought of the letters sent to them in her terrible scrawl is left to the imagination, but their replies are easily gathered from Mlle. Marie's letters and from the known characteristics of the recipients. Alexander Dumas *filis* seems to have sagely told her that she had been turning her brain by reading too many novels, that the ideal and the real are not quite the same thing in this world, and that she would do wisely to go to bed regularly at an early hour. This rebuff seems to have damped her ardour till next year, when she presents herself to M. de M— (read, doubtless, Guy de



Maupassant) as a *sister-soul* worthy of a confidential correspondence. This time, however, she is wiser than before, and does not appoint a rendezvous at the opera ball; she prefers to remain unknown. M. de M—, as might be supposed, replies that he is not the man she is seeking, that he is not romantic, poetical, or gallant, and that he is the victim of eternal *ennui*. They play at hide-and-seek for a short time; the author very cautious and mistrustful, the would-be celebrity of the future brilliantly flighty and impertinent. Evidently she thought that the watchword of 1830, "*épater les bourgeois*" (startle the Philistines), was out of date, and that modernity demanded that one should rather endeavour to startle the literary artists themselves. M. de M— failing her, she turns to M. Edmond de Goncourt, whom she had dubbed in a letter to M. de M— as a naïve old Japanese with a Louis XV. wig. M. de Goncourt had based his "Chérie" on confidences received from young girls. "Chérie," Marie tells him, is "full of poor things." She offers him at the moment her Journal, which she had originally intended to leave by will to "a talented young writer," evidently M. de M—. But, though all the deficiencies of "Chérie" would doubtless be amply compensated by her own Journal, she does not seem to have received an answer. Nor had she more luck, apparently, in flinging herself at the feet of Zola, in admiration of his "passion for truth." She vows she had read every word he had written; yet there is no second letter addressed to him, any more than to M. Edmond de Goncourt. Finally, she turns to M. Sully-Prudhomme, whose preface to his *Lucretius* is "infinitely more difficult to understand than the philosophy of the ancients. And I have such a high opinion of my intellect, that he who is capable of embarrassing it is in my eyes a giant."

MM. Alexander Dumas and Paul Bourget are greatly alarmed at the contemporary ravages in France of the analytical spirit, and the consequent "incapability of loving," at the increasing intensity of the "duel of the sexes." It is true they have not yet found it necessary to advise the resuscitation of the *jus trium liberorum*, and that marriages still take place. Yet Marie Bashkirtseff's confessions strengthen these writers' views—or paying paradoxes. Here was a young girl, not at all subject to that malady of lack of will they fear so greatly, who was ready and capable of being, in her relations with the opposite sex, a *camarade*, as they desire, and not a dressed doll. Yet none but perfectly modelled dukes, or at least great geniuses, need apply for her hand. Here was a girl who was intellectual, but her genius (if you will) only served to make her relatives uncomfortable, and to hasten her own death. These modern Atalantas are, on their own showing, intricate bundles of nerves and victims of moods. They live on excitement, and *se montent la tête à froid* in default of spontaneous enthusiasm. They no longer complain, as in George Sand's youthful days, that they are *femmes incomprises*, but use the scalpels of analysis to the injury of themselves and of others. But, after all, they do not escape the woman in them; though they regard a husband as a mere accessory to their glory, they are always seeking for a lay confessor, an Alexandre Dumas; or a master, a Bastien-Lepage. They are ever disciples and mouth-pieces, even George Sand and George Eliot. "Fie! 'tis an unweeded garden," we might say of Marie Bashkirtseff's soul; yet she wins our deepest sympathy. When a girl of sixteen not only writes to a friend that she "has placed a sort of pride in the building up for herself of a life all fair and glorious, with that selfish pride of a painter who is working at the picture which is to be his masterpiece," but with iron will proceeds to carry out her plan into effect, we can only follow with alarmed sympathy the inevitable drama of disappointments and doubts, of alternating self-confidence and distrust, or even judge that she was *felix opportunitate mortis*, though her inordinate desires seemed in a fair way to their accomplishment.

## FICTION.

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2. BY RIGHT NOT LAW. By Robert H. Sherard. One vol. London, Paris, and Melbourne: Cassell & Co. 1891.
3. THE VRL STAFF. By X. Y. Z. One vol. London: David Stott. 1891.

MISS WENTWORTH went one Sunday evening to hear the Rev. the Hon. Ernest Compton preach on behalf of the Society of S. Francis. He was a fine preacher, and he had great effect upon Miss Wentworth. She wished to surrender her worldly wealth, which was considerable, to the Society, and to devote herself to its work. She was opposed, however, by Ernest Compton himself; in the second volume, after she had renewed her offer, he insisted that she should take another week for consideration before he would accept it. An event which was more unexpected to herself than to Compton occurred during that week, and put an end to her idea of joining the Society. "It was never anything more than an idea," Compton remarked to her. There will certainly be some readers who will be more interested in Miss Wentworth's niece, Sylvia. Indeed, during a great part of the story, it is not Miss Wentworth, but Sylvia, who is the principal figure; one is more deeply engaged with the passions of the younger heroine than the mere proclivities of the elder. Sylvia returned the love of a bad baronet, a man divorced from his wife. The engagement was not sanctioned by her father or her aunt; and although Sylvia's illness ultimately won some concession from them, she did not live to marry her bad baronet. We have given briefly the raw material of the story; it is less easy to give any notion of the way in which Mr. Norris deals with it. Sometimes he seems to have amused himself by taking one of the typical characters of fiction and adding something. Ernest Compton is the typical religious enthusiast, with insight and strong common sense added. Sir Harry Brewster is the bad, bold baronet, with a genuine passion added. Miss Wentworth's cynical brother, James, is another new departure; for the cynical of fiction are not generally brothers, but uncles—elderly uncles. The whole story is written with spirit and confidence; it is bright on the surface and pessimistic beneath it; the style has a curiously winning and engaging quality in it. In choice of subject more than in execution the author reminds us of Trollope. For the choice of the title and the arrangement of the story some fault might be found; the main interest is stopped by an interest which was only intended to be subservient. But these are not points of the first importance. "Miss Wentworth's Idea" is an exceedingly pleasant and interesting novel.

Mr. Sherard dedicates his new book, "By Right not Law," to the many gentlemen of the press who have encouraged him in the past with their kindly notices. Such a dedication is embarrassing. One feels an inclination to be kind in order to share the honour of some future dedication. And the inclination to be kind is as uncritical as the impulse of the more common reviewer not to be dull on Saturday. There was a man once, the hero of "By Right not Law," whose name was variable and may be neglected. He discovered that his great-grandfather had been murdered by an innkeeper, and that the innkeeper had possessed himself of the great-grandfather's money. In course of time the innkeeper committed suicide and the stolen money went to his daughter, Prudence. Prudence was exceedingly religious. She lived an austere life, denying herself, saving all her money for the service of the Church. She wished to restore an old ruined chapel. To the hero it seemed better that she should restore the money that her father, that unrighteous innkeeper, had stolen. To this Prudence objected; the hero pressed his point; he became so exasperated that he wrote texts on her furniture. Now Prudence lived alone and kept the money in the house with her; she



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