

"The Government organized by the Constitution was considered to be, as it undoubtedly is, that of a representative republic, and no power existed in the Legislature to convert it into a pure democracy. The organization of the law-making power is one of the principal purposes of a constitutional charter of government, and in all communities of considerable extent this must be effected by means of a system of representation by which people at stated intervals delegate to citizens chosen by them the power of enacting general laws by which all members of the State are to be governed. That purpose is expressed in the Constitution of this State by the declaration that the legislative power shall be vested in the Senate and Assembly."

We would warn members of the Legislature that they will not escape these weighty condemnations by the cheap device of submitting "propositions" to the people, instead of actual bills. They began this plan of shirking their responsibility in 1883 by submitting a proposition about convict labor; but the public will not stand another repetition of this. They will not submit to be saddled with the expense and trouble of deciding questions which they have hired legislators to decide. Therefore, any member of the Legislature who does not feel himself mentally or morally competent to vote aye or no out of his own head on so simple a matter as the question whether the Civil-Service Commission, which the Legislature itself has created, ought to be abolished, ought to resign at once and make way for a better man.

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY'S manifesto about the Irish question, published in Saturday morning's *Tribune*, is extremely interesting, as showing what kind of government the modern world would get were the Comtist scheme, of having councils of scientific men set to rule over the nations, carried out. He expresses in thorough Carlylese his contempt for "government by average opinion," which he says "is merely a circuitous method of going to the devil," and demands instead of it "one real statesman" of "the calibre of Pitt or Burke, to say nothing of Strafford and Pym." The only mark of such a statesman that Mr. Huxley furnishes to the English people is, that he (the statesman) would "stand up" and tell his countrymen that "the proposed disruption of the Union [with Ireland] is cowardly wickedness," "an act base in itself and fraught with immeasurable evil." But if this performance is all that is necessary for statesmanship, England swarms to-day with real statesmen. Hundreds of politicians, and particularly Lord Randolph Churchill, have stood up and told Englishmen this very thing, and yet Mr. Huxley says, a little further on, that at the last election "he would have voted for the Conservatives for the first time in his life had it not been for Lord Randolph Churchill."

In Parnell he recognizes a genuine leader of men of the Carlylese sort. He says of him:

"Mr. Parnell has great qualities. For the first time the Irish malcontents have a leader who is not eloquent and who is honest, who knows what he wants and faces the risks involved in getting it. Our poor Right Honorable rhetoricians are no match for this man, who understands realities. I believe that he will succeed, and that success will destroy him, and I am very sorry for him. I respect him. I believe also that his success will destroy English politicians who permit themselves to be his instruments, as soon as a bitter experience of the consequence has brought Englishmen and Scotchmen, and I will add Irishmen, to their senses."

Nevertheless, instead of rejoicing that the Irish have got a genuine leader who "understands realities," and encouraging the English, who have not got one, to listen to him and heed him, he dismisses him with the pleasant remark that "success will destroy him."

Carlylese philosophers discoursing on politics have always been a little obscure. They have never yet furnished the world with a good working plan of government, but we doubt if any of them have been more barren in their utterances than Mr. Huxley. What encouragement is there for public men to "understand the realities," and become genuine leaders of men, when success will only ruin them? Surely if the Carlylese gospel had real salvation in it, it would be the duty of the English public now to throw their own statesmen overboard and buckle to Parnell with all their might. In fact, it seems to us painfully apparent that there is no use in being a real statesman, or grasping the verities, if one does not agree with Professor Huxley on the leading question of the day.

The manifesto also gives no reason for despising "the average opinion," except that on a particular question Professor Huxley does not share it. If it agreed with his own, touching Gladstone's effort to settle the long quarrel with Ireland, it is plain it would be much more respectable. The appearance of Sir John Lubbock at the furious Jingo meeting at Guildhall at which Gladstone and Parnell were hissed, makes the scientific opposition to Gladstone now very complete. Tyndall is as furious a Jingo and anti-Gladstonian as anybody, and we suppose there are other scientists of less note also boiling over with indignation against him more privately.

The phenomenon is most regrettable, because it will help to increase the growing popular contempt and dislike for "the scholar in politics." The occasional appearances of scientists like Tyndall and Huxley in the political arena are mischievous, because they do not bring with them a scrap or vestige of their scientific equipment. When they get "inside politics," they rant and roar just like any stump orator. This is not all. They go much further in the direction of non-science than any politician, for they demand before they begin their experiments, not the facts as they are, but facts as they would like them to be. Mr. Gladstone did not make modern England or modern Ireland. He found them as they are—that is, what six centuries of causation have made them; and the problem he has to solve is to make the actual Englishman and Irishman, and not the ideal Huxleyan Englishman and Irishman, stop quarrelling. The "average opinion," which Huxley abuses him for regarding, is also one of the great facts of the problem. There is no more use in calling him names for taking it into account than abusing a chemist because alkalis are alkalis instead of being acids, or an artilleryman for allowing for the resistance of the air. In truth, the scientists rarely open their lips about politics except when they are much excited about it, and they then almost invariably reveal their incapacity for political thinking. The difficulty of collecting and arranging the facts of all political prob-

lems, and the noise and confusion through which average opinion expresses itself, shock their sense of order and disturb their judgment. If they were ever to succeed to the government of the world, they would never be satisfied with anything short of a drilled society, from which political opinion would issue in prescribed lengths with official labels of soundness.

QUESTIONS FOR THE BRITISH PREMIER.

LONDON, March 27.

MR. GLADSTONE'S closed hand is to remain closed until the 8th of April. On that day he will make a statement and possibly ask leave to introduce a bill relating to the government of Ireland. It is taken for certain that before the statement is made Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan will have retired from the Cabinet. They will retain office, if they can, until the Crofters' Bill is well on its way through Committee; then they will go, and their places will probably be filled by smaller men. As to the nature of Mr. Gladstone's scheme, and the points at issue between him and his colleagues, we have literally no information. We have indeed a considerable number of paragraphs with large-type headings, but the headings have nothing behind them. They are like the scenes run forward while the chief tableau of the piece is being prepared. A vast extent of country is indicated or suggested; secondary characters enter and engage in conversations which nobody follows; the attention of the audience is held in reserve by the mysterious sounds of shuffling and thumping behind. It would be a waste of time to discuss all the statements which have been made this week "on the best authority." They may all be summed up in the phrase of Goldsmith's coffee-house politician, "A certain Minister is reported to cherish secret intentions, but this requires confirmation." Before Mr. Gladstone tells us what his intentions are, your readers may, perhaps, like to know what are the questions which the country will expect him to answer.

First, he will have to let us know in what order he proposes to take the various branches of the Irish difficulty. Is it to be a case of home rule first—Mr. Parnell's one-plank platform of November last; or shall we have a land-purchase measure first—a bridge on which the landlords may cross St. George's Channel before Mr. Parnell comes to his kingdom? This question the Prime Minister will probably meet by demanding to have the two measures considered together. They are indeed so closely connected that neither can well stand without the other. If they are taken together, the effect on parties will be curious. Landlords who have been looking forward with dread to the possible policy of a native Parliament will welcome home rule if it is combined with a generous scheme of land purchase. On the other hand, many Radicals who are willing to grant home rule will object strongly to a scheme for buying out the landlords on the credit of the imperial exchequer.

If Mr. Gladstone proposes purchase, he will have to meet opposition from two quarters. There are the enemies of the landlords, who grudge them the proposed compensation. Mr. Davitt has already been heard to protest against any leniency being shown to an "idle and worthless class." An ardent Home Ruler tells me that he means to echo this protest as soon as he gets a chance—and why? Because he thinks it would be a mistake to turn the landlords out altogether. He wishes to curtail their power and to get as much out of them as possible; but they do serve certain use-

ful purposes, and therefore, for the sake of the tenants and laborers, the landlords should not be permitted to sell out.

Again, any scheme of land purchase is sure to be opposed in the name of the British taxpayer. Here again we have to note one of those odd changes which Irish questions so often produce among English politicians. Hitherto our economists have been to some extent in sympathy with the landlord; they have taken objection to any argument which seemed to deny or undervalue the owner's interest in the land. Now they seem to be bent on showing that the owners of Irish land have no interest on which it would be safe to advance money. Sir James Caird has committed himself to the proposition that the majority of small holdings in Ireland cannot pay rent at the present time; his assertion was eagerly taken up by the *Times*, and we were told that land purchase meant simply the purchase of rents which are "practically irrecoverable." The *Freeman's Journal* was evidently puzzled and alarmed by this unseasonable waving of the No Rent flag; at the same time, it could not venture to shock Irish opinion by contending that rents ought to be easily recovered. It took refuge in what a lawyer would call confession and avoidance. "True it is," said the organ of the middle-class home-rule party, "that the tenants cannot pay rent now. But if we get a native Parliament, the circumstances of the country will improve, and even the poorer tenants will be able to pay a moderate rent."

It is not impossible that land purchase may be opposed in the name of other classes who consider that their claim to be assisted by the State is as good as that of the Irish tenants. If we are to pledge the public credit in favor of Irishmen who wish to set up as peasant proprietors, why not in favor of Englishmen out of work? If the answer is that Irishmen have become a political danger which must be averted, the English workman is shrewd enough to reply, "Then if we behave like the Irish peasantry, you'll think over the advisability of buying somebody out on our behalf?"

These objections to land purchase are formidable, and they may perhaps prevail with some who were inclined to look favorably on Mr. Giffen's scheme of expropriation. Difficulties on this point can only be met by showing that home rule offers the prospect of some benefit which will justify us in running a financial risk. What is the benefit to be? We cannot anticipate Mr. Gladstone's positive answer to this question; but there are advantages claimed for some other schemes of home rule which we may be tolerably certain his scheme will not endeavor to secure for us. In the first place, there will be no complete separation between British and Irish finance. It would in some ways be a gain to us if we were relieved from the necessity of raising, spending, or lending money in Ireland for the future. But to carry out this programme would involve administrative changes of great difficulty; it would also embarrass the question of land purchase by leaving us without any hold on our Irish debtor. Gentlemen at the Treasury say, "The thing is impossible"; and it is well known the Treasury has great influence with Mr. Gladstone.

It seems also most probable that the removal of the Parnellites from the House of Commons will not be one of the attractions of the Government plan. Mr. Morley, indeed, before he was in office, spoke in favor of this course; but the repeal of the Act of Union would point plainly to separation, and the British advocates of home rule are bent on showing that the scheme is to bring about a closer union between the two countries. It is very uncertain whether the Irish members wish to go, and they have some strong motives to insist on remaining. So long as they are with

us, they can hold over us the threat of obstruction, and they may consider this a useful and even indispensable safeguard against oppression by the Imperial Parliament. Then, in the House of Commons they have the aid of men who would not care to sit in an Irish legislature. I wonder what Mr. Justin McCarthy would take to live in Dublin? If the Irish members remain, their position will be anomalous; they will interfere with our local affairs, while we shall be debarred from interfering with theirs. It has been suggested that Mr. Gladstone may meet this objection by admitting the Irish members to vote only on questions concerning the whole United Kingdom. If any such limitation is introduced, it will be as fatal to Mr. Gladstone's measure of home rule as the "gagging clauses" were to his Dublin University Bill of 1873. But it is impossible to believe that an experienced statesman will make the rash attempt to distinguish between one Parliamentary question and another. Mr. Gladstone is governing the Empire at this moment because the Irishmen voted for him on an amendment proposed in the interest of English and Scottish laborers. He cannot surely dream of proposing that Irish members may in future be shut out from a division on an English question, even if the division be one which affects the fate of a government.

I have endeavored to state the questions to which Mr. Gladstone will have to find an answer when he makes his long-expected statement. There are many politicians, Liberal and Conservative, who are not willing to decide absolutely against home rule; but at the same time they do not see their way out of the difficulties I have indicated, nor do they feel sure that Mr. Gladstone can find a way. Their doubts are treated as treasonable by some devout admirers of the Liberal leader, but the name of Gladstone is not sufficient to conjure away all our fears. There are even some significant symptoms of reaction against the personal influence of the Prime Minister. Some advanced Liberal journals have declared that this Government is founded on a mistake; that the party should not have gone into office until it had an Irish policy. Others again hold that this Parliament has no mandate to settle the question of home rule. It is curious that a Radical paper should bring up at this moment an incident almost forgotten by the admirers of Mr. Gladstone—his prompt, not to say hasty, recognition of the Confederate Government. It is suggested that he has given Mr. Parnell credit for having "formed a nation," just as he gave the same credit to Mr. Jefferson Davis, and that the ultimate result may be the same in both cases. The comparison is worth noting, but we must not be ready to accept a sinister omen. Whatever our differences with Ireland may be, we must at least endeavor to settle them without recourse to the arbitrament of war.

R.

TWO NOVELS BY PAUL BOURGET.

PARIS, March 23, 1886.

FRANCE is undergoing a curious revolution: it is fast becoming one of the greatest fields of what I might call the fiction industry. The word industry is not misplaced: there must be somewhere large factories where novels are made by the thousand, as there are factories of shoes and clothes. I confess that I am perpetually astonished when I pass before the shop-windows of the book-venders and see every week—I might almost say every day—a large array of new novels, with their catching titles, their yellow, pink, red, blue covers, with the illustrations which often adorn these covers, so as to make them more attractive. I confess having bought some of these books, merely on account of the

cleverness of these title-illustrations. Alas! the outside was better than the inside, and I was not well rewarded for my little sacrifice. The fashion has set in not to make edition after edition, but to count the thousands of copies: you see on the title "fifth thousand," "sixth thousand," etc.; sometimes the numbers go much higher. There is a sort of mercantile spirit in this new literature: if a book does not sell rapidly, it disappears; it goes nobody knows where. Everything must be fresh and brilliant, as in a *magasin de nouveautés*. This eruption of novels marks a transformation in the public mind. I sometimes ask myself, What can be the intellectual and moral condition of the devotees of this new literature, of those who write these novels and of those who read them? Shall we pity more the former or the latter? The former have an excuse; they have perhaps a family—"J'ai quatre enfants à nourrir," as we read in one of Molière's plays. What can be the excuse for the latter? I am afraid that a moralist would be tempted to place the novel-reading mania with many others, such as the morphine or chloral mania. The systematic reader of novels needs to forget his own thoughts and troubles in the thoughts and troubles of imaginary persons; he needs an artificial sort of excitement; and this is probably the reason why the sensation novel supersedes by degrees the psychological and purely analytic novel.

The popular mind wants a somewhat coarse food; I have been conversing with some of the men who furnish novels to the penny papers which have the largest circulation. They are almost obliged to amuse their public with crimes and detectives. I should have thought that real crimes were sufficiently numerous and sufficiently interesting; but it seems they are not.

There is no disputing tastes: we must recognize hard facts, and must admit that France, which, even in my memory, was a very poor field for novel writers, has become most fruitful in this respect. If poor Balzac lived now, he would no longer struggle perpetually with creditors; the publishers would all be at his feet. There is not much in all this new literature which deserves the attention of the critic. The new novels are written for one day only; they are doomed to immediate oblivion, like newspaper articles. Here and there, in this chaos of trivial, obscene, dull, inarticulate literature, something more artistic emerges, as a fine flower blooms on a dunghill. My attention was first drawn to a writer called Paul Bourget, by the first number of a novel entitled 'Cruel Enigma,' which appeared in the *Revue Nouvelle*. It described the placid life of two ladies, poor and highly genteel, who were educating a young man, their son and nephew, with the most delicate and tender care. This début was charming; the description of this quiet home, this Eden of virtue, of respectability, of peace, in the midst of Paris, had real merit. To be sure, it reminded one of many passages in Balzac's 'Scènes de la vie de province,' for our great Balzac was admirable in these descriptions of humble and domestic lives: he knew how to place his pure figures in their *cadre*, and how to give a sort of life to this *cadre*. But it is not everybody who can make you think of Balzac, and I conceived at once a high opinion of the talent of M. Bourget.

I saw also at once how the drama would develop itself: how this tender, delicate, refined, but too feminine education of the young hero would ill prepare him for the temptations of life. I was not deceived; the young man falls under the influence of a bad woman, a married woman, and you can imagine the rest—the struggle between the pure affections and impure love, the hesitations, the victories, the defeats of the human will subjected to the action of conflicting forces. It is the old story of Hercules placed be-