

and in detail, this Boulangist party was to be formed, Rochefort answered for him that at the rate things were then going, the whole Chamber would be Boulangist in one year from that date, there being already thirty Boulangist Deputies. At this point Boulanger himself took up the tale, and intimated that what he was driving at was the Presidency of the republic, which, when the Chamber was entirely Boulangist, he of course would have, and he would be no more a dictator, he declared, than Grévy or Carnot.

He was asked whether, when he was President, he would go to war. This he denied indignantly, and told the reporter of the *Figaro* he might head the article he was going to write, "Boulanger, c'est la paix"—which of course recalls in a comic way the Napoleonic phrase, "l'Empire, c'est la paix." This, he said, was his answer to placards which had been stuck up all over the country headed "Boulanger, c'est la guerre." The nearest approach to a declaration of his policy which he made was in laying down his dinner knife on the table, and calling the reporter's attention to the straight line made by the blade and handle. "I am just like that line," said he; "why should I be obliged to go to one side or the other?" When he left the room, Rochefort exclaimed: "I adore that man. Did you ever see anybody simpler, or more natural, or, in short, a better fellow?" On the reporter's suggesting modestly that when Boulanger got into power, perhaps Rochefort would turn against him, the latter replied: "That will be *his* affair; but really this time I don't think I am mistaken." The only thing certain and definite that can be extracted, in fact, from the conversations of either the General or his friends is that he thinks he occupies the position which Louis Napoleon occupied in 1851; that the country is tired of parties and of parliamentary government, and wants a great man to take it out of the slough; that he, Boulanger, may, under these circumstances, consider himself "France," and do the best he can to get the Government into his hands. It does not appear that he has now or ever had any political ideas, except such as pass current in French barracks and are produced at mess-tables.

The politicians in the meantime are very much alarmed by him. The best observers felt sure he would carry neither Dordogne nor Nord, but he carried both by large majorities, although the Republican delegation in the Chamber from both these departments, issued addresses warning the voters against him as a dictator in disguise. Even the Reds have denounced him vigorously in addresses and proclamations, but without much effect. The following are some specimens of the stories by which his canvass was helped in Nord: that he was a sailor, and went a-fishing on the banks of Newfoundland before he entered the army, and therefore ought to have the sailor vote; that he is a natural son of Napoleon III.; that he is a grandson of Napoleon I. in this way: A man named Boulanger, who had

been a miner, entered the Grand Army under Napoleon the Great, and rose to high rank, and became very intimate with the Emperor, who, having had a child by a Russian princess, begged Boulanger to father it and give it his name, which Boulanger very obligingly did; and the present candidate is the child in question, and ought to have both the miner vote and the Bonapartist vote. Of course there are defects in this story. On the face of the narrative, it would seem as if he were the son and not the grandson of the first Napoleon, and as if, this being so, he ought now to be about seventy years old; but these little discrepancies do not count about election time. Moreover, there is an almanac widely circulated in the rural districts in his behalf, which declares that the signs of the zodiac make it very clear that he will conquer Germany on the 7th of May, 1890, and be proclaimed President of the republic in 1891. One Boulangist stump-orator goes about with a dog, which barks loudly when his master in his speeches mentions the name of Jules Ferry, the principal representative of the Opportunist party. There is a good suggestion in this for our campaign speakers. A dog taught to bark joyously on hearing Blaine's name, and to howl piteously on hearing Cleveland's, or conversely, might produce a good effect among doubtful voters.

It cannot be said that the French Republicans deserve or are receiving much sympathy in this the hour of their distress. They have persisted for ten years in the policy of overturning ministries for trifles, in spite of repeated warnings as to how it would end. No attempt have they made to build up a strong and united party, or to kill the suicidal habit of supporting the Cabinet only in return for "favors" and "recognition." They are rallying now, and trying to show a united front to the enemy—the terrible coming "Cæsar"; but it is humiliating to see the kind of Cæsar he is—a smug-faced soldier who never gained a victory or commanded in a battle, who won his promotion by sycophancy, and has no sign of the hero about him except his seat on horseback, which, however, is admitted on all hands to be rather that of a ring-master than of a great commander.

One thing they are mourning over bitterly—the substitution of the *scrutin de liste*, or general ticket, for the *scrutin d'arrondissement*, or district ticket. This was Gambetta's plan for stopping jobbery among the Deputies, by making each Deputy the representative of the whole department elected on a general ticket, instead of the single representative of one district. He thought that in this way the claims of constituents would weigh less heavily on each member. The scheme, however, has had no great success as regards jobbery, and it is now furnishing the Boulangists with the means of wiping out the minority completely in all departments in which they are a majority. On a general ticket in such cases they carry every seat, and give each election the air of that dreadful thing the "plébiscite," with which Napoleon wrought such execution among his enemies.

INCAPABLE ENTHUSIASTS.

THERE is an aphorism of Lichtenberg's, quoted by Mr. John Morley in his recent lecture, to the effect that enthusiasts without capacity are the really dangerous people. At first thought the saying is paradoxical. It is the enthusiasts with capacity, one is disposed to say, that are to be feared, for they can accomplish something. Yet, if we consider the matter, it appears that the enthusiasts with capacity are the really great men. Giving the word capacity a not unreasonably broad meaning, it is only such men that urge the world into genuine progress. If they led men astray, they would prove their incapacity. There have been perhaps great men who had little enthusiasm, although, of course, they had capacity, but their part has been that of conservators rather than reformers. The great onward lurches of the race have been due to the men of combined fire and steel, of energy as well as intellect, distinguished, in short, by both enthusiasm and capacity.

Wherein, then, lies the danger of incapable enthusiasts? It is in the misdirection of their enthusiasm. They hold up unattainable ideals, and lead men off on hopeless expeditions. In this way they cause a treble mischief. They consume time in futile struggles, they waste energies that would have been available for good, and they throw discredit upon all enthusiasm for reform. They have neither that kind of capacity, called common sense, which enables some men to distinguish between the practicable and the impracticable, nor that capacity, called insight, which enables others to anticipate the direction which progress must take. There is enough of the spirit of self-sacrifice in the world, of "public spirit," to make things a great deal better than they are, if it were properly directed. But if it is scattered and diverted in a thousand different directions and towards inconsistent ends, progress is blocked; and it is in achievements of this kind that incapable enthusiasts accomplish their mischief. Fortunately, as they get in one another's way and quarrel, their results are chiefly negative. They fail to carry out their own schemes, but they succeed in thwarting others. Unfortunately, they disconcert the plans of the wise as well as of the foolish.

For the most incapable of enthusiasts must have a following. No cause is so absurd as not to attract some one when enthusiastically urged, for the reason that enthusiasm is intrinsically attractive. It is a generous trait, and although not incompatible with egotism, it is incompatible with deliberate selfishness. It tends to carry a man outside of himself, and thereby acquires a moral quality. In fact, the predominant meaning of the word seems to be devotion to ends relating to the condition of mankind, and it is rather by a figure of speech that men are said to be enthusiasts in pursuits unconnected with the interests of their fellows. So essentially is man a social animal that whoever declaims to him that great line of Terence's, straightway wins his heart. No matter how fantastic the champion, his spirit is contagious, and by mere enthusiasm he becomes a power. When the major premise is friendship to humanity, it is odious to inquire too particularly into the minor, and if it is believed that a man's heart is in the right place, most people do not concern themselves about his head.

To criticise enthusiasts is thus always an invidious thing, and moreover their prophetic attributes serve them as a protection. Their ideals are all in the future, and as no one knows what the future may bring forth, it

is not easy to show that these ideals cannot be realized. Nor can it be denied that the world has often been mistaken, and pronounced those men incapable enthusiasts who finally have been determined to be great reformers. It is not always the case that great men are very articulate reasoners, and geniuses have a way of reaching their conclusions by instinct or inspiration rather than by logical process. Hence it is inferred that those who do not reach their conclusions by reason must do so by inspiration—a principle that hedges all enthusiasts with a certain divinity. Truly it is not easy to discriminate. Hardly any one would now call John Brown an incapable enthusiast, yet at the time of his epoch-making foray it was thought charitable to call him a madman. He may, perhaps, have reasoned as well as Arnold of Winkelried, or thought not without reason that he could play the part of Samson in the temple of the Philistines. The denunciation that fell upon him was of the same nature as that which fell upon the other abolitionists; they were odious because they were held incapable, and yet the incapacity proved to be rather on the part of the critics than of the enthusiasts.

The case of the abolitionists, however, is an excellent example of the possibility of distinguishing true prophecy from false. For nothing was plainer than that our society would not always tolerate slavery. There was nothing unprecedented in the demands of the abolitionists. Slavery had been abolished before, and it was rather surprising that it should have been maintained so long in a community so far advanced in civilization. No one who pretended to reason could assert that history taught that slavery was a permanent institution, or that it would exist in an ideal state of society. All that could be rationally urged against the abolitionists was that their methods were not the correct ones, or that the time was not ripe—arguments that were refuted by the logic of events if not by that of the anti-slavery party. Hence it was necessary to resort to appeals to the feelings, to coarse abuse, and even to violence against these enthusiasts, who had reason on their side; and when these arguments are employed, there is a presumption against the case of those who employ them. In fact, it may be laid down that the criterion of the capacity of enthusiasts is the attitude of their opponents. The final appeal is to reason; those who attempt to bring their case before other tribunals admit its weakness.

If we contrast with the abolitionists some of the enthusiasts of the present day, the applicability of the distinctions which we have taken becomes apparent. Their declared aim is to increase the wealth of the poor, and they propose to accomplish it by subtracting from that of the rich. It is true that political economy teaches that the accumulation of capital tends to increase wages; but as they dislike the conclusions of that science, and lack the capacity to follow its reasonings, they declare with the greatest assurance that it is obsolete. They propose to abolish the ancient relation of master and servant, and to institute a novel kind of partnership between labor and capital, in which labor shall dictate its own wages, control the management, and share in the profits, while capital shall bear all the losses. They lament the woes of the poor, and rejoice over the formation of trades-unions, whose principal effect and whose avowed object is to shut out the poor from opportunities of work, and whose practice is to persecute those who endeavor to maintain their independence or who try to work in defiance of union hostility. They declaim against the injustice of the present

constitution of society, and ignore the injustice which they encourage men to inflict upon one another. They refuse to explain the details of their projected reforms, but the most logical of them are driven into Socialism, and advocate the improvement of the condition of the poor by setting up the Government in business with capital furnished by the taxation of the poor whose condition it is to improve, regardless of the lessons of experience concerning the wastefulness of all governmental enterprises.

The most conspicuous proof of the incapacity of these enthusiasts is their insensibility to moral considerations. The great causes of poverty, vice, improvidence, laziness, and dishonesty, are treated as its effects, and charity to the poor is indeed made to cover a multitude of sins. The outrageous and growing faithlessness of laborers as regards the performance of their contracts meets with no condemnation from these effusive sympathizers with labor. They rave over the corruption of our legislation by capitalists, and ignore the fact that laborers form a majority of the electoral body, and that they prefer to choose representatives so ignorant, so dishonest, and so rapacious that capitalists are compelled to buy them off to avoid ruin. It has not often been the case, in the history of our race, that enthusiasm for justice has been attended with such a disregard for the most elementary virtues. It is a most discouraging sign that so large a proportion of our clergy and of the writers for the "religious" press should have proved themselves incapable enthusiasts by their utterances in these matters. They may not have much positive influence for evil, but they have encouraged so much folly that it is impossible to look for any great improvement in the condition of the poor until this generation has passed away.

IRISH NOTES.

DUBLIN, April 18, 1888.

AFTER a harsh and backward period, spring is coming upon us in all its beauty. Light clouds shadow the hills over which green tints are spreading; the birds answer each other in the hedges—over all there is the indefinable charm of the season. The moral order in Ireland is, however, not changed. A coercive policy is being carried out to the uttermost. William O'Brien was arrested on Saturday, John Dillon yesterday. Numerous are the other arrests, mainly in connection with the meetings in the west on Sunday week, where Mr. Balfour's challenge regarding the suppression of the League was resolutely taken up, and an attempt made to hold meetings in spite of their being tardily proclaimed. Some of these meetings were suppressed with brutal violence. At Ennis the people managed to elude the authorities and assemble in a warehouse opening off a yard separated from the street by a gateway. As they were passing out the authorities came upon them. The people made no resistance, and even opened the gates for the police, who commenced taking down their names. It has been fully proved that not a hand was raised or a stone thrown. Yet into this yard and upon these people charged, by order, police with drawn batons, infantry with fixed bayonets, and cavalry with sabres. Many persons were injured. The armed forces of the Crown cannot have had their hearts in the work, or the results must have been fatal. Fortunately, at least one

English member was present to see what occurred the same day at Loughrea.

It is difficult to understand the policy of the Government regarding the suppression of meetings. The humane course would be to issue the prohibition as long as possible beforehand, and to give it the fullest publicity; instead of which it is often delayed until the evening before, or the very day of the meeting. Crowds of countrymen attend, and a police charge is to many the first intimation that they have placed themselves in opposition to what is here called law. It doubtless has a discouraging effect, and that may be the intention of the Government. The poor, depending on their daily labor, cannot afford to run the risk of broken heads and disabled limbs. Mr. Balfour also probably wishes to make it appear that every meeting not suppressed is held by his permission. There is never any disturbance where the police and military do not interfere. Of late years, since we became accustomed to the presence of the Government note-taker, he is invariably protected and accorded a place on the platform. Meetings were announced for Sunday week, and at the last moment suppressed. Another was advertised for last Sunday, at New Ross, on the border of a district where the League is suppressed. Large bodies of military were quartered in the town. William O'Brien was arrested on his way to this gathering. Elaborate preparations were made for eluding the authorities and holding meetings elsewhere if necessary. Only when ten o'clock in the forenoon came, and no prohibition had been issued, was it felt with any degree of certainty that the meeting would be permitted. The police and military were confined to the barracks. The Government note-taker marched with the promoters between bands and banners. Perfect order and good humor prevailed, as is always the case when the people are left to themselves. The few police and soldiers off duty that strayed into the crowd passed unnoticed. Some 6,000 persons were present, and the number might have been doubled had there been any certainty of non-interference.

Nothing can be more futile than Mr. Balfour's assertion that he has really suppressed the spirit of the League, and weakened its prestige and organization. He has made it more dangerous; in the proclaimed districts secret gatherings and secret combinations replace open proceedings. The people are more than ever devoted to their leaders. William O'Brien's character has been revealed to an extraordinary degree. The crudeness, bitterness, and exaggeration that too often characterize *United Ireland*, of which he is editor, have led the outside public to underestimate his entire singleness of purpose, simplicity of nature, self-forgetfulness, and religious fervor. It is said by many that he intends, when the Irish question is satisfactorily settled, to enter a monastery, and this I quite believe. Nothing can shake Mr. Parnell's position as leader; but O'Brien and Dillon are the most beloved of the people, sharing personally their difficulties and dangers.

I never travel through Ireland or look beneath the surface here that I am not renewedly and painfully impressed with the dark shadows that inevitably accompany this movement. It is quite different from anti-slavery, or temperance, or any other great agitation in which the mainspring is conscientiousness and philanthropy. In our cause, indeed, such motives characterize the leaders and large numbers of the rank and file, and English support is generally unselfish; but the chief incentive here, so far as the land (apart from the Nation-