

details of the match fought over again at dinner! Freeman's disgust at the "chatter about Harriet" was no greater than that of many a non-golfer compelled to listen to endless explanations of the way in which the ball became unplayable on the thirteenth and hung on the edge of the cup on the last hole. Veterans fighting their battles over again are not a circumstance to the long explanations of golf strategy and the "most wonderful shot I ever made," which go on with inexhaustible zest on club piazzas and around the tables in the café. Condemn the inveterate golfer to silence about his favorite sport, and it would lose half its charm.

What Mr. Balfour seems to have confused is the rule of taciturnity while actually playing, and the rule of limitless discussion and living the scene over again when the match is finally lost or won. Strict observers of golf etiquette go over the course like so many Trappists. The tradition of silence on the links is ancient and severe. Stories and facts without end illustrate it. There were the two old Scotchmen who played a closely-contested round without a word or whisper, until one of them uttered a golfer's oath as his ball jumped out of the cup on the eighteenth hole. The other turned upon him in a fury at his "unbridled loquacity." The conviction is generally held that the best players are the most close-mouthed. The man whom Walter Travis defeated in the finals for the British amateur championship wrote afterwards that the American was the most silent golfer he had ever encountered. His single remark to his opponent during the whole thirty-six holes was: "You are driving a very long ball." This is the kind of golden silence on the links which Mr. Balfour may have had in mind.

There is, to be sure, what is known as "conversational golf," in which contestants are privileged by agreement to keep up a ceaseless patter of guying and banter between strokes, but that is admitted to be a shameless departure from the rigors of the game. Yet the most punctilious player, who holds it a sacred obligation to let his words be few in the course of actual play, feels at liberty to overflow when it is ended. Then come the joyous recollections of the exact difficult lie and the astonishing recovery, the long and absorbing

post-mortems, the nice pointing out just where the match was lost, the conclusive demonstration that if a wooden club had only been taken instead of an iron, or the ball not fallen into a heel-print in the hazard, a glorious victory would have resulted. There is also the utterly illimitable talk about the make of clubs and style of shoes and stance and swing and grip, which flows on no less fatedly and in much greater volume than Tennyson's brook. Golf not to be talked about! Why, it is one of the greatest provocatives to conversation ever brought into this tongue-wagging world.

It is true of all popular games that talking about them is inseparable from playing them. Fancy what would happen to academic conversation if its one great theme for a large part of the college year were to be taken away. Football gives its chief color to the speech of thousands of undergraduates for weeks and months. Before the season opens, there is the vast discussion of plans and possibilities. While the games are playing, the rising hope of American culture can talk of nothing else. After the last struggle has been fought out, there come the long regrets that its strategy or personnel had not been different; and the undergraduate mind carries the matter well into the winter, until it is time to enliven the conversation by speculating on the chances of the nine and the crew in the spring. If it were not for games and talk about them, we should not have any of that play of wit and fancy, and that mind sharpening mind, which this athletic age has made such a social staple. No games, no conversation. A young lady of our acquaintance put the case exactly as it is. She was thrown into the company of a college senior, with whom she endeavored to make talk. "I tried him on books," she said, "but only made him uncomfortable. I asked him about the theatre, but he merely looked blank. I inquired what he thought about politics, but found that he had no thoughts. Then I saw what had to be done, and suggested athletics. Instantly he brightened up, ran on fluently for an hour, and concluded that I was not such a fool as he had feared." So we see that the game may not be worth the candle, but is certainly worth the talk.

RECENT FRENCH HISTORY.

PARIS, December 2.

The latest of the many volumes which Emile Ollivier has in his old age written on "*L'Empire Libéral*" (Garnier), in which the history-making activities of his prime were spent long ago, practically concludes his *Apologia pro Vita sua*. It must be said that time, with its appeasements, had already proceeded to his essential justification. Never was a French minister more vituperated by his countrymen of every degree. After their crushing defeat by Germany, they were bound to find scapegoats. In 1867 Republican agitators had prevented the efficacious army reform urged by Marshal Niel. In the fatal July session of Parliament in 1870, Gambetta shouted loudest for war and branded opposition as *scélératé*. They profited by the Emperor's defeat, which was at the same time a national disaster, to work their Revolution; and when this, instead of mending matters, ended them by the loss of two provinces, they turned first, ungallantly, against the Empress Eugénie—it had been "her war" all along—next against Emile Ollivier, Prime Minister when they forced the Emperor to war against his own feeling and judgment. Ollivier's unhappy phrase of the *cœur léger*, with which he looked forward to the war he had in reality opposed, was taken from its context and for many years he sank under its opprobrium. He has bided his time. Has he justified himself now? Essentially, yes—and, along with himself, the Empress, who was never a friend of his, but whose rôle was grossly exaggerated from social and religious as well as political hatred. Her utterance as she escaped from the Tuilleries still best sums up that closing of an historical epoch: "We have been dupes!"

The story is long, but it is well told by this too theoretical statesman who was a chief actor in it and who remains a master rhetorician. The importance of these volumes extends far beyond the defence of their author and the rectification of still burning disputes. The "*Liberal Empire*" was a spontaneous progress of the French people toward representation by an executive power. Its utter failure has left France under the absolute sovereignty of the legislative body in the present Parliamentary Republic. The details of the diplomacy at Ems and the political workings at Paris are here told by one who knows, and, on the whole, with surprising impartiality.

"Napoléon III, devant l'histoire" (Dujarric), by Pierre Gérard, is a popular volume intended to lift the clouds from the memory of the *grand méconnu*. The undoubted progress and material prosperity of France under the hapless Emperor furnish easy arguments,

which, moreover, deserve a place in serious history. The preface is by the Marquis de Dion, progressive leader in the automobile industry and in the plebiscitary political party.

G. Weill, professor in the university faculty of Caen, writes from the outside the "Histoire du Catholicisme Libéral en France (1828-1908)"—a movement which prepared Conservative minds for the successive acceptance of four essentially revolutionary governments: King Louis Philippe, the Republic of 1848, the Second Empire in its Liberal phases, and the Third Republic, so long as this last tolerated the "rallying" of Catholic Frenchmen to itself. Although its formulæ are now discredited by both sides, this movement had consequences which endure in the social constitution of to-day. In this it is like the other defunct Liberalisms of the Continent. Its history in the main had already been written from the inside by the biographer of Montalembert, who was so long its leader. The present volume is from the publisher of philosophy, Alcan. With it should be noted a book on a new movement from Georges Goyau, Catholic editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*—his fourth series, "Autour du Catholicisme social" (Perrin). It treats discursively of the church of the people (in Ireland); Gladstone's State Church; the church and political novel-ties (illustrated by Cardinal Consalvi); and various present-day "Catholics of action."

Maurice Quentin-Bauchart, born a citizen of Paris and long one of its municipal councillors, publishes the notes of his impressions as a grown boy of the Siege and Commune—"Les Evénements de 1870-71" (Juven). They are prefaced by the Napoleonic authority, Frédéric Masson of the French Academy. Gen. Kirkpatrick de Closeburn, who is of the same cosmopolitan Scottish clan as the Empress Eugénie, publishes his remembrances of youth fighting for a predestined lost cause—"Souvenirs Carlistes" (Alphonse Picard). The death of the last Don Carlos gives them a shadow of actuality.

"Fashoda" (Flammarton), by ex-Foreign Minister Hanotaux, is an instructive revelation from diplomatic documents and inside knowledge of one of the most distressing incidents of recent French history. The international preliminaries of the brilliant Marchand expedition; the hesitating utterances of the British Foreign Office, which did not venture to claim exclusive rights in the Sudan until forced by that handful of Frenchmen; and, quite disregarded by a world which attends only to sensational history in the making, the final recognition by England, as a consequence of that humiliation of France, of the vast colonial empire which France has taken for herself from the Niger and Congo to the Mediterranean

—these are substantial additions to our knowledge of contemporary history. It is natural that M. Hanotaux should insist on the ignorance of the situation which he had prepared, or the neglect of it, on the part of his successor, M. Delcassé. The Fashoda incident was the immediate and condign punishment; but it is not sufficiently brought out that it was Minister Delcassé's subsequent, profiting by England's need in the Sudan which secured the consolidation of French rights in Africa. Here, too, as if a republic can have a successful foreign policy only by accident, the Delcassé negotiations ended in the seeming humiliation of Algéciras, which again has worked beyond all expectation for the recognition of the African rights of France by Germany. Delcassé has now downed Clemenceau, who thus drew final victory from defeat; but the Republic has taken back neither Delcassé nor Hanotaux to direct its policy. It is lucky for future history that the ex-minister concerned should elucidate all this first period. It makes possible a clear understanding of a movement that otherwise would seem made up of incoherent leaps backward and forward. The substance of the book first appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

"La Politique réaliste à l'extérieur" (Fasquelle), by Pierre Baudin, explains what that ex-minister of public works would have the foreign policy of France, now that the Republic is not profiting by his counsels. It is the book of a Moderate Radical, who has a patriot's good will with some knowledge of international events as they really happen, and not as newspapers report them. In name his "realist" policy is that proclaimed by Prime Minister Briand as his own "policy of realizations." This leaves the mind of Englishmen and Americans blank, for they hardly ever allow ideals or ideas to intervene in practical politics, but always and everywhere realize whatever is in sight. The reading of a book like this of M. Baudin is therefore a help to the understanding of French policies—no easy thing for the Anglo-Saxon.

"Terroristes et policiers" (Juven), by Jean Longuet and Georges Silber, is an evidently inspired book on a most painful subject of contemporary history—the underground working of the Russian police. The preface is by W. L. Bourtsév, whose accusations have so notoriously interrupted the operations of the Russian police abroad. The sympathies of freedom-lovers are inevitably torn between their dislike of bureaucrats striving desperately to save an autocracy at bay and their distrust of a Nihilism sticking at no crime in the pursuit of its own ideal of liberty.

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THE ORACLE OF LOVE IN THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF "LA VITA NUOVA."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: After Beatrice had denied to him her salutation, Dante declares that Love appeared to him in a vision, and sighed, and said: "*Fili mi, tempus est ut prætermittantur simulacra nostra*—my son, it is time for us to lay aside our counterfeiting"; and that, having so said, Love wept for pity, and to Dante, asking, "Lord of nobleness, why dost thou weep?" replied: "*Ego tamquam centrum circuli, cui simili modo se habent circumferentia partes; tu autem non sic*—I am as the centre of a circle, for which all parts of the circumference are alike; but thou art not so." Perplexed, Dante again asked: "What thing is this, Master, that thou hast spoken thus darkly?" Love only replied: "Demand no more than may be useful to thee."

Love's injunction, "it is time for us to lay aside our counterfeiting," is clear. Beatrice, and others, had misunderstood Dante's "screening" homage to another lady; it is time, therefore, to confess the truth to his real lady. Obediently, Dante addresses to Beatrice a *ballata*, which says of its maker:

Lady his heart has been
of such fixed constancy
that his each thought incites him to serve thee:
early 'twas thine, and never hath it strayed.

Apparently, this obedience, though due, is to entail disaster for Dante, because he is not, like Love, "as the centre of a circle, for which all parts of the circumference are alike." Also, present understanding of what Love means would not avail to avert the disaster, otherwise an explanation would be "useful." We should expect, accordingly, to find the key to the oracular utterance in the direct consequences of Dante's obedient "laying aside of counterfeiting."

After this above written vision [Dante writes], when I had already said those words [to Beatrice] which Love had charged me to say, many and divers thoughts began to assail and tempt me, each one almost irresistibly, among which thoughts four seemed most to disturb my life's repose. The first whereof was this: The lordship of Love is good since it draweth the mind of his liege from all evil things. The next was this: The lordship of Love is not good since the more faith his liege beareth him, the more heavy and more grievous straits must he pass. The next was this: The name of Love is so sweet to hear that it seemeth to me impossible that its action in most things be other than sweet. . . . The fourth was this: The lady for whom Love constraineth thee thus is not as other ladies that her heart be lightly moved. And each assailed me so, that it made me stand like one who knoweth not by which path to take his way, and who fain would go, yet knoweth not whither to turn. And if I thought that I would seek a way common to all, namely, where all might be in accord, this way was most inimical to me, namely, to call upon and yield me to the arms of pity.

Drawn "irresistibly" four ways in turn, Dante is obviously in a position unlike "the centre of a circle, for which all parts of the circumference are alike." Concerned as he is for his own welfare, he can see no way out, no centre of accord, except in his lady's pity, which he forebodes must be "inimical."