

tives were merely the party of the landlords and of privilege. And a new and burning issue would be injected into the campaign, the voting upon which no man could predict. All these considerations are plainly giving the Conservative leaders pause. Many among their followers, and several newspaper organs, in their violent denunciation of a "socialistic" and "confiscatory" budget, have been demanding that the House of Lords take its courage in both hands and make an end of the measure entirely, challenging an appeal to the country at once. But Mr. Balfour's cautious Scotch nature does not incline him to such vertiginous policies. During all the debates on the budget in the House of Commons, he has not once intimated that it might be done to death in "another place." And the likelihood is strong that his aversion to such a course will be deepened by the evident preparation of the Liberals and the Independent Labor party to pool their electoral issues.

Unquestionably, Mr. Asquith and Lloyd-George and Winston Churchill are in a position to appeal strongly for Labor support. They have sought to enact a budget which, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer asserted in the Commons, is a war budget—that is, a war for social reform. In addition to making a beginning of special land taxation, which the Labor party has long urged, they have inaugurated the system of old-age pensions, and have besides undertaken, through a system of official Labor Exchanges and in other ways, to grapple with the problem of the unemployed. If gratitude were the most powerful motive in politics, the Liberals might certainly be able to count upon the heartiest kind of support by the Independent Labor party. We know, however, that it is not. Pride, selfishness, greed, the spirit of faction, often show themselves able to lead political man to do what gratitude is too feeble to induce him to attempt; and, in spite of the *rapprochement* now visible, it is not probable that we shall see anything like a real consolidation of Liberals and Laborites, even for one general election.

INDIA AND TERRORISM.

Only three days before the assassination of Lieut.-Col. Wyllie, a special correspondent of the *London Times*, in

summing up his researches into the present condition of India, showed himself a prophet and a sage:

That the anarchist organization will continue to spread and will break forth into fitful outrages is tolerably certain. The anarchists remain a class apart, though they are really only the ultimate expression of a very widespread phase of Indian feeling. Lord Morley is under no illusions about their continued existence, and has repeatedly warned the British public that "bombs are not an end." Alone the anarchists could do little. A Punjab civilian said proudly, "The bomb is not made that could burst the Indian Empire."

The murder of Col. Wyllie came, and British opinion, in spite of early manifestations of rage and panic, has on the whole remained sober in the face of exceptional provocation. The Tory press will probably raise an insincere cry for strong measures in India. The violated sanctity of human life in sea-girt Britain will be insisted upon. But the noise will be made for partisan purposes, since India, like the navy, is no longer outside the sphere of domestic politics in England. At heart, there are few Englishmen of standing who believe that reaction is possible or desirable in India.

We catch this mood in the article on Britain's future in India from which we have quoted. At first sight, the writer is openly in favor of a drastic policy against Indian "sedition." He declares that, so far as British rule in the peninsula is endangered, Lord Morley's reforms have not abated that menace in any material degree, for British rule is disliked, not because it is bad, but because it is foreign. Nearly every experienced administrator in India is against the reforms. If Hindu discontent has recently shown signs of abatement, the reason is found, not in Lord Morley's policy of conciliation, but in "the tardy vigor of the authorities in dealing firmly with the seditious press, and in the wise and discriminating exercise of the salutary power of deportation." As for Britain's general attitude toward India, we find the argument of the mailed fist put forth with engaging frankness. "While we believe our presence in India to be for India's good, we must maintain it against a growing and unappeasable antagonism." And yet, for all his fine frenzy, this writer cannot help revealing his perception that force alone will not avail against a great people awakening to national consciousness and modern ideals. He admits that the

Indian official is too prone to say, Do this and it shall be done. The Indian politician's right to speak his mind boldly must be recognized. British policy, administrative or legislative, must be willing to defend and explain itself.

But just how it is possible to reconcile the Indian politician's right "to speak his mind boldly" with "the wise and discriminating exercise of the salutary power of deportation," is hard to see. The danger is that a discontented people may be driven to make use of that "ultimate expression" of its feelings which the Hindu student in London employed against Col. Wyllie. Terrorism as a policy has been repeatedly proven futile, as notably in Russia. Terrorism as a symptom has its value. The isolated act of a Guiteau or a Czolgoz is indicative of nothing but an individual aberration. But in Russia, or in India, the political assassin, even though fanatic or half-insane, is the product of conditions. His act may do more harm than good, as the case usually falls; but only in Russia is it imagined that a nation's ailment can be permanently done away with by hanging the individual in whom the general ill-being rises to fever heat. Common sense, which with the British people rises to genius, must recognize the folly of making terrorism an excuse for reaction. Given the awakening of Asia to the aspirations of Western liberalism, and it is not Britain's army, but such reforms as Lord Morley has "forced"—so we are told—upon the Indian administration, that will shape the future of India with a minimum of riot and political assassination.

REFORMING THE FOURTH.

It should seem, to judge from figures compiled by the *Chicago Tribune*, that our great national holiday has this year, thus far, cost us fifty-two lives. After the same interval of time last year, the death-roll was seventy-two. Thus our attempt at a sane Fourth has saved us twenty lives—a great saving, but not enough. To effect a moral reform, the substitution of a good habit for a bad one is essential. A drunkard could never reform in a moral and æsthetic vacuum. But give him sustained new temperamental and emotional interests, and he may wonder why he was ever intemperate. The Fourth of July, as we celebrate it now, is a bad habit, a bad na-

tional habit, bad in its destruction of life, of health, bad for the nerves and character of the young, as all extreme things are, and harmful to the taste of the entire nation.

Yet, bad as the habit is, we probably cannot get rid of it without the substitution of something else which is good and equally satisfactory to the temperament of the nation. It has been suggested in many places that a wise substitute would be a pageant, representing the trappings and the romantic backgrounds of history. Everybody loves a show, from a circus to a painting by a sixteenth-century Venetian, where a crowd of gayly dressed courtiers and fine ladies march across the piazza, their hearts filled with the excitement of love and with the romance of the national victory they are celebrating. But in our country, it may justly be objected that there have been no kings and queens blazing in ermine and wrought gold, no mediæval church or haughty conquerors; there can be no millennium of history, "no pell-mell of the men and women of Shakespeare's plays," no solemn cathedrals to enter, no "Cistercian abbesses, in garments whiter than the driven snow."

Nevertheless, if we have perhaps a sober-garbed history, it is not entirely devoid of the picturesque. Our white-wigged and short-trousered Revolutionary heroes strike tenderly to every American heart, as the decorative costuming of our romantic plays indicates—and what girl novelist of the States has ever failed to find material in our history for a romantic and appealing background? Our wars give opportunity for military scenes in which the trumpet and the brass band may supplant the isolated, impertinent, and destructive firecracker. A hero riding up San Juan Hill is a suggestion that may be made parenthetically.

There are, perhaps, other difficulties in the way of a great American historical pageant. We should need to learn more public honesty, for pageantry would require great coöperation and large appropriations of money. Imagine Tammany Hall organizing a consistent New York pageant for the occasion; imagine the appropriations that would be made!

One of the most important benefits to accrue from a national pageant would be the æsthetic education involved. It

would give an opportunity for our municipal artists to exploit their decorative talents. Modern Paris shows how a great spectacle can be organized on a holiday without an impossibly rich reference to history, and with a moderate expenditure of money. Sensibility to form and color and musical harmony would grow, and with it a true patriotism, for we could justly be more patriotic if we had more to be proud of. If the romantic elements in our history could be shown strikingly, who can doubt that our æsthetic taste and our love of country would be heightened? There is no more patriotic people than the French and none that loves more a beautiful, orderly spectacle.

The adoption of the pageant might even create better harmony between parent and child. Children love a loud crackling noise, and their parents hate it. By means of the pageant we might be able to do away with this annoyance, for the pageant would please and refine both parents and children. The trumpet and the band would tickle the ears of the eager child, while his eyes and imagination would be ravished by the glittering pictures of the past. And if he saw at his side his father and his mother as pleased as himself, he might understand the strange fact that grown-up people are human and a pretty good sort, after all.

ELIMINATING THE CHILD.

How is it with the birth-rate in books and on the stage? People who take their æsthetic pleasures seriously, and like to speak of literature as the mirror of life, may find striking confirmation of their view in the simultaneous disappearance of the child from real life and from books. The task of statesmen is being made harder every year by a slackening increase of population. But the novelist and the playwright are not at all in the same boat with the statesman. Small families lighten the writer's problem. His interest being chiefly with the passions and behavior of men and women, he prefers to remove so complicating a factor as children very often constitute in the lives of their fathers and mothers. Thus it has been to the author's purpose even grossly to exaggerate the world's growing reluctance to reproduce. The family, as he usually sees it, is the family of two. We have travelled far from Victorian

fiction, with its hordes of angel-infants dying amidst a welter of pathos; but children who die nowadays in literature are so much fewer because so many less of them are born. The dramatist, in this respect, is far more ruthless than the writer of novels. Take the particularly strong plays of the last few seasons, and in those that deal with the triangle or with any other geometrical refutation of the marriage tie, this is the common formula: five or ten years of marriage, husband busy in Colorado, wife bored in Paris, no children; or, husband well-meaning but stupid, wife intellectual and high-strung, either gnawing away at the other's happiness, no children; or, artist husband busy with pictures, artist wife busy with music, temperaments clash, and no children.

In the end, therefore, this kind of literature is untrue, even to conditions in our high-priced apartment houses; for even in flats and apartments children have been known to exist. They may be there in sadly diminished number, but there are enough of them at least to raise most human couples to human families. To Mr. Roosevelt the difference between one child and five children may seem enormous, but that is as nothing, of course, compared with the difference between the home with one child and the typical barren pair of the play or the novel. Why the stage in particular should be like Bethlehem after Herod's orders had been carried out, several matter-of-fact reasons occur. If a playwright puts children into his manuscript, they will have, as a rule, to be shown on the stage. Only now and then will audiences be content with mere allusion to a young family behind the scenes; we know how anxious Sir Roger de Coverley was for a peep at young Pyrrhus, who, by all that was said of him, must have been a fine child. Now, good child-actresses are rare. Plays like "Way Down East" still make their appeal with a stageful of little ones in checked aprons and bonnets, but our more sophisticated audiences will not tolerate the checked apron, and will howl with laughter at the stage-mother who dares to fondle the traditional rag-baby. Yet no such reasons exist for the novelist. If he leaves Rachel disconsolate because her children are not, it is because he chooses to do so.

Not that the modern child is banished either from the theatre or the story.