

thus far been a failure that they can be inspired to make it a success. The wonderful work of the past is at once the spur to future activity and the harbinger and prophet to future achievement.



## The Winter Sitting of the English Parliament

After an unprecedentedly short recess, Parliament resumed its sittings on Thursday of last week. The House of Lords will have little to do for two or three weeks to come; the House of Commons will at once address itself to the Parish Councils Bill, and to the measure for the amendment of the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. Both these measures were introduced in the House of Commons early last spring, but progress with them was necessarily delayed by the Home Rule Bill.

Two facts about the present autumnal sitting must be kept in mind. One is that the sitting is not a new session, but a continuation of the session which was opened by the Queen's Speech in February last. It therefore follows that nothing will be heard of the Home Rule Bill in Parliament until the new year. Then the new measure will have to be introduced just as though the bill of 1893 had never had an existence; and, notwithstanding all statements to the contrary, the new measure will have to be introduced in the House of Commons. It could, of course, originate in the House of Lords; but it is not at all likely to do so. If it did, the Lords would repeat their vote of September, throw out the bill again on the second reading, and thus peremptorily settle its fate for another session. It might, perhaps, be good electioneering tactics to have the measure so dealt with; but such a plan would not commend itself either to the Anti-Parnellites or to the Parnellites, and Mr. Gladstone must have their full and loyal support, both in the present autumn sitting, if the Parish Councils Bill is to go to the Lords, and in the session of 1894, if his Government is to pass the financial votes necessary for the maintenance of the army, navy, and civil services. It may be considered, then, as almost certain that the next Home Rule Bill will be introduced in the House of Commons, and, unless the recent speeches of the Irish leaders are meaningless, the new measure will be forthcoming early next year.

The political situation has not greatly altered since the adjournment of Parliament. In England nearly all the speech-making during the recess has been on the side of the Unionists. Mr. Gladstone has spoken in Edinburgh, Mr. John Morley has addressed his constituents at Newcastle, and Mr. Asquith has spoken at Glasgow. In reply to these addresses from the Liberal leaders there have been two speeches from Lord Salisbury in Lancashire, one by Mr. Goschen in Edinburgh, another at Huddersfield by Lord Randolph Churchill, and a fourth in Cornwall by Mr. Courtney. The rank and file on both sides of the House of Commons have addressed meetings of their constituents, as is customary at this time of the year, and at each of these meetings the action of the House of Lords in throwing out the Home Rule Bill has been indorsed or condemned. But on the part of the Liberals there have been no great popular demonstrations like those attending the visits of Lord Salisbury to Lancashire, Mr. Goschen to Scotland, and Lord Randolph Churchill to Yorkshire. So far, also, there has not been a single great meeting against the House of Lords, similar to those held in London and in the Provinces when the Upper Chamber

threatened the Reform Bill of 1884. The absence of such great meetings is remarkable; but it is, no doubt, in accordance with plans for the next electoral campaign which have been carefully made at the Liberal headquarters in London.

There has been much more stir among the politicians in Ireland. The case of the evicted tenants has been again to the front, and has caused much heartburning to the Nationalists. Both groups are disappointed that the Government found it absolutely impossible to pass a measure for the reinstatement of the Plan of Campaign tenants, who were worsted in the long-drawn-out struggle with the landlords; and the Parnellites, who set the pace in Ireland, encouraged by the enthusiasm which marked the great demonstration on the occasion of the anniversary of the death of Mr. Parnell, are threatening reprisals if something is not at once done by the Government for the evicted tenants. There are only nine Parnellite members in the House of Commons; but, in the present state of parties at Westminster, and with the existing tension between the two groups of Nationalists, where the Parnellites lead the Anti-Parnellites must follow, or lose ground with the Irish constituencies. It consequently follows that if the Parnellites demand that an Evicted Tenants' Relief Bill and the Home Rule Bill shall be the first measure of 1894, the Anti-Parnellites must, of necessity, join in the demand; and then the English and Welsh Radicals will again have to stand aside for a year, as they have done in 1893, or Mr. Gladstone must at once appeal to the country.

The Home Rule Bill has passed the House of Commons. This marks a distinct step forward in the Nationalist movement. The situation in England, however, is more complex and acute than it was twelve months ago, as the complications have been added to by the open hostility of the Parnellites towards the Government, by the development of the agrarian movement in Wales, by the industrial upheaval on the Midland coal-fields, and by the prospect of a winter in which the unemployed question will be even more pressing than it was in the winter of 1892-93.



## A Word to the Churches

The elections are over. The silver controversy is laid aside. The battles in the churches are either temporarily ended by a truce, or permanently ended by a peace—the Briggs case, the Smith case, the American Board imbroglio, the Andover controversy. The time is opportune for a concentration by churches and ministry on spiritual themes. The elections have directed men's thoughts to a consideration of topics of practical righteousness. The Parliament of Religions has enforced the reality and the value of religion, and illustrated its nature and the degree and extent of public and popular interest in it. And commercial disasters have taught men, with an eloquence which no pulpit can emulate, that riches have wings, and that life is capable of better things than a consecration to money-making.

Now let ministers choose the deeply spiritual themes for their pulpits. Let them give their people some better food than dogmatic definitions and partisan polemics. The souls of men are hungry; let not the clergy give them stones for bread and scorpions for fish. Let them choose the books richest in spiritual life for their study. Let them drop Herbert Spencer and Frederic Harrison, agnostic philosophy and the higher criticism, and study the Gospel of St. John and the Epistle to the Ephesians. Let Sunday-

school teachers study and teach their lessons for the practical and spiritual truths which they contain. Let them see what there is in Paul's instructions adapted to bring men to a practical realization of Paul's religion—living righteously, soberly, and godly; and let them not forget the third element in this definition. Let fathers and mothers open the windows of their homes to the air of heaven—the air which is composed equally of faith and hope and love—and let it blow through the homes and clear the world-miasma out. Let churches hope for spiritual results, expect spiritual results, labor for spiritual results. Postpone fairs; let purely social gatherings take a second place; let every church member give at least one devotional meeting a regular place on the week's calendar; allow only imperative duty to call away from it. In brief, let the Church put the development of personal, spiritual life before itself as the one end to be sought, and concentrate all its thoughts and energies on that one end.

We do not look for a repetition of the kind of revivals that were known under Whitefield and Finney and the Beechers, father and son. Not only have times changed: moods of thought have changed; methods of activity have changed; and forms of life must change also. But the revival of the religion of Jesus Christ does not always come with a *Lo, here!* and a *Lo, there!* The measures of Finney and Nettleton were "new measures" in their day. The measures that will be spiritually efficacious in our day will be "new measures" also, not a mere revival of those old measures. But where there is a will there is a way. It is the will we seek to stir up to activity. Let each church and each pastor be sure that the will is earnest, consecrated, concentrated; then each church and pastor will find a way, and each their own way.



## The Meaning of It

The comments of M. Paul Bourget in the current issue of the "Forum" on the moral tendency in recent French literature are specially significant as coming from one of the representatives of that movement and one of the foremost French novelists of the day. M. Bourget's work discloses a steadily deepening moral earnestness, a perception of the moral issues behind life; and what he has to say, therefore, of the movement of which he himself is an eminent exponent carries very great weight. The importance of the movement may perhaps be exaggerated; time alone will disclose its magnitude and its permanence; but its significance can hardly be exaggerated, for it brings out very clearly the inevitable reaction which sooner or later overtakes every artistic movement which limits itself either in its inquiry into life or in its representation of the phenomena of life. M. Bourget calls attention to the great difference between the French novels of 1880 and those of 1893; the first absolutely neglecting the phenomena of the spiritual life and concentrating attention entirely upon the physical and social phenomena, and dealing with persons not only humble in station but defective in the power of resisting temptation and incapable of effort. The recent novels, on the other hand, are almost wholly concerned with the problems of the moral life, with questions of conscience, subtle and rare traits and complex personalities. The reaction from the realistic has gone so far that in some cases it has passed through the idealistic into the symbolic, and is producing a group of writers in France notable rather for their mysticism and over-refinement than for their clear and clean insight into spiritual and moral things. This very excess, however, is

significant. Criticism, which fifteen years ago was wholly positivistic, has again become wholly philosophic and moral. In fact, the moral question is beginning to dominate fiction, poetry, criticism, and the stage; and the moral renaissance among young men, and the so-called neo-Christian movement, are only manifestations of a general tendency.

In 1830 the great motive in French dramatic art was passion; in 1840 it was intellect; in 1870 it was money; and the dominant method was an exact, searching, and scientific analysis of sensation. Flaubert's "Madame Bovary," a great work in point of execution, is the work of an anatomist and a physiologist. Renan attempted a natural history of religion, Taine interpreted literature as so much psychology, while Le Conte de Lisle and Beaude- laire approached man, the first through zoölogy and philology, the second "by applying surgical processes to the study of his intimate miseries." Then came that powerful genius Zola, and his gigantic effort to transform the literature of the imagination into a literature of scientific observation. Everybody now sees that M. Zola has utterly failed in this object, and that his novels of observation are very largely novels of imagination, the genius of the man triumphing to a certain extent over his method, but also very largely sacrificed to that method. This method of dissection and vivisection reached its climax in De Mau- passant, who passed from the dissection of sensation to the dissection of sentiment, and who, according to M. Bour- get, during the year which preceded the final crisis in his malady, was almost wholly absorbed in religious questions.

The significance of this evolution lies in the fact that it shows by another striking historical demonstration the impossibility of confining art, however delicate or powerful, to the examination of physical and social phenomena. Whether the artist will it or not, sooner or later art works through these obvious and external things, and finds itself face to face with that inevitable moral problem which is a part, and the chief part, of every human personality, and which underlies every social organization and every historical movement. M. Zola, in his attempt to analyze human disease, is brought face to face at last with the mysteries of moral disease. A keen-witted American woman, writing not long ago from Paris, said that the French theater constantly gave her the impression of a whole race gone astray. For twenty-five years many of the leaders of French thought and art have lost their way, and, if they have not prostituted their great gifts, have at least limited very largely their range and power of revelation by the limitations which they have imposed upon those gifts. The mind and the heart of France, however, are sound, and the reaction which is now setting in so strongly was inevitable from the first. That reaction is always implicit in every movement which attempts to limit the insight of art to any kind of physiological or purely social phenomena. Art can never rest in depicting these things; it is bound by its very nature to press on in its investigations until it reaches the moral nature and probes the moral problems. It was the spell of the inner life and of the spiritual consciousness in great works of literary art which has given Russian fiction such immense influence of late years on the French mind, and which has made De Vogüé, the interpreter of that art, one of the leaders of the new movement. Shelley and Tolstoï, M. Bourget tells us, have been a kind of illumination to many young writers in France. Men cannot, do not, live by physical sensation solely or chiefly; neither their nature nor their history can be explained by purely physiological or anatomical methods. Art may study the body long, but sooner or later it discovers the soul.