

nobody influenced by it. Nobody inside the House of Commons, at all events, is taken in; but out of doors the case is different; and Sir W. Harcourt's speech was eminently designed for a model which his followers might advantageously follow before their constituencies, as well as for a balm to their own consciences. It is appalling to reflect that these men are now primed with facts and arguments which the crowd are incapable of resisting. The historical parallels are all false; and the statement that coercive legislation has been abandoned by the Liberal party because it failed is equally so. But the populace do not read history; and their memories are not long enough to call to mind that the Liberal party's coercion was eminently successful, and that the idea of giving it up never occurred to them until they were beaten at the hustings, and needed the vote of the faction they had coerced. Add to this the discouraging rumours afloat to the effect that an understanding has been come to amongst Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Parnell, on the basis of some kind of agrarian legislation with a modified form of Home Rule, and it will be seen that the outlook is not very bright just now. The G. O. M.'s absence from the debate and division on Mr. Parnell's amendment, and the reserved tone of Mr. Parnell himself on the plan of campaign, rather point in this direction.

As to Mr. Chamberlain, the fact that he suggested the round table conference, at which he and his supposed irreconcilable foes are now sitting, is proof that he esteems the reunion of the Liberal party of greater importance than the cause of their irreconcilable differences. It is to be feared that if Mr. Chamberlain can extort from Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell any concession that would afford a pretext for any considerable contingent of Liberal-Unionists to go over to the side of the disruptionists he will invite them to follow him, and leave Lord Hartington in the lurch. They were quite right, who said, after the last elections, that the battle of the Union had still to be fought.

The Socialists, after trying their hands at church brawling for several Sundays past, by way of drawing attention to themselves, and some of them getting sent to prison, where they will find the "employment" they pretend to be seeking, have again taken to street rioting and the sacking of shops. To do them justice, they do not steal very much, and they show so little signs of being hungry that they attack the butchers and the bakers merely to wantonly destroy the contents of their shops. The superstition still prevails that the right of public meeting is the inalienable privilege of every free Briton, whatever its object may be. Last Tuesday's gathering in Clerkenwell, announced as a torchlight procession, was actually prohibited by the police; but this was easily got over by carrying no torches and forming no procession. The meeting assembled, and on being very gently dispersed, the usual consequences followed. Some good certainly these demonstrations are doing: they are seen to be the logical, though premature, development of political and economical lessons which greater men than Messrs. Hyndman and Morris have been preaching to the masses without suspecting what would come of it. The effect on the whole is to harden the Conservatism of the metropolis, and to dishearten the old-fashioned Liberalism of the provinces. Competent judges of the feeling of the country assert that it is becoming more Conservative, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say more anti-Radical.

Bad as are the prospects of peace on the continent, they are not quite so bad as one or two of the London newspapers make out. Warlike news published by the *Daily News* especially should be received with caution. One of the proprietors is—well, is Mr. Labouchere. ANCHOR.

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### THE RIVIERA.

To the minds of most travelled persons, the Riviera means the great hotels and aristocratic villa society of Cannes; the display of Paris fashions on mondaines and demi-mondaines along the Promenade des Anglais; the Carnival mirth of Nice; the gaudy, gilded rooms; the strange jumble of nationalities and types; the classical concerts; the hanging gardens of Monte Carlo; the wan consumptives of Mentone basking in the sunshine; the mildly spinsterly element of literary milk-and-water presided over by George MacDonald at Bordighera;—and to such recollections the sunset behind the jagged peaks of the Esterels, the stretch of purple blue sea, the great white domes of the distant snow mountains, the mystic gray green of the olive woods,—form but an unimportant background; the blue sky, the soft air, the constant sunshine, are but commodities provided for the use of the upper classes, and paid for as such in the exorbitant rent of the villa, or the length of the hotel bill.

Nature pays better interest for the capital confided to her than any other banker, but then the capital must be there, and I have met many a one who, knowing the prices of every hotel, the title of every aristocratic dowager from Cannes to San Remo, yet for any other purpose might just as well have spent their days between Brighton and Bournemouth.

But there are other ways of knowing the Riviera, for after all, this streak of exotic civilisation is only a thin line skirting the shores of the crescent bays, and running a short distance up the slope of the hillsides.

From Cannes, the very headquarters of aristocratic British dulness, the centre of low church spinsterhood, take an afternoon's ramble back into the country, and you will find yourself transported from a fashionable London suburb into the old Provence, the land of the troubadours. A silent, deserted country, with the gloom of the pines on its hillsides, the dusky shadow of the olive woods on its plains, and yet half an hour's reading in the driest of guide books is enough to people the solitude for one with ghosts—the ghosts of brave warriors and braver saints, of fair women, and Roman statesmen hurrying along the Via Aurelianne to the Imperial City.

Jeanne of Naples, that fairest and frailest of queens, fleeing from her castle over there by the Esterels, her soul dark with the sin of her husband's death, to meet her tragic doom at Naples.

Mary Magdalen fasting and weeping away her life in a cave in the desolate Esterel fastnesses. St. Honorat and St. Marguerite, fleeing from the wickedness of the world to their island homes. St. Porcaire and his seven hundred monks who fell by the swords of the fierce Saracens, before the stately fortress monastery was raised which made St. Honorat one of the centres of holiness and learning to the early Christian world. St. Patrick in that monastery, dreaming of the days when he was to make Ireland part of Christ's kingdom.

The stern Templars standing at bay in their hillside village of Vence. The turbulent spirit of the young Mirabeau and his still wilder sister setting all the sedate nobility of the mountain town of Grasse in a flutter with their pranks. The little Greek child of whom the inscription in the Antibes amphitheatre says that "he danced, and pleased, and died," so many years ago. Napoleon standing staring gloomily into the camp fire, on the shore of Golfe Juan, the night of his landing from Corsica.

All these shadows come to life at a word and people the silent country—better company than that to be found in the great overcrowded hotels. The gay world of Cannes might have been a day's journey from us instead of an hour's drive, in our little pink-washed turretted hotel upon its rocky crag, overlooking the great stretch of the plain of the Siagne away to the sea and the mountains.

Not that we had not many friends. Gradually we grew to know the faces of nearly all the peasants within a certain distance: the dark-eyed little Lucie, who drove Scarabee, the gray donkey, when we wanted him to carry the luncheon baskets on some expedition; Marie and Josephine, the two pretty motherless sisters down at the "bastide" (the Provençal name for farm-house), where they sold milk, and who, when one sat there to paint their threshing floor and vine trellis, and confusion of great earthenware jars, chattered and quarrelled and flirted without feeling the slightest restraint from our presence. What pictures they made as they ran in and out with their short skirts and loose pink cotton jackets, their glossy, beautifully dressed coils of black hair, and pale creamy skins!

Then there was the sweet-faced young mother up at the old convent on the hillside, with the terraced hillside garden, and the tall, dark cypress, and the little child who could only use the quaint old Provençal speech, and the tongue of the troubadours.

Even if we went farther afield, and came on some lonely farm where the faces were strange to us, we might be sure that if we stopped to talk with the men pruning the olive trees, or the women working among the rose vines, we should only meet with pleasant speech and smiles. Often, perhaps, they spoke only the soft Provençal, of which it might be hard to make out the exact meaning; but that never seemed to make any difference, and they talking in the Provençal, and we in French, we parted mutually content.

What a different type from the peasants of northern France, these men with the supple, slim figures, and the clear cut features of a Greek statue! Many such a young Adonis have I seen pruning his vines, and singing a quaint tune which, for all I know, may have come down to him direct from the troubadours. On the roads the most frequent passers-by were little old women mounted on little gray donkeys, the capacious folds of their striped woollen cloaks spreading over old woman, paniers, and donkey, until the whole mass appeared to be one waving object of composite construction.

Familiar as home scenes grew the mountain paths and the meadows to us during those winter months, and many a mental picture have I saved from those lazy, happy days,—the bright winter mornings, when one hurried out to the terrace, to see the lower hill-tops all covered with snow, even the dark green Gorge du Loup transformed into whiteness.

Those still gray days, when one had a touch of winter pleasure in walking sharply to get warm, and climbed some steep little hillside pathway, edged with silvery, dried thistles and herbs, up among the pine woods where all was so still and breathless, and one saw the far-off splendour of the great Alps, shining perhaps in the sunlight. But ah, the joy of the springtime in that

"Far, fair foreign land,"

when one went down into the valley where the meadows were white with narcissus, and the great red and purple globes of the anemones glowed among the corn; here the tall yellow daffodils and the white violets were to be found along the banks of the slow streams. Then up on the hillsides all the air was sweet with the breath of the white heath, growing in one shining sheet of blossom, as the heather grows over the Scotch hills.

What a pleasure it was when one reached home laden with floral spoils, to pack the little wooden boxes and send them off by that blessed flower