

The Empire could be self-sustaining, and need not (as suggested by Mr. Ashton) afford free trade to a country that maintains a protective tariff. What is wanted is a policy which is most conducive to the greatest *interchange* of merchandise the world over. If, therefore, the result of the Imperial Customs Union is to lead to a more universal free trade, it will bring about a desirable result. The Colonies cannot expect England to reject the market of any protective country if that market be thrown open to her on fair terms.

J. VAN SOMMER.

NOTE.—The figures given above are reduced from English £ s. d. by reckoning \$5 to the £, and will be very close but not exact with statistics in Colonial Reports.

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Night in the City.

Here in the city it is never dark,
Men call it night to mark the weeks away,—
It is a dull reflection of the day;
For the white lights are flashing to and fro,
The gaslights gleam and shine far down the street,
The stores are filled with flaring lights, that beat
Back from the pavement in long lines of light.
The wide, still square is quivering and white
And crossed with pale, thin shapes. From windows, too,
Through the closed curtains doth the lamplight shine
From all the houses. In this room of mine
The street lights flash and tremble, while the moon
Floods all the world with her majestic light,—
It slants across my bed; the roofs are white,
The window-panes are shining like pale fires,
The moonlight flasheth back from countless wires—
The moonlight shineth in across my bed,
Or, if I close the blinds, when I half wake,
Through the closed shutters shall the light creep in,
Until I turn and sleep, and, dreaming, pass
To where, at last, the darkness doth begin.

ELEANOR CORQUILLE ADAMS.

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Phases of Athenian Politics.

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(Continued from last issue.)

THEN there is the type presented by Nicias: the type of the moderate, sober, and respectable aristocratic and conservative; the man who is sore in heart at the strides which democracy has made, but who is yet too honest to be consciously disloyal to the state; but who slips nevertheless occasionally, under the influence of party feeling, into, at any rate, passive treason. Grote has insisted very emphatically upon the popularity and influence of Nicias in Athens, as testifying to the inner conservatism and sobriety of judgment of the Athenian democracy, and there is evident force in his argument. Nicias had nothing to recommend him but his extreme and, as it turned out, his very fatal piety, his decorous life, his wealth, his moderation, and his patriotism, which, though not uncompromising and unvarying, was yet genuine, and secure against minor temptations. Yet with only these somewhat negative recommendations he was elected to office again and again, and even after he had risked an army on the chance of getting rid of a detested opponent, he was trusted none the less, and was placed against his will in command of the Sicilian expedition. This expedition he ruined, but only by the indolence and weakness which, as always with weak men, made him dependent on the fortunes of the moment, and so alternate between premature confidence and premature despair, not only by the superstition and piety which forbade him to retreat during an eclipse of the moon, but also by the far graver sin of selfishness. He would not order a retreat while yet there was ample time, because he dreaded for himself the indiscriminating and unjust censures of the disappointed Athenian populace. Against these personal fears and personal grievances—perhaps in themselves justified and well-

founded—his patriotism was too weak to make head. Even in the last miserable hours, after his last march had failed, when his army and his reputation were lost, he still clung to life, fancying that the enemy would treat him with special leniency. The truth seems to be that his dislike of Athenian democracy and the pathos of that last march, when suffering from an incurable disease, he yet shook off for once the apathy which ill-health and his natural temperament had alike fostered, and cheered and encouraged to one last effort the broken-spirited troops, who were, after all, less miserable both in mind and body than himself. These things have combined to lend to Nicias, in the pages of most historians from Thucydides downwards, more credit than is his due. The English-speaking world has lately been debating whether a statesman's private offences should close his public career, and the majority appear to have decided that it should; a pathetic conclusion which inspires respect so far as it testifies to the homage rendered by the majority to personal virtues, but misgiving in so far as it shows how halfhearted is that homage (if material penalties in the loss of place and office have to be inflicted upon the vicious, lest otherwise vice in high places be too happy and virtue be not sufficiently its own reward), a conclusion which inspires neither respect nor yet misgiving, only blank dismay, so far as it confounds things which have no connection with one another, political sagacity and moral worth.

It is a pity that this same confusion of thought in the converse shape of entrusting military office to a man because his character stood high, governed the Athenians in their dealings with Nicias. Mirabeau's genius was lost to France because his private character was bad. Nicias' incompetence was raised to office in Athens because his private character was good. In both cases the confusion of thought was visited upon the thinkers in tragic ruin and utter overthrow.

The next phase of politics and type of politician worthy of attention is Nicias' opponent and enemy, Cleon; the type of the democrat in the extreme sense of the word. By democracy Pericles had meant only liberty for all and honour to every man in proportion to his merits: democracy had meant to him but a means to an end, the Government by the best and noblest, whatever their birth and station. To Pericles, democratic politics had been but the expression of philanthropy; just as to-day the strength of democracy is its connection with Christianity; it is strong because it is the expression in politics of the generosity and fraternity which Christianity teaches in theory and inspires in practice. By the people, the Demos, who were to rule the State, Pericles had not meant any one class, high or low; still less had he meant to emphasize class distinctions, and criminally to sow dissensions between the masses and the classes, or to confine office to men of conspicuously popular qualities, popular virtues and popular limitations. Himself an aristocrat by birth and temperament, an austere nobleman with the face of his ancestor Pisistratus, the exclusiveness of the Salaminian trireme and the stateliness of Olympian Zeus, statuesque in his oratory and the very antithesis of the demagogue in his manners and mode of life, his bearing and his eloquence were alike addressed to the fastidious taste of the few, not to the ready emotions of the many, for him to have advocated democracy in any other sense would have been absurd.

Democracy meant to him not levelling down, but levelling up. Cleon reversed all this; by democracy he meant the rule of the people and by the people, he meant not the whole people but the humbler classes. If this restriction of the word "the people" to a single class (though the most numerous) seems audacious at first sight, yet after all the use of the word was current then in Athens, is current among all of us to-day—at any rate for brevity and convenience—and was sanctioned only yesterday by no less an authority than Mr. Gladstone, who argued seriously that in determining whether certain legislation is or is not popular in a given country, twenty per cent. of the population may be left out of account, as not constituting any part of the people, but only the upper class, in whose case it seems even the sacred principle of "one man, one vote," has lost for this occasion only its sanctity. At any rate—audacious or not—this was Cleon's definition of the people then, as it is Mr. Gladstone's now. On this account, and others of the same kind, Cleon has been the object of the invectives of Greek historians from Thucydides downwards, till Grote came to his rescue, and successfully defended the sound judgment and ability