

ingmen, but after the Restoration they were put in force. "The landowners," says Prof. Rogers, "had made them (the labourers) social pariahs and serfs *without land*." The Act of Elizabeth with the magistrates' assessment had "rendered pauperism general and dangerous" and it was therefore found necessary to annex four acres to each labourer's cottage. But in the reign of George III. it was found that these little homesteads hindered the expropriation of the peasant's rights of common. For the landless, houseless peasant the poor law was provided.

Were it not for the increased and more general intelligence, though not the humanity of this age, the serfdom of the ninth century would have been exchanged for a more degrading servitude in the nineteenth. A system of local stability has become one of general instability. As men have gained in nominal freedom they have lost in comfort. The very name of labour is made a jest by the hocus-pocus of gambling stock-jobbers. Our system of commercial economy is merely a system of thimble-rigging in which the stakes are lives. Pride of birth may have carried with it an absurd affectation of superiority but the motto, "Noblesse oblige," was well understood and had a practical bearing. The history of that age did not embalm Jay Goulds, but men of chivalry like *Du Guesclin*, and the ruling, if not, universal spirit of those times partook so much of the character of romance that it seems unreal in comparison. In place of the Black Prince or Richard of the Lion Heart, we have the Nitrate King, the Oil King and the Knight of the Brazen Serpent. Yet whilst we are rapidly losing the heroic quality which pointed to the ruling of men by heroes, we have gained immeasurably in our national government which seems indeed to have gone far in advance of the aptitudes of the people themselves.

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Parisian Affairs.

THE good effects of Lord Salisbury's famous speech are relatively wearing away; but the chief corner stones of that important discourse remain—the united action of the six powers and the pledge that no member of Sextuple alliance will seek any advantage for itself at the expense of Turkey. That programme, while securing great moral force for England, is accepted as the sole solution for the precarious situation of the Sultan, and the prevention of the partition of his realm. But where is the triple, where the dual, alliance now? That is the puzzle for the French, who are in a curious mood, pessimistic and apprehensive. They see nothing but danger ahead and the inevitable unknown.

The powerful English Ministry, and the nation united like one man behind it, make a profound impression on the French. It is not an agreeable situation for a Frenchman to feel that at any moment he may be ordered to "fall in" and to march where glory waits him. Smoking-room and arm-chair politicians have no doubt that a general war is imminent. The Bulgarians are likely to counteract all the efforts of the Sextuple alliance to ward off the looming cataclysm. Their plan of campaign is becoming very clear. It may be nipped in the bud by Austria marching on Salonica—which means the cession of Trieste to Italy; Constantinople can be declared a free city, under the guardianship of all the powers, like Brussels. That implies a free waterway from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, just as exists between the Baltic and the German Ocean. Varna is discounted as a coaling station for England in the Black Sea. Russia will help herself to the hinterland of Asia Minor, while Germany will claim as much of Syria as France would demand. And the Holy Places? Who will be entrusted with the "keys"—the Latins or the Greeks—an old sore, while on the present occasion Italy, Germany, etc., may also demand a key for the Holy Sepulchres.

The United States of America, so say 'Mericans here, must have a coaling station in the Levant, and they are right to insist upon possessing such a *pied de terre*. Italy will expect Tripolitania and a few *et ceteras*, while England, in addition to Egypt, will insist on the possession of some strategic islands or peninsulas, and, as usual, will commence when the débacle sets in—by helping herself. That's the work, *Vraisemblable*, if not exact—only the war can precise the takes—blocked out by cool observers. Can a Congress do anything?—next to nothing, because France

will not renounce her grip on Tunisia, England upon Egypt, nor Russia dismantle Batoum and re-make it a treaty free port. And the existing treaties? About as valuable as prize essays. Force and wealth are the Archimedean screws and levers that rule the world; all else is but leather and prunello.

The Bourgeois Cabinet, that its defeated adversaries predicted would only endure the length of a November sunset, continues to keep the even tenor of its way. It looks as if it "came to stay." It has not the slightest intention of turning the world in general, and France in particular, upside down. The ministers are very earnest, very courageous, and very resolved. They are knocking the fee-faw-fum element out of postponed reforms, that their predecessors had not the grit, nor the audacity to bring to the front, and that the nation has made up its mind to have voted. The Bourgeois ministry, no matter whether labelled radical or extremist, is eminently reactionist, because kicking against the policy of doing nothing of preceding cabinets, of keeping ameliorations in the Greek Kalends section of their programmes, and, instead of marching on, with or without political hallelujahs, merely executed capers before the political groundlings. Then the new cabinet—becoming every day older—is thoroughly in earnest in the cleansing of Augean stables, and in the removal of functionaries, the tritons, not the minnows—strike at the head, was Caesar's "Rome expects every man will do his duty"—whose speciality was the purest mandarinism. Even M. Berthelot, whom the *mot d'ordre* was to pooh! pooh! is now admitted to have common sense and to be brainy, although only a renowned chemist. The ablest of living statesmen—I name Lord Salisbury—is, too, a chemist. Both are also distinguished in the manipulation of the political search-light.

The 100 fr. millions for the 1900 exhibition have been secured: 20, guaranteed by the municipality; 20, by the State, and 60 taken up by the public. The legislature has only to pass the agreement, *mem. con.*, when the works can be proceeded with, political wind and weather permitting. The Abbé Charbonnel energetically pursues his campaign, for holding a Parliament of Religions in 1900, to sow the germs of a *rapprochement* of consciences. He is opposed tooth and nail by the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, who has left for Rome to secure the disapproval of the Pope, and so an extinguisher upon the movement. The Abbé declares he will resist, not as a *révolte*, but in the name of liberty. Many prelates and members of the clergy are in favour of the parliament till His Holiness speaks. The Calvinist and Israelitish churches applaud the idea, and such "lay cardinals" as Jules Simon, etc., have given it their benediction, on condition that no dogmas or the metaphysics of religion be touched upon. The parliamentary system is unpopular in France, still Parisians do not object to one more—it will have the redeeming feature of being a novelty. The materialists and atheists will also hold an anti-religious parliament. General Booth had better have an extra corps d'armée ready.

It is reported that this month will be remarkable for shooting stars; it is to be hoped they will have no relationship with the two eastern questions, because the stars and aerolites are the debris of extinct glories. Shooting stars are merely scraps of comets' tails; but meteorites are celestial boulders, with red hot calcined surfaces that would crack one's skull, as effectually as was that of *Æschylus* when the eagle dropped the tortoise on his bald pate—there were no hair restorers then—mistaking it for a stone. When a planet or a satellite breaks up, its chips race about in space till the sun or our earth attracts them. The big devouring the little as ever. Our planet then, isolated though it be in space, receives visits, but does not return them. The wandering stars send us their cards in the form of golden showers. We receive samples of old comets and specimens of played-out worlds: and this exchange of politeness will continue till the fragmentation of our earth ensues. By then the question of bloated armaments will be settled.

A war now rages between the single and married needlewomen. Employers lean to give work to wives with families, while the single woman insists upon the right to obtain work to live. She has the advantage over her wedded sister in being able to work in a factory, or from home. M. Honoré, the director of the Louvre Magasins, says that the painful distress among needle women is due to the substitution of machines for hand-labour, to intermediaries, who cannot be