

Mr. Parnell. The suspensions in the House of Commons, the suppression of the Land League and the imprisonment of Parnell are matters of recent history familiar to all.—*Edward Brown, in Harper's Magazine for August.*

### THE ENGLISH SPARROW.

Many years ago we first made the acquaintance of the sparrow, and we were fascinated by its saucy contented drollery. It was in London, and just outside the window within which our studies were supposed to be carried on was a leaden roof whereon could be observed at every hour the domestic manners and social customs of these restless little rascals. We were never tired of their antics—their tempestuous love-making, their indefatigable housekeeping, their petulant quarrels, sharp tongued and sharp beaked too; and they cast shrewd little glances from time to time at us with much the expression of a party of savages making merry near the great idol of some divinity. Since those days, like most other Americans, we have become rather *blase* on this subject, less responsive to the sparrow's advances, and have finally come to consider him no better than a winged rat. In fact he is in one respect a good deal worse, for he is doing what the rats cannot do: driving our song birds from their former haunts about our homes to distant and unknown resorts, where they can be free from his chattering persecutions. About our homes there are fewer song birds than ever within our recollection. Not a catbird came last summer, nor even could we hear of one about the neighbourhood; not a wren; not even the valorous little blue-bird; not a tanager; not a marten; not an oriole. Formerly they were many, and the groves morning and evening resounded with their mingled notes; last year they were fewer; this year there were none. A pair of scarlet tanagers and a pair of orchard orioles were indeed seen for a week or so, but they were soon killed or driven off. Only the robins and the spotted thrushes hold their ground, and who can tell how long they will do so? These three pests—sparrows, red squirrels and strolling cats—have among them done the mischief, and every lover of birds should give orders to have all such vermin shot at sight.—*Theodore H. Mead, in the American Magazine.*

### THE THREE GREAT DOGMATISTS.

It is one of the regrets of my life that I never saw or heard Carlyle. Nature, who seems to be fond of trios, has given us three dogmatists, all of whom greatly interested their own generation, and whose personality, especially in the case of the first and the last of the trio, still interests us—Johnson, Coleridge and Carlyle. Each was an oracle in his way, but unfortunately oracles are fallible to their descendants. The author of "Taxation no Tyranny" had wholesale opinions—and pretty harsh ones—about us Americans, and did not soften them in expression: "Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging." We smile complacently when we read this outburst, which Mr. Croker calls in question, but which agrees with his saying in the presence of Miss Seward, "I am willing to love all mankind *except an American*."

A generation later comes along Coleridge, with his circle of reverential listeners. He says of Johnson that "his fame rests principally upon Boswell, and that his *bow-wow* manner must have had a good deal to do with the effect produced." As to Coleridge himself, his contemporaries hardly know how to set bounds to their exaltation of his genius. Diddin comes pretty near going into rhetorical hysterics in reporting a conversation of Coleridge's which he listened to: "The auditors seemed to be wrapt in wonder and delight, as one observation more profound, or clothed in more forcible language, than another fell from his tongue."

As I retired homeward I thought a second Johnson had visited the earth to make wise the sons of men." And De Quincey speaks of him as "the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and most comprehensive, in my judgment, that has yet existed amongst men." One is sometimes tempted to wish that the superlative could be abolished, or its use allowed only to old experts. What are men to do when they get to heaven, after having exhausted their vocabulary of admiration on earth?

Now let us come down to Carlyle, and see what he says of Coleridge. We need not take those conversational utterances which called down the wrath of Mr. Swinburne, and found expression in an epigram which violates all the proprieties of literary language. Look at the full-length portrait in the "Life of Sterling." Each oracle denies his predecessor; each magician breaks the wand of the one who went before him. There were Americans enough ready to swear by Carlyle until he broke his staff in meddling with our anti-slavery conflict, and buried it so many fathoms deep that it could never be fished out again. It is rather singular that Johnson and Carlyle should each of them have shipwrecked his sagacity and shown a terrible leak in his moral sensibilities on coming in contact with American rocks and currents, with which neither had any special occasion to concern himself, and which both had a great deal better have steered clear of.—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, in August Atlantic.*

### LOW PRICES, HIGH WAGES, SMALL PROFITS.

From Edward Atkinson's essay in the August *Century* under the above title, accompanied by charts, we quote the following introduction: The minds of many persons have been and are greatly disturbed because there has been in recent years a great reduction in the prices of nearly all the leading articles of commerce, the principal decline dating substantially from the year 1873. This decline in prices began soon after the war in the United States, but the general decline in all countries on a specie basis may be dated from 1873.

By whatever standard prices are measured (and there are many carefully-computed tables), the average is found to be lower at the present time than at any period since a date

anterior to the year 1850, in which year the great supply of gold from California, and a little later from Australia, began to affect the volume of the money metals of the world.

In most of the discussions of the money question this great fall in prices has been treated as if it were a misfortune, and it is often held that any measure of legislation ought to be adopted which might tend to check it. Is not this a very partial and one-sided view of the subject?

Some one has wisely and wittily said that "it does not much matter what happens to the millionaire—how is it with the millions?"

If it shall appear that out of this great reduction in prices the millions have gained higher wages; that hundreds of thousands of families have gained better homes and greater comfort in life; while those who have suffered temporary loss have been only the rich who have been incapable of adjusting themselves to the new conditions, or the unskilled poor who have been unable to grasp the greater opportunities for welfare which invention has offered them, then may we not come to the conclusion that diminished profits and low prices are merely the complement of higher wages and lower cost, and are, therefore, most certain indications of general progress from poverty to welfare, yet still leaving the problem open, how to help the unskilled poor?

It will be remembered that it has been stated that so far as the great mass of the people of this and of other lands are concerned, about one-half of the cost of living is the price paid for the materials of food, the cost of food to common labourers who have families to support being, as a rule, much more than one-half their income.

The question of interest to those who assume to be strictly "the working classes" is not so much what the price of the necessities of life may be, as it is how many portions of food, fuel and clothing each one can buy at the retail shops in which they deal, and how good a shelter each one can procure for one day's or one year's earnings. In other words, what is, or what has been, the value of a day's labour when converted into the commodities which are necessary to existence.

### THROUGH THE STORM.

I heard a voice, a tender voice, soft falling  
Through the storm,  
The waves were high, the bitter winds were calling,  
Yet breathing warm

Of skies serene, of sunny uplands lying  
In peace beyond;  
This tender voice, unto my voice replying,  
Made answer fond;

Sometimes, indeed, like crash of armies meeting,  
Arose the gale;  
But over all that sweet voice kept repeating,  
"I shall not fail."

—*Nora Perry, in Harper's Magazine for August.*

### THE BEST PLACE FOR THE SALOON.

Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt recently expressed a desire to see the sale of intoxicating liquors prohibited within an eighth of a mile of any railroad station. This is the wish and judgment of the owner of a vast amount of railway property, who has seen the danger and felt the evil effects of intoxication among trainmen and passengers. One of the most dreadful and expensive railway collisions of last winter was attributed to drunkenness on the part of some of those having one of the trains in charge, and a saloon near a railway station is a constant menace to the lives of both trainmen and passengers, leaving the destruction of property out of the question altogether.

There is not a large manufacturing concern in this city, or any other, that would not be benefited rather than injured by having the nearest saloon so far away that the men and boys employed therein could not visit it during working hours. The reason for this is apparent to all. A half-intoxicated labourer or mechanic is not able to take care of himself, much less the property of his employers. Sober men are often the victims of accidents resulting from the recklessness or the stupidity of those who have been indulging in too much beer or whiskey at the saloon on the next corner. The saloon is prohibited in theatres and other places of amusement; is banished from agricultural fair grounds; is not wanted within half a mile of any camping-ground; is declared a nuisance near a church, school house or college, and is, in fact, outlawed wherever the majority of the people, whether in pursuit of business or pleasure, want to conduct themselves in a quiet, orderly and decent manner. Where, then, is the best place for a saloon? If not about the railway station, or near the mills and factories, or even where people seek recreation and enjoyment, where should it be placed? Evidently the best place for a saloon is where it will be found by the fewest number of people.

THE Rev. John Smith, of Edinburgh, and Mr. Watson, of Dumbarton, have been appointed as evangelistic deputies to have a conference with Greenock Presbytery on the first Monday of October. They will be asked to remain a week.

THE third jubilee of Bonkle Church in the parish of Cambusnethan has been joyfully celebrated. Mr. Moffatt, of Edinburgh, preached twice; and at a public meeting presided over by Rev. J. Henderson Scott, the pastor, addresses were delivered by Dr. Mair, of Morningside, Mr. James Morton, of Greenock, and others.

THE Presbytery have refused to appoint Mr. M'Cowan of Fort William to the parish of Cromdale, though he was elected by a majority of the congregation. Mr. Bain, of Cuthill, dissented and gave notice of appeal to the Synod. The congregation, he said, were determined to carry the matter to the utmost limit the law would allow.

## British and Foreign.

IN France there are 430,000 public houses, one for every ninety-four of the population.

A CHURCH in Southern India, very much in need of a pastor, says his theological views may be of any breadth.

DEAN VAUGHAN, Master of the Temple, is busy compiling the memoirs of his late brother-in-law, Dean Stanley.

A NEW town has sprung up outside the walls of Jerusalem, and much building has been done on the Mount of Olives.

ONE of the latest accounts of the murder of Bishop Hannington states that he was on his knees in prayer when he was speared.

THE Rev. William Smith, M.A., died at the manse of Kincardine O'Neil, Torphins, on 9th ult., in his seventy-second year.

It is stated that close on a million pounds sterling have been placed in Mr. Moody's hands at various times for Christian work.

THE question is being asked in India whether unpaid agency might not be as successful in that country as it is proving in China.

THE king and queen of Siam have presented watches and other tokens of regard to the five missionaries, three of whom are ladies, at Bangkok.

THE Rev. David Stewart, M.A., for twenty-two years parish minister of Kennoway, has died of heart disease in his fifty-seventh year.

DUNDEE Presbytery has agreed to the translation of Rev. A. C. Mackenzie from Bridgetown to Dundee, and fixed his induction for September 1.

THE Rev. Samuel Hester, of Hackney, an Independent minister, with his congregation, has applied to be received into the London Presbytery.

TEN new students, representing the Baptist, Presbyterian and Anglican Churches, have lately been received into Dr. Valentine's medical training school at Agra.

DR. R. D. ROBERT, Aberystwith and Cambridge, has been invited to deliver the Thompson lecture at the Free Church College, Aberdeen, next winter.

IF the Lutheran Church is included, remarks the *Christian Leader*, the Presbyterians have an aggregate of 55,000,000, the largest half of the 107,000,000 of Protestants in the world.

THE vicar of St. Margaret's, Liverpool, Mr. Bell Cox, who was a short time in gaol for alleged ritualistic practices, has been served with a writ for the costs of the first prosecution.

MR. D. L. MOODY has been strongly urged to make a tour in India, and it is stated that the English friend who makes the suggestion has sent a cheque for \$25,000 toward the expenses.

A VISITOR from the United States who lately looked through Sir Walter Scott's library at Abbotsford did not find a single American book among the 20,000 volumes which it contains.

MR. DANIEL MILLER, senior elder of Ballymacarrett Church, Belfast, while attending a meeting of Session on a recent Tuesday, was suddenly seized with faintness and expired in a few minutes.

THE Rev. R. Milligan has given notice of a motion in Dundee Presbytery to hold its meetings in the evening, with the view of enlisting the more general interest of the office-bearers in the proceedings.

THE passage of a bill abolishing tithes by the Italian Parliament has caused great agitation among the clerical party. The patriarch of Venice has telegraphed to the King protesting against the measure.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Scotsman* states that "J. G. Edinburgh" is incised in large letters upon a plate between the tramway lines immediately in front of the entrance gate of Bishop Dowden's house in Edinburgh.

THE twenty-second anniversary of the Salvation Army was celebrated lately by a gigantic demonstration at the Alexandra Palace, which, in addition to the members of the Army, 11,000 of whom were present, was visited by 20,000 persons.

THE call from Kent Road congregation, Glasgow, to Rev. Alexander Kirkland, of Hamilton, to be colleague and successor to Dr. Joseph Brown has been sustained by Glasgow North Presbytery; it was signed by 432 members and sixty-three adherents.

IT is stated that in a certain church in the neighbourhood of Aberystwith on a recent Sunday there was a curious division among the worshippers. One section desired the clergyman to use the form of prayer for rain, while another section objected on the ground that their hay was mown but not stacked.

THE service in the Parish Church, Crathie, was conducted on a recent Sunday by Rev. R. Allen Davies, Congregational minister of Ventnor, who is spending his vacation on the Deeside, in response to the courteously and earnestly-expressed wish of Rev. Archibald Campbell, Chaplain to the Queen.

MR. ARBUTHNOT, the vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, son of the late Captain Arbuthnot, of Skelmorie, and brother-in-law of Mr. John Burns of Castle Wemyss, on being applied to by a dissenter for a subscription refused on the ground that while he feels an affectionate esteem for dissenters he regards dissent as an offence against the mind of Christ.

THE address showing the attitude of the Irish Presbyterians toward Home Rule delivered by Rev. R. J. Lynd, of Belfast, before the United Presbyterian Synod and the Established and Free Assemblies in Edinburgh is being largely circulated in Scotland as a four-page tract by Dr. Moir Porteous, of the Protestant National Alliance. No fewer than 45,000 copies have been issued.