

Old Letters.

By a Regular Correspondent.)

This is not an old letter; it is very new, for it was written in August last. My correspondent who is in France, and whose letter of the 9th August last struck me as being worthy of publicity, especially on account of the good it might do, has given a very forcible expression to his views regarding the state of political affairs in France to-day. The letter covers fourteen closely written pages of note paper; but all of it is not of public interest. I will simply extract therefrom the portion that deals with the great political, and consequently religious and social, problems in France to-day. Before taking such a liberty I had written my friend and asked his permission, and two days ago I received a reply granting the same, provided I did not make public use of the passages in which he speaks of some public men in Canada. I obey, but certainly I would have liked to reproduce this writer's estimate of some leading public men of this country. But that is out of the question; the letter then runs thus:—

Lyons, France,
9th Aug., 1903.

Dear Friend:—

"I have six hours of solitude—forced solitude—at my disposal, and I intend to spend a part of that time in writing to you on any subject that comes into my head." (I now skip eight pages).

"Have you read 'Problemes Politiques du Temps Present,' by Emile Faguet, of the French Academy? It was published in 1901, and seems to be a continuation of his 'Questions Politiques,' a work that had its hour of sensation and that paved the way to this his second, and as he states, his last production. Possibly you have not seen the work. In any case I wish to let you know what this writer has to say concerning Parliamentary Government in France. His definition and his explanation thereof constitute a very satisfactory explanation of the condition of affairs in this country to-day—especially since the present Premier took up the sword of persecution against all that stands for religion and good morals, order and stability.

"Faguet, thus defines Parliamentary Government: The government of a country by the country represented by delegates. We call them deputies in your country they are called members of Parliament. Then he continues: 'Until 1870 a species of Parliamentary Government existed; but not a Parliamentary Government as is thus defined; for, either it was not the country that was represented by the Parliament, or else the parliament represented the country, but were obedient to wishes other than those of the people.

"From 1815 to 1848, Parliamentary Government existed; but the parliamentarians did not represent the country. They represented a very small fraction of the nation. They were the delegates of an aristocracy. They thus sustained, during the third of a century, a government that was clearly aristocratic, the best, also, or at least the least objectionable, in my mind, that France has had; but it was not a Parliamentary Government, according to our definition. From 1852 to 1870 the Emperor named the deputies and had his nominations ratified by a plebiscite; but this was not Parliamentary Government. Thus before 1852 an aristocratic parliamentary government existed; before 1870 a government by plebiscite existed, and since 1870 we have had a Democratic Parliamentary Government, that has not given us very satisfactory results.

"France is governed during eight months—for her sessions average that number—by the Chamber of Deputies, and four months by a ministry; that is to say, eight months of Parliamentary Government, by a parliament that represents a small fraction of the people, and four months by a despotism called a ministry. And in the four months the despotism either destroys the effects of the rare good laws passed by the Chambre during the eight months, or else puts into vigorous execution the bad laws that it created. During the sessions the ministers are the humble slaves of the Deputies; during the recess they take their revenge, either timidly or violently, according to their different characters; and there is nothing on

earth more like real anarchy than the presence in the country of two different and rival governments, each taking its innings, and neither of them representing the will of the people."

"Such is the opinion of Faguet the academician. And he is right; and never was the absurdity of this system of so-called Parliamentary Government more clearly demonstrated than in the present condition of affairs in France. The delegation to the Chamber of Deputies does not represent France, any more than it did from 1815 to 1852, and from 1852 to 1870. It represents 'a very small fraction' of the French people, and that fraction may be subdivided into four elements—Anarchists, Socialists, Communists, Radicals—and the four combined bear the common seal of Masonic, or secret society, origin. And that deputation rules for some eight months; passes one or two good laws; a score of indifferent laws; and some one huge monster of an all-sweeping iniquitous law. And during the next four months the ministers spend their time destroying the effects of the good laws, playing pitch and toss with the indifferent laws, and putting into execution—some with timidity, others with violence—that great, big, bad law. At present you have this illustrated in the action of the Chambre in passing the 'Law of Associations,' and the action of M. Combes in putting it into violent and brutal execution. And neither Combes, nor his ministry, nor the Chamber of Deputies represents the people—and they call this Parliamentary Government. If they could only turn their eyes to your young Canada and contemplate the scene there, the representation by popular vote, the ministry responsible to Parliament, the Premier answerable to crown and people for his public course, they could learn a lesson that would put them to shame if there yet remains in their breasts a ghost of such a feeling."

I will add no comment to this. It is its own commentary; but I felt it would be a shame to have hidden from the public such a letter.

Women As Inventors.

The United States patent office was opened in 1790, but women are not entered in its list of patentees until 1809. The first invention—can you guess what it was? No. It wasn't a corset, but the second invention (in 1815) was, and from that day to this about every sixth device patented by women is a corset. That's food for reflection for dress reformers. No drawings remain to-day of those early stays. You must guess what they were like, if in this day of straight fronts and flexible boning you are curious concerning the cumbersome frames in which our ancestors encased their fair form. The very first invention was a device for weaving straw or thread. It is typical of the inventions that follow, for they pertain, with few exceptions, to two divisions—those things that concern a woman's health, dressing and personal adornment, and those things that concern her household and her family.

Some of the strictly feminine inventions are a stocking-heel protector, evidently the patentee was the mother of boys; improved shoe lacing, hair-curling apparatus, safety belts, hygienic bustles, skirt protectors, bosom pads, hair crimpers, safety pockets, and a toe protector for children's shoes. One, Harriet M. Fisher of New York, in whom the eternal feminine seems to have been strong, invented an improved rouse pad in 1867, and one, May E. Harrington of Oakland, Cal., of whom the records do not say whether she was married or not, but she must have been—was given a patent on a mustache guard in 1889. A few, not many, toys have been invented, among them a manikin made of an egg-shell and a strand of twisted wire, the joint organization of Miss Stella Sweet of Kansas City and W. F. Sweet of Saint Louis.

Household devices include washing machines galore, and all sorts of attachments to sewing machines, such as that for quilting, tucking and pleating apparatuses, and threading devices. There are dish-washers, washboilers, egg-beaters, a steaming apparatus for shaping pantaloons, a pea-shelling machine, folding crib, folding wardrobe and chiffonier, baby-walker, detachable coffee pot handle and a device for holding paper over cake in the oven. The medicinal devices are syringes, hot water bottles, atomizers, douch pans, shoulder braces and remedies for diphtheria, coughs, worms and other maladies that women and children are heir to.

The Way of the Drunkard In England.

In an article to the "New York American," Mr. T. P. Whittaker, M. P., thus refers to "The New English Licensing Act." He says:—

The new act which came into force on the first of January is not a great measure, but it is a useful one, and it has already attracted a considerable amount of attention, although the operation of several of its most important provisions has not yet been felt.

The drunkard is having a somewhat anxious time. Formerly he could not be arrested for mere drunkenness. He could be summoned and fined, but that was seldom done. The result was that if he was not also disorderly he usually escaped. Now he may be apprehended if he be drunk and apparently incapable of taking care of himself. The police should therefore make arrests in those cases where a drunken man is being taken home and is with difficulty being kept on his feet by one or two companions. Clearly if he requires one or two other men to take care of him he is "incapable of taking care of himself."

The clause which gives magistrates power to order that a habitual drunkard shall not be supplied with drink for three years appears to have spread consternation amongst well known inebriates. It should be noted, however, that it is not sufficient to prove that he has been convicted of drunkenness three times during the previous twelve months. It must also be proved that he is an habitual drunkard. On the other hand, the risk of incurring three convictions has been largely increased by the new power of arresting for simple drunkenness, which has already been referred to, and also by the extension of the definition of "a public place," so that it now includes "any place to which the public have access, whether on payment or otherwise." That it will be difficult to give full effect to this part of the act in large towns is obvious. But in all places of, say, less than 50,000 people there are notorious drunkards who are well known to every publican, and the supply of liquor to them can now be easily put a stop to without any practical difficulty. In large cities habitual inebriates are also usually widely known in the district in which they live and drink, and while it will be quite possible for them to go further afield for their supplies, so doing will involve much greater risk for arrest for drunkenness, as they will have a much greater distance to traverse when returning to their homes.

Further, not only are publicans and others liable to punishment for supplying these "listed" people with drink, but the inebriate is liable to a fine for obtaining, or attempting to obtain, it for himself; and that, of course, applies whether those from whom he obtained, or attempted to obtain, it did or did not know that he was a "listed" person. Consequently, such an inebriate is liable to punishment not only for being drunk, but for obtaining even a single glass of liquor at any licensed premises or a club.

A further provision is that any person who is convicted of drunkenness may now be required to enter into a recognizance, with or without sureties, to be of good behavior. It is clear, therefore, that by these numerous changes, which mutually extend and strengthen each other, the meshes of the law, through which a large number of drunkards have hitherto escaped, have been very materially reduced in size and proportionately increased in efficiency. While many of the victims of our drinking system, whose opportunities for degrading and destroying themselves will be greatly limited, will probably at first feel that life is so little worth living under such conditions that they will be disposed to commit suicide straight away, as one of them is reported to have done, or to exclaim, with the man at Islington who was "listed," "Why don't you hang me and have done with it?" a very large number will receive the prohibition with relief, and be thankful that at last some slight effort is to be made by the community to protect them against themselves and also against the temptations with which the selfishness of

sellers and consumers of drink and the failure of licensing justices properly to discharge the duties imposed upon them have beset their path.

The clause which enables a married man or woman to obtain an order of separation from his wife or her husband because he or she is an habitual drunkard is an extremely important new departure. That a wife should be able to get rid of a hopelessly drunken husband is obviously just, necessary and humane. That there are also a number of cases in which husbands who are cursed with drunken wives should be able to get a separation from them is equally true. But the case of the drunken wife will often stand on a very different footing from that of a drunken husband, and the clause, so far as it refers to separation orders against wives, will need to be administered with the greatest caution. If a man who has driven his wife to drink by his own bad conduct can then easily get rid of her, gross wrongs may thereby be facilitated. It also seems right that the probable future fate of the separated wife should be most carefully considered by the justices in each case. Before a separation order can be obtained against a wife it must be proved that she is an habitual drunkard as defined by the Act of 1879. According to that act an habitual drunkard is a person who, although not a lunatic in the legal sense of the term, "is by reason of habitual intemperate drinking of intoxicating liquor, at times dangerous to himself, herself, or other, or incapable of managing himself or herself and his or her affairs."

Clearly it will be impossible for such a person to earn her livelihood when she is turned away from her husband and home. Consequently, if a separation order be made without it being definitely ascertained that either, with the amount to be allowed to her by her husband or with that and the assistance of her friends the wife will be able to secure a home, it is obvious that only the very worst results can follow, and the woman will practically be sentenced to a career of unspeakable degradation, misery and vice. Of course there may be cases where the justices may feel that the injury done and the misery caused to the husband and his children by his wife, who has become a drunkard through no fault of his, is, and will continue to be, so great and serious that it must be put a stop to even at the risk of such a fate for the inebriate woman as we have indicated. But it is earnestly to be hoped that magistrates will remember all the bearings of these cases when considering them, and that when the risks referred to are present they will make the fullest use, and bring all their influence to bear upon the wives to induce them to avail themselves of the proviso which enables the magistrates, with the consent of the wife, to send her to an inebriate home for a definite period, instead of making a separation order.

There are a number of useful provisions in the act concerning the granting and transferring of licenses, the control of licensed premises, and the conduct of holders of licenses. In several directions powers given under the old law have been, so to speak, "tightened up" and made more precise, definite and imperative. The specific control and the direct means of enforcing it, which justices are given over the construction and alteration of licensed premises, includes not only all internal and external communications with the parts where drinks are sold, but also anything "which gives increased facilities for drinking or conceals from observation any part of the premises used for drinking." It is hoped that now licensing justices will deal stringently not only with back doors and side entrances, but also with those internal screens, partitions and "snugs" which are so creditable to the liquor trade and so detrimental to public well-being. The additions which have been made to the list of licenses, the granting and renewal of which are at the full discretion of justices, while far too meagre, are to the good as far as they go. The relief of justices from the risk of being involved in personal costs in connection with appeals against their decisions was a much needed and will be a highly appreciated reform, as is also the small step which has been taken in the direction of purifying the administration of the licensing laws by placing some restriction upon the extent to which solicitors who are clerks to the licensing justices may be personally interested in licensing matters which come before their bench.

On the whole, if the licensing justices of the country will regard this

act as what it really is, a stimulating and empowering piece of legislation, and use the great powers which they possess, they may do much to reduce the "gigantic evil" which is our national degradation."

We have no space to refer to the portion of the act which refers to clubs. It is the first step in a right direction in a very important matter. During recent years, owing to the lax state of the law, a large number of clubs which have been little more than public houses without a license and free from the restrictions to which the sale of drink is elsewhere subject, have sprung up freely. The evil is a great one, and it would have spread rapidly. This act introduces a much needed check. I have no doubt that it will be found necessary to go further in the same direction, and also to declare that the supply of drink to members of a club is legally a sale, as for all practical purposes it is. As public houses are reduced in number and the restrictions and regulations affecting them become more stringent, the difficulties and dangers connected with drinking clubs will increase and the necessity for further legislation to control them will become more and more apparent.

MAN OR THE DOLLAR

(From the Providence Visitor.)

In the rush for wealth and in the use of the dollar so much as the standard of human measurement are we not losing sight of the man and dignifying the thing that is simply his handiwork? The acquisition of wealth, when such acquisition is made without any stain on the method pursued, without injustice to the rights and interests of others and with the idea of being more useful in the world is in every way commendable and desirable; but in these days there has developed a sordid mania for the accumulation of vast fortunes without regard to the means employed so long as the restraining power of the law is avoided and without any care for the injury that may be inflicted. The latter kind of a race for wealth makes for the moral decadence of any country and for the creation of a class that is inimical to the security and perpetuity of the national life.

Man is the unit of all endeavor and it will not do to ignore him and his rights in the calculation of wealth getting. The vast corporate interests of the nation have no doubt a tremendous power and that power is constantly expanding until it has almost reached the danger line. The dollar is mightily potent, but overtopping its power is the popular will of the people whenever that will is called into play for its own protection. There is a decided danger in crowding people too far, and every lover of his country, of order and of his kind may well sound a warning note for a larger consideration of the Man and a less deification of the Dollar than is unhappily intruding itself upon American life.

If there is a political restlessness that asserts itself in the organization of parties of impossible aims led by irresponsible dreamers is not the reason for such disturbance of the mental equilibrium to be found in the conditions that the selfishness of the hour is imposing? Our Napoleons of finance and of industry in too many instances seem to have parted company with their consciences, and with all the finer sensibility that makes for the general good, and thus great abilities that would add immeasurably to the benefit of the age if exercised in a more just and humane way are employed solely and simply with a view of personal gain, and with a method as merciless as it is reprehensible and despotic. The industry of the small manufacturer that he has placed on a profitable footing through years of honest and energetic endeavor is wiped out remorselessly, the opportunity for open and fair competition is ruthlessly removed, and not satisfied with this, the halls of legislation are invaded and even the restraining authority of the Federal Government defied.

The question is a timely and pressing one as to whether the Man or the Dollar shall rule, and when the time arrives for an answer that shall leave no doubt on the subject, let us all devoutly hope that it may be given in favor of the Man.

en in a manner that will not be volcanic in its nature. May there be a re-enthronement of conscience of the dominating power in the financial business and commercial world and then will follow an era when it will be stupid to ask the question—Man or the Dollar?

MATERIAL AIMS.

"We live in a world that thinks and speaks," said he; "and goes about its daily round of business or of pleasure as if the human race had no other responsibility than the satisfaction of the needs of the passing hour. There seems to be no room for God in the schemes of brains of men. They lose sight of the future and live wholly in the present; they strive after a low kind of success with such enthusiasm that the highest ideal of life would appear to consist in the number of figures a man may write after his name. Religious obligations are dismissed with the empty remark that they are not clear enough to be taken into serious account. Liberty is over-estimated. Self-assertion has been exaggerated into a sort of fifth cardinal virtue, and has displaced the noble virtues of obedience, reverence, and awe." — Rev. Dr. Shannahan.

WORK.

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Catholic Indians In United States

A correspondent of the weeklies chronicles the re-establishment of the Catholic Indians. When Andrew J. president he procured the many people of that nation Indian Territory, but he refused to move and have the land of their birth unoccupied. Writing of those that Scharf says in his account:

"Bishop Janssens of Louisiana towards Archbishop of New Orleans established a mission among the Choctaws. Father took charge of this mission through his untiring efforts all accepted the Catholic religion. When Father Beckman grew old in the service he was able to induce the Fathers of Holland to take up the work, but in the end he finally went to the land allotted to the Choctaws in the Indian Territory. He divided in recent times, came necessary that the Choctaws move to the territory on their land. As a mission was broken up, the spring irresponsible parties move the Choctaws from the territory and Chickasaw nation Indian Territory.

"Realizing the importance of these people located in the vicinity of Catholic Choctaws in the territory of the Catholic Church, Cardinal Gibbons, Father Ketcham to the Mississippi and the Indian Territory, learn what could be done that end. The task was, something stupendous. After the field and negotiators the secretary of the interior, Dawes commission, who were favorably disposed towards Father Ketcham found it to have them located in a spot succeeded in colonizing some extent near churches, undertook the arrangement of the Indian Territory low their missionaries them, and to persuade the Fathers to remove to the land and assume the charge of the scattered flock. One obstacle was the unwillingness of the Indians to leave Mississippi the present time nearly all have gone.

"The result of several negotiations on the part of the Catholic Indians is that during this month of the Carmelite community was removed to the Indian Territory at Antlers, which, way, is Father Ketcham's station, and taking charge of the welfare of the entire and Chickasaw tribes, including new comers. They will establish mission centers and go in a truly apostolic way. very able and zealous missionaries who have already given evidence of their ability in this field.

"The superior of the community is the Very Rev. Father Breck, O.C.C., and the Bishop of the Indian Territory be congratulated upon the action of this energetic body of missionaries. Enormous difficulties encountered in the execution plan of removal, and the community's successful solution is tionably due to the Rev. Ketcham, the director of the Catholic Indian Missions.

The Choctaw Catholics, as in Mississippi, were a simple people. They did sing in Neshoba County, in the diocese, and besides doing work which was disposed of surrounding towns. Their fault was that frequently they allowed themselves to be at the mercy of sellers of ardent spirits. no question but the priests voted their lives to them in full duty, but outside influence often corrupting. There were good Catholics among them, number were indifferent. The church, Our Lady of the Holy picturesquely located, Sisters of Mercy conducted a for the young Indians, yet it was poorly attended as a result of the remnants of the Seminole war remaining in the Florida, the Choctaws did not take kindly to education, and