

which has been hitherto confided to the farmers, unless corresponding measures are taken for insuring a due representation to the Conservative classes and the Conservative school of thought in all classes throughout this country, for which purpose a thorough and far-reaching measure of redistribution is quite as necessary as a measure of reform." The Bill, in short, is to be opposed, not because it makes the will of the people too supreme, which was the ground of Tory opposition to Reform Bills in the days of old, but because, unless accompanied by a redistribution of seats, it will not produce a faithful representation of popular opinion. Lord Salisbury even gives us a new and democratic version of the proper function of the House of Lords, which he says is to reject the measures of the Commons when they do not carry with them the approval of the nation. The duties of the Order, according to him, are tribunician rather than aristocratic. In proving this, historically, his Lordship labours under some difficulties arising from the general conformity of facts to a different theory. The only two examples which he is able to produce are the rejection of Fox's India Bill and the rejection of the Whig policy with regard to Ireland, the first of which was followed by the defeat of the Fox-North Coalition, and the second by the defeat of the Melbourne Government at a general election. But the Coalition fell partly by monarchical intrigue, partly by its own general unpopularity, and the Melbourne Government owed its overthrow at the polls, not specially to its Irish policy, but to its administrative weakness, the growth of the Conservative reaction, and the towering ascendancy of Sir Robert Peel. In devising schemes for the proportionate representation of parties and schools of thought Lord Salisbury is pursuing a chimera. What he and all statesmen who recognize the ascendancy of the democratic principle have to do is to organize democracy, which in England at present is chaotic, and to provide it with real safeguards, analogous, but superior in validity, to those with which it is provided in the United States, in place of those monarchical and Conservative elements of the British Constitution which have ceased to exercise any real power, though they continue to fill the political imagination and confuse the political mind. Lord Rosebery brings forward a motion to increase the efficiency of the House of Lords by giving it something of the character of a Senate, and including in it intellectual distinction of various kinds; had his motion been accepted it would have greatly strengthened the moral position of the Lords in the coming struggle; but Privilege never reads the hand-writing on the wall: it always prefers destruction to self-reform. The resolution of these bodies is, however, not apt to be on a par with their obstinacy. They are composed of men of pleasure, who are seldom inclined to defend principle at the risk of their lives, or even at the serious risk of their dinners. The French aristocracy, when the hour of peril arrived, ran away and left its king to the guillotine. The British aristocracy has always succumbed after betraying its hostility to reform. Had the Lords the other day mustered courage to throw out the Arrears Bill, as they threatened, and gone before the country saying that, come what might, they would have no share in taxing loyalty to pay blackmail to rebellion, it is highly probable that they would have been victorious, certain that they would have done themselves honour. But the pecuniary interests of some of them were involved in the Bill; and Lord Salisbury, having valiantly taken up an advanced position, and bid his trumpets sound the charge, suddenly, looking round, beheld his legions in full retreat. It is not unlikely that we may see the same comedy played a second time on the same boards.

AGAIN, notwithstanding all prognostications to the contrary, Female Suffrage has been defeated in the British House of Commons, and by a very large majority. In vain did some of the Conservative leaders strive to impress upon their followers the expediency of following the tradition of Lord Beaconsfield, who always voted for the measure, in the persuasion, which is evidently shared by Sir John Macdonald, that the female electors would be Tories. The hope of additional votes was not strong enough to prevail over the fear of social revolution. All who rightly appreciate the gravity of the proposed change will, at least, rejoice that it has not been made on party grounds, and by a medley of Radical Revolutionists, Parnellite Obstructionists, Conservatives angling for female votes, and other Conservatives wanting to tie a stone around the neck of the Franchise Bill. The profound importance of the question is at last seen: all the foolish and unworthy banter which once greeted it is swept aside; serious journals treat it as one different in kind from any ordinary extension of the Franchise; and its supporters argue in its favour, not on the ground that all fear of its consequences is futile, but on the ground that when the Married Woman's Property Act, and other measures of that description have already "revolutionized the foundations of society," it is idle and illogical to shrink from revolutionizing the superstructure.

Another most notable feature of the struggle, was the line taken by *The Queen*, the English lady's newspaper, which after paying the proper tributes to the intellectual ability, and the earnestness of the ladies who have got up the movement proceeds in this strain:—

The question as to the views of the great majority of women on the subject of female suffrage is one which is strongly disputed. The advocates of the change say that women in general wish for votes. Doubtless many of the more energetic women of the day do aspire to their possession, but that the great body of women do so is, to say the least, an unproved assumption. With the majority of women marriage is the great object in life; that attained, their cares are the management of their households and the education and training of their children. The strife of politics married women naturally leave to their husbands, who represent them at the polling booth. That the right to vote, once granted to single women, could be long withheld from those that are married, is an absurd supposition—in fact Miss Simcox's letter proves that not only the giving the vote to married women, but the entry of ladies into Parliament, and the sweeping away of "all the time-honoured disabilities of sex," is contemplated with complacency by the advanced school of female thinkers.

That these proposals represent the views and aspirations of the great majority of women may be fairly doubted. The struggle of party politics has no attraction for them, and in spite of all the organised agitation that has been arranged, the women of this country have not, as a body, made any attempt to gain the franchise. The interests of women have not been neglected in the legislation of recent years. Questions affecting them have had their full share of attention, and in some respects the law has been strained in their favour. The old laws which pressed unjustly on women—and many did so—have either been repealed or amended, and there is no valid claim they could bring before either House of Parliament that would not receive immediate attention. Whether their interests would be better served if they possessed votes is problematical; and whether the interests of the nation and of the family would be promoted, if women possessed all the rights and responsibilities of men and "the disabilities of sex" were swept away, is still open to doubt.

This is precisely what the "Bystander" has already ventured to maintain. The number of women who desire, or to whom it would be possible, to be masculine, and to enter into masculine walks of life, who desire, or to whom it would be possible "to come out of the Egypt of dependence and sentiment" into the arena of rough competition with man, must be small; hardly larger perhaps than the number of women who wish to engage in male pastimes, go with the men to the smoking-room, and put off other restraints of social delicacy. But for the sake of those few the general relations of the sexes would be changed, the privileges of all women would be placed in jeopardy, and all alike would forfeit their claim to a chivalrous protection without acquiring those powers of self-defence which nature, persistently disdainful of radical theories of equality, confines to the stronger and coarser sex. By refusing to introduce women into politics the House of Commons asserts not the intellectual inequality of the sexes, but the fact that their spheres are distinct, and that political government, like police and national defence, belongs to the sphere of man. The decision can be taken as disparaging only by those who deem the functions of political government far superior to those of the wife and mother.

In the question of University Consolidation, the tide is at the flood, and if the opportunity is missed it is not likely to recur. The feeling that the decisive hour had arrived made those who were specially interested in the matter to hurry to Convocation the other day, to hear what the Chancellor of the University of Toronto, with whom the initiative presumably rests, would say. What they heard, however, was, that the Chancellor "would be delighted if a plan should be brought forward which was adapted to all the necessities of the situation, which was not inconsistent with the fundamental principles which each held, and which should promote a real and cordial union of interest and sentiment in the establishment and perfecting of the new system proposed." To a plan which is perfectly unobjectionable no large-minded man will object. It is clear that the Chancellor is not going to be the motive power on this occasion. His reserve may be easily excused: a leading politician, with the fortunes of a party in his hands, has, in the first place little time to devote to schemes of university improvement; in the second place, he is naturally afraid of bringing himself and his party into collision with any of the denominational interests involved. The stress of the situation now falls on the Minister of Education, who seems to have zeal, though unluckily he has not special knowledge of the subject, and on the Vice-Chancellor of the University, who seems to have both.

THE wave sometimes recedes though the tide is advancing. In Belgium, Clericalism, after being for many years worsted in its perpetual struggle against Liberalism, has at length gained an electoral victory, and will apparently get the Government into its hands. The cause of this revolution seems to have been the excessive violence of Liberal propaganda in the matter of public education. There are members of the Church of Voltaire who are not less persecuting than the members of the Church of Loyola, though perhaps in point of humanity the guillotine is an improvement on the stake. The party of reaction in Belgium rests on the foundation, not only of priestly influence, but of Flemish nationality, the affinity of which is not to the French or Walloon portion of Belgium,