

the policy and the endeavour of all who desire to preserve the unity of the nation. It is highly probable, from what we hear, that the prospect of being supported by a united party in a definite policy on the Irish question will have a considerable effect on the bulletins of Mr. Gladstone's health, and will dispose him to retain the leadership and act as general in the campaign. The Tories cannot fail to be weakened, especially in the North of Ireland, by the alliance into which they have allowed Lord Randolph Churchill to lead them and the stigma of Disunionism which they have brought upon themselves. They are in a fair way to be hoist with their own petard; while their Irish confederate is likely to rue a premature indulgence of triumphant insolence which must shake the belief of his followers in the wisdom and foresight of their chief.

IRRITABILITY is debility in a state of excitement. Of this saying of Abernethy there never was a better example than Lord Randolph Churchill, who is now announced to have raved himself, for the third time, into a state of nervous prostration. He is manifestly a man of febrile irritability, without genuine strength of any kind. He has great volubility, an amazing command of smart phrases, singular power of vituperation, and an entire immunity from the restraints of modesty and of principle. His immunity from the restraint of principle he has himself proclaimed, as we showed the other day, with astounding frankness. Both his violence of language and his unscrupulousness tickle the rowdies who are combined with the aristocracy in the Tory Party. But in these sensational days the whole world is carried away by almost anything that amuses it. To the excitement of party warfare and of vituperation incessantly carried on in the shrillest key, Lord Randolph has now added the labours and cares of an office to which he is wholly inadequate. It is stated that his physicians have ordered him to take complete rest till the election. For two months, then, at all events, India is safe. What the effect of this breakdown will be upon the balance of parties it is not easy to say. Lord Randolph had apparently been somewhat sobered by office, and his recent performances had elicited the remark that he was an uninteresting speaker in his lucid intervals. It was observed that he carefully eschewed the Irish question. On the whole, however, his own party will probably gain most by his silence. Be the result what it may, it is a thought of absolute shame that a national greatness, which it has taken ten centuries and thousands of heroic lives to build up, should for a single moment have become a plaything for the vanity of Lord Randolph Churchill.

THE struggle of politicians for power, though it fills the scene with its noise and turmoil, must yield in importance to those economical questions which affect the substantial interests and permanent welfare of the people. The annual meeting of the American Forestry Congress will be held at Boston on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th of this month. It is open to Canadians, who can become members by the payment of a subscription of two dollars a year, and it is to be hoped that Canada will not be unrepresented. This is a question, and a vital one, for the whole Continent, but especially for Canada. The produce of our forests is our staple export, its preparation for the market is about our most important industry. Ontario has no coal, and when she runs short of firewood she must import all her fuel. The climate, agriculture, the water power everywhere, suffer by the destruction of the forests which has hitherto been going on unchecked and at a disastrous rate. In the Eastern Provinces of the Dominion we still have old forests to preserve, and are better off through the bounty of Nature than are the people of Germany and France after centuries of labour. In our Western Prairies forests must be erected; it is a necessity; and in many parts even of our Eastern Provinces forests must be replaced. Forestry is not hostile to Colonization. Let the good land be assigned to the plough; but there is land of which the growth of timber is the natural harvest, a harvest which demands no labour but that of gathering year by year. It is a wrong to the settler to set him to spend years in clearing off the only valuable crop which the land can yield, and converting a fruitful forest into a farm on which he cannot live. But the urgent necessity of forest preservation is a matter about which we are all agreed. It is time that a vigorous effort should be made.

MR. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS, in his new three-volume novel, "What is a Girl to do?" shows a girl can do a good deal. He makes his heroine secretary to a blind gentleman, governess to the children of a Russian Prince, and nurse under the Red Cross to an English ambulance during the Franco-Prussian War, bringing the story down to the surrender of Sedan. Mr. Edwards likes to show his heroines under a variety of changes. Was it not his "The Three Louisas" which some irreverent wit re-christened "Unlimited Loo"?

MR. ARNOLD IN AMERICA.*

By dint of liberal spacing the three addresses delivered by Mr. Arnold in America, in the course of the winter before last, are made to form another volume of the standard edition of his works. There is no teacher of the present day who is heard more gladly by educated and thoughtful people than Mr. Arnold. He comes preaching a gospel of ideas and principles. He discusses every subject that he takes up from a fresh and independent standpoint, and with a remarkable affluence of literary illustration. He possesses a literary style which, in spite of some defects, is very attractive. He seems to us to have moulded it in part upon the Platonic dialogue, and to have carried the imitation not unfrequently to the point of affectation. Take for example such a sentence as the following: "But we will not talk or think of destruction for a State with such gifts and graces as France, and which has had such a place in history, and to which we, many of us, owe so much delight and so much good." But for the reference to France this might easily be taken for a translation from the Attic philosopher whom Mr. Arnold justly ranks amongst the few great writers of the world. Incorporated into English prose it conveys just a suspicion of a languid, well-bred drawl, and is just a little irritating to those who know or suspect that the thing is deliberately done. Taking the volume before us as a whole, we hardly think it shows us Mr. Arnold at his best. The style, in point of vigour, is scarcely up to the mark of the "Essays in Criticism" or of "Literature and Dogma." It does not flow in as full a stream as we have been accustomed to in the writings of Mr. Arnold; and here and there it is marred by, apparently, intentional angularities. A distinction should be made, however, in favour of the essay on "Emerson," which is better finished as well as better developed than the other two. In the essay on "Numbers" the thought is thin; in that on "Literature and Science" the illustration is, for Mr. Arnold, meagre; in the essay on "Emerson," on the other hand, we find much of the old strain and feel that our author is still with us. Widely as these addresses, in the several forms in which they have appeared, have been circulated, and much as they have been commented on, it may perhaps be allowable, now that they are definitively taking their place beside Mr. Arnold's already voluminous writings, to express the estimate we are led to form of their worth and significance.

The essay on "Numbers" contains one good thought, namely, the familiar, but not sufficiently heeded, one that moral forces and causes are of prime importance in governing the destinies of states. That our author has set anything else—any other doctrine or principle—in a clear light we fail to see. He speaks of "the doctrine of the remnant," "the comfortable doctrine of the remnant"; but, in reality, though he talks of the remnant he gives us no "doctrine" of it. He tells us nothing about the remnant that can be any guide to conduct; therefore, in no serious sense can he be said to give us any doctrine. He asks us to believe, as a matter of faith, that majorities are apt, if not certain, to be in the wrong—that the championship of sound opinions and principles rests with the minority. But surely there are minorities and minorities, and it would be somewhat hazardous for a man to conclude that because he was in a minority he was therefore in the right. How is the particular minority that holds the truth to be distinguished? What is the explanation of the fact, if it is one, that truth lodges itself in minorities? Finally, must the minority that holds the truth always remain a minority, or should it aspire to become a majority? Then, if it should become a majority, what will happen to it in a moral sense? Will truth, inevitably gravitating towards minorities, pass over to the vanquished party? Before we can have a doctrine of the remnant these questions, amongst others, must, it seems to us, be answered. We are told that the remnant, if large enough in point of absolute numbers, will save the state. How do we know that? Mr. Arnold gives us the word of Isaiah for it, but somewhat weakens the comfortable assurance we might derive from this guarantee by telling us that Isaiah himself was very much mistaken in his anticipations of what the remnant of Judah would do. The one original thought which the essay contains is that just mentioned: that "the remnant" in a large state, like one of the great modern nations, will have more effect for good than even a relatively larger one in a smaller state. This idea might with advantage be more amply developed than it has been in the essay now under consideration; but if developed successfully it would simply go to show that large states were more likely to be stable than small ones. It would not by any stretching make up a "doctrine of the remnant."

But if we do not find in this essay all it purports to contain, we do find in it a noble vindication of some very important moral principles. The author establishes the necessity of seriousness by the example of the

*Discourses in America. By Matthew Arnold. London: Macmillan and Company.