

LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

WHETHER to-day's pageant ends riotously or peacefully, the occasion will be a landmark in England's political history. The right of public assembly which the people have long enjoyed, and which they have seldom abused, has now been summarily withdrawn. We owe this to the Social Democratic Federation, who, by their attacks on the West End shopkeepers last year, prepared the way for general acquiescence in the prohibition of all such public gatherings in the future. The choice of to-day for a second Social Democratic Demonstration has settled the matter, and there will probably be no other. A precedent had long been wanted for putting an end to foolish and menacing processioning, and the police authorities, allowed a free hand by the Government now in power, have established a right which nobody will ever again seriously call in question.

THE Social Democratic Federation is led by a few English fanatics, encouraged by numbers of foreign socialistic refugees, and followed by a crowd of the worst characters in the Metropolis. The leaders themselves are not exactly what the teachers of a new gospel ought to be. The author of the "Earthly Paradise" may be pardoned for taking a poetical view of social duties; but being also an employer of labour (he is a fine art paper decorator), and notorious for his imperious rule in the workshop, his advent as a socialistic lecturer was hailed with universal ridicule, under which he soon had to retire—at all events, from the eminently practical work of the Federation as carried on by Mr. Hyndman. Mr. Morris is allowed to theorise in peace, taking with him the respectable element in the original Federation. Mr. Hyndman is now, therefore, sole ruler, and his followers—well, well—his followers may be judged by the fact that they still follow him, notwithstanding the revelations in the County Court the other day, from which it appears that he is numbered among the great "unemployed" at present. The bulk of his admirers also belong to the great "unemployed."

LORD R. CHURCHILL'S sudden conversion to the "Closure" has alarmed some of the foremost men of the old Conservative Party. His latest utterance pointed to closure by a bare majority, and already he has been warned that he would not carry the whole of the Tories with him if such is his design. One fashionable Conservative organ hints that he aspires to play the part of King Stork. All the same, there is a general assent to the prediction that somebody will have to assume that sort of kingship presently, although everybody protests against being counted among the frogs.

MR. GLADSTONE himself has contributed not a little to Lord R. Churchill's popularity. The G. O. M.'s manner as well as his matter has become so distasteful to all but the ignorant classes that the cynical unscrupulousness of his young rival is accepted as a refreshing change. Conscious of having lost caste with the educated classes, and knowing that his only chance rests with the populace, Mr. Gladstone has latterly enveloped himself in that mantle of piety, which formerly he partially and only occasionally wore. Sanctimoniousness goes down with the crowd, who cannot understand a good argument, but can always appreciate a good motive. Mr. Gladstone has not even attempted to answer Lord Bra-bourne's articles on the historical aspect of the Irish Question; he merely shifts his ground, and "admires the spirit" in which the controversy is being carried on! The people do not read *Blackwood's Magazine*, but they do read Mr. Gladstone's letters, and the conclusion arrived at is that the author of the separation scheme knows all about Irish history, and forgives those wicked noblemen who say he does not. His obstinate self-righteousness constitutes the chief danger of the situation. You knock all his arguments to pieces, and kick his historical evidence to the winds. Straightway, instead of repenting, he turns round and prays for you. Evidently he means to go on his way, and so long as he can keep up the rôle of a persecuted saint he will carry the well-meaning, simple-minded multitude along with him. No wonder that the shameless profligacy—politically speaking—of Lord Randolph Churchill receives such considerable toleration, especially as he has gained the popular ear, and is the only available antidote to Gladstonism in that quarter.

AMONG the many schemes afloat for permanently commemorating Her Majesty's Jubilee, that for continuing the Colinderies as a Colonial Institute seems likely to collapse, partly for want of definition, partly through commercial opposition. A Colonial Institute may be a very desirable thing, and when clear ideas are formed of its aims, it will find plenty of support. But these South Kensington Exhibitions are becoming unpopular with the trading and shopkeeping interests in proportion to their popularity with the pleasure-seeking public. Not in London only, but in every considerable provincial town is the shopkeeper deprived of his legitimate custom

by the flow of pocket-money, in one huge stream, during six or eight months of the year to the colossal bazaar at South Kensington. The word has gone forth, just as this year's exhibition is closing, to discredit it in every possible way. Seeing that it has been in all respects the best of the kind ever held, we may conclude that the newspapers and their clients have their own reasons, and very strong ones, for putting an end to these periodic shows.

MESSRS. CASSELL have just started a new, fashionable magazine, entitled *The Lady's World*, the get-up of which is superb, and the price even more so—one shilling. But the most striking feature about the new venture is the illustrated fashions, which are set out on what seem to have been living figures, instead of the idealised insipidities which have done duty for fashionably-attired ladies in all similar publications hitherto.

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ANCHOR.

SAUNTERINGS.

THAT it was quite possible to enjoy life, Anastasia, the Youth, and I discovered last summer, and to do it in the orthodox and approved fashion set by those who leave town for the purpose, without either going a prodigious distance or paying a prodigious price. These negative advantages were supplemented by a positive opportunity of gaining some knowledge of local life and character as it is in the Province of Ontario. Local life and character being sought for by Canadians usually anywhere but in Canada, we were fired by a sense of originality in our plan to discover it in the wilds of Prince Edward County.

There may be a few among the great untravelled that do not live in the vicinity of the place who will follow us geographically to the "Sand Banks," on the shores of Lake Ontario. A dotted line vaguely indicates them on the map, which gives no sign, however, of their being inhabited. The most speculative architect of castles in the air would never dream of constructing upon the basis of that wavering and watery indication the magnificence of a pine palace for the accommodation of the transient public, flanked by a grocery and surrounded by every sylvan and sandy attraction: yet such there is. The sand banks are phenomenal, and where there is a phenomenon there is sure to be a hotel.

To get to Picton from almost anywhere in the summer, one sails up the long, narrow, picturesquely irregular Bay of Quinté. Thrice happy is he who takes the trip in that magical time between the day and the darkness of the glowing July weather, when the little steamer almost noiselessly furrows her way through the still, shining water, with its dark tree-shadows and sunset tints of rose and amber, carrying her voyagers, one fancies, to some sure haven where the purple and the gold and the violet and the opal do not slip away. The solid old farm-houses that send their straggling boundaries down to the steep, rocky, moss-grown water's edge, have a look of having been built for comfort and endurance. The fences are all of stones piled on top of one another. Here and there the blossoming water betrays the idyl of a love-tryst at the water-foot of one of these primitive divisions, where Corydon and Phyllis are discussing the advisability of taking it down. And now and then our little craft makes a convulsive hiatus in her peaceful puffing toward an ideal port, and rubs up along a weather-beaten old wharf to receive a solitary passenger, or some half-dozen bags of an agricultural product, the lumpy and uninteresting nature of which will never be made public through the medium of this pen. One feels disposed to speculate upon the forgotten past of these discouraged-looking little settlements, each with its demoralised landing or dilapidated pier, its dusty road curving down to the water out of the woods and pastures, and its church spire rising from a parti-coloured sprinkling of village houses, and softly throwing its doctrinal significance against the evening sky—a chapter folded back in a book that few turn the leaves of; and yet what open page of Canadian history is more bravely illuminated than that which burns with the steadfast loyalty of the strong-hearted ten thousand who preferred allegiance as subjects to disaffection as citizens, even at the expense of all that exile meant in 1783!

It is ten o'clock when we puff into Picton, and at eleven we are driving through the soft radiance of a July moon, that shows us on one side of the road symmetrical maples, set out by the beauty-loving Prince Edward County farmers; on the other, glimmering whitely through the dark cedars and wild undergrowth, the sand banks that have given the narrow peninsula its local fame. Here and there the sand has gradually forced its way through and over the trees to the road, which curves in as the sure yearly encroachment is made. Silhouetted against the sky, the dead cedars stretch pathetic arms above us, and every now and then a plash from Lake Ontario, quiet to-night, sounds from behind them. Two hours of this and