

designated as an Independent. But the Repeal cry does not appear to have produced any great impression, either one way or the other; and the promise of the Dominion Government to do something royal in the way of railroads, as it was made only a very short time before voting day, seems to have been received with considerable distrust. The incredulous islanders will tell you that a word of this kind, which comes from a place so far away as Ottawa, must be taken with a deal of allowance. Many who have not visited these counties supposed them intensely loyal alike to Canada and the Mother-country. But while they are not lacking in a national feeling, their deepest love is always for their native land. Cape Breton folk who go away to seek the fortune which cannot be found at home, as we meet them in Boston, New York, and other American cities, speak with the most joyful anticipation of the time when they will have made their pile and can return to the good northern country of their childhood.

There has been some talk about a desire on the part of Cape Breton to separate from Nova Scotia, and it is even said one or two of the new members are pledged to work for this result. But a most careful inquiry, which has extended to every district of the island, fails to reveal any deep or wide-spread sentiment of this nature. Very likely some individuals who are in a position to have their words heard may have personal reasons for disliking any government located at Halifax; just as a few Nova Scotians, with more voice than brain, are shouting for annexation to the United States. Disregarding such wild talkers, a great majority of these independent thinkers are well satisfied with Cape Breton's present relations to the neighbouring peninsula. Did any reason actually exist for terminating these relations, the people certainly have the courage and energy for taking immediate steps in that direction. And in such a case we should hear something very different from the vague rumours at present floating about, which do not give evidence of being anything beyond campaign documents.

Among the reasons why so many annually emigrate from Cape Breton is the fact that the number of births always vastly exceeds the number of deaths. Were all the stalwart young men and women constantly growing up in such numbers to remain at home, the country would soon have a population which its utmost resources could not support.

ADDISON F. BROWNE.

A REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH.

A GLANCE at the currents of thought and politics which have been flowing through Europe and America during the past few months reveals a strange if not dangerous condition of things. The very soul of society, we may say, has been cast down and disquieted within us. Deep has called unto deep: all the waves and billows of anarchy have gone over us. Order has linked itself with license, and bloodshed has been the result. Statesmanship has gone hand in hand with demagogism, and political progress has come to an end. The stream that has run comparatively smoothly in England since the unquiet days of the Reform Bill, has of late again raged furiously, and, overflowing its banks, has made itself felt elsewhere than in the British Isles. Ireland, or a part of Ireland, clamouring for the right of self-government; London working-men defiantly demanding work and wages; Belgian miners in open revolt; the Knights of Labour resisting to the utmost what they consider to be the oppression of capitalists; Eastern Roumelia obstinately refusing to accept the terms of more powerful nations; Greece flying in the face of all the European Powers; riots in Liège; riots in Belfast; riots in Chicago; a revolution in Uruguay; Bismarck and the Reichstag disagreeing; Australia protesting against the actions of the Home Government;—such is the darker side of the picture which the columns of the daily press have presented to us within the past few weeks. "Disintegration," "dismemberment," "separation," "repeal," these are words which have been floating about us like vibrios in an epidemic, reminding us strongly of another period in the history of Europe—itsself, too, a revolutionary epoch—when were heard from the Chamber of the States-General to the log cabin in Pennsylvania, phrases not dissimilar to these, phrases such as "pantisocracy," "rights of man," "Liberté," "Égalité, Fraternité." Far seeing statesmen with clear views and sound opinions have not concealed the fact that they tremble for the fate of more than one class and one nation. A high authority in politico-historical subjects has weekly reiterated his forebodings as to the fate of the British Empire—an empire which has been called the police of the world.

None of us can afford to be blind to these things. Take as rosy a view as we may of the general tenor of the changes which (every one of us must admit) have been taking place in society, the source of these changes must by us be carefully sought for and diligently pondered. They are not confined to one class or one nation. Their influences are not limited to one people or one time. A disturbance in an out-of-the-way cantonment in

India will affect stocks the world over; the hoisting of a Union Jack in the antipodes is the signal for energetic foreign policies in countries separated by the diameter of the globe. No serious political action is, in these days of steam and electricity, trivial or ephemeral; and it is well that one should now and again pluck his fellows by the sleeve and with them consider carefully whither we are drifting.

Of the many changes that are taking place in the relationship between monarch and subject, governing and governed—indeed between class and class, and man and man—the most opposite views are taken. Never, perhaps, were there more incompatible remedies prescribed. Coercion is as often advocated as is conciliation. Disenfranchisement is mooted simultaneously with manhood suffrage. Labour, as the enemy of capital, is egged on at the same time that the hostility of labour is opposed by ball cartridge. Communism is preached at the very moment that the prerogative of the Sovereign is insisted upon.

Amidst these contradictory theories each will choose according to his peculiar proclivities; but the very antagonism of the remedies proposed points to the impossibility of making a correct prognosis. The treatment is empirical. I, certainly, am not about to exhibit any nostrum of my own. Let us, however, consider if some diagnosis cannot be made.

One symptom of this unhealthy state of society we can, I conceive, all detect: Society is suffering from moral and intellectual ataxia: the nerve-centres are paralyzed, and the muscles refuse to act—or rather act only too violently, but without co-ordination. Those who are supposed to solve political and sociological problems, alighted at their complexity, give them up as insoluble, or attempt weak and avowedly crude solutions. The result is they are not accepted; temerity gains the day; law and order vanish. Responsibility is shirked. We see evidences of this everywhere, from the Greek Chamber to the Imperial Parliament. Weakness, and not strength, characterizes the actions of the leaders of all parties. What strength there is is not the strength of the position fought for, but of the union of those fighting for it. Mob law reigns as much in the halls of Westminster as in the streets of Liège or Belfast. And where shall we seek for the source of this so deplorable a lack of stamina? Shall we not find it in that universal restlessness under control, that impatience of restraint, that hatred of discipline, that disdain of authority, which is so salient a feature of these closing decades of the nineteenth century? That curious sophism which taught the equality of man has tainted the blood of humanity, and the sins of the fathers have been visited upon the children. Our very statesmen have been inoculated with the virus. They forget their position as leaders. They will not wield authority. They are led. They do not guide.

We are too squeamish in these days. We know too much. Too much learning has made us, if not mad, at least imbecile. There is so much to be said on either side that we take neither side. We halt ever between two opinions. The exuberance of our information hides our view. We are not satisfied with approximations; we wait for accuracy.

Perhaps if we could find some man who would accept some one approximation, and would with that work out for us the problem, his solution would be accepted. If x is to have all values (and the equality of man seems to give to each the right to attach to x any value he may choose), if x is to have all values, there will never be any beginning made to finding the answer. Give it some particular value, and even if the answer be "*plus or minus*," we may congratulate ourselves that some progress has been made. But the man who works it out on this principle must be no ordinary man.

In the multitude of counsellors, says the wise man, there is wisdom; it does not follow that in the multitude of leaders there is guidance. Perhaps a multitude of leaders is itself a contradiction in terms. One leader there must be, whether those led be a flock of sheep or a nation of republicans.

But that leader must be a powerful one. In all great crises it is power, determination, force, that wins the day. When the Republic is in danger it is the Dictator that takes the helm, and no one asks by what compass he steers or for what port he makes. The era of revolutions in Rome was the era of weak emperors, not of stern kings. What has been the distinguishing characteristic of the great dictators of the world, from Cincinnatus to General Gordon? Acute argumentative ability, or force of character? Extraordinary analytical acumen, or wonderful power of action? The questions need no answer.

It is not the uniqueness of the theory or the validity of the argument that saves a country. Revolutions, as the word itself so aptly suggests, often end, so far as theories and arguments are concerned, in much the same state of affairs as existed before the revolt—perhaps even in the same state of affairs in exaggerated form. Louis's *Lettres de Cachet* were followed