

public opinion. It makes and unmakes an administration in an hour.

Upon this feature LeBlanc, a Frenchman, writes :

“Public opinion in England! Woe to him who defies it! There will be invoked against him no test of law; before no court will he be taken; there will be started against him no police officers or gendarmes; but he will run the risk of dying for want of air and of disappearing crushed by the weight of indifference or scorn!”

The one thing remarkable about England is that it worked out its civilization alone. It is a self-made country, as we speak now-a-day of the self-made man.

Buckle says this peculiar merit is universally admitted, and adds :

“I say nothing of the number of our discoveries, the brilliancy of our literature, or the success of our arms. These are invidious topics; and other nations may perhaps deny to us merits which we are apt to exaggerate. But I take up this single position, that, of all European countries, England is the one where, during the longest period, the government has been the most quiescent and the people most active; where popular freedom has been settled on the widest basis; where each man is most able to say what he thinks and do what he likes; where every one can follow his own bent and propagate his own opinions; where religious persecution being little known, the play and flow of the human mind may be clearly seen, unchecked by those restraints to which it is elsewhere subjected; where the profession of heresy is least dangerous and the practice of dissent most common; where hostile creeds flourish side by side and rise and decay without disturbance, according to the wants of the people, unaffected by the wishes of the church and uncontrolled by the authority of the State; where all interested, both spiritual and temporal, are most left to take care of themselves, * * * and where, in a word, those dangerous extremes, to which interference gives rise, having been avoided, despotism and rebellion are equally rare, the national progress has been least disturbed by the power of the privileged classes, by the influence of peculiar sects, or by the violence of arbitrary rulers.”

The same writer forcibly illustrates the reliance of the aristocracy on the people, and adds that it naturally followed that the people imbibed that tone of independence and that lofty bearing of which our civil and political institutions are the consequence, rather than the cause. It is to this, and not to any fanciful peculiarity of race, that we owe the steady and enterprising spirit, for which the inhabi-