

A NOTE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION 3

of doing evil that good may come, made straight for the Promised Land. What did it matter though school buildings and endowments had been left for teaching in the tenets of particular Churches? Adherents of these Churches will do well to remember which political party interfered with that projected spoliation. Again, take the liability of trade unions for the actions of their officers. I will not urge that the Liberal leaders tried to catch the trade union vote. That is true, but it is not all the truth, any more than it is all the truth that Tories tried to catch the votes of mine-owners. The soul of the quarrel was that the Liberals, eager to advance the position of the working classes, took no thought for the means they used. It is to Conservative common sense and fair-play we owe it that trade unions are not endowed with the privilege of irresponsibility, a privilege unknown to any social system, and foreign to the most elementary ideas of justice. Again, what was the attitude of the Opposition towards the Licensing question? Consumed with their laudable zeal to promote temperance—as what thinking man would not if he could?—they thought it no shame to evict from their livelihood without a farthing's compensation a multitude of men, who at the least are not shown not to be honest and well-conducted. From this monstrosity we were saved in part, perhaps, by Parliamentary expediciencies, but more largely and truly by the hatred of injustice and oppression.

Lastly there is a peculiarly topical case, that of the unemployed. They, or rather their friends of the moment, claim not charity—which is offered them on all hands—but work. Now work not ventured by private enterprise is not likely to be remunerative; and unremunerative work is a pure charity. Men are not divided sharply into two classes of rich and poor, and such a State-charity would not have the savour of true charity, which is voluntary giving and the quality of mercy; but would be wrung from the pockets of those amongst others who, with energy and character, can only just keep themselves independent. For this struggling and over-burdened class Liberalism has no pity. The vision of a happy and prosperous