

appear absolutely flawless, not only to others, but to himself; for great orators are always more or less the victims of their own power of persuasion. That his Land Act is working a perfect cure is apparently his belief, and he no doubt ascribes to it the lull in the storm of outrage which observers on the spot ascribe with one voice to the firm administration of coercive law. His Homeric studies are not more remarkable as a pleasant proof of the comprehensiveness of a statesman's tastes than from the evidences which they afford of his power, on a subject with which he is not specially familiar, of maintaining the merest fancies in the face of the most decisive facts. He is now going to do what terrible experience shows to be of all things the most dangerous; he is going to bring on a political revolution in the midst of social and agrarian agitation. This it was that led to the great catastrophe in France. Turgot probably would not have done it. Necker did it, but though a skilled financier, able, benevolent and upright, he has not left behind him the name of a great statesman. Yet Necker, a life-long Liberal, if he failed to control the torrent which he had set flowing, must, at all events, have known his own mind; he would scarcely, when he was upon the eve of pulling down the aristocracy, have given so singular a proof of his unabated reverence for title as Mr. Gladstone has given in making Tennyson a peer.

THAT Socialism and Agrarianism under various forms are rife in England, and enhance by their presence the danger of political change, every turn of the conflict shows. Like an inflammable gas they pervade the air and are always ready upon the slightest occasion to burst into flame. An explosion of them has immediately followed the revelation of the frightful state of things which prevails in some of the low quarters of London. As a revelation it seems to be regarded, though surely no fact could have been more familiar, or had been more often brought by economists, philanthropists, moralists and novelists, before the public mind, than the existence of these hideous expanses of want, ignorance, misery, brutality and filth, in close juxtaposition and soul-sickening contrast with the abodes of opulence, luxury and refinement. In all great commercial cities we find this terrible shadow waiting on prosperity. London has now more than four millions of inhabitants, and like other great English cities, especially Liverpool, it has been receiving for many years past, in addition to its own quota of pauperism, a constant influx of Irish of the same class with those who are now peopling Conway Street, in Toronto, and who peopled the Five Points at New York. To provide these immigrants at once with decent houses, and to change their sanitary habits, would be beyond the power, if it were within the responsibility, of any city government. But much has been done in several of the great cities of England, in Liverpool among the rest; and more might be done in London if the Radicals and their Irish allies would allow the City Government Bill to be introduced, instead of blocking it in the interest of political revolution. Lord Shaftesbury and others who have spent their lives in the practical work of social reform, treat the subject like genuine philanthropists, with calmness as well as with feeling, and point out that shrieking is of no use, and that remedial agencies are in operation which a spasmodic recourse to heroic remedies would only paralyze. But the politicians on both sides embrace the opportunity of making capital. Lord Salisbury plays once more the game of Tory Democracy, and tries to divert the minds of the people from political revolution by magnificent promises of economical reform. That economical reform is much more urgently needed by the suffering masses than political revolution is what many people, not wanting in political liberalism, are fully prepared to believe; but Lord Salisbury holds out expectations which he will never be able to fulfil, and he is in considerable danger, by his exciting language, of adding a Faubourg St. Antoine to the other elements of combustion. Mr. Chamberlain, on the other side, improves the occasion by framing tempestuous indictments against the landlords, and inciting the people beforehand to use the votes which he is about to put into their hands for the purpose of a confiscating onslaught upon that hateful class. If the extended franchise is to be immediately used as an engine of social war, stormy times certainly await the country. Landlordism in England has during the past centuries had much to answer for; but it is fair, though it may not suit the purpose of a trumpeter of agrarianism, to say that, besides the improvements in cities recorded in Mr. Chamberlain's own paper, there has been within the last forty years a great and general improvement in the dwellings of the labourers in most parts of the country. As in the case of the French monarchy and aristocracy, so in most revolutions, it is not upon the generations that are the chief sinners, but on the generation which begins to reform that the Deluge comes.

A BYSTANDER.

It is rumoured that Tennyson received \$1,000 for his poem in a late number of *The Youth's Companion*.

## THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION—A RETROSPECT.

THE important question of University education is again fairly before the public. It has, however, assumed a new phase, and practically takes the form of a new proposition:—"Shall university expansion take place in one direction only and through one agency, or shall that expansion be general and through the various recognized agencies now existing in the Province."

The numerous letters which have appeared in the daily press seem rather to have mystified the matter. They have obscured the vision of the public as to the simple issue which has really been presented in the revived agitation. The endless personalities which have been indulged in have tended still further to complicate the question which the Legislature may have to deal with.

The discussion seems to have originated in a request from the authorities of University College for aid from the Legislature for that institution. This request has been endorsed by graduates of the University of Toronto in various parts of the Province. It has, however, been objected to by the representatives and graduates of the outlying colleges, chiefly on three grounds, viz.: 1. That it is unjust and inexpedient to tax the supporters of these colleges for the maintenance of a sister institution which only became a child of the State eight or nine years after these colleges had practically become provincial institutions. 2. That if aid be granted by the Legislature for the first time to University College, the outlying colleges have a prior claim, as former recipients of such aid. 3. That if the principle of subsidizing University College be concurred in by the Legislature, and thus the old policy be revived, there is no justice or reason in excluding the older colleges from participation in this State aid.

The past history of this great University question has thrown a baleful shadow over the present discussion. It seems impossible for the letter writers on the subject to get from under this shadow, or to rid themselves of the ill-feeling which past discussions has engendered. Hence so many depreciatory references to the institutions and representative men engaged in the discussion. This probably need not be wondered at on reviewing the various stages through which this question has passed. The very institution itself which is chiefly concerned was founded by royal charter, obtained by Archdeacon Strachan in 1827. This charter was based upon a principle of great injustice to the entire body of Nonconformists in Upper Canada, and of wrong to the vast bulk of her population. Nor was this injustice removed nor the wrong righted for many years afterwards, and until many bitter words had been spoken and wounds inflicted which bore sad fruit afterwards.

The first practical, yet entirely abortive, attempt to make King's College a provincial university, was made in 1843—two years after the Methodists and Presbyterians had in self-defence been compelled to found universities of their own. This they did at a great sacrifice. And it should be borne in mind in this connection, that they did so with the sanction of the Imperial and Provincial authorities of the day, and with the aid of Government subsidies. These Government subsidies were continued in renewed form (as I shall hereafter show) for fifteen years, until they were discontinued by Hon. J. Sandfield Macdonald. Their institutions were in this way effectually incorporated with the general educational system. In point of fact they were more truly "national" (as the phrase is)—for they imposed no tests on students—than was the institution which now assumes that character.

By the time that the liberation of this institution from its sectarian trammels took place in 1849-'53, the really provincial universities at Cobourg and Kingston had become recognized as most important factors in our educational system; and from them alone, up to that time, could students of all denominations obtain a university education. They have not changed their policy in this respect, but they have been made to suffer by the liberation of King's College from its exclusive control and obnoxious tests.

The University Acts of 1849-1853 were a great step in advance; but they were specious and delusive in those very provisions (in regard to the outlying colleges) in which they should have been specific, comprehensive, and generous. The time had not yet arrived when full justice would be done to Nonconformists. And although Hon. Robert Baldwin, then head of the Government, was well disposed, public sentiment was not fully ripe on this subject, and the late Bishop Strachan was then Mr. Baldwin's uncompromising antagonist, and permitted no toleration in this respect.\* The

\* Indeed, so strong was the feeling against so-called "dissenters" in those early days, that Dr. Ryerson was himself purposely passed over, when a Superintendent of Education was appointed, in 1842, because he was a Methodist. See "Story of My Life," pp. 345-348.