

GLADSTONE FOR IRELAND.

The lull in British politics is but the calm before a great storm. Gladstone has asked for time in which to formulate his land reform and governmental policy respecting Ireland, and Parnell has consented to support the present ministry until its action respecting Ireland is made known. By the 1st of April next, Gladstone proposes to introduce a measure, having in view the expropriation of Irish land, and the abolition of Castle rule. It is impossible to state at this date the precise character of the measures which the grand old man intends to carry out, but it is safe to predict that landlordism in Ireland is doomed, and that the present system of governing that country through and by a British Viceroy, is to be abolished. Agrarian outrages still continue to be perpetrated, but it is evident, from the conflicting accounts respecting these unfortunate occurrences which appear in the party press, that the criminal character of these outrages is exaggerated beyond all bounds. As pointed out by Michael Davitt in his patriotic and outspoken address to the people of Castle Island, County Kerry, the only hope that the landlords now have of retaining their hold upon the Irish soil, is to foster by cruel evictions open opposition to the laws of the land. By cowardly and unscrupulous appeals, they hope to so work upon the passions of the people as to kindle strife. Says Michael Davitt:—"I want you, men of Kerry, to defeat this infamous purpose. I want you to look beyond the confines of your own county, and consider the consequences which your acts will entail upon the cause of your fatherland, and I demand of you the cessation of all proceedings which afford to our enemies the only arguments with which they can hope to combat our just demands for the abolition of landlordism and Castle rule."

Gladstone has undertaken a stupendous task, one that will test to the utmost his marvelous executive ability, but that the undertaking is beyond being accomplished, we cannot for a moment believe. The Irish people have for centuries been groaning under the curse of absentee landlordism, a curse which in itself is sufficient to account for the poverty and degradation which are observable in many localities; but, as if the burden were not sufficiently heavy, the Irish people have, in addition, been subjected to a system of government analogous to that of the people of Tunis.

Ireland has its Viceroy, and scores of officials appointed by him, so Tunis has its Bey or Governor, who fills the minor official positions with the creatures of his will; but beyond the Bey is the French Cabinet which virtually governs and controls his subjects, just as the British Ministry, through the Viceroy, control the people of Ireland. Gladstone's task is to secure the soil of Ireland to the Irish toilers, and establish local or home government, in which the Irish people shall be represented.

THE SERVANT-GIRL QUESTION.

The difficulty of obtaining efficient female help in the household, is the subject which is probably uppermost in the minds of most American housewives, and of not a few Nova Scotian ones. In the United States, hired domestic service is done chiefly by negroes, Irishwomen, Germans, or Nova Scotians, all foreign or of direct foreign extraction. The native American girl prefers the labor of the shop or the factory to that of the household. Not that such labor is easier or in many cases more remunerative; but there is an independence, real or fancied, about it which commends itself to the liberty-loving, as well as a possibility of advancement which attracts the ambitious. Factory and shop girls, too, find the service of experienced overseers who employ a large number of male and female operatives, and who treat them all alike and upon recognized principles, less irksome than that of the average housekeeper, who, fresh perhaps from some Ladies' College, is called upon to supervise operations of which she knows nothing. The advisability of establishing training-schools for servants has been discussed in many of the American papers, and experiments of the kind have been made, with some success, among the negro population of the South. But there is another kind of institution required to facilitate the harmonious working of the domestic machinery—and that is a training-school in which the accomplished young daughters of America may themselves learn to roast a joint of beef or boil a pudding, to treat servants with some degree of deference and to practice the principles of common domestic economy. When we hear an afflicted lady plaintively relating her experience of the six servants who have come and gone within a month, we are inclined to think of the sorrows of the servants.

The scarcity of domestic help is sometimes attributed to the spread of education among the "lower" class—"educating them beyond their sphere," as it is called. Those who hold this theory are in favor of keeping the said lower class in the darkness of ignorance, thus creating a dangerous, heliolic sub-stratum of society, which will keep the law-abiding citizens in daily terror of its lawlessness. "Alas, for the rarity, of Christian charity, under the Sun!" But, first, let the advocates of this generous measure prove that the shop or factory girls are more afflicted with education than their more easily satisfied sisters who remain "at service." They will then have adduced some evidence in support of their contention that education is to blame for the reluctance of girls to become domestic servants. But the real reason they overlook—the democratic tendency of the age, which on this continent especially, opens to all some prospect or possibility of social advancement, while it prevents their becoming the humble, cringing creatures to be met with among the domestics of former times and of European countries. This ambitious and independent spirit may sometimes run away with the judgment of the individual servant; but the march of democracy will go on, whether we have good servants or not.

OMINOUS FACTS.

Europe is again in a fever of excitement, and once more are heard the distant mutterings of a storm, which, sooner or later, must involve the great powers in a fierce struggle for supremacy. This time it is not the petty Balkan States which have created uneasiness; it is the simultaneous action of Germany and Austria towards the strengthening of their respective domains. The immense army of Austro-Hungary is to be supplemented by the establishment of Landstrum or universal militia, which will add to the military force of the Austrian Empire, 1,600,000 men, making a total of 2,180,000 men. This will enable Austria to place in the field 1,000,000 soldiers, and at the same time leave a sufficient force at home to protect the interests of the Empire. The recent proposal of Prince Bismarck, to expel the Poles and Germanize Eastern Prussia, has for its object the strengthening of the eastern portion of the German confederacy. For, so long as the Poles remain Poles, they would undoubtedly prove a source of uncertainty, if not weakness, in the event of a conflict between Germany and Russia. It is well known that the German Chancellor and Francis Joseph of Austria have formed a strong alliance, in order to prevent further Russian aggression in Europe, and the fact that the proposed strengthening of the eastern frontier of Germany has been quickly followed by an unprecedented increase to the military force of Austria, is considered ominous. Russia evidently has become alarmed at the situation, and is making preparations to checkmate any move that may be made to thwart her ultimate advance to the shores of the Bosphorus. In the Russian arsenals and dockyards, the activity evinced indicates that the rumoured intention of the Czar to take the field in the spring is not without foundation. With Austria seeking an eastern outlet upon the Aegean Sea, and Russia determined upon the occupation of Constantinople, with Greece clamouring for an extension of territory, and Bulgaria and Servia eager to follow suit, the possessions of "The Sick Man" in Europe stand a chance of being partitioned without his leave or license; but perhaps the desires of the greater powers with the lesser ones are the best guarantee for the continuance of the Ottoman rule in the Balkan peninsula. Germany may strengthen her eastern frontier, and Austria add a million men to her military force, without there being a war; but as we have said, the simultaneous action of these two great powers is, to say the least, ominous.

TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

During the thirty-five years that the Island of Cape Breton and its affairs were managed by a Governor and Council, its prosperity was all that could at that time be reasonably expected. Its progress during that period probably surpassed that of any contemporary British colony in America. So great a change for the worse was wrought in its condition by the legislative union with Nova Scotia Proper that the Islanders began an agitation for separation. For twenty-four years they remonstrated with the Nova Scotian legislature, with the view of obtaining a return of the halcyon days that had vanished with the Island's provincial status and autonomy. They had for years but two representatives in our legislature, and their pleading did not, it seems, at first make a deep impression. But their efforts did not pass entirely unnoticed. In 1844, a special session of the Assembly of the Province was called to decide whether it would be advisable to request the Imperial Government to restore the former Government of Cape Breton. A resolution was passed affirming that the union of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia Proper had been a great benefit to the former. Shortly before, owing to fears of an outbreak in the Island, its representation was increased to six, and it is a significant fact that all of these voted against the resolution affirming the satisfaction of the Island with the union. The dearest wishes of the people of the Island were, however, silenced by the forty odd members of Nova Scotia Proper, some of whom no doubt honestly believed that in a short time therefrom ample justice would be done the Island, and that, with a justly administered union, Cape Breton would be better off than if separate.

Now, again, the people of Cape Breton talk of separation. This time they are over 100,000 stalwart determined people. If justice to Cape Breton be not granted by the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, there are these 100,000 to appeal to the Throne for justice. The voices of so many British colonists will not be disregarded.

In all the principal cities in England associations have been formed to aid unemployed workmen during the present season of depression. The honest mechanics and laborers have expressed their unwillingness to accept charity, affirming their desire to maintain themselves by work if work could be provided. This manly attribute of the unemployed speaks volumes for the British workmen.

In 1851, the railway era of this Province began. From that year to 1867 seven million dollars were expended in railway construction within our borders. Since 1867, the amount spent must be over fourteen million dollars. These amounts were all spent in Nova Scotia Proper. The Island of Cape Breton was repeatedly consoled with the assurance that, as soon as the lines of which there was most need in Nova Scotia Proper would have been built, Cape Breton would receive from Government the attention and the money grants to which her resources and her contributions to the cost of railway building in Nova Scotia Proper amply entitle her. In view of the hope referred to, which was time and again held out to Cape Breton, the representatives of that Island often supported money-grants for railways in Nova Scotia Proper when they might have prevented the voting of the same. We submit that a handsome railway subsidy should now be given to Cape Breton in the name of Justice.