

ment of the Disestablishment question has not come. In England the subject has as yet hardly entered the domain of practical politics. The traditional belief that State support is essential to the maintenance of religion is still held by great numbers. Trusting to this, Conservative leaders calculate on substantial support by avowing their purpose of defending the Established Church. Opposition to State Churchism is not confined to the Liberationists; within the pale of the Church of England itself there is an increasing desire for its separation from the State. Some think that what they regard as necessary reforms in that venerable institution can only be secured by Disestablishment. Certain leaders of the High Church Party entertain the opinion that they cannot properly carry out their ideas unless they are free from the trammels of State control. In Scotland, however, matters are different. During the present election campaign the Disestablishment question is actually a burning one; it has set the heather ablaze. Mr. Gladstone's politic proposal to relegate it to the future is not very cordially received. The Church of Scotland has a large following; it has been growing of late years in breadth, tolerance and liberality, and in the esteem of the people. The other Presbyterian Churches are leavened with voluntarism, and are loudly demanding Disestablishment. The desire for separation of Church and State in Scotland is strengthened by the belief that if it were accomplished one of the chief barriers to the union of the separate Presbyterian Churches would be removed. Mr. Gladstone's opinions have great weight with the Scottish people, but his utterances on Disestablishment have not met with the approval that might have been expected. Leading Edinburgh and Glasgow journals have adversely commented on the Midlothian utterances relating to the subject. Agitation on this question has introduced an element of uncertainty into the forecast of the election in Scotland, though there is no doubt that the Liberal representatives north of the Tweed will be in a large majority.

WITH the people in the South and West of Ireland a capable and resolute leader can achieve much, but not everything he may have set his heart upon. Mr. Parnell by slow and cautious steps has almost attained the position and power of a dictator. The means he has too often employed have been of the most discreditable kind; he has not hesitated to take advantage of race prejudices and unreasoning bigotry; the mission of the moonlighter and the savagery of the assassin have been employed in his cause without even evoking from Mr. Parnell any but the mildest form of protest, and that only when impelled to speak by the overwhelming force of public opinion. The chaffering of rival English political leaders has given the Irish demagogue an importance that does not of right belong either to himself or his cause. His demands have risen with the opportunities which recklessly contending factions rendered possible. He emerged into prominence by making charitable appeals for aid in alleviating the distress prevailing a few years ago among his countrymen. By this means the stream of contributions to the propagandism of disaffection began to flow, which is as yet undiminished in volume. These easily procured resources derived from the hard earnings of expatriated Irish men and maids have proved a bonanza to professional agitators. Mr. Parnell's gains from testimonial and other sources are much greater than if he had devoted his energies to some honourable calling. His alliance with the opponents of the Gladstone Administration and the unexpected success of their joint vote appear to have impressed the leader of the Nationalist Party with the belief that he had become an invincible autocrat. It occasionally happens that he who clamours loudest for liberty and the relentless despot are one and the same person. Mr. Parnell flattered himself that he could control the Irish representation and the action of the next Parliament. His word was to be law to his following. The people were only to be allowed such candidates as he should name; but recent despatches show that there are instances in which his followers deliberately reject his dictation. The resolve of those who oppose Dismemberment to contest a number of Parnellite constituencies will also do much to break the spell with which Mr. Parnell has fascinated so many. It is not among the improbabilities that as a politician he may hereafter be placed in a niche in the temple of demagogic fame no more conspicuous than such as are occupied by Smith O'Brien and ex-Head Centre Stephens.

NOBODY objects to the whims and foibles of great men. We smile complacently at the stories of Newton and his dog Diamond, Byron and his bear, Shelley and his toy-boats, Cowper and his hares; indeed, it seems the privilege of greatness to possess a hobby-horse. Mr. Gladstone has a hobby-horse; and a most extraordinary one it is. And it is Mr. Gladstone's delight to gambol and caper upon it on the most extraordinary occasions. In the spring of 1880, when the whole of England was absorbed in the excitement of

the sudden and unexpected defeat of the Conservative Government, Mr. Gladstone was tilting in the theological lists on the subject of "Religion, Achaian and Semitic." And at the present moment, when many sober-minded statesmen believe that the British Empire is on the brink of disintegration, once more he saddles his pet steed, and in a twenty-two paged article in the *Nineteenth Century* resumes the joust under the name of "Dawn of Creation and Worship." While Irish Independence, Church Disestablishment, Socialistic Radicalism, and Demagogic Conservatism are racking the brains of political leaders, confusing the minds of voters, and plunging the country into a crisis which finds few parallels or none in its political history, the prospective Liberal Premier quietly peruses and criticises a book by the name of "Prolégomènes de l'Histoire des Religions." He writes some thirteen or fourteen thousand words; makes fifty-five accredited and numerous non-accredited quotations from a range of authors which includes poets and astronomers, philologists and Fathers; uses all the arts of theological and logical hair-splitting; elaborates, with all the details of numbered and lettered paragraphs;—all to show, "first, that many important pictures drawn and indications given in the Homeric poems supply evidence that cannot be confuted not only of an ideal but of an historical relationship to the Hebrew traditions, (1) and mainly, as they are recorded in the Book of Genesis; (2) as less authentically to be gathered from the later Hebrew learning; and (3) as illustrated from extraneous sources;" and that, "secondly, any attempt to expound the Olympian mythology of Homer by simple reference to a solar theory, or even to Nature worship in a large sense, is simply a plea for a verdict against the evidence." Chamberlain and Churchill hotly contend with social problems; Mr. Gladstone descants on the Mosaic cosmogony. Parnell inflames Ireland and dictates to England; Mr. Gladstone discusses different readings of the Septuagint. Prelates and laymen wax wroth over the severance of Church and State; Mr. Gladstone shows that "instead of Ixion's loving the wife of Zeus, it was Zeus who loved the wife of Ixion." England may perish; the "Grand Old Man" must prove that "Homer's entire theurgic system is resolutely exclusive of Nature worship." Nero's fiddling over burning Rome was almost a more pardonable proceeding. And what is, at bottom, Mr. Gladstone's aim? It is so interwoven with side-issues, so concealed amidst a mass of arguments on minor points, and of rebutting evidence against minor objections, that it is not easy to lay one's finger upon the particular end of the tangled skein which the eminent English statesman is seeking. However, laying aside all ramifications, the gist of the article is to show that, whether or not there was given to man a Divine revelation, the Olympian mythology, as exhibited in Homer, and "certain traditions of the Book of Genesis" have a common origin. Were the writer adducing examples of resemblances between Moses and Homer for the purpose of substantiating proofs of a Divine revelation, some little excuse might perhaps be found for unearthing, even at so critical a stage of party politics, a problem rivalling in intricacy and triviality many of the more frivolous of those of the schoolmen. But this is by no means the Liberal leader's desire. With his customary subtlety of reasoning, he "holds the last of these convictions ["an unshaken belief in a Divine revelation"] entirely apart from the others." But even so, Mr. Gladstone's discovery of resemblance is a mare's nest. No unprejudiced philologist or ethnologist but knows that the Olympian mythology is a derivation from Sanscrit sources, transmuted by Hellenic thought and spirit. If Mr. Gladstone would peruse without preconception (of which many will be amused to hear he declares he has "not a grain") a few German authorities on the subject of the origin of religions his mare's nest would disappear. But he has always been discovering these. His first published work, so admirably criticised by Macaulay, was a prototype of its successors. Still, as we have said, nobody would object to these fads if they were kept in the background, and did not occupy the attention of their owner when all his intellectual abilities are required for the solution of practical questions infinitely more important to the nation—a nation at whose hands he is at the same moment seeking the highest post of trust, and this on the ground of his solutions of these same practical questions.

THE attempts of the newspaper correspondents to find a bride for President Cleveland are fully as unsuccessful as were those made in President Arthur's interest. A friend of Arthur's kept watch of the newspapers and clipped out everything that was published about his matrimonial intentions. Just before his term expired these clippings were all pasted in a handsomely bound scrap-book and presented to him. On the cover was stamped a figure of Cupid, with a quiverful of arrows, and the words, "Many were called, but none was chosen." Mr. Arthur regards this memento with a great deal of interest.