

Politicians, even such politicians as Mr. Gladstone, are apt to look too much to the political, too little to the economical side of things. If Mr. Hall and those who hold the same opinion as to the nature and capabilities of Irish land are right, all legislation which tends, as the recent legislation does, to multiply small freeholds, and to fix the population to the soil, is certain to make matters worse. If all the land were equally divided among the people to-morrow, and they were left to themselves, in a few years the result would be a famine. Mr. Hall seems also to have confirmed the view constantly put forth in these papers, that the Southern or Celtic, or Catholic Irishman—let people choose which term they will—is not a farmer. In Ireland he clings to the land because it is his only means of subsistence, but when he comes to this continent his land-hunger deserts him, and he either cleaves to the cities or takes employment with a body of his fellow-clansmen on a railroad or in a mine. Some Southern Irishmen are now taking up the abandoned farms of New England, but, as a rule, when you hear of an Irish farmer he is likely to be a Protestant and a man of Scottish blood from the North of Ireland. A Southern Irishman has rarely tilled twenty acres or had anything to do with machinery. By industrial training under a happier star, if priests and demagogues will let him alone, he will become a farmer and everything else that his friends can desire; but there is no use in saying that he is at present that which he is not, or in dealing with him on any hypothesis which is not supported by the facts.

THE *Saturday Review*, which is now a fair representative of old fashioned Toryism, says that "Tories who are alarmed at, and Radicals who rejoice over, the Tory democratic speeches of Lord Randolph Churchill commit a double mistake; in the first place they take Lord Randolph for a serious political thinker, and in the second place they forget the immense difference between the conduct appropriate to a partisan pure and simple, as Lord Randolph now is, in opposition and in power. Tory democracy is perhaps a useful battle cry in Opposition; on that point it is not necessary to pronounce any opinion. But, independently of the fact that no one has yet succeeded in discovering what it means, there is another very simple fact which makes it pretty certain that so clever a man as Lord Randolph Churchill will have the good sense not to adopt Tory Democracy when he reaches Downing Street. The word may in itself have all the blessedness of Mesopotamia. But, it is quite certain that at least a large section of the Tory party will have nothing to do with the Democracy, and that nearly the whole Liberal party will have nothing to do with the Toryism." Cynical as the suggestion as to Lord Randolph's probable course is, it is fully borne out by his own published avowal that in politics the aim should be victory, no matter by what means it may be obtained, and that moralists should be left to prate as they choose. Lord Randolph and his train have shown themselves just as willing to enter into league with Disunion as with Radicalism. The net result is that the House of Commons, torn by unscrupulous factions, is fast becoming again the chaos which its despairing leader said it was before the recent changes. It has almost ceased to be an organ of national deliberation. Female suffrage, peasant proprietorship, abolition of vaccination or anything else, may be carried by a coalition of Tories and Parnellites with ultra-Radicals, simply to embarrass the Government. The absence of a really able and honourable Conservative leader at this moment is one of the greatest disasters in the Parliamentary history of England. The place which such a man should fill is filled either by miserable incompetence or by faction and greed of office, which are ready not only to league with revolution but to grasp the hand of treason.

It was to be expected that the dynamite explosions in England would cause a protest to be addressed to the Government of the United States. Americans can hardly doubt that they would remonstrate, and loudly, in a like case. Any representation coming from Lord Granville is sure to be made with perfect courtesy, and with an intelligent sense of what are euphemistically called the difficulties of the American Government on the eve of a Presidential election. It is not likely that much good will be done. The Federal Government, even if it were itself free from the fear of the Irish vote, is unable to control the legislation of the States, and if anything came into Court there would be sure to be on the jury either an Irishman or some one under Irish influence. Yet silence on the part of the British Government would have been a betrayal of the interests of civilization, and at the same time an implied insult to American honour. Apart from international obligations, the people of the United States, and of the continent generally, can no longer afford to leave the question of morality undecided. It is impossible to doubt what the effect will be of allowing murder, and murder of the vilest kind, to be openly organized and promoted by public subscription. Already impunity for murderers

has been carried so far as to lead to an outbreak at Cincinnati, while in some States, such as Kentucky, no practical security for human life exists. If it were forgery or the counterfeiting of bank bills which was being openly advocated, and for which subscriptions were being taken up, all the world would see the necessity of suppression, as all the world sees the necessity of preventing the dissemination of licentiousness through the mails. It is only the pretence of a political motive that misleads opinion in the case of dynamite. The motive of most of these miscreants is as mercenary as that of any forger or counterfeiter; their objects being, by making a sensation, to cause the subscriptions to flow in. But the crime once licensed and rendered familiar, the sanctity of human life once openly set at naught, limitations on the ground of motive will become precarious, and a reign of assassination may ensue.

THE poor Salvation Army is falling into the clutches of the law. It clearly cannot be allowed to block the streets with its processions, or to frighten horses with its drums and flags. Much, also, of what its enemies say against it on more essential grounds is true; and the probability is that in this, as in other cases, the transport of enthusiasm will pass away and that of the momentary conversions and reforms few traces will be left, while moral exhaustion and languor are too likely to ensue. Such has been the general result of these movements, of which many a one with its shouting preachers and its train of demonstrative devotees passes across the page of history. But, those who believe in religion at all, will, perhaps, temper their censure and will certainly restrain their mockery. It is highly probable that phenomena such as would be very uncongenial to the educated and refined Christianity of the present day attended the first preaching of the Gospel to the poor; and that an assembly of early Christians gathered in some upper chamber to hear the words of Paul, if our eyes could look back upon it across the gulf of ages, would seem to us hardly less strange or grotesque than the march of the Salvation Army through the streets. Two distinctive features of Christianity, at all events, the Salvation Army retains. Unlike Socialism and Nihilism, it sets to work to improve the world by self-reform, not by revolution, and unlike Socialism and Nihilism, it preaches not hatred but good will to men. The highly cultivated apostle of Communistic anarchy, M. Elisée Reclus, proposes to open his new era with a moderate number of murders.

A BYSTANDER.

HERE AND THERE.

"WITHOUT incurring the imputation of prejudice and partiality," says the ably conducted *Canada Presbyterian*, in an editorial on the just-concluded General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, "it may with modesty be claimed that Presbyterianism in Canada is advancing not only in numbers and resources, but in spiritual power and influence. Each successive Assembly marks a gain in prosperity, and in greater working efficiency. In almost all that pertains to the more important departments of Christian activity and usefulness, the reports submitted to the present General Assembly show abundant cause for gratitude. The blessings experienced afford additional incentives to renewed consecration and still greater devotedness." Commenting upon the changes which, in common with most other institutions, the "Ecclesiastical Parliament" has undergone since its first session in 1870, our contemporary points out with satisfaction that "old dividing lines are no more, and the union is in all respects a happy reality. Another perceptible change is noted in the manner of transacting business. Long and elaborate speeches are no longer heard. Debates are less eloquent, but far more practical and to the point. There is, however, no change in the sturdy independence of personal conviction and manly adhesion to the true principle of Presbyterian parity. As the years go by there is less and less disposition to tolerate the formation of clerical or other cliques in the management of affairs. The spirit of independence and fairness is too strong for that." In face of the voluminous reports given in the Toronto dailies, and the exhaustive summaries in the columns of the *Presbyterian*, it is obviously unnecessary to make any reference here to the details of work done. To quote once more from our contemporary, "The meetings of the present Assembly have been seasons of enjoyment and profit. The evenings devoted to Home and Foreign Missionary affairs have been widely commented on in the most favourable terms. The arrangements were obviously the result of wise forethought, and were admirably carried out. The delegates who met in St. James' Square Church will retain pleasant memories of the General Assembly of 1884, and the people of Toronto will feel that in entertaining them they have been amply compensated by pleasant and profitable intercourse, new friendships formed and old ones cemented."