

MR. BALFOUR'S ECONOMIC NOTES¹

THE simple fact of the publicity given by Mr. Balfour to his *Economic Notes on Insular Free Trade* destroys one of the arguments there set forth. To justify the suppression of Free Trade he cites the fact that the example of England has failed to convert the greater part of the other nations of the world. But have these other nations been converted to the English Government's method of wide publicity? Have they adopted the freedom of English procedure? Have even those among them which have tried to imitate the English parliamentary system carried it out under all its essential conditions? Do not the majority of governments still maintain the principle that the electorate ought not to know everything, and that no government ought to be without some methods of secrecy?

Is England then, because other nations have not all risen to the same height in the sphere of politics, to abandon her system of publicity? Mr. Balfour, at any rate, is so far from thinking so that he has taken a fresh step in the old direction; he has communicated to the public the explanations which he found it desirable to offer to his colleagues. He thus shows clearly that he considers the system of government in England

¹ The French original of M. Guyot's paper, of which a translation is here given, will be found on p. 9, and a postscript on p. 16.