

Irish enemies for the sake of victory in a faction fight, Irish orators will have some reason for saying that the sun of England has set.

ONE Radical member of the Government, Mr. Leonard Courtney, has resigned because the Redistribution Bill rejects the principle of minority representation. It is difficult to understand his persistency in immolating himself on such an altar. Minority representation, though plausible as a theory, is practically a failure. The question interests us because the scheme has been propounded by high authority as a remedy for electoral evils here. In the "unicorn" counties of England what is the result? The partition of the representation is made. The majority takes two of the three seats and allows the minority to take the third. The county then sinks politically into a long sleep. No matter what changes of opinions may take place or what reason there may be for thinking that the electoral balance has been altered, both sides shrink from a fair trial of strength. The member for the minority, holding a secure and inexpensive seat so long as the compromise is respected, of course opposes a contest to the utmost of his power. Thus torpor succeeds to political life. There have even been cases in which the member for the minority has parted company in opinion from his special constituents, and the constituents have been extremely discontented; yet the compromise has continued to prevail. Of course if a vacancy takes place in a minority seat at any time except at a general election, the seat is grasped by the majority, and minority representation falls to the ground. For the same reason its holder never can take office, however fit for it he may be, or resign, though he may have become hopelessly infirm. The plan moreover assumes that there are everywhere two political parties and no more: an assumption which is fast becoming unfounded. Cobden's plan, which the framers of the Redistribution Bill have partly adopted, of equal constituencies with one member for each really gives every opinion and interest the best chance. Divide any great city, however Radical, into equal districts, and in one district Conservatism is sure to prevail. At Birmingham for example, that district which contains the wealthy quarter of Edgbaston would, in all probability, elect a Tory, whereas at present the Liberal majority manages by a skilful distribution of its votes to keep all three seats in its hands. Intricate devices in politics seldom work; they are very apt instead of answering their purpose to give an advantage to wirepullers who study their action with tricky objects. The will of the majority must prevail: this is the law of election institutions; and the safeguards against tyranny must be moral; if these fail paper barriers are of little use.

Is the negro capable of high civilization? This is a question of most vital interest to the people of the Southern States, and, in a measure, to the whole continent, through which a certain sympathy runs. Its importance may hereafter be enhanced, since the West Indies are within our orbit, and pretty sure to be in some way connected with us in the end, though we may not be very anxious to rush into their political embrace. The negro evidently is destined to increase and multiply; unless the calculations of Judge Tourgée are utterly at fault, he is destined to increase and multiply faster than the white. It seems to be a law of nature that the lower and the labouring races shall be more prolific than the higher and dominant races, in which the growth of population is checked by economical prudence, social pride, luxurious habits, and the indolence of the women. Philanthropy answers the question at once in the affirmative; but then Philanthropy founded Liberia, and though her hope for the negro may be reasonable, its fulfilment may not be at hand. She ought to speak with caution after reading Sir Spencer St. John's book on Haiti, and the article in *Macmillan* on Barbados. That the Black Republic was a disastrous failure, politically, economically, and socially, we are already aware. We knew that the Government was nothing but a series of murderous usurpations, the administration a mere mass of corruption, the paper money worthless, public education a farce, justice a mockery, the manners and morals bestial, the capital a pig-sty, and agriculture little more than a lazy consumption of the free bounty of nature. But we did not know on good authority, till Sir Spencer St. John told us, that African serpent worship and Fetichism under the name of the Vaudoux religion extensively prevailed, that human sacrifice was practised, that cannibalism itself had reappeared. A relapse into cannibalism is the most decisive as well as the most hideous proof of ingrained savagery in the people of a country where it is palliated neither by the scarcity of animal food nor by the maddening vindictiveness of war. In the whole political history of the island, full as it is of revolutions, the only man of real mark appears to have been Toussaint, who did undoubtedly show intellectual qualities of a high, and moral qualities of a still higher, order. It was truly said by an ancient philosopher that the best individual of a species should be taken as the

measure of its capacity; but unfortunately it is doubtful whether Toussaint was of pure negro blood. The account of things in Barbados is also discouraging. The population, for the size of the island, is very large; the negro has thus been compelled to work for his living; and this has enabled Barbados to continue prosperous while Jamaica has succumbed to the consequences of abolition. Yet the picture of the Barbados negro given by the writer in *Macmillan* is that of a moral barbarian. He is described as lazy, treacherous, vindictive, cowardly, lying, thieving, sensual, and brutal to his wife, or concubine, and his children. The condition of his existence in anything bearing a semblance of civilization at present appears to be his subordination to a superior race. Perhaps the most hopeful thing about him is his taste for music, which if cultivated seems likely to be an instrument of more practical efficacy in softening and refining his character than an education which appeals more directly to his intellectual and moral nature. The outlook is not promising, though, as Judge Tourgée says, the problem will have to be faced.

THE treatise of Dr. Fowler, Professor of Logic at Oxford, on *Progressive Morality*, will probably be claimed by the Evolutionists as a tribute paid by a clear thinker and vigorous writer to their general view of Ethics. Butler in his sermons on Human Nature enthrones above all the faculties, passions and affections, Conscience, as an authority divine and absolute, determining intuitively and infallibly what is right and what is wrong. Dr. Fowler maintains that Conscience, in the only tenable sense of the term, is merely the aggregate of our moral opinions reinforced by the moral sanction of self-approbation, or self-disapprobation, while moral opinion is always advancing. "Conscience is fallible and needs enlightenment. There is no act of religious persecution, and few acts of political or personal cruelty, for which it might not be invoked. Queen Mary acted as conscientiously in burning the Reformers as we do in condemning her for having burnt them. Bishop Butler's 'plain, honest man' would always follow his conscience, but his conscience would not always guide him aright." In the moral estimation of action there are two elements: an intellectual judgment and an emotion. It is to the emotional part of the process only that the absolute, authoritative, and apparently instinctive character attaches. Our perceptions of right and wrong, which constitute the intellectual part of the process, are always varying and improving. Slavery and many other practices now condemned were deemed moral by primitive men. Thus the progress of Ethics could be like that of any other science, and there would be no ground for a vital distinction, such as is drawn by Bishop Temple, between the Moral and the Scientific Law. But does this conclusion square with the facts of Ethical history? Dr. Fowler speaks of Christianity as co-operating with culture in transforming the sympathies and manners of society; and in another passage he pays homage to "the ideals of mercy, purity, humility, long-suffering and self-denial, which are portrayed in the Christian teaching, and have ever since the early days of Christianity exercised so vast and powerful an influence on a large section of mankind." Yet it would seem impossible to bring Christianity under the general law of scientific development. Upon any hypothesis, it was the teaching not of a representative of advanced intellect, but of an unlettered peasant in an obscure and little civilized province of the Roman Empire. The same thing may be said, in a degree, with respect to most of the Reformers whose teachings have given a marked and lasting impulse to morality. Nor can it well be affirmed that in the persons of these men morality has been identical with any but spiritual well-being, or that their lives, so far as this world is concerned, were special examples of harmony between the organism and its environment. The author of Christianity was so little in harmony with his wordly environment that the environment put him to a shameful and painful death. Socrates met the same fate; and the disciple by whom his philosophy was expounded, in a most remarkable passage, describes such treatment as the normal lot of the champion of righteousness. Dr. Fowler sets aside the question of the freedom of the will as a theoretical puzzle, which in whatever way resolved has never influenced and never will influence any sane man's conduct. He is at liberty to do this so long as he will admit that the doctrine of fatalistic evolution is incompatible with responsibility, and therefore with morality, as the language of his own treatise throughout implies. To accept the belief that we are under the domain of a dead iron rule is, as Bishop Temple says, to call life a delusion, and the moral law a dream.

A BYSTANDER.

THE length of Welsh names is proverbial, but even Taffy seems outdone by the title of a Mahrathi work lately published—i.e., "*Shriman-madhawwripanidhanawarnanatakapadyaratnamala*," which means, "Verses describing the death of Peshwa Mahaw Rao I."