

subject be history, cookery, or metaphysics. The tone, as might be expected, is Anti-British, and the political history of the French Canadians subsequently to the Conquest is represented as a struggle for the recovery of their liberties, as though they had possessed any liberties under the despotic government of the Bourbons, which more than once positively refused to them even the shadow of a representative assembly. M. Reveillaud deplors the error which, as he thinks, the French Canadians committed in not responding to the call of the American Revolutionists, and with them casting off the yoke of England. But here he is greatly mistaken, supposing his object to be the development of a French nationality on this Continent; for the population of New France, which then barely amounted to 70,000, would most certainly have been absorbed by the Anglo-American Republic. The nationality of New France has been preserved only by her isolation, and her isolation has depended on her continuance under the separate rule of England, which has thus produced an effect precisely the opposite of that which it was expected to produce when Canada was wrested from the Bourbons. To the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood, no doubt, is due the singular character which the Province retains as a survival of the France anterior to the Revolution; but exposed without shelter to the progressive activities of the Great Republic, the influence of the priesthood would unquestionably have succumbed. M. Reveillaud is aware and frankly proclaims that by this same agency the country has been kept industrially and commercially in a state of comparative torpor, so as to present an unfavourable contrast to the energy of the Protestant Anglo-Saxon. He thinks, however, that Liberalism is stirring. French Canadians who return to their parishes from the States bring, he says, the seeds of mental rebellion with them. He might add that the Jesuits, though their aim is as reactionary as possible, have acted as a disturbing force in breaking up the ice of the old ecclesiastical regime. The political horoscope of Quebec, M. Reveillaud declines precisely to cast. The one thing on which his heart is set, and which he insists that destiny shall in one way or other bring to pass, is the creation of a great French nationality on this Continent. Annexation to the United States he seems to contemplate as the most probable turn of events in the immediate future, but he thinks that this may be only a transient phase. The centrifugal force, he thinks, may prevail over the centripetal, and the vast federation may break up into fragments, one of which may be a great French nation. But here he appears to be the victim of a fallacy. Extension of territory beyond certain limits may be fatal to the unity of a centralized nation, though nobody seems to expect Russia to fall to pieces; but it has no tendency to break up a federation which remains true to the principle of local liberty, provided that the territory is still in a ring-fence and the population free from strong lines of cleavage, economical or social. Setting aside any danger of social disruption which Slavery may have left, the American Union, in spite of its enormous extension, is a good deal firmer now than it was on the morrow of the Revolution.

THE destiny which links the control of Egypt to the possession of India is apparently about to be fulfilled. The stars have been kinder to the Gladstone Government than, in the estimation of the British people at least, the Gladstone Government has been to itself. France having once more happily declined a partnership which would have been an organized discord, England is left to do the work alone; and alone she will have to do it. The call of fate comes unseasonably, when Ireland is in a state of moral insurrection, when Europe is jealous and unquiet, and when strenuous efforts are being made both by the Irish and by the Protectionists in the United States to bring about a quarrel with England; but to necessity seasons cannot be prescribed. The ship has weathered many gales and may weather this if her crew will only be united, and cease to pay to faction the allegiance which is due to the country. Vacillation, though it has wrought mischief not without disgrace, has at least proved to the world that England is not intent on aggrandizement but only on guarding her indispensable high-way to the East. Unhappily it has also proved, or at least strongly indicated, the unfitness of such a body as the House of Commons for the conduct of diplomacy and war. Military force will no doubt be now put forth sufficient to repress the devastating horde of El Madhi, who it must be remembered is not a patriot chief, or an aspirant to local sovereignty, but a petty Mahomet, claiming the religious lordship of the world, and asserting his claim with the destroyer's sword. Another task will be that of restoring order to a weltering chaos in Egypt herself, that land as unhappy in its gift of fertility as, according to the poet, Italy was in its gift of beauty. But the only way of restoring order is to accept the universal form of Oriental government, discarding its abuses, and to rule righteously with a strong hand. There is absolutely nothing

in the ideas, character or tradition of his Fellaheen on which free institutions can be founded. The Dufferin constitution collapsed at once.

It is surely strange that Canadian experience should still be pressed by men of sense upon England as a key to the solution of the Irish question. Is it the Dominion that is to be taken as the model, or the Province? The Dominion enjoys legislative independence, and to concede legislative independence to Ireland would be simply to repeal the Union in the worst conceivable manner, since everybody must see that a collision between the British and Irish Parliaments would infallibly ensue. To bring one about would be the first object of the Disunionists. It would be far better to cut Ireland adrift at once. The Province is a member of a Federation; but the United Kingdom is not a Federation, nor can it be made one, the condition of a Federal Union, which is the existence of a number of States pretty equally balanced, not being present. Is not the life of discord led by Sweden and Norway enough to prove that the federal principle is not capable of indiscriminate application to all cases? Great Britain is not in a hemisphere apart where she might take herself to pieces with impunity: she is surrounded and confronted by great centralized nations, of which the most powerful, France and Germany, are in a menacing attitude at this moment. For her the loss of unity would be a descent to utter weakness; and it is singular that acquiescence in her own dissolution should be commended to her by advisers who tell her, at the same time, that the relinquishment of a nominal sway over a distant colony would be a thought of unutterable shame. Who is to rule India and all the other dependencies when the legislative unity of the Imperial power shall have been dissolved? If the Irish members of the House of Commons would only act together on Irish questions as the Scotch do on Scotch questions, instead of trying to wreck the Legislature, they would have, as it is, under the roof of a united Parliament a virtual power of Home Legislation. In addition to this the head of Parliament was actually held out to them, with a measure of increased local self-government, when they burst into this rebellion. The leaders would not accept a measure of Home Rule. What they want, as they frankly and persistently avow, is the dismemberment of the United Kingdom, and that question, unhappily, will have first to be tried.

IN the British House of Commons the Session closes in barrenness. It is not the first that has ended in this way, nor is it likely to be the last. The new rules of procedure, on which Mr. Gladstone relied for the reorganization of the distracted House and the restoration of its working power, have only served to prove once more the inefficiency of legislative enactments without a change of character. The House remains the scene of unbridled faction, which, even under the powerful leadership of Mr. Gladstone, tramples on the claims of public business, and which, when Mr. Gladstone is gone, seems likely to convert Parliament into a venomous Babel. The new leader who, backed by the Tory rowdyism of the cities, has succeeded in imposing himself on the weakness of the Conservative party, openly avows faction as his guiding principle, and proclaims in language which would shock the lowest of American Demagogues that party victory is the thing to be sought, no matter by what means, and let moralists say what they may. "The Bystander" begins to find himself not alone in his opinion about party government. "The growing complaint of serious persons belonging to all political sections, based on the notorious block of urgently needed legislation, especially during the last two Sessions, is that the Lower House has become degraded into an arena in which the public good is openly sacrificed to chronic party aims and lust of office. As a rule measures are not debated or decided on their merits, and the art of embarrassing and defaming the Government, regardless of the supreme object which alone justifies the existence of the Legislature, is cultivated by the Opposition with a zeal as methodical as it is perverse. Conservatives, in combination with Home Rulers, have recently shown a rancour rarely, if ever, equalled in party attempts to prevent the Government programme from being carried out. At the same time it is by no means to be understood that Liberals, when out of office, have not too often been guilty also of resisting the progress of good bills merely because they did not happen to be brought forward by themselves." So writes Mr. Macfie, the author of an article on party government in the contemporary Review. Here lies the root of the evil; and it is not to be plucked up by new rules of procedure, much less by patriotic exhortations which, addressed to men excited to frenzy by the contest for place and power, are about as effective as a moral admonition to a gambler at the side of the table at Monte Carlo. The Session of Congress was as sterile as that of the British Parliament, and from the same cause; the time and energies of men styled legislators and of an assembly styled deliberative were entirely consumed in the faction-fight