

property in land, which he always ascribes to some mysterious horde of robbers, are simply the offspring of his historical ignorance. No political economist is worth much who has not checked his abstract science by the study of history, and this Mr. George evidently has not done. The paragraph is this:—

There is another thing worth noting. Ireland was never conquered by the Romans, as were England and the Scottish lowlands, and the idea that land could be made private property so as to shut out any class of the people from all legal rights to the use of the earth, opposed as it is to ancient Irish law and custom, was only forced upon Ireland in comparatively modern times, by the force of English arms and the treachery of Irish chiefs, bought, as were the Scottish chieftains, to betray their countrymen by the promise of a change of the tribal tenure of land into an individual tenure which would make it absolutely their own; and it is only where the English tongue has supplanted the Irish tongue that Irishmen have forgotten their ancient traditions, and become accustomed to regard private property in land as a matter of course.

In Ireland, down to the time of the conquest, tribalism continued to prevail, with all its incidents, political, social, and economical, including the "patriarchal" rule of coshering chiefs, who were considerably more oppressive than any modern landlord. Agriculture hardly existed; the tribes were still in their pastoral state. Traces of nomadism remained even in the time of Charles I. The English lawyers were, of course, like all other lawyers in the days before scientific jurisprudence, hide-bound by their own system, but they were right in thinking that any regular land-law was better for agriculture than none. Tribalism, Mr. George will observe, is not nationalism; and had one tribe intruded on the pastures of another tribe it would at once have been evicted with a vengeance. His theory, if it is worth anything, makes the land the property not of a tribe any more than of an individual, not even of a nation, but of mankind. But what shows his ignorance most plainly is his notion that the Roman Conquest was the influence which determined the difference between the Anglo-Saxon and the Celtic tenure of land. All traces of Roman civilisation in England were absolutely effaced by Saxon invasion, and the Saxon, like the Scandinavian, freehold was a native institution of the race. This gang of brigands, which ousted the people from the land, appears to have been not less universal than mysterious. Its rapine was not confined to feudal countries, or even to Aryan populations, but extended to Semitic and Turanian populations also. Does Mr. George fancy that Naboth's vineyard was not his own, or that when Abraham bought the field of Machpelah of Ephron for four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant, this was not a sale and purchase of property in land? Mr. George was coolly received by the Irish, who would have nothing of his nationalisation except the general sentiment of plunder. This, he says, was the case only where the English language has supplanted the Irish, that is over nineteen-twentieths of Ireland.

THE Commissioner of the Bureau of Labour Statistics for the State of New York presents a table of 1,900 strikes in that State alone for the year ending October 31st, against 222 in 1885. His statistics of losses appear to be imperfect, but he sets down the loss in wages at \$2,858,191, and that of the fifty-eight firms which made definite statements at \$3,000,000. We may safely say, that the proportions are wrong, since the amount paid in wages always greatly exceeds the amount received in profits. However, there can be no doubt what 1,900 strikes in a single State, and in one year, denote. As in the complex machine of commerce the stoppage of one wheel stops another, the number of persons in the whole of the United States, whose industry has been affected, directly or indirectly, must have amounted to hundreds of thousands. Then Labour Reformers point to the multitudes of men out of employment, and impute their enforced idleness to the tyranny of Capital and the vices of society. The Commissioner, who is partial to strikes, says that out of 1,238, in reference to which the facts were ascertained, 733 were successful, and he assumes that this is so much clear gain for labour. If it were, justice would have been done, and there would be reason for rejoicing. But, to be assured of the fact, we must know not only the immediate rise of wages but the ultimate consequences to the trade. We must know whether the employers could really afford the increased wages, which, under the duress of the strike, they were constrained to give. If they could not, the end would be the ruin or deprivation of the trade. Such has been the effect on trades in England of what were scored at the time as successful strikes. To say that the interests of non-unionists were consulted as well as those of the unionists is flummery. The object of these organisations is to confine the right of labour to their own members to fare as they may. Some day Labour Reformers will arise who will reassert the universal right.

Public Opinion is an invaluable mirror of political life in the United States, and there is one thing by which, looking into it at present, we are particularly struck. The Presidential election is still two years off, yet the thoughts of the nation are already absorbed by it; speculation about it is the one universal topic; the actions of all prominent public men are evidently warped by it; legislation in Congress is little more than a series of manœuvres by which each of the two parties is trying to get the weather-gage of the other for the battle of two years hence. It is manifest what an effect this must have in narrowing the political vision and degrading the political character of the nation. In fact, it is hardly possible to get American statesmen or the American people to look outside the arena in which this all-absorbing prize-fight is to come off. External relations receive no attention except when some politician thinks that by vilifying and bullying England he can gain some Irish votes. The Americans have a great advantage over the English and the French in possessing a real Executive, vested with authority of its own, and comparatively stable, inasmuch as its existence is not dependent from hour to hour on the fluctuating moods or the shifting combinations and cabals of the Legislative Assembly. This feature of their constitution England and other countries will have to borrow, if they mean to have stable government at all. But the mode of electing the American Executive is as far from being worthy of general adoption as it is from answering to the intention of the founders of the Constitution. It is alleged that by these struggles the interest of the people in public questions is kept up. It may be so; but if the questions are regarded not as national problems but as cards in the hands of two sets of players in the great national game of euchre, the interest, it is to be feared, is not worth much.

A shout of jubilation is raised over the promise of the British Government to send a squadron to these waters, and support Canada in the Fisheries question. That the British Government desires to do for Canada all that in honour it is bound to do has never been doubtful. But let us not live in a fool's paradise. If the British constituencies believed that the Government was going to draw them into a war with the United States in defence of Canadian fisheries, the Government would fall. The very mention of our tariff, laying protective duties on British goods, would be an irresistible weapon in the hands of the Opposition. If the British democracy is ready to surrender Ireland, will it fight for that in which it has no interest whatever? The question will in the end be amicably settled, because, in spite of Mr. Ingalls and the other Pograms, the American people are good-tempered, and have no desire to do Canada any wrong.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER has told the English as much of the truth as could be expected from any one in his position respecting the prospects of Imperial Federation in Canada. Due allowance being made for his politeness and loyalty, the Federationists in England can hardly fail to see that he regards their case in Canada as hopeless; and if it is hopeless in Canada, it is hopeless altogether; for how could there be a federation of the Empire with Canada left out? At Halifax, it seems, a Federationist organisation has been set on foot, but we are told that the chief promoters are British officers. We have the heartiest respect possible for the red-coat, and we feel a pensive interest in the reduced garrison of Halifax, as the last remnant on this continent of the military power of Britain. But the sentiments of the Canadian Democracy are not faithfully reflected by British soldiers. If the English Federationists are Conservatives, as they mostly are, they hardly know what they are doing when they entreat Old England to press more closely to her bosom the democratic communities of the New World.

THE Separatists in England have not yet, it seems, given up citing Canada as an auspicious precedent for their Irish policy. Whether they mean the relation of the Dominion to Great Britain or that of the Provinces to the Dominion does not clearly appear; sometimes their language is applicable to one, sometimes to the other, though there is as little resemblance between the two as there is between either of them and the project of a Statutory Parliament for Ireland. Mr. Gladstone himself cannot help seeing the irrelevancy of the parallel, but to let the fallacy down easily he says that beneath the superficial difference between the two cases there is a fundamental similarity, inasmuch as the Canadian Tories are the enemies of liberty. Some reparation, or at least some acknowledgment, is surely due to the Tories both in Canada and in England for the misleading example which was set them and the false teachings to which they were exposed during all those years in which Mr. Gladstone, having gone into Parliament as the nominee of the ultra-Tory Duke of Newcastle,