

acceptance of the immigrants of Conway Street, but rational Liberalism surely would pause.

If Newfoundland were in the Confederation, the murderous attack made by Roman Catholics in that island on an Orange procession would be setting the Dominion in a flame. As it is, the occurrence only calls attention to another important but often neglected factor in the Irish question. Not only the self-styled Nationalists, but the people generally, and especially American journalists, are always talking of the Roman Catholic Irish as the Irish people and of their cause as the Irish cause. They forget the existence of the Irish Protestants, who, though a minority, are, and have more than once proved themselves to be, the very sinews of the country. If Ireland were cut loose from England to-morrow, she would contain within herself these warring elements, and the assumption that the element which is numerically the strongest would prevail over that which has the moral forces on its side, to say nothing of the sympathy of England and Scotland, is to contradict the records of Irish history.

THE movement of American opinion in the direction of Free Trade, which was denoted by the election of Carlisle to the Speakership, seems to have been succeeded by a sort of qualm. This always happens. The Democrats are in the main a Free Trade party, and they evidently feel that the question is becoming practical, but when the moment for action comes, and they are brought face to face with the issue, their resolution ebbs away. They have a Protectionist section in their own ranks, which threatens secession, and they are afraid to grapple with the vested interests. The commercial movement is thus rendered ineffectual by want of a political organ. Still the wave continues to swell; it will gather volume with every addition to the surplus; Free Trade has powerful organs in the press, and all who are interested in the question may make up their minds before very long to see the end. A nation must indeed be in its dotage if it could submit forever to a heavy burden of taxation solely for the purpose of securing to any set of producers higher profits than they would make in a fair market. The Protectionists, if they are not blind, will begin to set their house in order and prepare to carry on their trade on a natural basis. Nor need they despair or even despond. The day which they dread as that of doom will probably be nothing of the kind. It will more likely be the birthday of a sounder and more stable, as well as a better earned prosperity. Assuredly it will, if it opens the great foreign market from which the Americans entirely exclude themselves under the present system. Instead of falling into the abyss of ruin when the artificial support is withdrawn, they may find that for the first time they have solid ground under their feet.

THE report that a new Conservative coalition is about to be formed in England, with the Duke of Argyll at its head, has very likely no better foundation than a visit of Lord Salisbury to Inverary. In England, though not in France, the social relations of public men remain unaffected by political differences, and no political inferences can, as a rule, be drawn from their social movements. If Lord Salisbury has any sense, however, he must be considering in what way he can strengthen his party, for with the forces which he at present leads it is impossible that he should make head against revolution. Morally bereft of its coronet by the progress of Liberal opinions, the aristocracy is now losing, through the depression of agriculture, the material wealth which has always formed its most solid support; while the House of Lords, by alternations of selfish resistance and timorous concession, has sunk itself deep at once in odium and contempt. If an effective stand is to be made, a much broader basis must be found, and all the opponents of Disunion and Socialism must be welcomed into the Conservative lines. If the very name Conservative could be discarded and that of Liberal, as contrasted with Radical, could be assumed, the party would be the gainer by the change. Toryism of the old type is dead without hope of resurrection, and Tory Democracy has proved, like all political legerdemain, a total failure. But it may be doubted whether the Duke of Argyll is the man to lead the combined forces. Eloquent he is, accomplished, and the first magnate in Scotland, but he fatally lacks force and weight; his apparent superciliousness makes him personally unpopular, and, above all, he represents, in the most marked manner, the special interest of territorial aristocracy. What is wanted now is a man who represents no special interest, but the good sense, patriotism and honest industry of the nation, in short, another Peel. But Peel's name, like that of Turgot, reminds us of the invariable inability of aristocrats, nurtured as they are in a fool's paradise of caste opinion, to discern the signs of the times and grasp the hand of the preserver when on the eve of doom it is held out to them. Peel had by his practical genius placed the British Conservatives

in the strongest of all positions, and he would in all probability have transmitted power to statesmen trained in his school; but because he was not foolish and wicked enough to maintain the bread tax in the supposed interest of a caste, he was struck down as a traitor. The catastrophe of 1884 is the Nemesis of 1846.

THE Ilbert Bill, subjecting Europeans to the jurisdiction of native judges, which has caused such a commotion in British India, seems likely to be practically nullified under the decent guise of amendment. Any attempt to make conquest beneficent and to raise the conquered people to the level of the conquerors must be hailed by the friends of humanity as a boon to the race, by the children of England as an addition to her wreath of glory more genuine than the triumphs of Plassey and Assaye. But the Ilbert Bill, if good in itself, was certainly not well-timed. A more unlucky moment could not have been chosen for kindling a conflagration in India than that at which Ireland was already in a flame, while the embers of war were still smoking in Egypt. Sentiment is apt to be misguided on those subjects by the false notion, which often lurks in the pages even of well-informed English writers, that India is a nation, with national susceptibilities such as are wounded by the promotion of foreigners to all places of power. India is not a nation, but a museum of races and religions fully as hostile to each other as any one of them, except perhaps Islam, is to the British rule. To be governed by a conquering race is to the languid inhabitant of unsheltered plains a normal condition against which his heart no more rebels than it rebels against the dry season or the monsoon. Touch the Hindoo's caste and he mutinies; other susceptibility he has none. The British are to him a caste of rulers, a race of conquerors which has come in from the sea as previous races of conquerors had swooped down from the mountains of the North. As to the "cultivated Bengalee," whose claims and alleged grievances are practically in question, he is a creature of the Empire, and if the Imperial power were withdrawn would at once be crushed like an egg shell. To suppose that his exclusion from the judicial bench offends, or that his admission to it would gratify, the pride of the Mogul, the Mahratta, or the Sikh would be to show a grotesque ignorance of the leading features of the situation.

THOSE who watch with interest the course of events in India will notice as an element of increasing importance in the case the growth of what may be called the European colony in India. The company, ever wise in its generation, did its best in a quiet way to discourage the intrusion of any Englishmen unconnected with its own service. But since the transfer of the dominion to the Crown, this policy has not been maintained, and there has now evidently been formed a considerable British interest outside the official body. The growth of this element must be limited by the climate which prevents European families from being brought up in India. Yet with a free press the colonists may be a considerable power, and their equivocal position as members of a dominant race lording it over the natives, and at the same time asserting the rights and liberties of British citizens against the Government, can hardly fail to add to the complications of the Indian problem.

THAT electricity has annihilated distance is now becoming, if not the faith of statesmen, that of political writers like Professor Seeley, who undertake to give practical advice. Yet the assertion requires a good deal of qualification to make it true. Electricity has no doubt done wonders; as somebody says, it has rendered a parish life henceforth impossible; nobody in a community which reads newspapers can any more shut out the events and questions of the great world. Yet the mere circulation of the news among the nations by no means suffices to produce a fusion of sentiment or interest. It does not even give the people of one country a very intimate knowledge of the people of another. The last number contained an extract from "John Bull and His Island," written by a Frenchman, which comes into our hands in the form of a translation. It might have been taken for a squib, only that a squib would not have been loaded with so much matter-of-fact description. But the writer literally talks about the inhabitants of a country separated by twenty-two miles of sea from his own as he might about a newly discovered tribe in the centre of Africa. He is by no means ill-natured or Anglophobic; he sometimes shows quickness of observation as well as smartness of style; but in spite of electricity he is the Frenchman of Leicester Square. As an illustration of British uncommunicativeness he gravely tells us that if you remark to an Englishman in a smoking compartment that he has dropped some cigar ash on his trousers, he will probably answer: "For the past ten minutes I have seen a box of matches on fire in your back coat pocket, but I did not interfere with you for that." In English family life, according to this