

TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES.—17TH YEAR.

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THE SITUATION IN ENGLAND.

A passage from one of Disraeli's speeches in the House of Commons, is, as a contemporary states, applicable to the present state of affairs in England. "It is like one of those earthquakes which take place in Calabria or Peru. There was a rumbling murmur, a groan, a shriek, a sound of distant thunder; there was a rent, a fissure in the ground and then a village disappeared; then, a tall tower toppled down, and the whole of the Ministerial benches became one great dissolving view of anarchy." The issue has been fought out with the greatest possible vigour, and despite the boundless magic of Mr. Gladstone's name and his unsurpassed eloquence the Kingdom of Great Britain has gone against the Liberal leader. This we attribute in a great measure to the form which Mr. Gladstone gave to his proposition. We have always said that his bill had in its very vitals the germs of turmoil and disaster; and that under its operation the second condition of Ireland would be worse than the first. That Mr. Gladstone's speeches were eloquent, great and noble in spirit, nobody will deny, but any man of common-sense knew that a co-ordination of parliaments was hopelessly out of the question. We have had temerity and presumption enough in these columns time and again to state that no such proposition as that brought down by Mr. Gladstone could have a ghost of a hope to work successfully. Mr. Chamberlain has boldly proclaimed that a plan like that tried in our colonies with such successful results was the only way out of the difficulty; indeed what he has said on this subject corresponds exactly with what the contentions of TRUTH has been. But Mr. Gladstone was pleased to say that such a plan was not alone a poor one, but that it was "vulgar." Fancy that! Well, Mr. Gladstone has the refinement of political doctrine upon his side; and the great majority of the British nation is against him. Of course after a count has been made he will resign, and Lord Salisbury, though quite a second rate man, will be called upon to form an administration. It is a great pity that the grand old statesman should be thus laid low in the very hour of his desire to settle a question and end an injustice that has been long a disgrace to the most enlightened nation upon the face of the earth. The principle of Mr. Gladstone's policy we have always applauded, and we believe that all just and unbiased men have approved of it; it is in the matter of detail that he has gone wrong and missed the end that he has had in view.

What will happen upon the incoming of the Salisbury Administration it would be hard indeed to say. Mr. Labouchere in our London namesake, makes a forecast which we reproduce. He says:—"The agricultural labourer knows and cares little about Ireland, and he is sold that had it not been for the Irish bill he by this time would have had a cow and three acres of land. The Land Bill has done us

a vast amount of harm. The very possibility of Irish landlords benefiting at the expense of the taxpayer has alienated many from Mr. Gladstone. As things stand now it looks as though the new Parliament will be much like the old. The Liberals will not have a decisive majority, nor the Conservatives, even with the support of Liberal and Radical Unionists who have made common cause with them. What, then, will happen? I suppose Lord Salisbury will be installed in office, and be supported by Lord Hartington's friends and the members for Birmingham. What, then, will be the duty of Radicals? To render it impossible for anyone else than Mr. Gladstone to carry on the Government. This they can easily do by a strict alliance with the Irish. Should the Tories obtain the upper hand and attempt to pass a Coercion Act, the Radicals and Irish should fight on until they are surprised. This will bring things to a crisis. Probably at first the Tories and their allies will say 'good riddance,' but they will soon find that it will be practically impossible for the House to legislate with one-third of its members excluded. Having declared that the Irish have a right to resist coercion, we must back up their resistance should it be attempted. The time is arriving to take off our gloves."

One thing is quite certain, the bayonet and buckshot can no more be resorted to; and since these are out of the question, what then? Well, our belief is that the Chamberlain plan is the only one that promises salvation, and that it must prevail.

THE QUESTION OF PROHIBITION.

Most of the eloquent advocates of general prohibition who aspire to legislative honours declare that they can see no good reason why the Dominion Parliament should not pass an act prohibiting the manufacture or importation of alcoholic beverages save for medicinal manufacturing, or other utilitarian purposes. The electorate can see as little difficulty about the matter as the candidate; so they take up their newspaper day after day when the Parliament sits to read the declarations of their representative upon the burning question. But no such declaration do they find; for their good member puts his conscience in his pocket when he goes to Ottawa, and sitting upon the footstool looks to Mr. Blake or to Sir John and says, "Master, what wilt thou have me do?"

Of course there are grave obstacles in the way of prohibition, and the proposition is one of such importance that a politician may be excused for approaching it with fear and trembling. Yet the fact remains that if the politician is prepared, upon the stump, to "go" for prohibition, he ought not to sit like a mute in the House of Commons. More than one politician in this country is indebted to the "temperance cry" for his public laurels; yet not one has ever had the consistency to fairly agitate the question in the House. Now the Parliament of Canada can pass prohibitive legislation if it chooses to do so, notwithstanding that the tem-

perance advocate who supports prohibition on the stump will come and tell you after the election that "the Canadian Parliament cannot, you know, very well pass such an act." We do not care to meddle in questions belonging of right to the politicians; nevertheless this much anybody may say: If prohibition is good in one county of a Province, it ought to be good for all the Province; and if it be good for one Province, why should it not be adopted for the whole of our Dominion? No honest man will deny that the Scott Act does accomplish good by reducing vastly the consumption of liquor and lessening misery and crime.

We are aware that the revenue would suffer sorely from the passage of a general measure of prohibition; but revenue is not of as much importance as the morality and the happiness of the people. The Conservatives as a party are not in sympathy with the temperance spirit of the time; yet we firmly believe that Sir John Macdonald if hard set for a question upon which to appeal to the country, would not hesitate to make Prohibition his shibboleth.

We are very glad to perceive that Mr. Blake has put himself, unmistakably, on record respecting the question; and we make no apology for reproducing the following:—"A party may suffer temporary defeat by keeping too close to this principle; but, gentlemen, I trust you will always put principle before party. Looking at this question, then, in this light, let me remind you, young gentlemen, that some years ago; I gave up entirely the use of wine, not in my own interest, for that was never allowed to suffer by its use, but for the sake of young men such as I see before me to-day, the flower of my native and beloved land. In that case I followed my conscience; and though it was a somewhat bold step exposing me to the charge, even by my own political friends, of asceticism, I am happy to-day to state that my example has influenced others to such an extent that public banquets are now common in which no intoxicating liquor is used. This being my personal conviction and experience, my attitude towards the question in its broader aspect can be readily understood. That same course of reasoning which made me a personal prohibitionist, makes me also a public prohibitionist, and I desire that you, young gentlemen, will come out firmly on the side of the only true temperance—moderation in things which are good, prohibition of things which are evil. I need not here discuss the effect upon my party of the stand which I have taken on this important question. Even though it should strain the allegiance of that section of our party who are allied with the accursed traffic—happily a comparatively small and unimportant section—and much as I desire that we, as Liberals should enter upon this arduous struggle as one man; yet let us keep our consciences clear in this matter, regardless of temporary defeat, for—

Right is Right, as God is God,
And Right the day must win;
To doubt would be dishonour,
To falter would be sin."

Now why does not Mr. Blake make this

very question of prohibition a living, *the chief*, issue at the next election? If he believe that the principle is sound, and just, and expedient, why hesitate? Believe it, he would have upon his side the great bulk of the Canadian people.

"TRUTH'S" WEEKLY BUDGET.

The present issue of TRUTH will be found up to its usual standard. In fiction the departments are well stocked. Dora Russell's story, "The Broken Seal," is still running. This interesting and ably written tale has reached a point of high interest now. "Four Canadian Highwaymen" has likewise reached the highest point of interest, and many incidents are being recounted with which old residents of Toronto must be familiar. The editorial matter is varied, and public events are treated, as TRUTH always treats them, in a perfectly independent spirit. We give allegiance to no party; and we always have commended what seemed to us to be good, just as we have condemned what we deemed to be bad. Our contributed matter this week is very readable. "Moralist" writes trenchantly and with grace upon "Intelligent Living"; "Traveller" gives us a view of the "Shah's Domains" and most graphic is that writer's style; the "Poetry of Churchyards," by J. A. Currie, is a cultured, vivid, and altogether superior contribution, which we recommend cordially to our readers. There is a very good picture especially engraved for our columns entitled "A Fact." The "Ship That Never Returned" is the name of our musical contribution. All the departments containing selected matter will be found to maintain their usual character of excellence. "Observer" has many things to say this week; but we refrain from making comments. All we do say is that the subjects which he discusses are interesting.

Even though, in a sense, political disgrace has overtaken Mr. Gladstone he is still the most interesting figure in the public life of the nation. A writer of very capable powers has penned a description of the grand old statesman, and there is so much said that is vivid about his methods of oratory, we cannot refrain from reproducing it. We begin with, it is of extraordinary quality from the light high bantering style, so to he twitted the Tories with... adorn the laugh—decorate... idea, down to the deep, serious... ally hoarse haze to war... of the profane and... with which English... was universally... bility of it, too;... Mr. Gladstone... ly and easily... quality of it—how... It is impossible to... so fall into absurd... something so winning, so... Gladstone's voice, as it was... as we can hear... venture to... will be ag...