

sidered action. In other words, to be listened to respectfully by people who have money to invest, or who are making plans for the remote future, a man must be habitually cool, and cultivate what we may call the scientific way of looking at human activities of all kinds.

In Mr. Bagehot's day the *Economist* played this part in an eminent degree. He brought to the analysis of the political phenomena of the day precisely the same sort of acumen which he brought to the analysis of the last bank report or a new funding bill. Reading his articles was very like having a private and confidential talk with a shrewd and experienced man of the world, who had special means of information, but was perfectly indifferent to the bearings of the phenomena which he explained for your benefit. In fact, he brought to modern politics the same spirit of disinterested inquiry and minute observation which he brought to the examination of the history of national growth in his remarkable book on 'Physics and Politics.' He knew that his influence in the commercial world was dependent on his constantly cultivating in all things a spirit of philosophical detachment; that it would not do for him to rail about Disraeli, or grow enthusiastic over John Bright, if he wished to be listened to with respect about the bank rate or the trustworthiness of a foreign loan.

The London *Spectator* never could boast the judicial temper of the *Economist*, but it placed its readers under somewhat similar obligations by its steady application of moral standards to politics, and its constant habit of examining both political men and measures from the moral point of view. Its love of analysis, the manifestations of which in some fields—that of theology, for instance—were excessive, always found instructive and interesting expression in its treatment of politicians and pending questions of legislation. One might not agree with it; one might often grow wearied of its subtlety or over-refinement, and often accuse it of fancifulness, and of too much prophetic spirit, and too great eagerness for signs and wonders; but its columns were always edifying to any one who was watching English politics simply as an observer, for the simple reason that he might always feel sure that the editor did not hold a party brief, and was not bound to extenuate or defend anything for party reasons, or to consider the effects of his utterances on party fortunes, and that he was treating every public man on his merits without regard to his political antecedents or surroundings.

We are sorry to say that the home-rule discussion has changed all this. There are no more violent party papers in England to-day than the *Economist* and *Spectator*. We do not mean by this simply that they argue against home rule, and are deeply impressed by its inconveniences or dangers. We mean that they attack it in precisely the same spirit and with the same weapons as the *Times* or the *Standard*, and are as worthless to a disinterested observer desirous of seeing the situation exactly as it is. For instance, there is nothing so tiresome and often disgusting, as all American newspaper readers know, as the way party journals have of dividing the voting population into two groups, one composed of ignorant and

reckless people, blinded by their passions and hostile to, or careless about, property or order; the other composed of sober, thoughtful, industrious, patriotic, and God-fearing people, whose supremacy in national affairs is necessary, not only to peace and security, but to the very preservation of the social fabric. The division of the leading politicians is of somewhat the same sort. On one side are a band composed of reckless demagogues, without conscience or honor, seeking the ruin of their country for purely personal profit, through falsehood and perversion, and utterly indifferent to the consequences of their policy as long as it keeps them in power or enables them to win it; on the other, a band composed of calm, wise, moderate men, speaking and acting in politics with a single eye to the national prosperity and glory, eschewing all sophistry or misrepresentation, and constantly uttering pregnant truths, without caring for the effect on their own personal or political fortunes.

In England there has hitherto been less of this sort of classification than here, owing to the transfers of power from one party to another, which take place more frequently under the Parliamentary system than under ours. Every Englishman who has reached the age of forty has seen probably two or three of these transfers, so that it is impossible for the party press or orators to work him into that state of fear and suspicion about his political opponents in which Republicans, for instance, lived with regard to the Democrats during the twenty years before 1884. Nobody has hitherto been able to persuade the Liberals that if Salisbury came into power he would probably betray the Government to its enemies, and plunder the Treasury; or persuade the Tories that Gladstone would surely propose an equal division of goods and knock down the price of all securities 50 per cent. But just now the *Economist* and *Spectator* even, to say nothing of the rest of the Conservative press, talk in this to us very familiar strain. The *Economist* has got so hot in its fury against the Irish that it actually commends military courts-martial as the best tribunals for the punishment of crime—military officers, it says, making excellent jurors—and objectionable only on account of the prejudice against them among philanthropists and Americans. Chamberlain, who was its *bête noire* two years ago, when he was denouncing inequality of taxation, is now its model statesman.

But the *Spectator* far outdoes the *Economist*, as might have been expected, in the fervor with which it surrenders its soul to Liberal Unionism. It is impossible to read without a smile its accounts of the way in which not only common sense and common honesty, but mental capacity, has deserted that immense body of the British people who follow Mr. Gladstone. Not only are the Irish representatives all thoroughly dishonest and unscrupulous, and elected by 4,000,000 of rogues and assassins—this was to have been expected—but the Gladstonian leaders have become ignorant, absurd, sophistical, and stupid. Gladstone, John Morley, Harcourt, Bryce, Rosebery, Childers, Russell, and Trevelyan now never open their mouths without falling into obvi-

ous blunders or misrepresentations or fallacies. Eloquence and knowledge have both deserted them. They have lost either the desire or capacity to present any question in a right light. Not only are they wrong occasionally, in the old human way, but they are always wrong, in the diabolical way. On the other hand, Salisbury, Chamberlain, Hartington, Selborne, James, Holland, Goschen, nay, even Smith, Balfour, and Churchill, never speak without hitting the nail on the head. Their reasoning is always perfect; their illustrations apt; their forecasts timely and correct. In fact, the state of mind just now of the quondam independent journalist in England is enough to give a pessimist an illustration in which he would delight, of the flimsiness of the human mind and the weakness of the human character.

THE MARRIAGE OF LOUIS XV.

PARIS, May 7, 1887.

THE marriage of Louis XV. and a Polish Princess, Marie Leczinska, is one of the most romantic incidents of French history in the eighteenth century. M. Paul de Raynal, a French magistrate, has lately studied the circumstances which brought about this extraordinary union between the sovereign of the most powerful country of Europe and a poor and exiled Princess. I knew, in my youth, a gentleman who was old enough to remember Louis XV. He spoke almost with emotion of the fascination which was exercised by this sovereign in his youth. Louis XV. was like a prince of fairy land. He was as handsome as the day, to use a familiar expression of our ancestors; his manners were charming; he had been brought up with the greatest care. He had been promised, since his earliest infancy, to the daughter of the Duke of Anjou, the Infanta of Spain. Why was the Infanta suddenly dismissed, and why did the young King marry the daughter of a Polish nobleman, who had been kept on the throne of Poland for a few years by the protection of Charles XII. of Sweden, and who afterwards had become an exile and a pensioner of the French Government?

When Louis XIV. died, the Duke of Orleans was proclaimed Regent of the kingdom, and assumed an almost absolute power. He asked in 1721 the hand of the Infanta, Anna Maria Victoria, who was then three years old, for the young King of France. Philip V. gave his consent at once. The Regent obtained at the same time the hand of the Prince of the Asturias for his own daughter, Mlle. de Montpensier. Louis XV. was then eleven years old, and entirely under the influence of his preceptor, Fleury, Bishop of Fréjus. When the matter was brought before the Council of the Regency, Saint-Simon tells us that the eyes of the King were red, but that he said "Yes" in a low voice when he was asked to give his consent to the marriage, which was in consequence declared.

Saint-Simon was sent as Ambassador to Spain, and he gives in his memoirs full details of his mission. He paints with his usual vigor Philip V., who had become so different from the handsome Duke of Anjou; the Queen, who was his second wife, who had exiled the Princesse des Ursins, and completely enslaved the King and condemned him to a solitary and monotonous life. The Infanta was exchanged at the frontier for Mlle. de Montpensier; one of them was intended to wear the crown of France, the other the crown of Spain. The exchange took place on January 9, 1722, on the Bidassoa River. Soon afterwards the marriage of Mlle. de Montpensier was solemnized in Madrid. The Infanta, a mere

child, was brought to Paris, and, on her arrival, Louis XV. gave her a doll worth 18,000 livres. "Tout le monde," says Barbier in his Journal, "trouve le mariage original." The King lived at the Tuileries; the Infanta was lodged at the Louvre. When Louis XV. attained his majority, he was left almost immediately without a guide, though he was only entering his fourteenth year. Cardinal Dubois died suddenly, and the Duke of Orleans was struck by apoplexy on the 2d of September, 1723, at the age of forty-nine years.

The Duke of Bourbon, the first Prince of the House of Condé, took the office of Prime Minister, as Fleury, who was the real master of the mind of Louis XV., did not yet dare to take it for himself. Monsieur le Duc, as he was called, was only thirty-one years old. He had lost an eye, and his contemporaries called him the *sinistre* or the *borgne*. He lived at Chantilly in great style. He had lost his wife, and was entirely under the sway of the celebrated Marquise de Prie. Mme. de Prie was the daughter of a wealthy contractor for the army; she was handsome, witty, ambitious, and affected an infidelity which was then the fashion with some members of the aristocracy. She was the declared mistress of the Duke of Bourbon.

The Ambassador appointed to Spain by the Duke of Bourbon was the Comte de Tessé, who was Marshal of France. Tessé had served with great distinction in the French armies, and had already filled many diplomatic missions. He accepted his new post notwithstanding his old age, and he was on his way to Spain when the news arrived of the sudden abdication of King Philip. The Prince of the Asturias was proclaimed King under the name of Louis I., and it was known that all his friends were enemies of the French alliance and partisans of the alliance with Austria. Louis did not like his French wife, who, says M. de Tessé, in one of his despatches, "had learned many things at the Palais Royal which she had not forgotten in his palace." The union of Louis XV. and the Infanta had been solemnly promised, but the Duke of Bourbon was very adverse to it. The Infanta was only six years old, and she could not become the wife of the King before the age of ten. The prolonged celibacy of Louis XV. was a danger for the succession and a danger for the King himself. Louis XV. took no pleasure in the Infanta; on the contrary, he could not feel for her a sort of aversion. If Louis XV. died without a son, the crown would pass to the Duke of Orleans, the son of the Regent, a virtuous prince who hardly concealed his contempt for M. le Duc and for Mme. de Prie.

Mme. de Prie kept her lover in a state of constant inquietude, and prepared him by degrees for a rupture with Spain and for the dismissal of the Infanta. It did not hinder her from asking for a *grandesse* for her husband and for her children; this request recurs often in the correspondence of Marshal de Tessé under the name of *l'affaire des charbons*. The Marshal does not seem to have been very anxious to procure this favor for Mme. de Prie. The King of Spain fell ill suddenly, and, at the age of seventeen years, died after a very short attack. The crown passed to the head of the second son of Philip V., the infant Don Ferdinand, who was only eleven years old. The Duke of Bourbon was very much alarmed at the consequences of this change. It was clear that the young King would be completely in the hands of the *grandees* of Spain, that the kingdom would fall into complete anarchy. He wrote to Philip V., who was the only true friend of France in the peninsula, and begged him to come out of his retreat and assume the power himself. Philip consented, with some reluctance; and M. le Duc, confiding in his sentiments, in his love of quietness and peace, in his

affection for his nephew, Louis XV.; thought that he could now, without any danger of war, send the Infanta back to Spain and find another wife for the King of France. Mme. de Prie knew that she would never obtain the *grandesse* from the pious and scrupulous old King of Spain; it was thought by her as well as by her lover that the time for action had come.

Secret councils were held at the Duke of Bourbon's a few weeks after the death of the young King of Spain. They were composed of M. de Fréjus, of Marshals Villars and Uxelles, of the Comte de la Marck, the Comte de Morville, and M. Pecquet. The Duke of Bourbon explained the reasons for a prompt marriage of Louis XV. with another Princess than the Infanta, and the reasons that would prevent Philip V. from declaring war on France. M. de Morville is said to have exclaimed: "Certainly, the Infanta must be dismissed, and *par le coche*, so that it may be done sooner." The question at once arose, What Princess would be chosen in place of the Infanta? Seventeen names were pronounced in a special report made by Morville, among the others, "Marie, daughter of King Stanislas Leczinski of Poland, aged twenty-one." There were objections to all the names: some were promised, some were ill, some were of another religion. The Duke of Bourbon, however, gave his preference to Princess Anna, the eldest daughter of the Prince of Wales, and asked the French Ambassador to inquire of the Ministers of George I. if they would give her to the King of France, on condition that she should become a Catholic.

Time pressed; at the age of seven, the Infanta was to be solemnly affianced to the King of France. The Spanish Minister in Paris had no suspicion of any change in the intentions of the French court. Marshal Tessé was suddenly recalled and replaced by the Abbé de Livry, chargé d'affaires in Portugal. Louis XV. was made to write a letter to the Pope announcing that he could not marry the Infanta, and begging him to soothe the irritation of Philip V. Livry had to deliver at the same time a letter to the King of Spain announcing the change. Philip V., who had been previously made aware of its contents, refused to receive it; he showed calmness and dignity, but his wife, Elizabeth, was furious, as were all the Spaniards. The Abbé de Livry was ordered to leave the Spanish territory, and Mlle. de Beaujolais, who had been promised to Don Carlos, was sent back to France.

Mme. de Prie did not much approve of a marriage with an English or a Russian princess; she wished for some modest, poor, plain princess, whom gratitude would always tie to her. She found all she desired in the Polish Princess, who had neither wealth, nor pride, nor fortune. She espoused her cause with much warmth, and what she desired was soon after the wish of the Duke of Bourbon. She was helped by the English Government. The proposal which had been made by the Comte de Broglie for the young English Princess had been thought very flattering; the Count had shown the King a picture of Louis XV., who was at that time most beautiful. The religion, however, had been thought an insurmountable difficulty, and a negative answer was finally returned.

The disappointment of the Duke of Bourbon was great. He thought for a moment of one of his sisters, Mlle. de Vermandois, who had been brought up in the Convent of Fontevault and wished to become a nun. President Hénault and some other writers of the time say that Mme. de Prie went to Fontevault under an assumed name, and saw Mlle. de Vermandois. She spoke to her of her brother and mentioned Mme. de Prie. At the mention of this name, Mlle. de Vermandois interrupted her with vehemence, and manifested the greatest contempt for the person who had

enslaved her brother. Mme. de Prie changed the conversation; her mind was made up—it was not for her to put the crown of France on the head of Mlle. de Vermandois.

From that moment the Polish Princess became the most eligible candidate. The humility of her position was an advantage, as it tended to soothe the irritation of Philip and of the Spaniards; the Infanta was not sacrificed to a great princess or to a powerful country. The marriage ceased to be a political affair. The offer was made, but not before Louis XV. had seen a portrait of the young Marie. She was not handsome, but she was agreeable and had a very pleasing countenance. Marie Leczinska was six years older than the King, but every objection was put aside. It is easy to judge of the emotion of the poor exiled King of Poland when he was informed of the project of the King of France; after having received the letter of Louis XV. at Wissembourg in Alsace, he entered the room where his daughter was sitting with her mother:

"My daughter," said he, "let us kneel and thank God." "My father, are you recalled to the throne of Poland?" "No, my daughter, God is more merciful—you are Queen of France."

The marriage was for a long time a happy one. The Queen had a very amiable disposition. When she made her presents to her ladies she said modestly: "This is the first time in my life I have been able to make presents." She did not, however, accept the tyrannical friendship of Mme. de Prie. Fleury, the Bishop of Fréjus, found in her an ally, and she became an unconscious instrument in the disgrace of the Duke of Bourbon. The victory of Fleury became complete. The Duke was dismissed from the Council, and Mme. de Prie was exiled to one of her estates. She fell into a state of despair, and the memoirs of the Marquis d'Argenson tell us that she lost her beauty, and that in 1727 she poisoned herself.

By a strange concatenation of circumstances, which completes the romance of the life of Marie Leczinska, this Princess, who was so poor that her father, when the offer of the King of France was made to him, had just pawned her jewelry, had, in fact, brought to France a magnificent dowry: her marriage had for one of its consequences the reunion of Lorraine to the kingdom.

Correspondence.

WESTERN MORTGAGES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Allow me a reply to "L." Western development has always been the profitable opportunity of Eastern capital. The older always lend to the younger States. Europe did it fifty years ago; now we do it from our own profits in Western growth and trade. Western mortgages are no experiment. System and experience have simplified the matter in both convenience and safety for the investor. The incident of loss by foreclosure has actually been eliminated. While foreclosure itself has been reduced to a fraction of 1 per cent., the profit of foreclosure is absolutely assured. A Western corporation of tried, prudent, and wealthy men, who themselves supervise the loans, and examine titles and values, and select their mortgages, can and does actually produce the choicest 6 per cent. security which the experience of insurance companies, savings banks, and private investors has been able to find during the past fifteen years. Of this there is ample evidence in the reports. We cite one—the Bank Commissioners of New Hampshire, 1886, page 419. There was no foreclosure in Western loans; all foreclosure was in Eastern mortgages.—Yours,
H. W. HALL.