

but they all keep silent about the national faults. Supposing this to be true, in the broad way in which Mr. Arnold states it, is this not also a defect to which a foreigner, and especially an Englishman, should be very indulgent? We do not think it is true as Mr. Arnold states it. There is a great deal of criticism by Americans of American morals and manners, but no native criticism ever satisfies a foreigner. He always wants it laid on stronger, and is displeased if it is tempered by any perception of countervailing virtues. The way the English press treats the conduct of Englishmen in dealing with other and especially weaker communities, for instance, is never what foreign critics think it ought to be. There are reserves and omissions and qualifications in it which make Americans and Frenchmen and Germans swear with indignation, and yet, in spite of it all, it is the general belief that English civilization improves. It is not every one, as human nature goes, who enjoys, as Mr. Arnold and Mr. Ruskin do, speaking their mind freely and incessantly to the people among whom they live about their faults and follies. Such men are doubtless a precious possession to any community, but they will always be scarce, and have to be amazingly clever not to become insufferable bores. There is probably not one of the thousand agencies of human culture which accomplishes so little as lectures from censorious sages.

Mr. Arnold's attack on the American press touches on what all foreigners of distinction find the greatest mystery and nuisance of American life. For the last fifty years the newspapers have been the first thing which attracts their attention when they land, and which during their stay here most distinctly represents to them the national taste and manners. "The absence of truth and soberness in them, the poverty in serious interest, the personality and sensation-mongering, are," he says, "beyond belief." This is undoubtedly what a very large body of the most intelligent and cultivated Americans say of the newspapers, and it is no wonder that a foreign critic, who suffered severely from their brutality when he was here, should say it also. But here again it does not do to generalize too sweepingly. It is not true of the American press as a whole, and when true of particular newspapers is almost always the result of the personal peculiarities of the editor. For reasons which we have not space to discuss here, journalism in the United States has until recently been one of the neglected callings, which made no serious drafts on the talents and cultivation of the country, and of which the pecuniary possibilities were first made plain by a man of very low character. He may be said to have created "the American newspaper" as the world knows it, and to have given it a stamp and tone from which it has not yet worked free; but to conclude that it will never become more sober-minded, more serious in its interests, and more careful about accuracy, and more closely allied to the intellectual life of the country, is to deny one of the plainest facts of American

history, and that is, that there is no department of human activity in which progress in the United States is not constant and steady, though at particular points not always very perceptible.

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main."

#### PARLIAMENT TILL EASTER.

LONDON, March 29, 1888.

THE Easter holidays have come, and the Government may look with complacency on the record of the last six weeks. The Conversion Bill has already been passed into an act, with an assured prospect of success for the great financial operation which is its object. The Local Government Bill, a measure of the first magnitude and importance, has made an unusually fair start, and, though the signs of reviving trade are still faint and uncertain, the Government have been able to come to Parliament with a budget showing a larger surplus than the Chancellor of the Exchequer has had at his disposal for a good many years. The position of all these measures is favorable, after making every allowance for the defects they contain and the dangers they may run.

The credit of the financial proposals, so far as they are ultimately successful, will belong, of course, to Mr. Goschen. Those who doubt the correctness of his published opinions as to the effect of the appreciation of gold upon trade and prices, may not regard him as a trustworthy guide in the more difficult problems of political economy; but all the world was prepared to find in him a capable Chancellor of the Exchequer. His name, moreover, may be justly associated with the reform of local government also, because, when he was the first President of the Local Government Board, created in 1871, he did much to elucidate the principles on which reform should proceed, and reform in this direction has ever since been a definite aim of the party to which he then belonged. I believe the Liberals as a body recognize with pleasure that the finances are in the hands of an able man who knows his business, and whose administrative powers were too long lost to the country, even though on most political questions they find in him, to say the least, a very determined opponent.

Whatever interest may attach to the measures I have mentioned, they have not, in the eyes of many critics, redeemed the session up to the present time from the imputation of dulness. To this charge I cannot subscribe. It is true that, with the exception of one or two nights during the debate on the address, there have been no heated and angry discussions. But this very change in the temper of the House is a matter of great importance and of good augury—I wish one could dare to assume that it will be permanent; and there are certain other aspects in which the proceedings of Parliament have been specially significant and interesting. The new Procedure Rules have hitherto been a great success. The two important rules are the Closure Rule which was passed last year, and the suspension of business at midnight. It is by the combination of these two rules that the improvement has been effected. The midnight rule presses somewhat hardly on private members' bills, which often found their only chance in the small hours of the morning. But if the difficult problem could be solved of mak-

ing some selection among these bills, which are now left to a most unsatisfactory system of ballot, more would be gained than has been lost by the new rule. The prudence of making the discussion of the new rules the first business of the session was questioned by the Opposition leaders, though they undertook that, so far as their authority extended, no factious opposition should be offered; but the event has justified the Government. The House was more generally eager than was counted upon to adopt reasonable hours. The rules now furnish very formidable and effective weapons against obstruction, but hitherto there is ground for the better hope that all sections of the House will concur in turning over a new leaf.

One test of the complete success of the rules will be when the closure is not regarded as penal, but an ordinary incident of procedure; and though an amendment to make it automatic met with little support, there is certainly an approach to this change of view on the subject. Another incidental improvement which must follow, if the rules are to work well, is a curtailment of the length of speeches. On this subject there was some plain speaking. A few speakers on the front bench and elsewhere have had too great a monopoly of the time of the House, and have not made a moderate use of it. The House is very patient of a speaker who by any means has once got its ear, and speakers have not realized how inexpressibly tedious their long and ill-digested harangues had become. In this respect there is a beginning of improvement. A very high authority is said to have been struck by the greater condensation of speeches in some recent debates. Then the withdrawal of the hours after midnight has improved the temper of the House, because it was generally after midnight that it lost its temper.

But the most remarkable feature of the proceedings of the present session is the advance which they disclose in the growth of liberal opinions. At the opening of the session, in 1880, Mr. Gladstone's Government, in the flush of victory, was embarrassed for weeks by the opposition offered to Mr. Bradlaugh's taking his seat. The other day, with a Tory Government in office, Mr. Bradlaugh carried the second reading of his Oaths Bill by a majority of 100. The question of the reform of the House of Lords has entered into a new phase. For the first time the regular Opposition in the House of Commons has declared it is now ripe for consideration, and the debate and division on Lord Rosebery's motion show how seriously the matter is now taken up by the House of Lords itself. Lord Salisbury, echoed by the Unionist organs in the press, says that the House of Commons will not tolerate any reform of the House of Lords which will make it a stronger power in the country—which is tantamount to saying that it will not tolerate any reform at all. These critics profess to know the mind of the House of Commons better than its own members. The majority of the present House, by their recent vote, declared their opposition to reform of the House of Lords. But the number who objected to reform on Lord Salisbury's ground is infinitesimally small. Any one who supposes that such a consideration is sufficient to secure acquiescence in the present constitution of the House of Lords, is blind to the signs of the times, the signs of the present session. The argument, if good for anything, is an argument for a single chamber. But to such a change, without discussing its merits, the public mind would, at least for the present, be averse. If any change is made within a reasonable time, and that is probable,

it will be a reform of the present second chamber, and one question will be how far the hereditary element is to be retained. Some very moderate Liberals think it would be illogical to leave any vestige of a principle which is so indefensible in theory and so incongruous with present democratic institutions. I am inclined to think it more probable (always assuming that reform comes in time) that the hereditary principle will be practically retained in defiance of logic, and that it may lie embalmed in the swept and garnished House for many a long year. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Gladstone pleaded for the hereditary principle in his address to the electors of Midlothian in 1885, as a more respectable kind of privilege, and to a certain extent a counterpoise to the ascendancy of mere wealth. The sentiment of the people has still some favor for an hereditary aristocracy, and I doubt whether the democracy are bent upon extinguishing it entirely in the Legislature.

But the great landmark of Liberal progress is the Local Government Bill. The reform of municipal government and the establishment of the representative principle in towns was one of the great Liberal achievements which were made possible by the Reform Act of 1832. The Liberal party has long contended for the application of the same principle to counties, to local government outside of towns, and now it is adopted without reserve by a Conservative Government, and even extended to the government of London, the reform of which has long been the dream of Liberal reformers. Some of the important practical results which may be expected from the acceptance of the principle, such as the reform of poor-law, school, and liquor-licensing administration, are not carried out or are imperfectly carried out in the bill. But the principle is there, and even the means of extending its application are provided. It is described on both sides of the House as a thoroughly radical bill. It is incontestable—I do not think that any one would deny it—that the same bill, if proposed by a Liberal Government, would have met with the most strenuous opposition from the united Conservative party. Now, only a few faint murmurs are heard in the clubs and in the press. The Government has made resistance more difficult by handing over several millions to the local authorities from the imperial taxes, and by mixing up the budget with the bill, so that they must stand or fall together. But such precautions were, perhaps, not essential. They counted with justice on the docility of the party when a choice was to be made between power and principle. The tone of remonstrance rises no higher than an article in an evening paper which condemns the bill as thoroughly radical and thoroughly bad: strong measures are necessary in the crisis; Conservative principles are at stake. But the remedy suggested is not to vote against the bill, but to walk out.

The reflection occurs that, if the Tories pass radical measures, it may indefinitely retard the return of the Liberals to power. It may—the Liberals are well aware of it; but they will help forward the bill by every means in their power. They are accustomed to the situation. They know that most of the great reforms of the century have been carried under similar conditions. They make a virtue of necessity. The virtue is learned from necessity, but it is virtue after all, and contrasts favorably with the pliancy of opponents, the bulk of whom do not pretend that their convictions have changed.

Meanwhile, the Ministry say to themselves, Ireland will be forgotten. The Liberals say, No; real reform in England will make the mis-

government of Ireland more palpable and more intolerable to the conscience of Englishmen.

C. D.

#### THE POPE AND HOME RULE.

ROME, March 20.

THE relations of the Pope to the home-rule movement have been the object of so much report, in such variation of color, that I am tempted to give you an account of what is known to have been done and said, and what is the most authoritative opinion in Rome about it. In the first place, the general, and apparently almost ineradicable, belief that the Duke of Norfolk had a mission to induce the Pope to exercise some influence on the clergy of Ireland against home rule, has no foundation whatever. The Duke came here as the head of the special mission to thank the Pope for his mission of felicitation on the occasion of the Queen's jubilee, and to deliver the presents which were the reciprocation of those sent to the Queen; and when he had finished the ceremonial involved in these two acts, he returned with his staff to England. In the performance of this duty, not one word was said of a diplomatic or political nature indirectly or directly relating to the Irish question. This I am able to say on authority which cannot be contested, that of the Duke himself, and that of every member of his mission, all of whom I saw during the stay of the special mission continually, confirmed by the testimony of Catholics who were in a position to know what had passed.

When the Duke had returned to England and rendered account of his official relations, he went back to Rome at the head of the English Catholic pilgrimage, he being the chief of the Catholic nobility and gentry of the kingdom, but with no mission, secret or otherwise, from, or relation with, the English Government; nor did he ever enter into any negotiations on the subject of the Irish question with the officials of the Vatican. All reports and rumors to the contrary are without any foundation in fact. To any one who knows the Duke it is only necessary to know that this is his statement, and as he has in various forms and on different occasions distinctly declared to me that he not only had no mission of any character beyond that of the jubilee ceremonial, but had no knowledge of any mission of a political character, there is no justification for the persistence in maintaining that the Duke has either failed in his mission, or is about to return to England to report on the results of it; or in attaching to his stay or departure any political importance. The Duke is not by nature a politician or a diplomat, but a shrewd, common-sense English gentleman, a devoted Catholic, and a most loyal supporter of the Crown and the present Government. To these qualifications and that of being the hereditary representative of English Catholicism, he owes his being appointed as the head of the special embassy for the jubilee; and beyond this there is nothing.

But there is more than this to be said. The English Government is not in a position to enter into negotiation with the Pope on the question of Ireland, or to ask for any assistance from the Vatican in the arrangement of the Irish complication, for the simple reason that if concessions are asked others must be made, and there is nothing that the Government could concede in return. The Catholics are, after a period of bigotry and intolerance on the part of English public opinion quite as bad as that complained of now in Spain, placed on a footing of absolute equality, as far as depends on

the law, with Protestants; and beyond this no government can go; and that this is realized by the Pope is shown by his reply to the address of the English deputation, in which he referred with special unction to the complete liberty which the Church enjoyed in England.

To obtain for Ireland privileges for the Church which it has not in England, would be too evidently chimerical for the shrewd Vatican negotiators to put such a proposition forward; as they can see (with no exceptional knowledge of English affairs) that such a concession would be disastrous to any government making it, and would be untenable; and the Church never commits the folly of making idle demands. In a Protestant country, all that the Church can hope for is perfect equality, and nobody knows this better than the Pope's advisers. The only thing that the English Government could do to gratify the Pope would be the establishment of diplomatic intercourse with the Vatican, and this is clearly seen by the Church authorities here to be impossible at present, not on account of the indisposition of the Government itself, but from the popular superstition that the Church is still intent on the overthrow of the present dynasty and the restoration of—what, it is difficult to conjecture; and the popular belief that the entire body of English Catholics are in a conspiracy to change the Government, or, as it is expressed, "They are Catholics first and Englishmen afterwards." The English Catholics are so well aware of this that they would unanimously warn the Pope against making such a demand as useless, though they know that the attainment of it would be the highest gratification to him.

Moreover, the confession of weakness on the part of the English Government in asking for outside assistance to regulate its internal difficulties would be as disastrous as the breaking down of the present policy, because it would make a foreign potentate the master of the position. Then, although the Government of Mr. Gladstone made an attempt to arrange a quasi-diplomatic relation with the Vatican, it is certain that a similar attempt now would be used against the present Government by the Liberals, and might lead to the overthrow of the Ministry. These are the intrinsic difficulties in negotiation with the Vatican on the Irish question. The English Government has neither entered into nor attempted to establish negotiations with the Pope on the basis of "Do ut des" with regard to the submission of Ireland, nor, so far as can be known, or is known by the supposed negotiators, on any other political matter since the regulation of the Goa question more than a year ago. It has (and in my opinion most wisely) left the entire problem to the deliberations of the Pope and his advisers, and with results which are entirely satisfactory, if I am accurately informed, and which, if not everything that the English Government could desire, are all that it could hope for.

The declarations, made in the most impressive and pointed manner by the Pope on occasion of the reception of the Irish delegation, are unequivocal in their condemnation of the manner in which the agitation in Ireland has been conducted; and when we confront them with the usual reticence of Papal declarations under similar circumstances, they will be seen to be very significant. The Pope said, after expressing his affection for Ireland:

"To this feeling of affection we have recently given abundant expression in sending our venerable brother the Archbishop of Damietta, with certain instructions bearing upon the present state of affairs; that we may be aided