

Notes [Jun, 1887]

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June, 1887

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Fifty years more of dust-licking before an out-worn, meaningless superstition, and we are to make our continued want of energy and common sense an occasion of national rejoicing! National self-abasement for our folly would be more to the point.

* * *

What possible meaning has all this cant about loyalty to the poor old German, who for fifty years has allowed herself to wear the cap and bells as Queen of England? Truly our civilization, from the British Constitution to the women's dress improvers, has grown into such monstrous shapes that it is hard to discover its relation to the reason of mankind.

* * *

When the sovereign of England was a great military leader, like the First and Third Edwards, or the center of a national idea like Elizabeth, there was some meaning, though there might be little wisdom, in talking of loyalty. But Victoria is simply the most scandalous sinecurist in the land, and yet the workers are badgered or wheedled out of their pence by primrose dames and the like empty headed sentimentalists, to show their loyalty by making her a further present of money. For 68 years they have supported her in luxury, what has she done for them in return?

* * *

Before another fifty years are over and gone the workers of the whole civilized world will be asking some such question in right good earnest; asking it with a determination to get an answer that will set it at rest for ever; asking it not of kings and queens alone, but of ruling men and ruling classes of every sort and condition.

* * *

In the little *divertissement* in Irish affairs lately caused by the *Times*, the Irish actors in the comedy at St. Stephens would have played a better part if they had allowed the mud thrown at them to dry and drop off, and a better part still if they had boldly avowed their willingness to be associated in name with the extremists of their party.

* * *

If but for one thing, the present system of legislation should be condemned to die the death, and that is for the way in which it makes rogues of those who might be honest men enough. Among the so-called representatives of the people, who is there who is not eating his own words, or stifling the feeble aspirations after freedom and justice of which he was delivered on election platforms?

* * *

What an awkward position that was at St. Austell for a sometime "friend of the poor and champion of economy," to be publicly confronted by the question, "Is it true that you refused to

accept the office of Secretary to the Local Board until the salary had been raised from £1,200 to £1,500?"

* * *

The question remained unanswered; and yet it seems the extra £300 had been demanded only because it was feared the lesser sum would be regarded by the agricultural laborers as a slight put upon their special representative! This delicacy of feeling has no doubt been much appreciated. It is possible, however, that the agricultural and all other tax-burdened laborers, may come to contemplate the cropping of their tribunes' salaries with a philosophic calm.

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