

WHEN a man leaves a Government on account of a difference of opinion he generally sulks and very often turns against his former colleagues. On the question which occasioned his secession, at all events, if he has a good opportunity, he can seldom refrain from vindicating himself at their expense. Mr. Bright has neither sulked nor turned against his colleagues; he has continued to give them a hearty support; and on the Egyptian Question, which occasioned his secession, though opportunities of vindicating himself at their expense have abounded, he has been magnanimously silent. He has now shown the chivalry of his nature in a more marked way. If there was a division in the late Cabinet on the subject of Coercion, it may be pretty safely assumed that Mr. Bright was in the minority. He proclaimed that "force was no remedy," forgetting that though force is no remedy for constitutional grievance, it is a remedy and the only possible remedy for murderous conspiracy and attempts to excite civil war. But he knows that Lord Spencer has honourably done his duty, and that the men who have been accusing him of judicial murder and every sort of infamy are slanderers and traitors. No doubt he sees with the scorn of a generous nature Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke slinking away under fire from the side of the colleague for whose acts they are just as responsible as that colleague himself. He comes forward from his retirement, places himself at Lord Spencer's side, and deals slander and treason a straightforward and manly blow. Called to account in the House of Commons, where the calumniators thought they could rely on the promised aid of Tory Rowdyism, he deals a second blow heavier than the first, under which the whole confederacy collapses, the Parnellites yelling with rage and upbraiding their Tory allies who have not the effrontery to fulfil their compact. A refreshing incident is this to all the friends of honour and of the country; yet it has its unpleasant side, because it shows that if anything like Mr. Bright's courage and firmness had been shown by Parliament at the outset, the mischief would never have reached its present height nor would the unity of the nation have been put in peril. Amidst his righteous wrath Mr. Bright we may be sure preserved his dignity. Lord Ebrington forgot his dignity when he used such a word as "blackguard" in a public speech. Yet it is difficult to say what room there is for that word in the vocabulary if it is not to be applied to those who like the Parnellites bring against such a man as Lord Spencer a charge of murdering the innocent by means of suborned testimony and for a political purpose, when they well know, every one of them, that the charge is a foul falsehood and that they would not dare to utter it if they could possibly be called to account.

It is not unlikely that the bold and generous stand made by Mr. Bright may have had its effect in bringing about the revolt of Conservative honour against the intrigue of Lord Randolph Churchill with the Parnellites. Liegemen of Mr. Parnell, both in Munster and at New York, have been exulting in the belief that their hero, having succeeded in playing the two sets of office-seekers against each other, had brought the whole nation to his feet. They now see that the office-seekers are not all England, and that Disunionism has still something to overcome. It would have a good deal to overcome if the sound and patriotic portion of the community could only find for itself a worthy leader. The *Standard*, which has denounced Lord Randolph Churchill unsparingly, is not only the principal organ of the party, but has hitherto rather belonged to the Tory Democratic wing; its editor is understood to have himself strong democratic leanings, and it supported with great ardour Mr. Disraeli's measure of household suffrage. Its estimate of Lord Randolph Churchill and his policy is the same as ours. It regards him as an imitator of Lord Beaconsfield without a fiftieth part of Lord Beaconsfield's ability. He has shown, it must be owned, a full measure of Lord Beaconsfield's political morality. In frankly proclaiming that the one thing to be regarded in politics is victory, no matter by what means it may be gained and let moralists say what they may, he blurts out the principle upon which his master acted through a long and brilliant career. Not Toryism or Jingoism but the corruption of public principle and public character in England was the unpardonable sin of Lord Beaconsfield in patriotic eyes. The outcome of Beaconsfield training is the profligacy of Lord Randolph Churchill. A crisis has now arrived in Lord Randolph's fortunes and in those of his party. It will presently appear whether the Rowdy element, of which he is the embodiment as well as the head, and which hopes to triumph under his leadership, is able to quell or absorb that section of the party which, true to its old traditions and professed principles, refuses for the gratification of a schoolboy ambition to be dragged into treason and infamy. In the cities the Rowdies have to a great extent the party organization in their hands; but in the rural districts it can hardly have passed out of the hands of the country gentlemen who as a body are independent of office and retain a sense of political honour. To Disraeli's schemes it was essential to have under his influence such a bellwether as the old Lord Derby, without whose countenance he could not possibly have

succeeded in the "education" of the party. Disraeli's imitator is evidently trying to make the same use of the Marquis of Salisbury, and so far as the Marquis's character is concerned, he might very likely succeed if he had a tenth part of Disraeli's address. But Disraeli had too much tact ever to bring matters to such a crisis as this. It seems impossible that high-minded men should fail to see that they have a common interest and a common duty far above this wretched strife of factions and intriguers.

UPON the accession of a Tory Government the Cobden Club, as a matter of course, stands to its arms. But it is in the last degree improbable that even if the Salisbury Ministry should be confirmed in power by the result of the elections there will be any great change in the tariff policy of the country. The English artizans would not suffer a protective tax to be laid on their food, the farmers would not suffer a protective tax to be laid on manufactured articles of their consumption. The immense expansion of trade and the marvellous growth of prosperity since the repeal of the Corn Laws have made their natural impression; the mind of the nation is made up, and nothing could be more decisive than the answer of the artizans when, some years ago it was proposed to them to revive Protection. In that vast hive of various industries local depression must occasionally prevail; but no person of sense imagines that the cause is commercial freedom. The cry of "Fair Trade" was a good deal louder ten years ago than it is now. It is very self-denying on the part of our Canadian Protectionists to be pressing their principle for adoption on the British, since the first consequence of a conversion of England to Protection would be the closing of her ports against Canadian grain. Reciprocity is a different question. Not being pursists of Free Trade, or worshippers of any economical principle irrespectively of its practical effects, we have never been able to see why England should not meet hostile tariffs with retaliatory duties; but the object of such a policy would not be the revival of Protection; it would be the enforcement of Free Trade. The commission of inquiry appointed by the Tory Government is, we are persuaded, little more than a sop; and the Canadian farmer may continue to sow and reap in the assurance that the advice of Canadian Protectionists who would close against him British markets is not likely to find favour in the land of Adam Smith and Peel.

OVER the crater of the Russian volcano a smoke-cloud of rumours still hangs though the volcanic fire is burning low. Daily news of the negotiations must be furnished to the papers, and furnished it is. Narratives of debates in the Council Chamber of St. Petersburg are given us in which the Czar is made to behave like the Great Mogul of story. Now we are told that the war is only put off till after the election in England, now that Bismarck has interposed and guaranteed the independence of Persia. In the first report there is just so much of rational significance that if the prospects of the Tory Party in the election should seem bad, Lord Salisbury will be greatly tempted to press the quarrel with Russia and to found upon it an appeal to the warlike spirit of the nation. The second report may be taken as a fantastic indication of the fact that Bismarck, who was personally jealous of Mr. Gladstone, is not jealous of Lord Salisbury, and is inclined for his part to act in a more amiable spirit towards England. But it is evident that the Gladstone settlement is being carried into effect. No renewal of preparations for war is visible on either side. On the side of Lord Salisbury there is faintly discernible a tendency to recede from the "Buffer State" plan for the defence of British India and to fall back on the "scientific frontier," which was the policy of Lord Beaconsfield. This would render Lord Salisbury, if anything, rather less tenacious respecting the question of the Zulficar Pass, or anything connected with the frontier of the Buffer State. We have reason to be thankful that war is not impending when we find Lord Harrowby for the Government and Lord Northbrook for the Opposition warning the commercial ports of England that they must not look for defence to the Royal Navy, which will have overwhelming duties of its own, but bestir themselves in providing for their own defence. What would be the fate of commercial ports in the dependencies?

It is one thing to hold that people would be better with less fermented liquor than they now drink, or in some cases without any fermented liquor at all, and to try to propagate that opinion by teaching and example; it is another thing to seek to impose total abstinence by compulsory legislation. The question as to the wholesomeness of alcohol generally or in any particular case medical science only can decide, and the verdict of the highest medical science at present seems to be that alcohol should be very sparingly taken, but that when sparingly taken it does no harm. Arguments on this point, however, are nothing to the purpose when the justice or expediency of Prohibition or of the Scott Act is under discussion.