

Exchequer in the Commons." It will be observed further that this virtuous disclaimer was written at the very time Mr. Parnell was seeking an interview with the Conservative leaders.

THIS gentleman who, as the *Times* says, has been thus quite recently "convicted of having deliberately and repeatedly affirmed that which he knows to be false," now has the matchless effrontery to deny that the Irish party and the National League are in union with American Fenians; and he unblushingly characterises Lord Hartington's statements to that effect as untrue. "I know nothing whatever," he says, "of any Fenian organisation in Ireland or America, beyond what I have learned from the newspapers. I have never had any communication with the leaders of such organisations, or accepted any alliance with them. I do not even know who the leaders are. No union of the National League and Fenians has ever been proposed." We dare say not—for they are one and the same thing, and no "union" is required. But did not Mr. Parnell personally attend the Convention of Fenians at Cincinnati? Is he not in communication with the Fenian leaders—whom he does not know!—but with whose dollars he and his band have been fighting this election? Lord Hartington and Lord Carnarvon are both, like Mr. Blake, men of unblemished honour and veracity, and to entangle their names in any connexion with this sorry fellow is an impertinence.

IN his rejoinder to the Duke of Westminster, Mr. Gladstone asserts that the civilised world has stamped England's Irish policy with discredit and disgrace. The "civilised world" that Mr. Gladstone has in view are his allies, the American-Irish who procured the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, with the whole dynamitard rank and file, from Patrick Ford to O'Donovan Rossa; the American Press, who think England ought not to object to a dissolution of her power in order to solve the universal Irish question, which presses for solution in America as well as in England, and which it would therefore be highly desirable to settle—at the sole expense of England; the Canadian Home Rule Press, who show their loyalty to British institutions and to morality by encouraging treason and nerving the arm of the assassin; the Quebec Assembly and kindred influential centres of enlightenment; the envious and hopeful Anglophobes of France, Germany, and the Continent in general; and, finally, all the ill-informed or perverted "masses" in the United Kingdom who have voted for Mr. Gladstone. The uncivilised world, on the other hand, which has stamped this gentleman's project as an amiable hallucination, are the opposites of all these; and having in self-preservation assisted in or sympathised with overthrowing him, they listen to his scoldings with regret indeed, but with perfect equanimity and confidence in the future.

IT is quite a new thing in British history for the Cabinet to seek the approval of the most malignant foes of the country before venturing to introduce its measures into Parliament. Yet this is what Mr. Gladstone did before submitting his Home Rule scheme to the House of Commons. In the words of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, the Secretary of State for War,—"Information was sought from the leaders of those millions of Irishmen in America, who form so serious an element in the people with whom we have to deal nowadays." The admission of this extraordinary proceeding was made by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman at a meeting of his constituents at Stirling; but these, although fellow-countrymen of Mr. Gladstone and therefore Gladstonites, not appearing, however, quite pleased with the idea of the British Government consulting Mr. O'Donovan Rossa, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Egan, on the policy to be pursued, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman went on to say that "the Cabinet had no direct communication with them, but means were used whereby their opinions were ascertained." That is to say, probably, that Mr. Herbert Gladstone, who does all his father's dirty work, did this, just as he is charged in general with the duty of revealing Cabinet secrets, whenever the publication may help his illustrious father's tactics.

IN his speech at Birmingham, Mr. Bright referred to the fact that during the last twenty years he had been three times a member of a Cabinet over which Mr. Gladstone presided, and added there was only one break in the harmony which prevailed between them. "That," he said, "was in regard to what took place in the year 1882, four years ago, on the occasion of what I deemed a great blunder, and I am afraid nationally a great crime, the bombardment of Alexandria." Who can doubt that the whole miserable Egyptian business from that day to this has been a series of both blunders and crimes; and who can doubt which of these men again is right on this Irish question?

MR. BRIGHT insists most justly on the plain fact that the trouble with Ireland is not political, but economical; and he refers for proof to the report of the Devonshire Commission (to which Mr. Gladstone had also referred in one of his speeches). That Commission was set on foot by Sir Robert Peel's Government, of which Mr. Gladstone was a member; it travelled over all Ireland; it took the evidence of a vast number of persons there; and it told everything. There has been no need for any further Commission since. It showed that the population of Ireland had increased from the time of the Union in 1801 from five millions to eight millions and over; it showed that at least two millions of the people of Ireland were tramps and beggars; it showed that the rate of wages over great portions of the country—the labouring men on farms, and so on—was not more than 6d. a day; it showed there was an amount of poverty which probably was not exceeded in its melancholy proportions in any Christian country in the world. But nobody who knows anything about the subject for a single moment would have the idea that that had arisen from the Union or from the direct action of the Government since the Union had taken place. Ireland had then eight millions of people depending for food greatly upon potatoes; and an unfavourable harvest not seldom occurring, large districts of the country were often in a condition of famine. But how could a Nationalist Parliament at Dublin have helped them? The great famine came—a dreadful famine; and, said Mr. Bright, "the population went on decreasing, but imagine what was the state of Ireland when the population was eight millions, imagine the scramble for the soil, how farms were seized at any price anybody could get a farm at, how farms were divided, and the cottagers and the peasantry were existing upon plots of land upon which it was scarcely possible for them to exist. In the west of Ireland, which is the great seat of the calamities of the country, the soil is poor and sterile. The climate is unfavourable and many seasons are bad, the people live upon their small plots of potatoes, and poverty in those circumstances increases and becomes intense and painful. But if that be so what will follow? Naturally will follow disorder and often crime, and an opportunity for anybody who chooses to harangue a suffering people, to create a great discontent and dissatisfaction with the Government; although it may be that the Government is as entirely free from any blame as the Corporation of Birmingham is free from any blame with regard to the poverty of some particular family in certain circumstances within your limits. . . . Now, in the west of Ireland scarcity verges on famine, suffering breeds disorder, disorder gives you food for agitation, and hence the movement is against the landowners. It is natural for these poor people who have these small plots of land and who are half living upon potatoes to think that if they could get rid of the landed proprietors the country would be redeemed, and they would be much better off. And thus you have the agitation against the landowners. The landowners for the most part are Protestants. To a considerable part they are English, and it comes home to the population—'If we could only get rid of these proprietors the land would be ours, and if we could get them out of the country the country would be ours.' That is the sort of movement that has been going on, and the movement, no doubt, among the bulk of those who have agitated is far more against the ownership of land in the hope of obtaining farms at a smaller rent, or at no rent if the landowners can be expelled from the country."

MR. JOHN MORLEY asserts that "none of the plans of the paper Unionists touch the enormous problem of restoring social order in Ireland." Yes: one of these plans is to turn out the imbecile Administration—it is almost absurd to call it a Government—of which Mr. Morley is so prominent a member, and institute in its place a firm and just Government. With this Administration will go its Irish co-partner, the National League; and the suppression of this treasonous conspiracy will remove the chief obstacle to the restoration of social order in Ireland.

THE minority in Ireland are the very flower of the Irish people. They are the breed of the Wellesleys, the Lawrences, the Robertses, the Beresfords, the Wolseleys. Yet, since the Parnellite conspiracy got the upper hand, what voice have they had in the affairs of Ireland? Are the brutish yells heard from the Irish benches in Parliament the voice of the Irish gentry? The truth is the Jacobins alone send representatives to the House of Commons; all other classes are represented only indirectly through the British members. And the British people cannot sell them to the American-Irish. As Lord Salisbury put it to his audience at the St. James's Hall: "Our history is one long promise to the Irish Loyalists to stand by them as they have stood by us;" and, while they are unwilling to go, they can never be handed over to the dominion of the Jacobins.