

WHEN a Governor-General of Canada suggests an international undertaking requiring the co-operation of two countries the foreign country addressed does not stop to enquire whether the suggestion be the result of a spontaneous impulse or carries with it the guarantees of an official overture. The outline of an international park at the Falls of Niagara, sketched by Lord Dufferin, would naturally be received at Albany as an intimation that Canada would be prepared to do its part towards realizing the project. This irresponsible form of initiative, if liable to repetition, would be found inconvenient, and the extent to which it committed the country would require to be defined. The State of New York has acted on Lord Dufferin's suggestion; the American side of the Falls is free; the work on our side has passed the initial stage of the necessary survey, by which the road to arbitration as a means of purchasing the land has been opened. Mr. Mowat, at first inclined to throw the cost on the Dominion, has now made it an object of ambition to see the work finished before he leaves office. He may fairly call upon the Dominion to bear its share in the work. An international park appeals to more than local interest. The first thing for Mr. Mowat to do is to strangle the railway scheme by which the cupidity of promoters sought to disfigure the Canadian bank of the river, and over which he took the precaution to retain the power of life and death. The importunity of the hackmen, which is a full match for their extortion, will survive the free park, and it will go hard with them if they cannot succeed in making the life of visitors wretched. But if the nuisance cannot in the nature of things be wholly abated, it can at least be minimized, and this end the Ontario Government should seek to attain at the earliest possible date. An international park may require for its police regulation something more than municipal administration. The violence of the wrangling hackmen's importunity is a sad shock to the reverential mood in which this great altar of nature can be surveyed to best advantage.

It was not to be expected that a movement which had gained so much headway as that in favour of the Scott Act would at once be brought to a stand, or that the tidal wave of dementia, to borrow a phrase from the *Bobcaygeon Independent*, would in an instant subside. Yet a resistance hastily got up, very slightly organized, and mostly in the hands of men untrained to the platform, has sufficed to defeat the Act in three out of the last six elections. The attention of the people has at last been in some degree awakened, and they have begun to see that objections to the system which has demoralized Maine and Vermont are not confined to traders in liquor but are shared by men independent of the trade and with a temperance platform of their own. They have been brought to a sense of this late, it is true, yet not too late. The counties which have preserved their freedom will probably in the end set free the rest. A chequer-board of contradictory legislation cannot be maintained forever. The State cannot continue vigorously to prosecute as criminal on one side of an arbitrary line that which it licenses and makes a source of revenue on the other. It will soon appear that the free counties have an advantage in the eyes of most people who are choosing an abode, not only or principally on account of their exemption from the particular law, but on account of their general exemption from Blue Law ascendancy and the dominion of preachers over private life. Already it is beginning to be perceived that the question is one of social liberty, and men are heard to say that having burst the bonds of the Roman priesthood they are not going to submit to any other ecclesiastical yoke. It cannot be affirmed that experience of this contest is calculated to strengthen our faith in the working of elective institutions. It shows that on questions not identified with political party the power of an organized minority may be dangerously great. We have before referred to the fact that something like two-fifths of the electors have generally stayed at home, and that the measure represented as the will of the majority and as sacred on that account has really received the approval of barely one-third of the total vote. The rich are indifferent because the Act does not affect them. Others are indifferent because they know that, Act or no Act, they will be able to get any liquor that they want and it will be only going to the druggist instead of going to the tavern. Weather and other casual influences have a great effect. At St. Catharines the election has been stupidly or astutely fixed, it seems, at a time when all the sailors, the most important part of that community, will be absent. But even when present and opposed in his own mind to the Act, a citizen needs pressure to bring him to the polls when a host of reverend gentlemen are assuring him that the cause of Prohibition is the cause of God. The Legislature, however, was inexcusable in omitting to apply to the public conscience in this case the test which ought to be applied in all such cases. An absolute majority of the whole constituency ought to have been required for the adoption of the Act. In regard to

by-laws granting money this safeguard is provided, and it is still more necessary when the measure to be voted on is one by which private liberty will be infringed. In fighting, as they did, against the requirement of an absolute majority the Prohibitionists bore witness against themselves that they had not popular conviction on their side; and we believe that their witness was true. At Ottawa the Senate amendments would probably have been carried had they, when reinserted by the Senate, been at once submitted to the House of Commons. But in this case, as in the case of Orange Incorporation, the Master of the House wishes to keep the votes of both sides, and in both cases he takes pretty much the same line.

"A POINT," says Mr. Morley in *Macmillan*, "that cannot escape attention in the crisis is the peremptory dissipation of favourite illusions as to the Irish Vote not counting. The notion that the two English parties should establish an agreement that, if either of them should chance to be beaten by a majority due to Irish auxiliaries, the victors should act as if they had lost the division has been cherished by some who are not exactly simpletons in politics. We now see what such a notion is worth. It has proved to be worth just as much as might have been expected by any onlooker who knows the excitement of the players, the fierceness of the game, and the irresistible glitter of the prizes. When it suits their own purpose, the two English parties will unite to baffle or to crush the Irish; but neither of them will ever scruple to use the Irish in order to baffle or to crush their own rivals." There is the true account of the matter given by one who is perfectly well qualified to judge. If the surrender of the national interest to rebellion and disunion were an act of conscience, however Quixotic, we might regard it with respect, and even deem it of good omen to the country, whose greatness can never be separated from justice. If it were an act of policy, however unintelligible to us, we might be prepared to believe that those actually engaged understood better than ourselves the necessities of the case. It is neither an act of conscience nor an act of policy; but a betrayal of the country to its ruin by the selfish madness of contending factions. It has its source neither in a sense of equity nor in a sense of necessity, but in "the excitement of the players, the fierceness of the game, and the irresistible glitter of the prizes." And people are told that they are renegades from Liberalism because they do not applaud the destruction of the greatest Liberal power in Europe by such influences and for such objects as these! Is Ireland herself likely to be wisely handled, and are her permanent interests likely to be carefully consulted by two parties of political gamblers, who, in their frantic eagerness to overreach each other, have thrown patriotism and honour to the winds? "As for the new Government," says Mr. Morley, "sharp critics, and some of the sharpest are to be found on their own benches, do not shrink from declaring that they came into power as Mr. Parnell's lieutenants. His vote has installed them; it can displace them; it has its price, and the price will be paid. In the whole transaction, the Irish not only count, they almost count for everything." To talk of the Irish is a fallacy. The majority of the Irish members are loyal to the Union, and so is still a great part of the Irish nation. But for "Irish" substitute "rebel," and what Mr. Morley says is perfectly true. Let believers in party Government mark how it can bring down to the dust the head of the greatest and proudest among the nations. Mr. Morley has spoken very bitterly and contemptuously of the Orangemen. If he could only see how the unphilosophic constancy and patriotism of these men will show hereafter by the side of the philosophic intrigue which is bartering for "a glittering prize" the interests of the country and those of civilization at the same time!

THE effects of faction in undermining the noble traditions of British duty were shown the other day by the conduct of Sir Peter Lumsden in allowing himself to be used by a political Opposition against the Government which he served. A more signal and more baneful instance of the same fatal tendency has now occurred. Hitherto it has been a point of honour with each succeeding Ministry to accept and uphold the official acts of its predecessors. Under no other conditions can executive government be maintained. This rule has been observed, especially with regard to the department of justice, which would at once be wrecked if the decisions of each Minister were liable to repudiation by his successor. There can be no sort of doubt what in any such case would have been the conduct of Sir Robert Peel or Lord John Russell, even when the party struggle was fiercest. Either of those statesmen would have repelled as a suggestion of dishonour the thought of tampering for a party purpose with the authority of the Executive. But Lord Salisbury is not Sir Robert Peel or Lord John Russell. Through Lord Randolph Churchill, this Conservative Minister and loud pretender to high principle has made, for the purpose of