

cessful, gave a free lunch and free railway ticket to every enrolled member of every Liberal association in eight surrounding constituencies. The secretaries of the local associations were instructed to canvass for members to accept the invitation. Where special trains were of no use, rides in four-horse breaks were freely offered, and contracts for refreshments were judiciously placed in the hands of local supporters. A park was hired for the occasion, bands engaged, huge marquees erected, and roundabouts, swings, shooting-galleries, and all the amusements common to a country fair provided. A fixed quantity of beer was given to every luncheon, while the public were able to get unlimited liquor on the ground, and every inn in the neighbourhood was kept open till midnight. What wonder that working men in thousands joined the Gladstonian Party that day! But it is eloquent of the demoralisation and mental perversion produced by Gladstonianism that men like John Morley should be pleased with such a fool's paradise: it would be interesting to know to what extent such demonstrations have coloured Mr. Gladstone's recent calculations as to Home Rule gains.

BESIDES providing his hearers with these creature comforts, not forgetting something to drink, Mr. Morley baited his hook with a promise that if they would "summon back the old pilot," the Irish question being got rid of, legislation would follow on Disestablishment and the liquor traffic—questions which the Gladstonians would be able to approach with "clean hands and clean consciences." But to this seductive bid for the temperance vote, Mr. T. W. Russell, the Member for South Tyrone, makes a very good answer in a letter to the *Times*. He points out that Mr. Gladstone has never in any way shown himself favourable to the Prohibitionist cause. He was the originator of the grocer's license and the wine license, which are so much objected to by all abstainers, and it was he who made the proposal "for attaching a locomotive public-house to the principal trains in the Kingdom," to defeat which the whole strength of the temperance party had to be exerted.

SIR HENRY JAMES has subsequently written to the *Times* pointing out that this "treating" is a gross violation not only of the spirit but of the letter of the Corrupt Practices Act. One of the principal objects of that Act was to obtain a free expression of political opinion by removing all the influences which wealth could exercise. It was thought desirable that rich and poor candidates and parties should fight with equal weapons. But if two meetings be held simultaneously, one under the conditions of that of Templecombe, the other without refreshment or railway tickets being provided, surely a greater number of people will signify their acquiescence with the political opinions expressed at the first meeting than at the second. Thus the objects of the Corrupt Practices Acts are defeated. It matters not at what stage of the political contest such practices and influences are exercised. The corruption which causes a man to profess a political faith is as injurious as that which induces him to fulfil it by recording his vote. And Sir Henry James expresses the hope that upon an election petition there will be judges strong enough to say that the candidate who has reaped the advantage of such an appeal has not been elected by pure or legal means.

MR. GLADSTONE'S lieutenants are, however, far outdone in corrupt practices by Mr. Gladstone himself. The denouncer of the infamy of Pitt now offers Disestablishment in Wales as a bribe to secure the Welsh vote in favour of Gladstonianism. Having himself capitulated to Mr. Parnell, and surrendered Ireland, Mr. Gladstone seems prepared, if needful, to surrender Wales, Scotland, and England in turn, rather than that the Parnellite conspiracy shall be thwarted. When did Mr. Pitt put up the institutions of his country for sale at Dutch auction in this fashion? Can we conceive such conduct as even possible for Mr. Pitt, or even Mr. Gladstone, before his terrible fall of two years ago? The surrender of the Church, for such a purpose—we are not concerned here to defend the Establishment in Wales,—is peculiarly flagitious in Mr. Gladstone, who long ago constituted himself the champion of a State Church as the visible embodiment of the religious principle in the State. On the reputation so earned much of his influence has been built up and has rested in the past; he has never disclaimed the advantages of the position; and the only reason that can be discovered in any of his recent acts and speeches for now going directly in the teeth of his avowed principles is an eager desire to supplant a rival Government. If this sale of old principles for votes goes on, the throne will soon follow the altar, and property will follow that: property and all else in England will be held by a precarious tenure when once it is seen that demagogues may purchase power with it.

THE severe check Russia has met with may be a new grave danger to peace. She can hardly sit patient under the accumulated bafflements of the past few weeks. The long-extended *pourparlers* with Turkey as to sending a Russo-Turkish Commissioner to Bulgaria came to nothing, because the Porte, being once again anti-Russian, is only "playing" the Czar; the Bulgarian Government is most careful to give no loophole for foreign interference, by scrupulously fulfilling all possible obligations towards the suzerain Power. The visit of the Italian Prime Minister to Prince Bismarck has resulted, to use the words of the German Foreign Office, in a complete agreement between the two statesmen to preserve peace in union with Austria-Hungary, to do all they can to prevent a European war, and in case of necessity to take common defensive measures. This means that Russia shall not be permitted to take Constantinople, nor France Morocco; and that if either Russia or France attacks Germany, they will attack the three allied Central European Powers. There can be no doubt, the Italian Prime Minister told a reporter, that Italy, like all other European States, has every reason to dread the advance of Russia to Constantinople. She cannot allow the Mediterranean to become a Russian lake. These remarkably plain words, though aimed at Russia, strike also at France, who is told that she will not be allowed to increase her influence in the Mediterranean by seizing Morocco. They are a direct menace in certain consequences to both Powers. It is supposed that the Czar, impatient of continuous defeat, has of late meditated a march on Constantinople; it is known that France stretched her hand towards Morocco, on the death of the Sultan being reported as imminent; and this is the answer of Germany and Italy to both. It is good to see the two youngest States in Europe—the elder not much more than a quarter of a century old—acting as police in this effective manner.

SHOULD France make an attempt on Morocco, she will drive Spain into the Central-European alliance, and thus finish surrounding herself with a cordon of hostile States. Morocco is neighbour to Spain, and Spain, ever since she expelled the Moors, has regarded their country as a reversionary estate to which she is natural heir. She will never permit France to add Morocco to Algeria, and in preventing this she may count on the active assistance of Italy—possibly of the whole Central-European alliance. For the question is of European importance: France in possession of Morocco would hold a key to the Mediterranean, which, with Russia seated on the Bosphorus, would convert the Mediterranean into a Franco-Russian lake. That is a result that the rest of Europe, and especially Italy, can never permit. And England may safely count this time on all taking a fair share in defending themselves, whether against Russia or France.

THE French Ministry is seemingly in a perilous way. The power of M. Clemenceau and the extreme Left is increasing, while a considerable defection of the Right may be expected as a result of the Comte de Paris's Manifesto. With such diminished strength the Rouvier Cabinet has to face the Chambers, hampered by domestic and foreign difficulties—the Caffarel scandal, the Morocco crisis, the refractoriness of Madagascar. In the last named case, it seems, the Premier of Madagascar has exiled the Foreign Minister, who was a friend to France, and has demanded that the letter by which Admiral Miot obtained the Treaty of Tamatave, and which explains away most of the provisions of that treaty, should be formally recognised by the French. The Government in Paris has always ignored this letter, and the French Resident, M. le Myre de Vilers, rather than give way, on September 21st hauled down his flag and threatened to quit the capital. This no doubt was only show—and apparently unsuccessful show; for it is not likely the Madagascar Premier acted without counting the cost, and determining to stick to his guns. It is said in Paris that diplomatic relations have been resumed. The Government at any rate would hardly dare to ask the Chambers for money and conscripts for a new Madagascar war; the Radicals are opposed to the Ferry Colonial policy; and if war is involved, the fate of the Ministry is sealed. With Germany threatening as now, the French peasantry will never sanction another Colonial war; they will willingly pay and fight in defence of hearth and home, but they have a hearty objection to spend money or life in furthering detested Colonial enterprises.

FROM a census recently taken in China for taxing purposes, it appears that the total number of souls ruled by the Emperor of China exceeds four hundred millions. As the population of India exceeds two hundred and fifty millions, the Indians and Chinese together constitute more than half the human race. It looks as if in another century, if civilisation receives no great check, the world will belong in the main to the Teutons, the Slavs, the Chinese, and the East Indians.