

tionists who wish for their commercial purposes to inflame hatred of Great Britain, are vociferous on the platform and in the press; while on the other side hardly a voice is heard. Yet the silent feeling of the great mass of native Americans assuredly is such that it would be utterly impossible for the Nationalists to make use of the power of the United States for the enforcement of the Irish demands. On the other hand, serious danger may arise from weakness. Let the separate nationality of Ireland be once established by the creation of an Irish Parliament, and the recognition of Ireland as an independent nation by the United States will almost certainly follow. As to the military force of Fenianism itself, Canada, having twice encountered it in the field, is in a position to assure Great Britain that it will not hurl her from her Ocean Throne. If the British people could only hear by anticipation the yell of triumph which is suspended on the lips of their enemies in America, only till Mr. Gladstone shall have done the work, the sound might arouse them to a sense of national honour.

Another bugbear is the reminiscence of the unsuccessful attempt to subdue the American Colonies. As resistance to the demands of the Colonists failed, it seems to be argued that resistance to any demands must fail, and that it is cheaper and better to yield at once. The difference between the military power of the American Colonists and that of the Land League is considerable; the armies and fleets of the Empire failed to overcome the first; a single brigade of regulars would scatter the second to the four winds. But, apart from this, the precedent is totally irrelevant, and the omen is void of significance. What the Americans demanded was redress of a specific grievance, taxation without representation, which was refused when it ought to have been granted, and when by granting it an end might have been put to the quarrel, and good-will might have been restored between the Mother Country and the Colonies. They did not demand separation, to which most of them were heartily opposed, much less did they demand anything analogous to the dismemberment of the United Kingdom. Had they demanded anything analogous to the dismemberment of the United Kingdom, resistance, and uncompromising resistance, would have been right, and would undoubtedly have been successful. By the Irish no specific grievance has been put forward or so much as named. No redress, therefore, in their case can restore peace. They have risen in conjunction with the foreign enemies of the country for the destruction of the Union and of the British power; to sever, as their leader said in a speech which has never been retracted or qualified, "the last link which binds Ireland to Great Britain." To disregard the remonstrances of the Americans was folly and injustice; to combat the attempt of the Irish is the dictate of national self-preservation. To Mr. Gladstone's curiously constructed mind the conduct of the Americans to the Seceding Southern States seems to afford a precedent for consenting to Irish Secession. The Americans, he says, gave the South "autonomy." They did nothing of the kind. When the South struck for autonomy they put forth their military force against it, and having subdued it, and made it pass through a political quarantine, replaced it in the Union from which it had attempted to withdraw. Mr. Gladstone cannot do better than follow their example rightly understood, and at the same time that of the Swiss Confederation, which, when the Catholic Cantons attempted to secede, put rebellion down without hesitation and with the happiest result.

Had the Pope really instructed the Sacred Congregation on extraordinary ecclesiastical affairs to study Ireland in the light of Mr. Gladstone's speech, His Holiness would have been wise in his generation. It is his game, for the present, that is being played, whatever struggle between his liegemen and those of the Red Republic the future may have in store. The restriction on the establishment of any particular religion which Mr. Gladstone proposes is just as devoid of a practical sanction as the other restrictions, and it would probably be the first to be set at naught. The public schools would at once be made Roman Catholic; State subventions, on educational or eleemosynary pretences, would be given to the monasteries, as they were under Irish rule in New York, and virtual Establishment would speedily follow. Priests, therefore, may well applaud when the Roman Catholic and Rielite Legislature of Quebec passes resolutions in favour of Home Rule in Ireland. That a separate Ireland will be a Quebec they have the best reason to hope. The British Nonconformists cling to Mr. Gladstone, in the hope that he will disestablish the Church of England. Will they support him in a measure which will practically lead to the establishment of Romanism in Ireland?

Now comes the Land Scheme, which is to wait on the Home Rule Scheme as its tender, and to buy a way through the House of Lords. The difficulty has been to make the bribe sufficient for the Lords without estranging the Radicals. May such difficulties ever attend any attempt to induce legislators to tamper in their own pecuniary interest with the integrity and the honour of the nation! The Land Scheme consists, as was anticipated, in raising a vast sum to be advanced to the Irish Parlia-

ment for the purpose of buying out the landlords and creating a peasant proprietary in their room. The money is to be repaid by the new proprietors to the Irish Parliament in the shape of rents which are to be collected by the Government, and in this way the Irish Parliament is to be enabled to repay the loan to Great Britain. The obvious and fatal objection is that the rents which are deemed so oppressive, and which are so difficult of collection now, will neither be less oppressive nor less difficult of collection when for the landlord is substituted the State, nor will eviction become sweeter when it is the Government that evicts. The rigour of the landlord's demands upon his tenant is softened, at least to some extent and in some cases, by personal relations; and in bad seasons or times of misfortune the landlord, being, if not beneficent, at all events made of flesh and blood, usually remits some part of his claim. The Receiver-General's office not being made of flesh and blood, but of cast-iron, would take no notice of bad seasons or of misfortunes: it would invariably and inexorably exact the uttermost farthing. To expect that smiling contentment would be the universal attendant of this change seems sanguine. But everybody knows what the result would really be. The "State" is to be a Parliament consisting of Irish politicians; the politicians are to be elected by the peasant proprietors; they will not dare to collect the rents; probably they will at once ensure their own popularity and their seats by proclaiming that the rents cannot be collected. Ireland would then repudiate her debt to Great Britain. When she did, how could payment be enforced? Here we are brought to the inherent and fundamental weakness of the whole plan. It is a bargain, which there will be no legal means of enforcing. The loan, if Ireland refuses payment, could be recovered from her only at the point of the bayonet. As was said before, to avoid the necessity of coercing the Moonlighters Great Britain is taking upon herself the burden and the peril of coercing the whole Irish nation.

Suppose the peasant proprietary brought into existence by this vast process of expropriation, how is its existence to be guaranteed? How is it to be shielded against the action of the economical forces if they tend to a fresh aggregation of estates? Are the holdings created under the Land Act to be rendered inalienable? That was the course taken by the legislator of Sparta, who at all events went straight to his mark. The question is the more practical inasmuch as the natural destination of a great part of Ireland, the climate being too moist for grain, is grazing, so that there would be strong inducements to throwing farms together. Is the union of two or more holdings by inheritance or devise to be forbidden? Is the taking of rent to be wholly prohibited, and is every man to be obliged himself to cultivate his own lot? Is mortgage to be interdicted as well as sale? If it is, how can the small farmer be enabled to stock or improve his farm with better agricultural implements than his spade or fork, or to tide over a bad season? If it is not, there will be foreclosure and sale, perhaps to the owner of adjoining land. Supposing the Receiver-General to do his duty there will certainly be evictions and consequent sales. The money-lender is already in force upon the scene, and the more lawless the country becomes and the greater the insecurity of loans the higher the rate of interest will rise and the more foreclosures there will be. It is vain to imagine that the economical condition of a country can be changed all at once by the stroke of a legislative pen.

By the present legislation the main root of the evil is not even touched. Mr. Gladstone has barely shown himself conscious of the fact that in certain districts of Ireland there is a congestion of the population. Suppose Quebec were an island instead of being coterminous with a country into which her redundant population can freely overflow, would any system of land tenure that could be devised prevent her people from pressing by their rapid multiplication on the means of subsistence afforded them by her niggard soil. There are probably now something like ten millions of Irish, or people of Irish blood, in the United States or the Colonies. All these complain that they have been deprived of their country by the tyranny of Great Britain. If they were all restored to their country, what would be their fate? A cabin and a wretched potato ground, swarming with children who cannot be fed, will hardly be made the abode of plenty and civilization by alterations in the Land Tenure or by restoring Grattan's Parliament. Nor will the influence of the Church on industrial energy be annulled, or the fees which she exacts rendered less burdensome by any legislative change whatever. The Irish problem, we repeat, is in its main character not political but economical. It is not to be solved in a moment by any nostrums or by any legerdemain; it can be solved only by a gradual process of which emigration from the congested districts, and the restoration to the bog or mountain of land unfit for tillage must certainly form a part. The Irish question is not a riddle with a single answer to be found out at once by a happy guess; it is a complex malady, the remedy for which also is complex and will take time.

It is another vulnerable point in the scheme of expropriation that the