

THE French Government went into the late elections confident of success, though to bystanders the signs of reaction were plainly visible; and before the last election in England Lord Beaconsfield was led by his electioneering agents throughout the country to believe that he would certainly be victorious. With regard to the coming English election, therefore, we accept the predictions of those engaged in the struggle with reserve, especially as there is an uncertain factor so large as the agricultural labourers' vote. But, so far as we can see through the dust of battle, the advantage is with the Liberal Party. At the same time, in that Party, the Radicals appear to be decidedly gaining the ascendancy. The enormous bribes which they hold out to the masses could hardly fail to tell; for the people, knowing nothing either of economy or of history, have no means of checking the extravagant promises made to them on the Socialistic platform. Lord Hartington has not seriously talked of retirement, but his language is tinged with despondency, while that of Mr. Chamberlain is jubilant and triumphant. The secession of a few Whig aristocrats to the Tory side has not much significance; the same thing has happened at every political crisis since the passing of the first Reform Bill. There would probably be a much larger secession, and one not confined to Whig aristocrats, but extending to moderate Liberals, were it not that Lord Randolph Churchill and his Tory Democracy repel all sensible and honourable men from the side which his ascendancy disgraces. The respectable organs of the Party do their best to keep him in the background, but the impertinence of his language, as well as the violence of his sentiments, takes with the Tory rowdies in the cities, and he is not to be shaken off. Liberal speakers, of course, are careful to give him all possible prominence, and to represent him as the typical Conservative. And now it is seen once more that nothing is to be gained by leaving the path of honour. Had Lord Salisbury kept that path; had he behaved in the hour of his country's peril with the magnanimous patriotism which his high rank and his great estate ought to have made as easy to him as it is difficult to an obscure and needy adventurer; had he thought of England instead of thinking only of his own pretensions and his personal feud with Mr. Gladstone; had he confined his opposition to the legislative measures of the Government and refused to embarrass the Executive in its struggle with the public enemy; had he preserved a tone of dignity and moderation instead of rivalling Mr. Bradlaugh in venomous violence and injustice to opponents, he would be morally in a most commanding position: all the Conservative and anti-revolutionary elements of the country would be gathering round him as their head, and, unless the nation were totally given up to Radicalism, he would have the fairest prospect of entering by a well-won victory into the possession of real power. But he has done the very reverse of all this. He has ended a career of reckless demagogism, of obstructionist and rowdy tactics in Parliament, and of practical complicity with Dismemberment by accepting the aid of rebels to help him into office. And the result, to all appearance, will be that he will have bought a few months not of power but of place by the moral ruin of his Party and his cause.

HAD Lord Salisbury behaved like the great chiefs of the Conservative Party before him he would now be standing before the nation as the champion of its integrity against Dismemberment. But on that question he has sold himself; and his only reasonable hope of a majority rests on the Irish vote in the English cities. To the great issue of the hour he dares allude only in ambiguous phrase and with bated breath, while his lieutenants are constrained to pass it over in guilty silence. But he must have an issue of some kind, and therefore he desperately throws his arms round the Established Church, and makes that his party cry in the election. A greater calamity could not befall the Church than to be thus used as the prop of a falling party. By every one who understands and sincerely tenders her interest, she would be earnestly counselled to stand apart, as much as possible, from the political fray. She is in no immediate danger if she will only abstain from throwing herself, and refuse to let herself be thrown, in the path of a social and political revolution with which, as a spiritual body, she has no direct concern. The people no longer hate her, as in her days of domination they did. She has of late been winning the hearts of a good many of them by her increased activity in good works; they have learned to regard as social guides and benefactors such prelates as Bishop Fraser, who will be followed to his grave by the universal respect and sorrow of a population which, fifty years ago, detested the very name of Bishop. Nor has she very great reason to fear the Disestablishment pledges given by candidates, which, though the list of them may seem formidable, are in a great many cases enforced by the pressure of a Nonconformist minority, and will, to say the least, not be eagerly fulfilled. But if she allows herself again to be used as an electioneering agency, and to be presented to the people as the great obstacle to their entrance into the

felicity the gates of which they imagine to have been opened by the Radical leaders, she will be remorselessly trampled down; of that she may rest assured. The artisan or labourer may not be without regard for his spiritual interest, but his material interest will determine his vote; and if he were a religious philosopher he might, perhaps, find a defence for the preference. The clerical vote itself is a mere drop in the bucket; nor do the clergy control many votes besides their own. Hodge, as any one familiar with rural England will say, is not likely to go to the poll with the parson. If the Church would take high ground, saying that her mission was to democracy or any other dispensation, political or social, as well as to aristocracy, and that she stood above the party fray, she might come out of this convulsion not only unscathed, but morally strengthened; and such is the line which would have been taken by the late Primate or by Bishop Fraser. But it is not given to all Bishops, and still less, perhaps, to all Rectors, to see matters in that light. Could any of the Colonial Prelates give their Anglican brethren a hint?

SURPRISE has been expressed at the manifesto of Cardinal Newman in favour of the Established Church. But it will not be shared by any one who is well acquainted with the history of the Cardinal's mind. Were he a Jesuit or an Ultramontane, the Anglican Church would be the special object of his denunciation, as it has always been of theirs: the nearer the heretics are to the true fold and the clearer is their view of it the greater is their condemnation for refusing to come in. Charles I. had approached as closely as possible to Rome, and if he could have made terms for his own ecclesiastical supremacy and for his Lambeth Papacy he would probably have been willing to reunite his Kingdom to the Church of the Reaction; yet his fall was viewed by the Catholic Monarchies with serene indifference or pointed to as an awful warning of the peril of remaining outside the pale of salvation; and when his head was cut off and his palace was rifled, Catholic kings felt no scruple in becoming the purchasers of his fine collection of paintings and *vertu*. But Cardinal Newman is not a Jesuit or an Ultramontane: in his heart he detests them, their syllabus, their Papal infallibility and all their works. He has never succeeded, at least never since the first days of his conversion, in narrowing his intellect to the conception of the Church of Rome as the only true Church outside of which there is no salvation. He looks forward, we may depend upon it, to meeting Keble and Pusey in the kingdom of heaven; perhaps he looks forward to meeting Keble and Pusey more than he does to meeting Cardinal Manning, who is a true Roman hierarch of the ambitious sort as well as a typical "Apostle of the Genteel." He, no doubt, regards the Church of England as a bulwark against Atheism, assailed by the same enemies who are assailing the Church of France, and in that respect entitled to his sympathy and support simply as a Theist and a believer in the necessity of religion. But he also regards it as his virtual ally against the Ultramontane and Jesuit party in the Church of Rome.

It seems that Mr. John Morley has been telling a Radical audience at Southwark that English statesmen, forty years ago, looked on with apathy or turned their eyes elsewhere while Ireland was approaching the abyss of famine. It is but justice to the Nationalists to say that the calumnies which they have uttered against the English people and the British Government, frantic as they are, scarcely exceed in recklessness those which have been uttered by British demagogues seeking to capture the Disunionist vote. It might have been thought that even Southwark Radicals would scarcely have been so ignorant of comparatively recent history as to listen with credulity to Mr. Morley's statement. No sooner was the alarm sounded by the approach of the potato disease than a Commission of Inquiry was appointed and the Government addressed itself vigorously to the work of guarding against famine. The ports, which Protection had closed, were thrown open by legislation to foreign grain. A great sum of money was voted by Parliament for the purpose of relief, and the public aid was supplemented by private charity on the largest scale. The utmost zeal was shown in collecting and dispensing funds by a number of private Englishmen, conspicuous among whom, according to the testimony of Home Rulers themselves, was William Forster, now the special mark of Nationalist calumny and of the Nationalist knife, as well as of the unceasing attacks of Mr. Morley. Nay, a British Ministry, the strongest since that of Pitt, may be said almost to have sacrificed its life in relieving Ireland; since the repeal of the Corn Laws, by which Peel fell, was a measure which he made up his mind to adopt in consequence of the Irish famine. Never, it may safely be said, was more of national feeling or energy displayed in meeting any public calamity. No such national effort has ever been made to relieve local distress in England. By way of requital, Great Britain is accused by an Irish-American Convention of having brought about the famine for the purpose of exterminating the