

scene before us is a melancholy proof. The artisans too, of whom there are now such masses in the city constituencies, are apt to think more of their trade union than of their country. But the prospect of immediate disruption revealed by Mr. Gladstone's proposal of surrender has caused the nation to start back, and the effect of its recoil is seen in the changed attitude of political intriguers. Good was perhaps involuntarily done by the Nationalist who gave improvident utterance to his rapture at the thought of seeing the legislation of American Fenians enforced by the Queen's troops on the loyal Protestants of Ulster.

Mr. Gladstone, though compelled to draw back, is still evidently bent on climbing into power by the help of the Parnellite Vote, for which he angles with the rhetorical skill of which he is only too great a master. Under cover of a historical allusion he even once more intimated his readiness to concede an Irish Parliament, thus holding out, for an unavowed purpose, a flag which he dares not hoist; a proceeding which his unflinching casuistry would no doubt be able to reconcile with his duty to his party and with political honour. But at this writing the Tories remain in office: in power, with a party numbering barely two-fifths of the House, they cannot be said to be. This, as was said before, was the best thing that could happen; it may lead to another dissolution of Parliament, and thus give the nation a chance at all events of pronouncing on its own fate, and determining, with eyes open, whether it will descend from the first place in Europe to the rank of a second-rate power. Of a permanent Tory reaction no Liberal need be afraid. Aristocracy is ruined in its base; its territorial wealth is departing; its political command of the counties has departed. Reforms of the House of Lords and of the Church are important, and they must come; but they may wait till the unity of the nation has been saved. If the present Government should fall, the next hope is a Moderate Coalition; but this, in face of Mr. Gladstone's manoeuvres, it will be very difficult to form.

"Cowardly" the *London Times* calls the conduct of both parties on the Irish question. Weak enough the attitude of the Government certainly is. What does it matter whether murder or boycotting is at present the chosen engine of Terrorism? Terrorism reigns in Ireland, and it is the first duty of a Government to restore to law-abiding citizens the protection of the law. But the Irish Protestants are "obstacles" to Lord Randolph Churchill in his intrigues with the Parnellites, and the caprice of destiny permits this political gamester to play not with the common stakes of the political gambling table, but with the unity of the nation, and with the lives, fortunes, and liberties of all the loyal citizens of Ireland.

The Press teems with projects for the settlement of the Irish question. It is useless to discuss them. All are plans more or less weak and tortuous for surrendering the Legislative Union and leaving Irish loyalty at the mercy of Rebellion. An Irish Legislature, under whatever name, would, as everybody must see, and as all outspoken Nationalists boast, become at once, in the hands into which it would fall, an engine of Separation. The contrivers of these schemes of Home Rule fail to see that the temper of the people to whom new powers are to be given makes all the difference. The avowed aim of the Irish leader is the destruction of the British Empire. A full measure of Local Government for Ireland, as well as for England and Scotland, had been promised before the rebellion broke out, but the knowledge that it was coming did not prevent the rebellion. There are only two practicable courses: to restore the supremacy of the National Government in Ireland, which may be done with ease if the House of Commons will for a moment lay aside its factions; and to let Ireland go, thus setting England free to deal with her as a foreign power, and to protect the Protestants of Ulster with the cannon.

Once more let it be noted that Mr. Parnell and his associates, while they complain that England will not attend to the claims of Ireland, have put forward no claim whatever. They have made no motion or proposal of any kind. They have only tried by obstruction and terrorism to bully Parliament and the nation. They hope in this way to extort instalments of Home Rule which they will at last improve into Separation.

The Roman Catholic bishops and priests seem to be now throwing their weight decidedly on the side of Dismemberment, though but the other day the Pope was thanking the Queen for the liberty and protection enjoyed by his Church in her dominions. It is some satisfaction to know that a Revolutionary Government in Ireland, like Revolutionary Governments elsewhere, will not be long in showing what is its natural relation to the Priest. Between Revolution, Romanism, and Protestantism, the Hibernian Republic, founded on a soil already teeming with conspiracy, terrorism, murder, and agrarian rapine, will be born under a happy star.

Mr. Gladstone claims and receives credit for his soothing tone. To soothe an angry but placable friend is right and wise: there is not much use in soothing a sworn and implacable enemy. The actual result of

Mr. Gladstone's language and bearing has been the constant growth of the rebellion in strength, malignity, and insolence, while personally he has reaped his reward in the overthrow of his Government, the ejection of his friends from their seats in Parliament, and perpetual threats against his own life. The practical effect could hardly have been worse if he had firmly declared from the outset that he would never suffer treason to lay its hand upon the Union, that he would uphold law at any cost, and that nothing should induce him to desert the Loyalists of Ireland. To his accomplishments and virtues everybody pays homage; but a brave and honest Sergeant of the Guards, with England and duty in his heart, would be a better leader for the nation. Whether he is Master of the Liberal Party, and able to use it for his designs, will presently be seen. My information differs from that of some journals which, in the conscientious performance of their party duties, cultivate the Irish vote.

The political rebellion, however, is not the worst part of the matter. It does not show its head in the field, and would collapse at once, and without resistance, before the resolute attitude of a united and patriotic Parliament. More dangerous is the agrarian revolt, from which alone the political revolution derives its strength. This, stimulated instead of being allayed by Mr. Gladstone's legislation, appears to be on the point of breaking out once anew. Property in land is held by as good a right as property in goods or stocks, and is just as much entitled to the protection of the Government. Nor is there any real force in the plea that the Irish tenant represents tribal right: if he does, he must represent also tribal liabilities to coynage and livery, bonaght, soroken, coshery, cuddies, and other customary exactions of the Chiefs. But this Celtic clansman has often a Saxon name, and often he has come in by the eviction of a previous holder. Still, wholesale ejection is desperate work for a Government. The State is bound to defend property, but owners are bound to make their property defensible. This Irish absentee landlords have hardly done. To buy them out, however, at the expense of the thrifty people of England and Scotland, would be most unjust, and the Irish farms would be scarcely out of the hands of the landlord before they were in those of the money lender.

Worse than either political rebellion or agrarian revolt, and the real root of all the danger and mischief, is the absence of anything worthy to be called a Government. There is no authority now in Great Britain but that which is vested in an assembly elected by masses of ignorance and passion, full of demagogism instead of patriotic duty, and split into at least four factions, not one of which is strong enough to support a Ministry; while public character has so utterly broken down, that men of great estate, high rank, and illustrious name are found manoeuvring against each other for the support of a rebel vote. Who can predict the end?

GOLDWIN SMITH.

THE EXAMINER.

THERE is a class of gentlemen, usually old and invariably moral, sometimes severe and generally fluent, who, after prolonged travels in other lands, or even flying visits to foreign cities, return with the fullest "experiences" of the immoralities of foreigners. In letters, articles, lectures, and endless conversations, they pour out volubly their pious horror at the degraded condition of those who inhabit "the slums" of London, Edinburgh, or Paris. There are few temptations so strong as that which seizes one at times to stop one of these godly men in the midst of some fervent lament, and solemnly and significantly wink. What was it brought you to the slums, my dear sir? Was it not, in fact, sheer curiosity, with perhaps just a hint of some more cunning device of "the enemy" concealed under the curiosity? We will not investigate too closely. But there remains always the temptation to wink. I have been led into these remarks by the hasty perusal of a little volume that might have been interesting and is only amusing, but amusing in a way that the author did not intend, and that suggested the remarks with which I commenced. The volume is entitled "An Account of the Establishment of the British Protectorate over the Southern Shores of New Guinea," and it is written by Mr. Charles Lyne, who was with the British force as a correspondent. One opens the book with some pleasurable anticipations; one closes it with the recollection only of "the British flag" and the petticoats of the native women! The flag was a matter of course; it was to fly it the expedition was sent; but the resources of the British Navy were not exerted to discover new varieties of petticoats. This fascinating but fatal garment exerted on Mr. Lyne a malign influence. He has one eye occasionally on the scenery and "the flag," but both eyes are mainly occupied, in a way that would delight the soul of the writer of "The Development of Dress," with the native petticoats—which indeed are not large enough to occupy so much attention. At Port Moresby he tells us