

to the depressed state of agriculture in England, the diminished quantity of grain to be harvested, the use of machinery, and the poverty of English farmers, this source of income for the Irish is much lessened.

The true remedy for the condition of the congested districts is not Home Rule, not the plunder of the landlords, but a diminution of the number of persons seeking a living out of the land, a removal of the congestion, consolidation of the holdings, so that they may afford a living to the cultivator. How this is to be effected it would be foreign to my purpose to discuss, but I can safely say this: That the Parliament of the United Kingdom is as willing, as able, and as anxious to do it as any Parliament that could be formed in Dublin.

It may be asked, Why, if this is so, is there the popular desire for Home Rule, which is shown by more than four-fifths of the Irish members being Home Rulers, and by the people in their meetings, and otherwise? I have given one reason: The people are agricultural and want the land rent free. There is another reason. There is no doubt, a hearty hatred in Ireland of the English, not on account of what the English say or do now, but on account of what they have done, or are said to have done, in bygone generations. Whether England has been as bad to Ireland as some would make out I will not discuss. I think a good deal may be said for our ancestors. They were struggling for their religion and their liberty. They, doubtless, were savage to the Irish, but the Irish retorted when they had the power. The massacres of Englishmen and Protestants, the latest not a century old, are not to be forgotten when we are talking of how the English have behaved. But I say I will not discuss who was right or wrong in the past; in the present I bitterly complain that I am an object of hatred to an Irishman, not for anything I have done, but for what some other Anglo-Saxons have done generations back. I feel it to be most unjust: I have never had any feeling toward Ireland except for its good. I remember, in 1829, when Catholic emancipation took place, the joy I felt, and the admiration for O'Connell that I had. So I was, too, when that act of justice was done, the disestablishment of the Irish Church—and I speak of myself for no egotistical reason, but because what is true of me is true of my Anglo-Saxon countrymen. Whatever the past may be we are not enemies of Ireland. We wish her well. We are interested in her prosperity. What ill motive or reason for bad conduct to Ireland can be imputed to us? None.—Lord Bramwell, in *The Forum*.

### PRINCE ALBERT AND NAPOLEON III.

THE following extract from Count Vitzthum's *St. Petersburg and London, in the Years 1852-64*, being a report of part of a conversation with Prince Albert in 1860, ten years before the overthrow of the second French Empire, gives a remarkable proof of the Prince's political sagacity.

"I should not like," began the Prince, "to call the Emperor Napoleon inscrutable (*unberechenbar*). I see in him no enigma. The events we have yet to expect will, upon the whole, not surprise me. He is, as he himself may sometimes think, the creature of a fatal destiny. His actions are the logical consequences of given premises. He wills far less often than he must. He is more to be pitied than blamed. His whole power is based upon falsehood. His system rests upon unsolved and insoluble contradictions, which assert themselves in mutual antagonism, and which must bring his system, if not himself, to a tragic end. To reconcile these contradictions is impossible. Napoleon would like to be Emperor by the grace of God, and at the same time *par la volonté nationale*. He can be either one or the other, but never both together. In France his power, if not derived from, at least rests upon, the Catholic priesthood. In Italy he is compelled, in order to escape the daggers of Orsini's confederates and to redeem the promises made to the Carbonari, to threaten and attack the Romish Church. In like manner the "l'Empire c'est la paix" stands in direct contradiction to the need of giving employment to his army. Eventually he will not be able to live without the halo of a campaign on the Rhine. Even in apparently minor matters the Nemesis of these insoluble contradictions pursues him. Take merely the architectural embellishments of Paris. Enormous sums were lavished to stop the mouths of hungry workmen; whole quarters of the town were pulled down and built up again. But when the work is finished, there will be no one in the most beautiful metropolis of Europe rich enough to enjoy its beauty. The most extraordinary thing is that the Emperor is really sincere in both directions. He honestly believes in what he says to-day, and just as honestly in what he will say to the contrary to-morrow. That things have gone tolerably hitherto is owing to his undeniable cleverness and to a certain exercise of prudence. But with all his gifts he is unable to appreciate that irreconcilable conflict of ideas, of which he is sure in time to be the victim. He is no philosopher. You will not be surprised to hear that I have vainly endeavoured to make this clear to honest Persigny. The only policy which, in my opinion, England has to follow with Napoleon can be expressed in two words: Dignified Silence. I trust we shall succeed in keeping our hands clean. No doubt this is more easily said than done in a country where the Press is free and the Parliament a power. If they took my advice, the Government would keep silence. That would be quite enough. What is now going on is very simply explained. Our national movement, the Volunteer Rifle Corps, even more than our naval preparations, have made Napoleon anxious to lull John Bull to sleep again. Up to a certain point he may succeed. At present we are not, unfortunately, in a normal condition. Since 1846 we have been wanting a great man to guide us, and hence the machine of State is not working as it should. What we want is a leader of the Conservatives in the House of Commons like Sir Robert Peel. We have lost in him the rock against which the waves of democracy broke, the man who in the House of Commons struck with true instinct the keynote of resistance."

### CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SUPPOSED TURN OF THE TIDE IN ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Those who are watching with interest the course of affairs in England must always be on their guard against the influence of intelligence seasoned to suit the Irish or anti-British taste of New York. I have correspondents in England who ought to know the truth, and who would certainly not conceal it from me. That the situation is still, and is likely for some time to be, highly critical there can be no doubt, but I see no reason for believing that it has of late changed seriously for the worse, or that Mr. Gladstone is much nearer power than he was three months ago. Allowance being made for vacancies and for the loss of two seats, the strength of the Government in the House of Commons appears unimpaired. The relations between the Liberal Unionists and the Government, as one of the leaders of the Liberal Unionists assures me, are as good as ever; and from the same correspondent I learn that the efforts of the Liberal Unionist party to organise throughout the country have been beyond expectation successful.

Two bye-elections have been lost by the Conservatives, and in others the Conservative majority has been reduced. But the probable account of this is that a number of Liberals who at the last elections left their party lines (some of them, as I can personally testify, only under very strong pressure) to save the Union, have fallen back into their party lines again since the Union has ceased to be the issue immediately before them. In the election for St. Austell, where the Unionist candidate seems to have belonged rather to the Liberal wing, so that Liberals could vote for him without prejudice to their party allegiance, instead of a falling off there was a very large increase of the Unionist vote.

Bye-elections are notoriously apt to be decided by local or secondary causes. Even the Cass affair may have had something to do with the apparent turn of the tide in the metropolis. The influences which decided the Spalding election, as I am assured by one who knows the district well, were local. The Conservative candidate was a stranger, the Separatist was a local favourite; and the Methodists, who are numerous, and who, at the last election, had stayed at home, were brought out by Mr. Gladstone's alluring half-promise of Church Disestablishment.

On the whole there seems to be no reason to doubt that were another general election held with the Union for the issue, the result would be the same that it was last year; while if Lord Hartington joins the Government there will probably be a permanent junction in defence of the Union of the forces which showed their collective strength the other day in St. Austell, and which combined are sure of carrying the country. The reverses in the bye-elections will no doubt encourage Irish resistance to the Crimes Act; but this seems to be about the measure of the disaster.

The Government seems to show confidence and vigour in the application of the Crimes Act. Mr. Parnell's tone on the other hand is greatly subdued, though it cannot be supposed that his designs are changed. The absence of the Liberal leaders from the banquet given in his honour indicates that there is among their more moderate followers a reluctance to be associated with obstruction and crime which they find it necessary to respect. Mr. Parnell has as yet taken no measures to call the *Times* to account, or to prove the spuriousness of the fatal letter; and Liberals who shrink from complicity with murder are not likely to be unaffected by this fact. There are symptoms, moreover, of estrangement between Mr. Parnell and the more violent and venomous men of his party.

The defection of Sir George Trevelyan was discounted long ago. From the moment of his losing his seat his restlessness and instability appeared. In saying that his final departure has removed a dry rot from the timbers of the Unionist cause, my friend, Professor Tyndall, gives homely utterance to an unimpeachable truth. Lord Randolph Churchill is bent on mischief, and he still has followers in the Music Halls and in the "Habitations" of the Primrose League; but in the House he leads a party of one, and his character is so well known and his machinations are so much upon the surface that he can hardly do his party much more damage by his perfidy.

The situation, I repeat, is still full of danger, as any one must mournfully admit who knows the character of the new constituencies into whose hands the supreme power and control over the destinies of the country have been suddenly thrown. But the exultation of the American enemies of England at the supposed turning of the scale in favour of Mr. Gladstone is founded, as I believe, on partial intelligence, and to say the least is premature. Old England is sorely beset both by enemies without and by traitors within, but she is not dead yet. Yours faithfully,

July 28.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

LAMARTINE was once visited by a deputation of "Vesuviennes," furious female republicans of the *petroleuse* type. The captain was the spokeswoman. She told him that the "Vesuviennes" had come to tell him how much they loved him. "There are fifty of us here," she added, "and our mission is, in the name of all the others, to kiss you." This announcement made the poet shudder. The captain of the gang was tolerably good-looking, but the others were a horrible-looking, half-drunken and half-crazy set of viragoes. He was equal to the emergency. "Citizens," said he, "I thank you from the bottom of my heart. This is certainly the happiest day of my life; but permit me to say that splendid patriots like you cannot be treated as women. You must be regarded as men; and, since men do not kiss one another, we must content ourselves with a hearty hand shaking." The ladies considered themselves highly complimented. "Vive Lamartine!" they shouted, and each one of them grasped his hand. When they were gone he fainted.