

the political union, whereas that between the States and Canada is to take place before, or, as the Commercial Unionists say, without any such union. This is an important difference; and we have mentioned instances that illustrate it in the matters of lumbering and mining. Has the conduct of the States, in respect to the fisheries, been such as to justify Canada in placing her destinies—for that is what Commercial Union means—unreservedly in the control of the States? Here is an explicit treaty entered into solemnly by the States, for value received, and recognised subsequently over and over again by the States when it suited their purposes, now denounced violently by press and politicians because it is found effectually to protect the property of a poorer neighbour from spoliation. (We have to thank Mr. Wiman, by the way, for placing the nature of the Canadian claim very clearly before the American public. In his address to the New York Board of Trade he says: "It is no wonder that Canada holds firmly to her vast fishing interests. The advantage which she derives from the bait which lines her shores, indented by numerous bays, is a geographical one. When you recall the fact that twenty-five per cent. of the cost of the ordinary fishing voyage is found in the bait, you will see how important an element it is. If this bait can be secured by dipping it, as it were, from the Canadian shores of the sea into carts and small boats, its possession is like the possession of seed-corn or wheat in an agricultural community. To sell one's seed corn would be folly. To permit its sale to a competitor, without compensation or consideration, is to give up the advantages of geographical location and proprietary rights as distinctive as any other national right.") Under the pretence that a fishing vessel becomes a trading vessel when it gets a trading permit from an American collector, and that "by the unity of nations," they so acquire a right to buy up the Canadian seed-corn, while excluding the poor harvest left to Canada from her "natural market," our neighbours take us by the throat and threaten us with Retaliation in a manner little becoming a civilised people. Yet it is an unconditional surrender to such demands that Commercial Unionists are urging upon us for peace' sake. If Canada yielded to such intimidation as is intended by the Retaliation Bill she would be more disgraced even than the country that can pass such a bill for the immoral purpose of seeking to force its weaker neighbour into a commercial arrangement which it intends shall be, and knows will be, its ruin, unless relief is sought in self-effacement and absorption.

LORD ROSEBERY persists in believing that the split in the Liberal Party is not so serious that re-union before long is impossible; but the recent speeches of Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain show that the cleavage introduced by Mr. Gladstone has gone so deep as to leave the two parties on opposite sides of an ever-widening, unbridgeable gulf. The Liberal Party has disappeared: its more substantial elements form at present a party of the Centre, which attracts and is attracted by the Conservatives, who on their side have left the old fashioned Toryism in the depths of the past; and the fusion of these two, now in process, will probably result in a strong Unionist Party, which, winning the support of the middle class English, including the lower fringe as well as the upper, may hold office for many years; while the Gladstonians probably will linger on, a small and powerless minority, till they be absorbed on the disappearance of the present leader into some new Radical Party. It is curious to note how of late the poorer middle class, once regarded as the mainstay of Liberalism, has been neglected by the Liberal leaders, who as the Franchise has been lowered have paid court almost exclusively to the new electors. It is these, no doubt, with the high Tories at the opposite pole, the fringe of the two great parties, whom we hear most about at election time; it is to them that demagogues of both parties address themselves chiefly; but for all that, the main strength of both parties lies in the great middle class; and there are not wanting signs that, as far as the lower stratum of these, the bulwark of Liberalism, are concerned, a stir is taking place whose effects will be felt at the next General Election. The late Liberal leaders have counted too surely on them as a safe vote that needed no cultivation; and no doubt for many years past, the great victories of Liberalism having been won, they have been somewhat supine. But the great mistake committed by Mr. Gladstone, the manifest degeneration of his followers from Liberalism to Jacobinism, and their alliance with the Parnellites, has aroused them at length. No body of men professing such principles as are avowed by the Gladstonians ever yet were entrusted with the direction of affairs by the vote of the people; and it may be counted as absolutely certain that the voice of true Liberalism, whenever heard after this, will pronounce overwhelmingly in favour of the maintenance of law and order. Which will be bad for Gladstonianism.

The Parnellites evidently feel that the game is up. Mr. Gladstone's apostasy from Liberalism a year ago gave them some hope that their con-

spiracy might succeed; but the signs are thickening that as the vastness of the danger into which Mr. Gladstone led the nation is seen clearer as it recedes in time, so they who surmounted it, more by luck than foresight, are awakening now to the absolute necessity of never again trusting affairs to Mr. Gladstone or any of his way of thinking; and English blood is rising, "fiercely though slowly" in resentment against all, whether principals or accessories, connected with the treason that came so near wrecking the Empire. Doubtless there is a difference in kind between Mr. Gladstone and his Irish allies; but Mr. Gladstone has been lending every assistance in his power to his Irish allies in their design to make all government impossible until the Irish conspiracy be rewarded with success; while his Irish allies, at last in despair throwing off the mask assumed last year to bamboozle the English people, again reveal their real purpose in clamouring for Home Rule. "They and their children," cried Michael Davitt at Bodyke, "would swear, as many of them had sworn, to carry on at any cost this fight until landlord tyranny and English Government were destroyed in Ireland." And these are the men Mr. Gladstone believes would be made honest and loyal by the grant of Home Rule.

A most ridiculous Plan of Campaign is attributed to Mr. Gladstone by one of the Irish cable correspondents. It is to give up the struggle over the Crimes Bill and Home Rule for the present, and attack the Government on its foreign policy. Mr. Gladstone is to pose as a Jingo, to raise the country against the Government for devoting too much time to the Irish Question, to the neglect of foreign affairs, whereby the honour and prestige of the country has been injured. This correspondent must surely be new to public life; or his memory is very short if he does not recollect in what state Mr. Gladstone has always left the honour and prestige of the country abroad after a term of Gladstonian Government.

A TENANT of Mr. Parnell's, holding twenty acres of grass-lands in Avondale, after an eight years' occupation, was compelled, or induced, to take another farm. He did not succeed in it, and after six months' occupation tendered six months' rent. The agent refused the money, alleging, probably with truth, that the tenant had had all the best of the year's grass. The tenant removed his cattle, refused to pay, and is to be sued. Now, Mr. Parnell is no doubt quite right in insisting on the fulfilment of the contract, but in doing so wherein does he differ from the Irish landlords he has grown rich by denouncing? Many of them are admittedly kind landlords, and Mr. Parnell does not appear to have acted oppressively at all in this case, but why is favour shown to him and not to them by the National League? Their proper course, on their own principles, as the *Spectator* points out, would have been to boycott the agent, advertise the tradesmen who dealt with him, and threaten Mr. Parnell, and then, if not obeyed, to apply their "ultimate sanctions." But Mr. Dillon has not made a speech in Avondale, nor will Mr. O'Brien quote the case as proof of the brutality of the Saxon, although Mr. Parnell is both landlord and Saxon.

THERE is again talk of *pourparlers* between the German and Austrian Ambassadors and Lord Salisbury, with a view to an alliance between the three Powers directed against the Russian advance in Afghanistan as well as in the Balkans. But this report must be received with a good deal of caution; however desirable Prince Bismarck might think it to ensure for Germany allies that would check France as well as Russia (no doubt Italy would join England and Austria), there is no likelihood of England in any case engaging in a German-Franco War, while Austria is already certainly secure, and Italy most probably so. Such an alliance must precipitate an alliance between Russia and France, which is a thing Prince Bismarck would give up the Balkans and all the rest of Europe, to say nothing of Afghanistan, to avert.

THE disastrous break-up of a wheat-corner in Chicago is interesting in connection with an article in the *Spectator* of three weeks ago, which dealt with the possibility at any rate of a syndicate, controlling twenty millions sterling—less than Mr. Vanderbilt's wealth,—possessing itself of a year's supply of foreign wheat, which it might hold at a cost of 7 per cent. on its money, with the result of forcing up prices in the British market ten shillings a quarter. The moral is that in these days of American capitalists, who buy whole systems of railway, all the telegraph lines of a continent, or the spare bullion of a country like the United States, a corner in wheat might be easily established, which would be equivalent, as regards the increase of the price of bread to the British consumer, to a corn-duty of ten shillings a quarter, while this "duty" would be levied, not by the British Government, but by a body of foreign speculators.