

The Lord Chancellor refuses any explanation. His letter may be expressed in four words, "Mind your own business." Both Lord Hatherley and Mr. Gladstone put off the evil day of explanation, but if they think that the matter will have blown over before Parliament meets they are egregiously mistaken, and their position will not be improved by this rudeness.

To whom was the curt, and we must add, coarse, letter of the Lord Chancellor addressed? It would be indecorous to comment on the high character of Sir Alexander Cockburn, but certainly no man ever sat on the seat of Gascoigne who was more esteemed than the present occupant. But we waive all such considerations. Sir Alexander Cockburn protested as the Lord Chief Justice of England in his own name and on behalf of his colleagues. The Gladstone Government is notorious for discourtesy, and by their discourtesy they have made a host of enemies; but we are amazed that the Lord Chief Justice of England should be snubbed with gross impertinence. If the protest had been sent by a barrister called last term the answer of the Lord Chancellor would have been inexcusably rude. Sir Alexander Cockburn must be personally indifferent to the treatment he has received. Neither Mr. Gladstone nor Lord Hatherley can hurt a judge who is so eminent for his learning and probity that both England and America rejoiced in his appointment as the arbitrator for England under the Washington Convention. But Sir Alexander Cockburn justly resents the slur cast on his exalted official position. Whatever else Parliament may do or leave undone, we may be sure that the discourtesy of Lord Hatherley will be emphatically rebuked.

But unless the Prime Minister admits his error, we are persuaded that Parliament will expressly censure the evasion of the law in the appointment of Sir R. Collier. We venture to say that, if Mr. Gladstone will not confess himself in the wrong, he will have to submit to a vote of censure or to resign. It may be urged that a Government with a majority of seventy or eighty should not be turned out on account of an evasion of the law in the disposition of patronage; but in this instance the matter is of vital importance. It concerns the repute of the judicature, and God forbid that the public should believe that in the appointment of our judges there is any shuffling or any tampering with the plain intent of the law. We say with regret, but we say most emphatically, that the appointment of Sir R. Collier to the Judicial Committee was an act for which Parliament will be fully justified in censuring the Government.

The excitement so manifested in England about an evasion of the law, the immediate result of which will be merely the placing on the Judicial Committee an undoubtedly able man, will hardly be understood in the Province of Quebec. Such an admirable way of shelving an Attorney-General, will in all likelihood be