

must emigrate; the farmer will lose on one hand more than he has gained on the other. The only people that are likely to flourish are the few speculative gentlemen whose personal interest lies in bringing the two countries into closer connexion; agents and middlemen of all kinds, who will represent American business houses here; and the labour employed by any particular industry that may be incidentally developed in the course of the American quest of profit. And such being, as we believe, the likely consequences of adopting Commercial Union, it would be as well, perhaps, at this early stage of the discussion—at the beginning of what promises to be a vigorous pro-American trade crusade—to pause and enquire whether the blessing of Commercial Union may not be purchased at too dear a rate. Mr. Wiman told us the other day, in his address to the Canadian Club, that the Americans would certainly neither pay us money for our Fishery privileges nor grant partial Reciprocity in exchange, and therefore, he urged, we had better agree at once to full Reciprocity, or Commercial Union: that is, as we can expect to get no fair recompense for a portion of our property that the Americans covet, we had better make them a present of not only that, but of all else we possess besides. And for what? In spite of protests to the contrary, does anybody of experience believe that with Canada reduced to the dependent condition we have depicted; or, to take the brighter picture held up to our view by the Commercial Unionists, with Canada made prosperous by American gold and enterprise, swarming with American exploiters,—can anybody believe that Annexation would be far distant? And is that what we wish for? It is the fish the Americans expect to catch when they bait their hook so temptingly with Commercial Union; but are we so in love with American morals and manners that we are ready to cut short our national growth in order to become Americans? It is fitting that we should look honestly at all the consequences of the contemplated union, even at this early stage of the courtship; for an engagement on the basis of Commercial Union would inevitably involve final marriage. It is best that we should do this at once, while the courting is all on one side; otherwise we may drift unconsciously into a most dangerous flirtation, from which it will require all the parental authority of the Mother Country and the energy of Young Canada to rescue us. Of the former, it is probable, we may rest assured. The days are past when England was ready to throw her colonies away—when Mr. Gladstone with but a little persuasion would have given up even Gibraltar to Spain; and we are much mistaken if the opening of an alternative route from England to the East and Australasia across this Dominion do not bind the Dominion to the Empire with a force that nothing but the disintegration of the whole fabric can dissolve. And as to Young Canada—have our young men no national aspirations? That is incredible to anyone who has observed the awakening life, the pulsings of the national heart, evident in so many directions of late. Canada is not a nation, as the boy is not a man; but natural growth will correct that defect. It may be hoped the man may still continue to stand beside his Mother—he can do so without any loss of manhood; but to be absorbed in his youth into the American Union, as one State or two among forty to be reduced to the hopeless dead level of republican mediocrity, would be most deplorable annihilation—annihilation of a fresh, vigorous individuality that, standing in advantageous contrast to a neighbouring society framed on a different pattern, cannot but be good for the future of both.

EVENTS are proving the truth of the prediction uttered by Mr. Goldwin Smith last summer, that the victory then gained by the Unionists was not the end, but the beginning, of the struggle for the maintenance of the Union. When Mr. Gladstone gave the sanction of his great name to the demands of the Nationalists, he flung a brand into British politics that will burn while he lives, and cause the combustion of much besides the rubbish of the Irish question. Home Rule in the shape he proposed will, it is certain, never be granted while England remains so greatly the foremost member of the United Kingdoms; but some fair system of local government for Ireland, satisfactory to Irishmen, will no doubt be evolved during the present agitation, and when the dust of the bitter controversy has cleared away, Ireland, let us hope, will smile once more, with its soil in the undisputed possession of its peasantry. To bring this last and greatest desideratum about, sacrifices must be made, both by the present nominal owners and by the nation. Absentee landlordism, and perhaps resident landlordism, is responsible to a very large extent for the present troubles; and in the coming settlement regard may justly be had to the revenues that have been drawn from the land, and in great part spent elsewhere. Landlords as well as tenants have their duties; and if it is true that by evading these duties the landlords have already received the full value of their land in rents that have been used wholly for personal purposes, they must not expect

to receive the value over again in compensation, now the reckoning has to be made. Some reduction in their claims is reasonable; but as this might press hard on present possessors—the “innocent holders”—or on mortgagees, the nation at large ought to contribute to the settlement. Justice must be done all round, that all may be satisfied. Twenty or thirty million sterling spent in this way, would be the very best investment England could make just now.

WHAT sum in reason that could be named would be too much for England to pay for the cure of the ill that has afflicted Ireland? Even the hundred and fifty million that Mr. Gladstone's land-bill of last year would have involved would not be too great a price, and might have been paid if Mr. Gladstone had not coupled it with the grant of Home-Rule, and raised suspicion about the wisdom of his scheme by credulously holding out that the sum would be repaid by his proposed Home-Rule Government. If there had been no Home-Rule in question, that scheme of land-purchase, modified in the direction of insisting on the landlords' participation in any needed sacrifices, might have passed. But Mr. Gladstone has abandoned that part of his plan; and, holding to Home-Rule, has driven this like a wedge into the side of England, splitting its society from top to bottom—splitting his own party into two irreconcilable camps, and, as is probable, utterly wrecking it. If he live for a few years longer, the great Liberal party will be but a memory, represented in a surprising evolution by such politicians as Harcourt and Labouchere. The one reputable name on its rolls now is Mr. Gladstone's, and that is justly sufficient to make it respectable in the eyes of a large portion of the people: but, he gone, with all else that was respectable in it joined to a man to the Unionist party, nothing will be left to save it from the disrepute to which low courses are now fast bringing it. Happily, the end is certain; and this the optimistic Parnellite sympathisers who are to-day as confidently predicting the final triumph of Home Rule, as they were a year ago the then triumph of Mr. Gladstone, might profitably bear in mind; the political brigands who follow Mr. Gladstone's unhappy lead, and are aiding the Parnellites to wreck the British Parliament, are not of the class the English people usually entrust with the office of Government. During the past two centuries there have been Whig Governments, succeeded by Tory Governments, which have again given place to Whig; but it will be observed that always these changes have taken place when the superseded Government had ceased to be respected. That was of late beginning to be the case with each successive Gladstone ministry; and it is now glaringly so with the Gladstonite party—always excepting, however, Mr. Gladstone himself. Almost every man of repute in public life supports the Unionist cause, whether as Liberal-Unionists or Conservatives. A few there are, like Lord Granville and Lord Rosebery, whose personal attachment for Mr. Gladstone keeps them by his side; but is it likely that, he removed, such men will continue in company with the Harcourts, Laboucheres, and Morleys, who will then have control of the forlorn Home-Rule rump? Rather is it likely that the Home-Rulers will form an insignificant and harmless, though noisy, faction, while a new great Unionist Party, comprehending all that is best of Conservatism and Liberalism in the three Kingdoms, will carry on the work the present great Liberal leader has so lamentably led his forces away from in pursuit of this *ignis fatuus*.

SOME restraint ought to be put on Mr. William O'Brien's projected agitation against Lord Lansdowne in Canada. The Plan of Campaign should not be put in operation here; nor should we permit our public men to be terrorised by Irish agitators. If Mr. O'Brien sets foot in Canada, he ought at any rate to be placed under the strictest surveillance. When statesmen like Mr. Chamberlain are threatened with assassination for opposing the designs of these self-elected Irish tribunes, everybody connected with a Conspiracy which notoriously has a murder wing, should be closely watched. Mr. O'Brien's mission may recall an old Fenian reminiscence: an Irish agitation, not unlike that proposed to be raised by Mr. O'Brien, had for one result the murder of D'Arcy McGee.

IT is fair to Mr. Parnell for the present to discredit the authenticity of the letter imputed to him by the *Times*; but he must not remain long “undecided whether to prosecute the *Times* or not.” During some weeks, the *Times* has been publishing a series of articles plainly accusing the Parnellites of complicity with the murder wing of the Irish Conspiracy; this charge the Parnellites have treated with a disdainful but somewhat suspicious silence; but now that the charge is crystallised in this way, it must be met if our belief in the innocence of the accused is to continue.