

THE repeal agitation in Nova Scotia has not the appearance of a widespread or deep-rooted movement. Although the resolution to secede was introduced by the Government, it was carried by a majority of seven votes only. It is purely a party measure, and the vote shows the strength of the Government; but the Local House, where the Liberals are in the ascendant, being elected on purely local issues, their strength there is hardly a guide to the opinion of the constituencies on the subject of Confederation. There may be a general dissatisfaction with the present connexion; but it has not yet been shown at the polls: while Nova Scotia returns to the Dominion House thirteen supporters of the present Government and the present connexion against only six opposed to it, the rest of the Dominion must refuse to believe that any serious wish to break away from the Dominion exists. To command attention, here or in the Imperial Parliament, a desire to withdraw from the Confederation must first be expressed unmistakably in a constitutional way—by the election of Representatives to the Dominion Parliament, charged by the constituencies to obtain the redress of grievances, or in case of failure, to promote the withdrawal of the Province.

THERE is unquestionably in the Maritime Provinces a feeling of lukewarmness, if not of hostility, towards Confederation; and this may be traced wholly, we believe, to one cause—the imposition of a fiscal policy that kills all foreign trade in maritime provinces to which foreign trade is as the breath of life. The National Policy is fostering manufactures in the inland Provinces, but in proportion as it succeeds in this object it excludes foreign manufactures; and in excluding them it, in many ways, direct and indirect, inflicts injury on the shipping interests of the coast, or at best prevents their due development as the portals of international commerce. If it had not been for the fisheries, the pressure of the effect produced by the National Policy in the Maritime Provinces would have been felt long ago: it is the closing of the United States markets that has brought on these acute symptoms; and now that these Provinces have to discover or create new markets abroad to take the place of those just closed, we may reasonably expect that, handicapped as all foreign commerce is by the National Policy, the present dissatisfaction will continue to grow in intensity unless an adjustment of the tariff to the circumstances be made.

IF we may believe the cable correspondents, Mr. Michael Davitt is reported to threaten that he will rouse the members of the National League in Ireland and America, if Mr. Gladstone yields to Mr. Chamberlain's demands for modification of the Home Rule Bill; and as to the people of Ulster, who are "only Englishmen and Scotchmen that have settled in Ireland," "leave them to us," Mr. Davitt is reported as saying, "we will make short work of them." The public on this side the Atlantic are supplied by these correspondents with so perverted an account of what passes in England that we dare say this is not exactly what Mr. Davitt said; but none the less it is, we believe, very much in the spirit the expected acquisition of Home Rule is being received by the Irish agitators. If the people of Ulster be left to the mercy of the instigators of the Phoenix Park murders and the subsequent dynamite outrages, we know what the "short work" to be made of them means. We may make a good guess of their probable system of government not only from the general conduct during the past few years of the apostles of the dagger and dynamite; but also—though he may not have uttered this threat—from the personal antecedents of this friend of Mr. Gladstone's, Mr. Davitt, whom Cabinet Ministers now delight to honour, who sits in the distinguished-strangers' gallery of the House of Commons, and who is regarded by the British public as a worthy and representative Irishman, but to whom, when tried for treason sixteen years ago, Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, when passing sentence on him, uttered words which ought not to be forgotten at this juncture:

"There is one thing," said the Lord Chief Justice, "I cannot help regarding with a feeling of the utmost condemnation and horror, and that is—that assassination is not considered as a means too desperate or bad to be resorted to, when it is found convenient to have recourse to it. That letter of yours shows that there was some dark and villanous design against the life of some man."

This is the man, undoubtedly guilty in the judgment of one of the astutest judges that ever sat on the English Bench, of a design to commit murder, who now is reported to openly threaten war to the death unless Ulster be subjected to the rule of the statutory Parliament at Dublin. And it is this spirit among the Irish leaders, which undoubtedly exists, however carefully concealed for the moment,—it is this spirit, which makes it utterly impossible for Great Britain ever to give the Celtic Irish control even over their own destinies, until, at any rate, they have shown unmistakably

that they have undergone a complete change of heart and are not likely to abuse the trust.

IN the discussion of the Gladstone Irish Bills it should never be for one moment forgotten that the Government, as respects Irish affairs at any rate, is Mr. Parnell as representing his employers, the American-Irish, acting through the executive of Mr. Gladstone and his Irish Secretary, Mr. Morley. It is evident from the information given incidentally by Mr. Chamberlain and others as to the ignorance of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues, up to the last moment, of the nature of his schemes, that in the preparation of the Bills the Nationalists took the place of the Ministers of the Crown, at least as far as Mr. Gladstone's overweening self-confidence brooked any extraneous help in the concoction of his measures. And in the subsequent proceedings on these measures the same thing is observable. A few hours before Mr. Gladstone moved the second reading of his Home Rule Bill, a Cabinet Minister and another member of the Government gave assurance that important modifications of the Bill, which would put an end to all danger of its being defeated, were to be announced. But when Mr. Gladstone sat down, it became evident that his colleagues really knew nothing about his intentions. The simple truth is it is the Nationalists, not the Ministers of the Crown, who are now Mr. Gladstone's colleagues; the function of the Ministers has been changed to that of clerks to a puppet set in motion by the Nationalists. And so we read further that Mr. John Morley, at a conference had on Thursday with the Parnellites, was unable to persuade them to consent to any changes in the Home Rule Bill; and on Friday Mr. Parnell laid before an assemblage of his supporters a number of communications from Mr. Gladstone suggesting certain modifications in the Home Rule Bill.

THE *London Economist*, a Liberal journal, be it remembered, of high authority in political as well as commercial matters, says on the subject of one-man power, as exemplified in Mr. Gladstone's present departure from both Liberal principles and practices:—"There is one feature in this great struggle to grant or to refuse Home Rule to Ireland which has not yet received the attention it deserves, and that is the temporary breakdown of the British system of Cabinet Government. That system, which entrusts all executive power to a committee informally elected by Parliament, though always unrecognized by law and often misunderstood, has gradually come to be regarded among us as the key of our administration, and the check, not only on the folly or caprice of Parliament, but on the rashness or unwisdom of any individual Minister. In the present instance the use of this grand guarantee for moderation has been reduced to a minimum. Mr. Gladstone, it is now officially admitted, formed his Cabinet without any explanation to his colleagues of his principal project, and when it was formed left them still in ignorance. Whatever may be the ultimate result, a great event—one of the greatest in our history—has occurred thorough the volition of one man, who, in spite of all our elaborate constitutional checks, had made himself for this occasion the Government. It may be taken as certain that if Mr. Gladstone had explained his scheme to the people the Tories would have been returned to power." With respect to this last sentence, we have no hesitation in affirming that the statement of Mr. Labouchere and his friends, the Irish cable correspondents who serve the American Continent with news, as to the favourable attitude towards Home Rule of the great body of the English artisans and working-classes, are utterly, we are pained yet pleased to say, the reverse of truth. It is not merely clubs and drawing-rooms that are opposed to Home Rule, as these gentlemen would have us believe; it is the people in general who are set against it; and if the opinion of *any* class be taken it will be found that the only persons favourable to the Gladstonian scheme have a strong Irish accent. Mr. Gladstone and his supporters know this, we believe, perfectly well; and hence their dilatoriness in proceeding with the Bill. Every week of delay gave them a chance of bargaining with the Radicals, till that came to an end by the final rupture with Mr. Chamberlain last week. Moreover, it has been hoped to familiarize the nation with the idea of disruption by the perversions of truth and probability of the jackals we have referred to—a hope unfortunately not without foundation, for unthinking people are easily led to take a view which they believe is generally held. But the main reliance of Mr. Gladstone is undoubtedly the ignorant rural vote newly enfranchised, who unfortunately know him only by name. Yet, even here, it is more than likely that he has gone astray; for these are mainly dissenters and ultra-Protestants, and ultra-Protestantism will assuredly not look with favour on the Rome Rule so evidently accompanying Home Rule. This is not a high motive for political action, but it will tell with many; and, besides, though the rural vote is not an enlightened vote, it may be counted on to be a patriotic one as far as it sees. Mr. Jesse Collings, who, if any one, may be taken as the spokesman