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THE NEW TURKISH CONSTITUTION.

We gave in our last issue an account of the events which have apparently led to a complete change of policy on the part of the Turkish Sultan and Government toward its subjects, both Moslem and Christian.

We already stated that the good faith of the Turkish authorities in granting a constitution to the people may be very reasonably doubted, judging from their conduct in the past; nevertheless, as all Europe is deeply concerned in the concession of popular government to the discontented provinces, it is quite possible that the Sultan may be compelled even by pressure from the hypothetical "European concert" to adhere to his promises on the present occasion. In fact the most recent despatches from the districts of Macedonia and Albania, called by the Turks "Vilayets," assert that the Young Turks Party, whose object is to secure popular government for all classes of subjects, is in complete ascendancy, and that the Moslem or Turkish authorities which have hitherto held sway, have surrendered themselves to the Young Turks. It appears also that the publication of the Sultan's proclamation at Kossovo, granting the new constitution, was hailed with the greatest possible manifestation of joy by the populace of all degrees and classes, and welcomed even by the militia who occupy the fort, by a royal salute of 21 guns. All this betokens the universality of the joy with which the Sultan's promises of the entirely new basis of government have been received, and seems to show also that there is an expectation on the part of the people that the concessions granted have more solidity than we living at so great a distance from the point of activity can conceive under the circumstances.

When the Sultan's "irade," or decree, was published, even in Constantinople, where we would scarcely expect very heartfelt rejoicings on the occasion which puts Christians almost, if not fully, on a par with Turks, the enthusiasm was intense, and the people acted very much as a Western European crowd would do when some extremely popular measure should be put into force. Crowds with bands of music and banners went through the streets blessing the Sultan and cheering for the Constitution which promises them liberties they have never yet enjoyed. The individual members of the Government were also loudly cheered, and the Grand Vizier and other Ministers thanked the people for their loyalty and devotion.

Furthermore, the Sultan has proclaimed a general amnesty to political prisoners, and amnesty has been extended to those who have long ago fled the country, including the 200,000 Armenians who are believed to be living in America, half of whom are said to be political refugees. So far as the Christian Armenians and Syrians in the United States and Canada are concerned, however, it is most unlikely that the great boon proffered them in the shape of an amnesty will induce them to return to their native country. They may indeed have that innate feeling of patriotism which would attach them to the soil of their nativity, but it is more likely that the precariousness of the existence they eke out in their Asiatic homes will be long remembered, and that having once experienced that America is a land where industry and obedience to the laws meet with their own reward, they will not return to a country where, even though it is their birth-place, they were subject to the likelihood of being raided by barbarous tribes who hated them for their religion, as well as envying them for their worldly prosperity. And this motive of action will be so much the stronger as they are well aware that Kurds and Druses were encouraged by a hostile government to exterminate them.

Kurds and Druses were induced to prey upon these denizens of an unhappy country, by the love of plunder. But besides this motive, the ruling authorities had the further inducement to set the barbarous tribes upon their Christian subjects, which the Egyptian Pharaoh had to slay the male children of the Hebrews whom they had unjustly enslaved.

"Behold this people are becoming

numerous and stronger than we. Come, let us wisely oppress them, lest they multiply, and if any war shall rise against us, join with our enemies, and having overcome us, depart out of the land."

These immigrants to America are not likely to leave a land where they enjoy liberty, civil and religious, and commercial prosperity, for the sake of being governed by their lives constantly endangered owing to the whims of insatiable and tyrannical masters. They will naturally feel, as Benjamin Franklin has so beautifully expressed the sentiment: "Where liberty is there is my country."

There is a point on which the Young Turks have expressed dissatisfaction, which is that the new ministry are not of a character very likely to carry out the liberal measures promised by the new constitution. Younger men with liberal ideas have been asked for, that it may be expected with confidence that the reforms already nominally conceded may be honestly carried out. The Young Turks say they are very much in earnest, and will not submit to mere paper reforms. The men appointed are too much identified with the mistake of the past to be capable of governing the country according to the liberal programme laid down in the new constitution, and therefore there must be a radical change in their personnel.

In submission to these demands, the Sheikh-ul-Islam and several of the other Ministers, have already resigned their portfolios, and as it is believed that the Ministers who have already been named were so designated merely as a temporary expedient, it may be that the terms proposed by the Young Turkish Party may be accepted in their totality.

A curious circumstance connected with the incidents mentioned in this article is related in the most recent despatches from New York to the effect that leading Syrians in that city have started a movement to present Turkey with a modern battleship as a testimony to their confidence in the Sultan's honesty of purpose to rule in future as a constitutional monarch. In our estimation, the Great Mogul is too young a convert to constitutionalism to be hailed with so much enthusiasm by those who have suffered such grievous wrongs at his hands.

As the wisest Trojans of old feared the Greeks in their most apparently benevolent mood, so might the Syrians and Armenians fear the friendship of the Sultan, even when the latter is ostensibly offering them a most precious political concession.

The latest despatches on this subject state that the Young Turks' Party have succeeded in having a Government appointed which will carry out their views.

It is also stated that an attempt was made to assassinate the Sultan, but was unsuccessful, owing to the stroke of the would-be assassin being rendered harmless by the coat of mail which the Sultan always wears.

A TRIBUTE TO CATHOLIC QUEBEC.

A fine denial to those who assert that the Catholic majority of Quebec are intolerant towards the non-Catholic minority is found in the words of the Protestant Bishop of Quebec, who in his address to the congregation on the Sunday that occurred midway in the Tercentenary celebration and at which the Prince of Wales was present, said:

"We thank God for having put it into Champlain's heart to found Quebec. We thank him that we meet in this Cathedral built for us by George III., just as our French neighbors are meeting at the same time on the Plains of Abraham. We also thank God that with the early settlers there came their churches, teaching them the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

"As to the general spirit of our lives in this old city of Quebec, I would simply remind you of the fact that when the first English Bishop, Dr. Jacob Mountain, arrived here the French Bishop of that day, Monsignor Briand, went down to the wharf, and kissing him on both cheeks, said: 'It is high time, Monsignor, that you came to look after your people.' It is in the same kindly spirit of charity and Christian love that I am thankful to say we have both lived together ever since."

Coming from such a source, from the one who is the highest authority of Protestant opinion in the Province of Quebec, the words of the Bishop may well bring pleasure to the hearts of Catholics and their utterance is one of which we may be justly proud. We hear so much on the other hand about the arbitrary and dictatorial Church, about the intolerance of Catholics towards their Protestant neighbors throughout that Province, about the educational system in which non-Catholics are considered either little or not at all, that it is indeed refreshing to hear the truth spoken so well and fearlessly by the head of the Protestant Church in Lower Canada.

The Catholic News, commenting on the pronouncement, says: "We trust the papers of Toronto printed that portion of the Bishop of Quebec's address. If they did, the words must have set the intolerant Orangemen of that city thinking," which is one more proof of the continental reputation our city has for the bigotry and narrowness of a portion of its population.

Another tribute drawn forth

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by the recent Quebec celebrations was that given by the General Methodist Conference of Canada previous to the Tercentenary. During the session the following resolution was adopted:

"On them (the early Catholic missionaries) we have a rich inheritance of Christian devotedness, as Champlain himself described on introducing them to the Huron tribe of Indians. 'These are our fathers. We love them as we love ourselves; the whole French nation loves them. They do not go among you for your furs; they have left their friends and their country to show you the way to Heaven.' We recall the glorious motto of these men, to which they were unflinchingly true 'Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,' and unitedly honor their passionate charity and their enthusiastic love for the souls of men. We rejoice that in this patriotic monumental celebration all races and creeds of our great Dominion can unite and give expression to their conviction that the genius of a nation is not in her harvests, herds, and stores, not in the sinews of her peasants and artisans and the lives of her children, but in the character she stamps on history, in the type of her art and literature, in the spirit of her laws, and, not least, in the pride and glory of her memories and traditions."

Though this tribute to the early missionaries was deserved, we were perhaps not prepared for this magnanimous and frank avowal from the Methodist body. That it was given reflects credit on the framers and deserves the recognition and appreciation of Catholics in all parts of the Dominion.

LORD ROBERTS AND MILITARY TRAINING.

The advice of Lord Roberts in his farewell to Canada has roused considerable comment, inasmuch as his words advising that the whole male population should be trained to the use of arms, seem to have been understood as meaning that the entire population of Canada should live hereafter in a continual state of aggression. It has been said in reply that Canada would not be justified in incurring the expense such training would demand, and that an aggressive attitude is not to be desired. It is asked against whom should be arm?

Is it not possible that the old soldier, when proposing a general military training, had in view a time of peace rather than war and a reduction of, rather than an addition to, the public expenditure? Great Britain has not been too enthusiastic in adopting his suggestions, but it is just possible that there, too, he has not been fully understood. In Great Britain a standing army has to be maintained at an enormous expense. If the men and youth of the nation had all a certain amount of military service, the standing army could be greatly diminished if not altogether abolished. Thus one expense would offset the other.

An entire nation ready to meet a foe would militate against the approach of that foe. A seeming preparation for war might serve as a potential factor in the cause of peace. War is barbarous and always to be deplored. A dissemination of the spirit of patriotism and a knowledge of the means of protecting home and country are not necessarily followed by a conflict. This known readiness might serve as a preventive, in which case there would be no occasion for a practical application of the training received. If the carrying out of Lord Roberts' suggestion would serve in this way it may have something in it, for "prevention is always better than cure."

MR. BIRRELL'S WORK FOR IRELAND.

Of more importance in the eyes of many than even the passage of the University Bill, is Mr. Birrell's bill having in view the check and uprooting of the terrible White Plague now so prevalent in some parts of Ireland. The bill is aimed at the causes of this menace to the lives of so many of Ireland's people. It seeks to remedy the conditions of a vitiated atmosphere, insufficient food, excessive mental or bodily labor and mental depression under which many are at present an easy prey to the insidious disease.

The bill provides that medical inspection shall be thorough, the practitioner to report every case in the district; county councils are empowered to raise funds for hospitals by means of the poor rates, and lectures are to be provided which will give information regarding methods for fighting the plague. Cattle and dairy inspection is also to be enforced.

This together with the strenuous work of Mr. Birrell in connection with the Irish University Bill, the passage of which is in a measure for him a personal triumph, cannot but gain and keep for the Liberal party

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the support and friendship of the Irish Nationalists.

In addition to the results which may be looked for on the physical and educative life of the people by the passage of those bills, there is something else also to be gauged particularly from the success of the action respecting the University. A decade or so ago, the opposition to the passage of the bill would have been so strenuous that no Liberal Ministry would have risked alienating a considerable portion of its supporters by taking the matter seriously in hand. Now, however, a better state of things prevails. The injustice under which Ireland has so long endured the lack of the means for higher education has at length been so well presented and generously admitted that the passage of the Bill by a large majority has now become a tangible reality.

COMMUNICATION

To the Editor Catholic Register:

The first of the weekly letters in which I promised to give the "Register" an account of my trip to Europe will be a little late in reaching its destination. I expected to send a communication from Father Point, but the turn of events disappointed me. That last point of intercourse with the land which the good ship Ottawa was leaving was reached in the early hours of the morning and letters to be taken off there had to be written on the preceding evening ere we had left Quebec out of sight. Any such letter, therefore, could only contain an account of my journey from Montreal to Quebec, and readers of the Register will be made quite familiar with the features of that journey by the accomplished pen which sketched so vividly the recent guard ecclesiastical pageant in New York and will do the same service for what promises to be the finest display ever witnessed in Canada. Were it not that I know how well this will be done, I would be tempted to dwell a while on the mighty warships of England and France which lay reposing peacefully under the shadow of Quebec's citadel-crowned cliff. Though not a gun was visible and only the thinnest stream of smoke rose from their funnels, yet their length, their lowness in the water, the tiers of circular openings along their sides, suggested the terrible broadsides they could launch against a foe, whilst the bluejackets on guard here and there, the torpedo nets, the small boats impelled by lusty arms which circled round indicated what strict watch was kept. The French warships, because of their snakelike length, and the dark slate color with which they were painted from the water line to the top of their masts, looked particularly formidable. And as the mists of evening began to gather they grew indistinct much more quickly than the white vessels of the British navy.

The quaint, historic and superbly situated city of Quebec looked very attractive on Saturday night, July 18th, as the steaming Ottawa left it behind. All through the day the weather had been gloomy, and threatening a repetition of the rain which fell all Friday afternoon and evening. On this account it did not present the magnificent spectacle that greeted the eye when the tin roofs of its many churches, the frowning grandeur of its cliff, the broad stretch of rippling river on whose waters the finest ocean liners ride securely, and the richly wooded banks, now precipitous, now stretching away in a splendid sweep to the background of the blue Laurentian mountains thickly studded with towns and villages in each of which the church spire is the most commanding object, were lighted up by the glory of a summer sun. Some years ago I was fortunate enough to see from a steamer deck, Quebec garbed in light, and the sight is one never to be forgotten. On this occasion I saw it in shadow and the difference in charm was very perceptible.

However, Quebec by night at this time made up somewhat for what it lost because of the cloudiness of the day. The work of illumination in preparation for the celebration of the following week was fairly well advanced. Some buildings gleamed with electric lights. The French warships in the harbor displayed many lights, whilst their British neighbors were very sparing in this respect. The enterprising advertiser had his signs ablaze. The ferry boats which plied busily from Quebec to Levis seemed to be on fire, so lavishly were they illuminated. The street cars on the outskirts gleamed through the trees of the suburban streets; and for miles on the Levis and Quebec sides of the river the myriad lights were simply enchanting, the darkness of the night making them more prominent.

I fear that if I dwell any longer on Quebec I shall be departing from my intention expressed at the outset, and therefore I reluctantly pass over the gay decorations of its streets, and the many evidences of preparation for the great Tercentenary celebration. Early on Sunday morning the little steamer from Father Point bore away the Ottawa's pilot, and severed the last thread of communication between its passengers and their friends on the American Continent. At 7 a.m. the Angelus party assembled in the finely fitted library of the Ottawa, heard Mass, and went to Communion. The celebrant was a Jesuit priest on his way to Japan, and amongst the communicants were six priests, three of whom wore the An-

gelus badge. It was a reminder of College and Retreat days to see the priests going to Communion, and those who had made a Retreat shortly before coming aboard felt that they were entering on another. Indeed an ocean voyage is a kind of Retreat. There is a complete break with one's former life, with nothing to do from morn till night except to sit and think, whilst the immensity of the waste of waters over which the steamer ploughs her way for days with naught visible save wave and sky, is a most impressive sermon on the greatness of Him in whose sight all this is but as a drop of morning dew. Had I realized this a little earlier I might have asked to be dispensed from the Retreat made a week before.

The morning Mass was not the only reminder of Retreat. The Angelus party had prayers in common every evening, whilst each morning in turn one of the priests on board said Mass, the others, as well as a large percentage of their lay associates, going to Communion. This is one of the advantages of belonging to such a party as that of which I am a member. Another is the delightful spirit of companionship. Whilst the number of those in the Angelus party is far less than I was led to expect, yet a great variety of character was to be found in the group gathered as it was from districts far apart. Some of the members were residents of San Francisco and had gone through the experiences of the earthquake from which the city of the Golden Gate is fast recovering. Others had their homes on the banks of the Hudson. All were one in their intense devotion to old Ireland, and in their determination to make everything as agreeable as possible for their associates in particular, and those on board in general. That they succeeded was evidenced by the friendly relations quickly established on every side. For my part I can say that I shall ever cherish the memory of my association with the various members of the Angelus party.

The scenery of the St. Lawrence after Father Point disappears is much the same as that witnessed on the sail from Quebec outwards. The steamer wends her way along the same stretch of shore, steep and beautifully wooded in places, then stretching away in a succession of gently-rising fields until it attains the height of a respectable hill, all the time with blue mountain ranges in the horizon and a succession of charming villages strung out like beads along the water's edge with the church cross ever in the foreground. As the Gulf widens and the farther bank grows dim and melts into cloud, the panorama of Gaspé shows up in its rocky barrenness, and the dwindling villages bespeak the scanty subsistence afforded by the soil. There is hardly a trace of cultivation or of communication by land between the scattered settlements on this shore. The few hardy settlers must depend principally for their means of living and communication alike on the cold waters into which their peninsula penetrates far.

Drizzly as their life must be, as the chilliness of the wind which blew upon their shore in July testifies, their lot must be far preferable to that of the inhabitants of Labrador, the southern shore of which becomes visible as the Strait of Bellefleur is neared. As the Ottawa passed in sight of that coast on Monday, July 20th, masses of snow, piled here and there, were visible, whilst two great icebergs loomed up some distance from the steamer. Had we seen the latter in the sunshine they would have presented a splendid spectacle, reflecting the light in prismatic colors; but viewed in the gray of the evening, they were weird and forbidding visitors, suggestive of the perpetual winter which lingers on the shore around which they hover during the long days of July and August. For the dwellers on that shore the term "balmy summer" must have no meaning. The passengers on the Ottawa found it expedient to wrap up warmly, and walk vigorously in order to keep from being chilled as they passed in sight of it.

One thing contributed, together with warm clothing and exercise, to keep their blood in good circulation, namely, the expectation of seeing the warship on which the Prince of Wales was coming to Quebec, as it passed through the strait. In this they were not disappointed. As the sunset glow was lighting up the sky there passed at some distance south of the Ottawa an apparently small cruiser. Perhaps it was the disappointment which made her seem insignificant, but she was a disappointment to those who expected a splendid vessel. Soon afterwards, however, there loomed up a warship which answered all expectations of what a British man-of-war with a royal prince aboard should be. Swiftly she ploughed through the waves and passed quite near the Ottawa. A splendid sight she was, as her long form, lighted up from bow to stern, and lying low and firm in the waters, shot majestically past, receiving a hearty cheer from the Ottawa's passengers.

A little before this incident another of a very different character took place. A steamer of the Allan Line, passing by the Ottawa, hung out signal flags which quickly brought the latter to a stop. At the same time the signalling steamer launched a boat which swiftly made its way to the Ottawa, carrying four unfortunate stowaways. These were transferred to the latter, to be put to hard labor, on the way back and then consigned to prison at Liverpool for attempting to steal a passage over to Canada. It seems that one of their company died on the way over, and his death compelled the others to come out of hiding. Though they were of the toughest appearance and decidedly undesirable importations to Canada, it was impossible not to feel sympathy for the unfortunates, whose experience is one of the tragedies of sea life.

But the absence of some of our number at meal time suggests that there may be other calls on our sympathies before long. The swell of the open sea is beginning to make itself felt as we pass through the Straits of Bellefleur, and our experiences there will form the subject of my next letter.

L. MINCHEN.

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