

# Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 27, 1877.

## THE WEEK.

ALTHOUGH it can no longer be boastfully said that "when France is tranquil Europe is at peace," still that country, even if fallen somewhat from its high estate, is still so important politically, commercially and geographically, that no state of Europe, or of the civilized world, can look forward without interest to the 14th of October next, the day fixed by Marshal MacMahon for the general election throughout France. For the fight—which will be a desperate one—both sides are making every preparation. The Government have power, prestige and custom on their side; for the electors have been thoroughly broken in to the idea that it is a legitimate function of the Government of the day to organise the election campaign, to nominate candidates, and to influence and control the voting at the polls to an extent which to us, with our experience of freedom, seems perfectly intolerable. The President's manifesto does not, of course, seem to Frenchmen so strange a document as it does to us, but, after making every allowance for the practices hitherto observed in France, we are forced to admit that the Duc de Broglie's Cabinet, in direct intimidation, and in the pressure which it is exercising on the electors, seems to exceed even the lengths to which the wire-pullers under the Second Empire felt justified in resorting.

Once more the political picnic fever has set in, and the symptoms indicate that the attack will be a severe one. The approach of a general election adds zest both to the appetite with which the electors flock to the rhetorical feasts provided for them, and to the desire of the cooks to serve up their dishes with all the spices of abuse, high flavour of mis-representation, and garnishing of self-laudation of which their respective larders, cookery manuals, or imaginative uncharitableness enable them to avail themselves. *Nemo omnino malus* is an old saying of ridiculously tolerant charity which is altogether alien to the opinions which political speakers and writers pride themselves on holding concerning their opponents. It may be that, in their hearts, they do not believe that those whom they bespatter with colour of an extra-Satanic hue are really quite as black as they paint them; but it is a pity that the thousands who flock to their gatherings should have their ears accustomed to wholesale denunciations of some of the most prominent men in Canada. It is a poor compliment to Canadians to be told that those whom a moiety, more or less, of the electors have chosen to be their representatives and leaders can only be fitly described by the freest use, in the superlative degree, of the most forcible adjectives. But then we are told the colour is only laid on for effect, and, if not applied in broad lines, the country critics cannot appreciate the distinction be-

tween black and white. Complimentary again to Canadian electors!

How often is the complaint heard that there is "nothing in the papers!" When we hear a man of rapid mind and yawning mouth making this querulous statement, we are inclined to ask what are his ideas as to the relative value of "something" and "nothing." At home, it is true that the even tenor of life may be only disturbed by an occasional large fire or now and then by a murder, or that the surface of the political lake is only ruffled by the gentle ripple of the bun-and-speeches festivals; yet it must be admitted that the daily press does its best to make sensations out of the most unpromising materials. But if a man will but look abroad, he surely must be hard to please, or his ideas of "something" must be very magnificent, if he can find "nothing in the papers." Is it nothing that events are now passing which may alter the political aspect of Europe for many years to come? or is it of no interest to us, safe in the peaceful plenty of our Western homes, that in Eastern Europe every returning sun looks down upon hundreds of fresh corpses, thousands of wounded men writhing in fresh agonies, villages in flames, more women and children driven to captivity or brutally abused? Or is it nothing that in India, already, half a million of our fellow-subjects have succumbed to a famine of unexampled severity, and which can only be alleviated—and then but partially—by the instant assistance of those who are able to afford it? Surely there is "something" in all these incidents, something in which the most *blase* do-nothing might find a little to interest, something to which our preachers might, more frequently than they do, direct the attention and the prayers of their congregations.

There can be little doubt that the life of the Pope is very precarious. Of temperate habits and genial mind, his Holiness' days have already been protracted beyond the usual time of man, and far beyond the average duration of the Pontificate; but indications are now appearing that his end is considered to be approaching. We have been under the impression that Pio Nono's chief malady was weakness and a liability to fainting fits, but apparently we were mistaken. For there has been an outburst of miracle-working at Lourdes, and Father D'Alzon, we are told, remarking upon the fact that most of the miracles consisted in making those walk who could not do so, draws the inference therefore that Notre Dame de Lourdes thereby invited them to pray for the legs of the Pope. For those who are not initiated in the mysteries or the logic of thaumaturgy, the inference is hardly as obvious as it is harmless. But that his Holiness does suffer in his extremities, as well as have a keen sense of humor, finds confirmation in the story told of his interviews with a lady who went to thank him

for having been cured of an affection of the legs by putting on one of his Holiness' old stockings. The Pope (the story runs) congratulated his visitor: "As for me," he said, "I wear two of my own stockings every day, but cannot regain the use of my limbs!"

The French press, commenting on M. Thiers' death and character, has dissected the dead statesman rather unmercifully. The Republicans, of course, see his virtues in the strongest light; the Orleanists gloss over his faults and deal gently with what they consider his backslidings; and the Bonapartists find something to say in his favor. But the tone of the whole articles is but moderately commendatory, and perhaps, therefore, the more true. For M. Thiers was more brilliant than deep, more versatile and flexible than thorough and reliable. He rendered great services to France at the time of the German occupation, and by his firmness during the trying days of the Commune, and this must not be overclouded by the fussiness and want of dignity that characterized his dealings with the Assembly. The Ultramontanes and Clericalists sneer at his character and career, and M. Veuillot, in the *Univers*, of course classes him amongst the hopelessly lost. Anyhow, were he great or small as a politician, his sudden death is of immense importance in the present political situation, as one large section of the community had pinned its faith on the man whom the *Temps* not inaptly describes as "the most French of Frenchmen."

More than once the *Whitehall Review* has shown an ambition to rival in matters ecclesiastical the sensationalism of which in mundane affairs the *Daily Telegraph* is the chief exponent. It now announces the immediate promulgation of a long and argumentative manifesto or Pastoral containing and explaining the reasons for the establishment of "The Order of Corporate Reunion," which, as far as can be gathered from the hints given, seems to be an independent branch of the Church of England, repudiating on the one hand all State control and connection, and, on the other, restoring to their due position doctrines and usages which are claimed to have been held and practised by the Primitive Church, but to have been overlaid by innovations, disregarded, or despised in more modern days. When the document alluded to is before us—if it ever is—in its entirety, we shall be better able to judge of its meaning and value.

## THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. Paul's thorough devotion to Christ is nowhere more fervently manifested than in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, where he refers every thing the Christian receives to the grace of Christ. The whole course of the Christian is referred to Jesus Christ. It is all by Christ, through Christ, in Christ, with Christ; and when the