

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1878.

THE WEEK.

THAT Easter-tide should be the most joyous festival of the Christian year is but the natural expression of the feelings the Christian should experience, in contemplating the most glorious triumph achieved by the Saviour, when He showed that it was not possible He should be holden of the bonds of death. That both the grandeur of the subject in itself and in its relation to the human nature of our Blessed Lord, and its importance to us, are so great that it should engross our undivided attention and should fix all the powers of our soul on one subject alone, can hardly be denied by any man claiming to be a Christian. That the entire octave, from Easter Sunday till the Sunday after, both inclusive, is to be employed in this way, evidently appears to have been the intention of the Church, as we gather from the Proper Preface in the Celebration of the Eucharist. Nor would even a longer period have been at all out of proportion to the other seasons of the Christian year; and indeed during the five weeks after Easter, the teaching of the Church has direct reference to the event which constitutes the Corner Stone of the Christian system. Fully impressed with this principle, it would seem strange that any part of this season, and especially Easter Monday, should be selected for the purpose of holding the annual Vestry Meetings. In large parishes a great deal of business has to be gone through which can hardly be transacted without considerable difference of opinion, and another part of the year would answer the purpose just as well. When the evil genius of faction is dominant, as will sometimes be the case as long as the nature of man is prone to evil, the unfortunate selection of Easter Monday is still more apparent. We know of some parts of the country where another season has been adopted for the purpose for several years. The matter rests with the Incumbents of the several parishes, as the Church Temporalities Act allows any part of the year to be chosen for the annual meeting.

The Eastern question remains nearly unchanged. British preparations are continuing on the same gigantic scale as before, although peace is not yet altogether out of the question. An announcement is made that "both England and Russia having accepted the scheme for the withdrawal of their forces from the vicinity of Constantinople, Bismark has retired from the office of mediator, thinking that the negotiations can be most conveniently carried on directly between the parties concerned." And then, it is added, that "from St. Petersburg come exceedingly pacific assurances, to the effect that Russia is willing to accept any arrangement securing the amelioration of the condition of Christians and a moderate compensation; that she would submit to such modification of the Treaty of San Stefano as a limitation of the

boundaries and period of occupation of Bulgaria; the substitution of a European for a Russian Commission; and that Russia would content herself with the retrocession of the small strip of Bessarabia inhabited by Russians. On the submission of the whole Treaty to a congress, however, she appears to be unchanged. Germany is uneasy about the Baltic Sea in case of war, and wants the whole of it to be neutral. Other reports are still very conflicting as to a league between Russia, Germany, and Denmark, as well as on other points. Gortschakoff is better, but too weak to attend to business.

In reference to the representations made by an aggrieved parishioner against the Rev. H. E. Chapman, Rector of Donhead St. Andrew, the Bishop of Salisbury has declined to take proceedings thereon for reasons which he has thus assigned: "1. That in the case of four of the seven charges alleged—that is to say, (a) elevation of the consecrated elements, (b) bowing and prostration, (c) intentional hiding of the manual acts of consecration, and (d) the use of unleavened bread, dough, or wafers, it is expressly denied that the usage has been such as has been pronounced illegal by the recent decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, while, in a fifth (the wearing of a colored stole) the fact (which is acknowledged) is not more or less illegal than is the custom in almost every Church in England. 2. That while in regard of the remaining two charges it is not denied that two candles were lighted at the 8 a.m. celebration of Holy Communion after sunrise on the four winter mornings specified in the representation, and that water was mingled with the sacramental wine on three of those occasions, both of which practices are confessedly illegal under recent decisions, we consider it more desirable to endeavor to effect the gradual accordance of all the usages of the parish with the letter of the law by peaceful and fatherly methods, than by introducing the scandal and division of feeling sure to arise out of litigation into a parish which has been remarkable for a great increase and appreciation of devotional services during the incumbency of the present rector, and for much affectionate and most earnest sympathy between the clergy and a very large majority of the communicant parishioners. 3. That a perfectly plain celebration of the Holy Eucharist, without lights or stoles, is held at the weekly eleven o'clock service once in every month for the benefit of the older people and such others as prefer that method. Thirteenth of April, 1878. GEORGE SARUM.

Considerable attention has lately been bestowed in the columns of our English contemporaries in reference to the statements sometimes made that until the last two or three hundred years the Bible was almost an unknown book in the mother country. Abundant evidence has consequently been adduced

to show that the Book of God was always dear to the English people. That at all times, during the middle ages especially, the Scriptures were far more familiar to English writers than they are now to some of them. No Englishman, in Anglo Saxon or Norman times, with any pretensions at all to education of any kind, could be guilty of so large an amount of ignorance of the Sacred Record as a scientific gentleman in England displayed a short time ago. On hearing the beautiful quotation from the Lord's sermon on the mount, "Consider the lilies, &c." he inquired where that magnificent passage was to be found; and on being asked if he really did not know, said he had never met with it before. A very extraordinary instance of modern ignorance of the Bible is to be found in an edition of Chaucer, by Thomas Wright, M.A., of Cambridge, as well as F. S. A., and author of a number of other works. In "the Friar's Tale" occurs this passage:

"Judas hadde purses smale
And was a thief."

Upon which Mr. Wright makes the wonderful remark—"According to Medieval legends, Judas was Christ's purse-bearer, and embezzled a part of the money which was given him by his Master!"

From Caedmon, in the seventh century, King Alfred in the ninth, we find the Scripture record familiarly handled and reproduced for popular use. In the days of Chaucer we find too a very extensive acquaintance with most of the events in the Bible record. "The vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman" was universally popular at that time and is full of religious teaching, shows an intimate acquaintance with all parts of the Bible, and supposes too an acquaintance with it equally intimate, among his numerous readers, and so on downward to the sixteenth century.

Confirmation has been received of the murder, announced some weeks ago, of Lieutenant Smith and Mr. O'Neill, in East Africa. The information appears to have reached Zanzibar from three men who were with the Mission party and escaped into the backwoods and afterwards swam out to the *Daisy*. Some ineffectual effort was made to bring the bodies away, which were plainly discernible on the beach.

The funeral of the late Bishop Selwyn took place at his Cathedral on the 16th ult., and was accompanied with all the demonstrations of respect and affection that could be shown to so devoted a servant of his Master—so self-denying, self-sacrificing a Bishop—a man who never spared himself, who was intolerant of self-indulgence in others, but whose kindness and liberality to all was universally felt in all parts of his Diocese. At eight in the morning Bishop Hobhouse assisted by Bishop Abraham, the Rev. F. Thatcher, and the Rev. W. Selwyn, administered the Holy Communion in the chapel of the Palace, to the family and immediate friends of the deceased.