

BRITAIN AROUSED

The British people have seldom been so in so bellicose a state of feeling as they are to-day. And this does not arise from any alteration of the usual policy that has prevailed amongst them—preferring peace to war—but from the fact that the conviction has got abroad that Russian diplomacy has become but another mask for deception, and that England has been by fooled long enough by it. The gradual and stealthy approaches that have been made by Russia in the direction of India are not of recent origin. Almost as soon as the great war with that power, having its chief seat of action in the Crimea, was at an end, steps were taken in the direction indicated, still now there are not many furlongs intervening between the Russian outposts and those that have been occupied by the ally and dependent of England—the State of Afghanistan. The latest news from that point shows that there has been a protracted effort to bring on a rupture. Whether it has been prematurely done time has yet to disclose, but it may be surmised that the preparations on the part of Russia are in a condition of very great completeness, and that we may soon hear of surprising developments at the India frontier. To meet this state of things little else has been done on the part of England than for Mr. Gladstone to receive with pleasure the assurances on the part of Russia of continued esteem, and of the most earnest desire to continue on terms of the closest amity and goodwill. These assurances have been the topic of ridicule in all parts of the world, except within the ranks of the Gladstone administration. Even the comparatively uninformed public have been laughing at them for months past, while the "Grand Old Man" has been living in a species of "fool's paradise"—hoping that "better counsels might prevail"—and all that nonsense. "The only good thing that Mr. Gladstone seems to have done has been to send Lord Dufferin to the proximate scene of action. And it has been owing to his endeavors, in consequence of his advice in respect of defensive preparations on the part of the Amir, that the Russians are not licking their heels within the walls of Afghanistan to-day. But the recent attack on an Afghan outpost—which seems to have been done without any provocation—has served to stimulate over Mr. Gladstone to a sense of the inevitable. He has spoken in tones which his own friends are the most menacing kind. It would have been well if he had uttered his recent words many weeks ago, when he was pottering over increased representation, thus trifling with the gravest interests of the nation while attending to matters that were of a sentimental kind, and not of any immediate importance. But the leader of the Liberal Government has found out his mistake. May it be that he is not too late in his discovery? And while he has been at last aroused to the true condition of affairs the people at large are fairly up in arms, and seem to be demanding to be let to battle at any cost. A reply to this condition of fact and feeling is being at last met by warlike preparations on a very extended scale. As force coupled to intrigue has at last been met in the field, it is well that there is to be no more pottering and humbering over it. The first loss will be the smallest, under such circumstances. Thus, while the fleets are to be put in immediate motion, the reserves to be called out, furloughs to be recalled, we may look for some very extensive demands upon the general population to fill the ranks, and thus add considerable numbers to the existing military forces. It has been for some time suspected, in many cases openly alleged on the part of the Conservative statesmen of England, and it will not do to try to conduct the complicated affairs of a great people, touching shoulders with so many nations with other nations, on the principle of playing at being good little boys. If imperial conditions are to be maintained it must be by the use of imperial means. And those means have always included the maintenance of large and effective forces. One might as well try to teach the tiger to go to Sunday school, and wear nice mittens on its claws, as to deal with a nation like the Russians in the manner which Mr. Gladstone seems to have laid down. The late Lord Beaconsfield knew them much better, and had it not been for the sickly sentimentality of the Exeter Hall people, and the absurd ravings of Mr. Gladstone himself over the so-called Bulgarian atrocities, the forces of England would have combined with those of Turkey—our ancient ally—and have given the Russian power such a shaking that the present emergency would have been postponed for many years to come. But it may not be too late to compel them to take up ground as to their new frontier in Asia (a joining that of Afghanistan), in such a way as to relieve the English nation from the apprehension that an immediate attack on the outposts of India are among the present intentions of the Czar. That such an attempt will be ultimately made is taken to be altogether certain by those who are able to penetrate through the clouds of deceit and pretence that for so long have enveloped the national action of the British people. But be that as it may, the determination of the British people to meet in such a way as to show the world that it is not too late to value the peace of the world.

fathers were at so great pains to establish. Fresh events will soon demand the renewed attention of the public, but in the meantime the assurance seems to be not a strained one that the British power does not mean to permit the Russians to acquire any foothold in India, or within those provinces which have thus far claimed protection of the English, and have spurned that of the plausible and crafty Russ.

A MASSACRE

Authentic reports of the killing of ten persons by Cree Indians at Frog Lake have been received. The particulars of this horrible and deplorable event will be found in other columns. The onslaught seems to have been prompted by an Indian Chief named Little Poplar, of very bad repute. What the precise occasion of it was, is not revealed at the hour of writing, whether the result of a foray upon the provision stores, or an act of pure devilish and unprovoked cruelty. It seems to stand apart, however, in the present outbreak, as an isolated atrocity, perhaps to be looked for in the disturbed state of the country generally, but probably having no near connection with the operations under Kiel. While his uprising may be responsible for it, by giving confidence to the Indian race generally, it is to be regarded as a part of the half-breed programme. Those directing their movements are probably too astute to authorize a butchery, which could not serve but only defeat their purpose of eliciting terms from the Government. The place mentioned is remote from civilization, 40 or 50 miles north-west of Battleford. There is a sparse and undefended settlement, which offered temptations to prowling Indians in search of "grub." That the brutality reported originated from attempted pilage, rather than from concerted measures of the rebels, is the more likely. For that is after all the only trouble with the Indian tribes, a shortness of meat. Canada has in no case violated its understandings with the red men, and given them no cause for war. But who shall say how far some of them may proceed in "parading and bloodshed under the promptings of an empty stomach? Those whom General Middleton has not yet left his camp in peace and contentment on being fed, and were all within range of moderate rations it would take a good deal to excite them. If on the other hand it should prove that the Reds have set loose such men as mere bloodhounds in the North-west, to slay peaceful settlers, it is hard to say how far the authorities may be warranted in withholding its loyal Indian subjects from the war path.

ARCHBISHOP TACHE.

It is stated that the Venerable Archbishop Tache, of St. Boniface, has furnished Mr. W. P. R. Street, Chairman of the Half-Breed Land Commission, with an open letter to the clergy and half-breeds of the affected district, expressing the utmost confidence in the Commission, and asking that all grievances be left to their disposal. No doubt this will have a salutary and pacific effect upon the people now in arms, causing them to reflect upon the folly as well as the criminality of bloodshed. At the first outbreak, when so many hearts were wrung with the tidings of warfare, and the loss of valuable lives, the good Archbishop lamented greatly the course of affairs, and in anguish of spirit is reported to have said it was "too late" to repair by pacific means the injury that had been done. The Hon. Mr. Blake, as will be borne in mind, repeated and dwelt upon these hastily spoken words in Parliament, as though they presaged some awful and irreparable calamity to the Dominion. But, as will be seen by the late report, his Grace, if he ever used the words imputed to him, does not now hold the opinion they expressed. It is not only "too late," but the very means taken by the Dominion Government are endorsed by him as being calculated to rectify all mistakes, and lead to a permanent and peaceful understanding. The use made of the expression by the Opposition leader may have accorded with his emotions, but reflected no great credit upon his judgment and firmness. A crisis of such a kind is not a time to break out in feeble lamentations, but for action resolute, prompt, and effectual, when cold heads and ready acts are most serviceable.

CARS AND COMMISSARIAT.

While some have complained that the cars used in transporting troops were not well heated, there is not a word against the commissariat. In fact the 7th men are all praising the excellent arrangements made for them in that particular. As regards the temperature of the cars, that is a question on which people may agree to differ, and those who most object to the shortest of fuel in the stoves may prefer present comfort, though at the cost of future ailment. A certain amount of exposure to cold in passing over the gaps was acknowledged to be inevitable. But if in one part of the journey the men were roasted by red hot stoves they would be the less qualified to support the rigors of the tramp when it came to their lot. As it is represented, the men would probably have with pleasure the prospect of an active run at pleasure in the cars, beforehand, they would face it with reluctance. But the good and considerate people who express so much concern lest the boys should not have every luxury, en route and in the field, must recollect that they are not chickens, but bold and sturdy campaigners, to whom such trials of endurance will be a good experience in itself, and without which, they would neither feel pride in their work, nor value the praises of their fellow citizens thereupon.

THE RISE IN WHEAT.

The news of the Russo-Afghan imbroglio and the chances that England would be ally, has had the effect of stimulating the wheat markets on this side of the Atlantic, and in Chicago and New York the price advanced five cents a bushel, and Chicago remained in a feverish state of excitement on Thursday and yesterday. The effect here was to advance wheat from \$1.40 to \$1.46 per cental. The indications at present are for firmer prices, and soon as the certainty of a war with England and Russia is established wheat will immediately run up to war prices—whatever this may be. The wheat problem will depend largely upon the dimensions and duration of hostilities. Under any conditions breadstuffs will receive an impetus, and if a prolonged warfare be kept up wheat will be absolutely higher and in all probability attain to \$1.40 and \$1.50 per bushel. During the Russian war of '54 and '55 this cereal advanced to \$2 a bushel, whereas two years previous to this it had been as low as 60 cents. However, it can hardly be expected that wheat will make such a sudden and abnormal advance now as then, for nearly one-half of the present area of wheat has been brought under cultivation since that time, and in parts of the world that were not thought of thirty years ago. By the aid of railways, improved machinery, and advanced agriculture, wheat is now grown nearly all over the world, and to such an extent that the production appears to be increasing faster than the population. On this account, too, wheat is nearly all over available and supplies can be had at the shortest notice. Whatever may be the outcome of the war, fabulous prices need not be expected at the period above quoted. A farmer now, too, should be contented with less, for wheat can be secured at a far less cost, for by the rapid strides made in every branch of husbandry, and the facilities for transit and marketing wheat should pay better at \$1.40 a bushel now than \$2.00 thirty years ago.

QUICK DISPATCH.

A Manitoba paper observes:—"We trust the situation at the front is not so critical as our despatches yesterday indicated. But it seems a terribly long time to get the troops on the ground." How long has it been? The news of the Duck Lake skirmish reached the Government March 28th. The above was written on the 4th of April. Of course at that time the air was full of alarming rumors of fresh outbreaks, and the feelings of nervous people were at high tension. But it was most absurd to suppose that in the six days which had intervened the Government could send a sufficient force a distance of 1,500 miles to stamp out the rebellion. In twelve days, however, this has been done. There are now 3,000 troops under Gen. Middleton's immediate command, and another thousand on the way. Nothing more prompt and thoroughgoing than this has ever been done by any Canadian government.

RIEL IN THE COMMONS.

We have received the following inquiry by post from Delaware:—"An I am interested in the motion of Mackenzie Bowell in the Commons for the expulsion of Louis Riel, three of the Mackenzie-Blake Cabinet Ministers voted for said Riel to be sent to Parliament." Answer.—Yes. The members of the Mackenzie Government who voted against Mr. Bowell's motion to expel Riel from the House were Messrs. Dorian, Letellier, St. John, and Fournier. These three Reform Ministers were willing that Riel should sit in the House as member for Provencher.

CURRENT TOPICS.

Says the Montreal Times (Grit):—"The rebel chief has not forgotten the events of fourteen years ago." Right! He may well recollect how the Hon. Ed. Blake, after offering \$5,000 reward for his capture, kept out of the way while he (Riel) was in Ottawa, and did not lift a finger against him.

The British Columbia Militia are drilling twice a week in anticipation that their services may be required by the mother country. The latest report is that three British war vessels are on the way from the Chinese station to British Columbia waters. It was also lately asserted that a Russian fleet was within eighteen days' sail of the British Pacific Coast.

It is said that some of the Mounted Police officers are calling in question the appointment of Gen. Middleton to handle the North-west campaign on the ground that while experienced enough in scientific warfare, he is a "pilgrimage" in the North-west. But it must be borne in mind that the General has among his advisers the most intelligent and best experienced men acquainted with frontier life. To this he adds the coolness, courage and ready resource of a veteran campaigner in many lands. This is lacking in those who are said to complain. They are horsemen of the plains only.

Brockville Recorder (Reform):—"We are not of those who were in favor of sending our volunteers through the United States. We prefer to be independent of any obligation to a foreign power in such a matter, and the more questions of a few days' delay is neither here nor there so far as we can see at present. The passage of our troops through the United States would have been attended with risk to our two evil disposed persons on the train, have caused great delay, and would have placed the Pacific Railway in a state as to allow of the volunteers."

No doubt the volunteers on their way through the gaps have suffered not a little from the weather. But this phase of their mission should not be exaggerated. Rabid Grit sheets may shed crocodile tears over the matter, and endeavor, by whining over the hardships of the young men, to win the sympathy or arouse the indignation of their relatives at home. All this is very wrong. In the first place, it is an important reflection upon the physical condition of the men, assuming that they are unfit for the duties of a soldier's life, that a little hardship is likely to use them up, &c. Of course, every word of this is reported in the camp of the enemy, who must feel greatly stimulated in their rebellion by such representations appearing in the Globe and kindred journals. We have reason to believe that the men and their relatives resent such a form of appeal most strongly, and split upon the sentiment that the young men of Canada belonging to the force are mere feather bed soldiers, unfit to stand their own climate, or to endure those fatigues of marching which, hard though they be, are not more than thousands of our hardy young fellows go through every year in their fishing and hunting excursions. The Globe but insults the physical prowess of the country in thus belittling and begging sympathy for the boys of the battalions. Such white livered sentiment will not go down.

An independent contemporary calls attention to the bill of expense that is to be incurred in putting down the Riel rising, and suggests that the Opposition should show no factious spirit on that matter. In the first place, it is admitted by all parties that the Government must be sustained in the campaign against rebels at whatever cost, and secondly, the Hon. Mr. Blake distinctly pledged himself on the floor of Parliament to support any expense for arms, men, or transportation for this purpose. More than this could hardly be expected from the Opposition leader on that point. It is felt to be a pity, however, that he should have almost immediately afterwards attempted to worry the administration with a lot of petty, ridiculous, and mischievous questions, with the seeming design of puzzling and hindering their operations, and of extracting information which, if answered, could only result in giving aid to the rebels.

Kingston Whig (Grit):—"The West Northumberland election occurred yesterday, and Mr. Guillet, the lately unseated member, was returned to Parliament by a largely increased majority. Unless evidence of a terrible bribery and corruption be forthcoming—which is quite probable, the Government will be fairly well acquainted with the Tory agents of inquiry—the re-election of Mr. Guillet must be accepted as an endorsement, more or less emphatic, of the Government's policy."

The Midland Railway, of England, now deals with American passenger luggage on what is known as the "check" system. Herewith says:—"Experience on the Continent and in America has shown it to be an excellent one, and the working of the past few days on the Midland lends further corroboration. An adaptation of the system might be usefully introduced into all our lines."

Hamilton Spectator:—"John Finerty's Chicago organ says that the Canadian troops will be blown sky-high with dynamite if they attempt to go through the United States. The Grit organs are very anxious that the Canadian troops shall go through the United States. Is it a fair inference that the Grits think the Canadian troops being sent to the front are all Tories?"

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