

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1877.

THE WEEK.

MR. GLADSTONE has opportunely re-published a pamphlet, which first appeared in 1850, on the Royal Supremacy. In his preface to this new edition he says: "It is, and has for many years been, my belief that the multitude of penal proceedings, which began with the movement at Oxford in 1835 against Dr. Hampden, and which have in so singular a degree marked the history of the past forty years, have done much more of harm than of good. The sentences obtained do not compare favourably with the working of our Civil Jurisdiction, as to the general respect and confidence they have won. These proceedings disturb the minds of men, and tend to precipitate changes which it were wiser to avert or postpone. It is of primary importance that they do not escape in many quarters the suspicion of giving rise to judgments which are founded (however unconsciously) on motives of policy more than on a dry unbiassed consideration of the law, and which thereby suffer loss in their moral claim to respect. * * * The conclusion to which I am drawn is that not only the particular instrument, but the method, is defective. * * * Also I bear in mind that we came through the great Wesleyan movement of the last century and the Evangelical movement in the early part of the present century without having had any recourse to measures of this kind. And who in calm retrospect would desire that they should have been resorted to on either of these occasions?"

There is no doubt that the Government Burials Bills will be very strongly opposed in and out of Parliament. In the Lords, Lord Granville is the champion of the claims of Nonconformists to equal rights with churchmen in parochial churchyards. In both Houses the Ministry can undoubtedly carry the measure if they think it wise to do so. We are still of opinion that the majority of Dissenters would see and recognize the justice of the proposed settlement if their feelings were not played upon by agitators whose policy it is to use this question as a lever for their future operations against the Established Church.

An interesting conversation took place in the Convocation of Canterbury between the Bishops and the Prolocutor of the Lower House respecting "silent burial," from which we gather that it is the wish of the latter that, at the burial of unbaptized children or other cases in which by the law of the Church no service is allowed to be used at the grave, it should be competent for the clergyman to invite the mourners into the Church and there hold a service, to be approved of by the Ordinary or by Convocation, for their consolation. The Prolocutor is of opinion that, when the body is interred without any ser-

vice in the churchyard, the conditions of silent interment are satisfied, and that by the facilities offered by the Shortened Service Act it is now permissible for the minister to use such a service afterwards in the Church as is above mentioned.

In the Lower House a long debate took place upon a resolution to report to the Upper House the completion of the revision of the Rubrics; the question being whether or not it was desirable to apply for legislative sanction to the proposals of Convocation, it being argued that there was at present no safeguard against uncalled for and subversive emendations being made by Parliament. Eventually the motion was amended so as to express the opinion of the Lower House "that it is desirable that many rubrics, and especially those which have been the subject of litigation, should be cleared from ambiguity by the Constitutional action of the Convocation and of Parliament; but that they are also of opinion that such legislation cannot be safely entered upon until some safeguards are devised against the possibility of changes affecting the worship of the Church becoming law by the action of Parliament alone without the consent of Convocation."

The anxiety which has been felt for the safety of the steamship City of Brussels has been relieved by that vessel having been "spoken" under sail, with her main shaft broken. She is expected to arrive at Queens-town in a few days. Not unnaturally men's minds reverted to the mysterious disappearance of the City of Boston, although there was, as was known, no hurricane and no fields of ice on this occasion such as beset the path of that unfortunate vessel. But surely it is not too much to ask that, in cases of such great public anxiety, the Telegraph Companies should exercise discretion in withholding sensational reports until they are authenticated or denied by the agents of the vessels concerned. Exactly the same terrible mistake of giving currency to a false rumour of the steamer's safety was made on this as on the former occasion. Surely anxious friends might be spared the keen agony of disappointment which follows the elation raised by false reports.

The English newspapers have been full of minute accounts of the rescue of the colliers who for nine days were imprisoned in a colliery in South Wales. Hour by hour the progress made towards relieving them from their living tomb was telegraphed over the land, and great praise is given, and is well due, to those who worked not only laboriously, but with a courage which those who do not know the dangers attending on the situation can hardly appreciate, for the release of the imprisoned men. Such occurrences stir up a deep and noble feeling, but Canon Farrar is right in urging upon his congregation

that they should not let the compassion and admiration awakened by an isolated incident evaporate.

Who are the Uniates? "The Uniates are a large body of Poles who, when the Church of Constantinople separated from that of Rome, held aloof from the Russian Church and ultimately submitted to the Pope, retaining most of the Greek rite, including the marriage of the clergy." Not unnaturally they have found themselves between two fires; the Pope, on the one hand, pressing for their complete submission to the Holy See, and the Czar, on the other, using every means to bring them into communion with the (so-called) Orthodox Church, and the denomination that had the Civil power at its back has prevailed. Russia, which is a religious as well as a political autocracy, not unnaturally objects to the extension of Roman influence in her territory, especially in Poland, where Romanism is equivalent to opposition to the Government policy. Pressure, accordingly, was brought to bear upon the Uniates. "Compulsory conversion" was officially declared to be as distasteful to the Czar as we have his august word for it that war is; but still, somehow or other, we read of an assimilation of the Uniat to the Orthodox ritual being forced upon congregations by Cossacks, and men, women and children being ordered a certain number of blows with the nagaika (Cossack whip) for rejecting priests who had accepted the Government's new ordinances. Of course this is nothing but legitimate pressure, in the Czar's eyes, and he now thanks God that so many hundred thousands have been induced, by the nagaika and other cogent reasons, to abjure the Bishop of Rome and embrace the Orthodox faith.

The Irish Church Synod has been doing very important work, the full significance of which cannot be fully stated until the whole details are before us. The greater part of the Revision Bills have passed their third reading, exception being made in the case of that which, as we gather from the context of the report, provided a Burial Service for unbaptized infants. In the discussion on this Bill, which was rejected by a large majority, a lay delegate, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, said that he never saw a country where there was less chance of large masses of Protestants going over to the Church of Rome; but he never saw a country where there was a greater tendency to go over to Atheism, or no religion at all. And in another debate a clerical speaker affirmed that votes were being given on rationalistic rather than Evangelical principles. One of the most important measures, presumably, is the new Preface to the Prayer Book, by which the whole Revisionary Acts are to be interpreted. The utmost that can be said in its favour—to judge from Professor Jellett's remarks—is that its advocates hoped by this means to take the wind out of the sails of the extrem-