

The Week.

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THE opening of the C. P. R. through to the Pacific coast has attracted attention in England to the great value of this Canadian contribution to the consolidation of the Empire. England has now an alternative route to India, China, and Australia, and can girdle the whole earth without touching foreign soil. It is a splendid contribution to Imperial Unity, of which Canada has just reason to be proud; and it raises her at once into a most important constituent of the Empire. Commercially, also, there can be no doubt it will give an immense impetus to this country. Not only may the railway be of great service to the trade of the mother country in case of a blockade of the Suez Canal in time of war; but also in time of peace, owing to its comparative shortness, it should become the main highway of trade between Asia and the eastern coast of this continent; and there are incalculable possibilities in the opening up of the vast habitable North-west territories. The railway is certainly the greatest industrial work ever undertaken by a country of the size of Canada, and might be deemed a fit monument to the great statesman who carried it to completion, were it not that a fitter will be hereafter found in the nation covering half a continent his genius has founded.

THE Government of the United States will do well to closely watch the action of the French Government in respect of the Panama Canal. An effort is being made to secure the sanction of the French Government for the issue of bonds to the amount of six hundred millions francs; and a writer in *L'Economiste Française*, after declaring that it cannot seriously be expected that the work can be finished with the amount named, hints at the possibility of the work ceasing to be a private enterprise, and becoming a national one. This is the French method of colonisation and annexation. When once a few French obtain a foothold in a place, twice as many soldiers are one day landed to punish some imaginary insult; the flag is hoisted; and, as it is usually a matter of protracted negotiation to satisfy or get rid of the unconscionable demands of the French Government, there the flag flies, unless it is torn down by a stronger Power. This is the method by which France has acquired a number of islands or archipelagoes in Polynesia, and her latest move in that direction was at the New Hebrides. She is not likely, it is true, to attempt precisely the same thing on the American Continent—the memory of Mexico must be too fresh with her; but watchfulness is advisable.

A sign of relief might well spring from every British heart when the result of the elections became certainly manifest last week. Gladstone has succeeded, during his lease of power, in lowering the British name and prestige in every quarter of the globe. In Egypt, in South Africa, Australasia, India, Afghanistan, Turkey, the Continent, everywhere is seen the ruinous result of entrusting the government of an empire to a mere arguer, whose great piety and equal lack of statesmanship impels him always to prefer the good of every other country to the good of his own. There can be no doubt in the non-official mind that his mischievous influence has been at work also in the present fishery dispute between this country and the States. In his and Lord Granville's feeble grasp, we could expect no other than that the interests of Canada would have been long ago ignominiously surrendered to the States, for the sake of peace, if the Canadian Government had been less firm than it has, happily, shown itself to be. The Americans have been counting on this surrender, and their chagrin at the loss of Home Rule is therefore much aggravated at the certainty that the incoming Conservative Government will compel them to observe the treaties between the two countries. The settlement of this question, now to be looked for on some fairly equitable terms, will be one good result of this election, and another will probably be the clearing away, or the precipitation, of the war cloud that has been hanging over Eastern Europe since Mr. Gladstone, by a parliamentary trick, ousted the Conservative Government from power. The Czar has since been hovering over Turkey, watching in common with the other enemies of England, in Europe and America, the progress of the Gladstone plan of doing justice to Ireland; and if that had succeeded—if Mr. Gladstone had succeeded in breaking up the British State into two or three or four States, to none of which the

colonies and dependencies of the British Power could owe allegiance;—why, then, the British Power having disappeared, the greatest obstacle would have been removed from Russia's path to Constantinople; and the whole of Europe might have been plunged in war.

THEY deceive themselves who imagine that because Mr. Gladstone has received nearly half the votes cast in the elections, therefore this granting of Home Rule is only a question of time. If Mr. Gladstone should disappear from the scene to-morrow and another election be held on the question of granting such a measure of Home Rule as he proposed, to the demand of such a set as the National League, it would be found that this seeming surrender of nearly half the nation to Fenianism, is in reality the surrender only of the ciphers under the dominion of Mr. Schnadhorst's machine, and numbers of a class whom Mr. Carlyle had in his mind when he described his country as being mostly inhabited by fools. With the removal of the object of their adoration, the victims of Gladstonolatry would probably cease this degrading cult; at all events they would not be likely any longer to practise it at the polling booths. It is true, this cult has already reached the point of flat blasphemy; but we cannot believe that the worshippers will go quite so far as to regard the defeat of their idol as a second Crucifixion, and continue their idolatry after he is physically as well as politically dead. We read in the *Daily News*, Mr. Gladstone's organ, that at Edinburgh "a touching incident was noticed during the walk along Princess-street. A blind man stood on the edge of the pavement, having a friend at his side who was blessed with sight. As Mr. Gladstone came up the seeing friend thrust the blind man's hand forward, so that it just slightly brushed the Prime Minister's coat. "Was that him?" afterwards whispered the blind man in the ungrammatical colloquialism in vogue before and since the days of the detection of the jackdaw of Rheims. On being assured that he had touched Mr. Gladstone's garment the blind man's face beamed with delight." It is surprising that he was not healed! Here is a plain comparison made between Mr. Gladstone and the Saviour of the world; and on the next day that other great and good man, Mr. Labouchere, bosom friend of Henri Rochefort, is reported to have said: "Mr. Gladstone appealed from the elected to the electors, from Pilot and Caiphas, from Judas and doubting Thomas, to the people." Evidently the deification of the G.O.M. is proceeding at a rapid rate: the writer of "Pilot" and "Caiphas" must be already more familiar with the gospel of Mr. Gladstone than with the New Testament. But here again we have a comparison instituted between the trial of our Lord and the trials undergone by Mr. Gladstone in his attempt to confer Home Rule on Ireland; and this is the moral condition of the men whose voice has, it is fondly imagined, rendered the concession of Home Rule, sooner or later, inevitable.

UNDOUBTEDLY, the question of Home Rule has been projected permanently into English politics. There is now a British as well as an Irish Home Rule faction: many leading English statesmen on the Unionist side are convinced of the absolute necessity of settling this Irish business, and whatever Government succeeds to power must take account of this new factor; but, it may be reckoned as certain, no self-government will be granted while Ireland remains under the government of the National League and is represented in parliament by the Parnellites. The bad character of these men, who for seven years have tried their best to wreck the legislature, and, worse still, whose hands, it is more than suspected, are not free from the stain of blood,—the suspicion that attaches to them as the representatives of domestic lawlessness and foreign outrage-mongers, has been a prime cause of the defeat of Home Rule now, and will prevent its success, until Ireland has recovered from her frenzy and is restored to moral soundness. This can be brought about only by freeing her from the monstrous tyranny that now weighs on all but the most degraded classes: the first duty of any Government must be to suppress the National League. When that is done, the now rampant scoundrelism will shrink back to its place, and the natural leaders of the people, the Irish Catholic gentry and the better class of the priesthood, will have courage to assert themselves, and assume their rightful position. And then will be the time when England will cheerfully grant the only Home Rule that can ever be granted—the right of county councils, or even a national assembly, to make by-laws—but nothing more—relating to the local affairs of Ireland. The laws for Ireland will ever, while England remains the imperial country, be made at Westminster.

UNDAUNTED by defeat, Mr. Gladstone intends, it is said, to wage a ceaseless battle for Home Rule in Parliament. This is a repetition of a threat he made several months ago; and might have been expected from the stupendous vanity and egotism of the man. He has appealed from the