

that majority has still further dwindled to 38. Since the vote in 1887 the movement has received a great impulse from the adhesion of Mr. Gladstone. Dr. Cameron also claimed that Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen were bound to vote for his motion, as both have affirmed that Scotch opinion should decide the question. Scotch opinion has, he claims, been pretty emphatically expressed, seeing that out of fourteen bye-elections in Scotland during the last four years, eleven members have been returned in favour of Disestablishment and only three against. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, M.P., the chairman at the Liberation Society's meeting, pointed out one fact that makes Disestablishment in Scotland much easier than in England. Scotland is Presbyterian throughout. The great Presbyterian Church is divided into three great sections, absolutely identical in discipline, in doctrine, in ritual, and in organization. They are equal in social standing and in the esteem of the community; they are rivals only in the zeal and devotion which they display in their sacred work. Yet one of these three is selected for all the honours and privileges and emoluments which the State could bestow, the others being left to their own resources. It is the vast difference in social standing and in the esteem of the community that gives the Established Church its strong position in England, and that makes the work of the Liberation Society so hard. An interesting part of the programme of the meeting was a speech by Mr. Augustine Birrell, M.P., the talented author of "Obiter Dicta," who, it appears, can speak as well as write. Mr. Birrell believes that the Church of England is already finding its relation to the State to be intolerable. He thinks it doubtful whether the Liberation Society should not be regarded as the friend rather than the foe of the Church. A good deal of argument will probably be needed before the majority of its adherents can be brought to see the matter in that light.

NOT even great men are always wise, and it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at if the rare courage, fortitude and sagacity which have made Mr. Stanley the hero of one of the most wonderful feats of exploration in the world's history, have not availed to save him from errors of judgment in his letters and in his speeches to multitudes of admiring Englishmen. The day of jingoism is so far gone by in England that the best opinion of the nation will henceforth demand a better reason than mere desire and opportunity for further national aggrandizement, before it will sanction unlimited aggression upon the rights and liberties of even barbarous African tribes. Mr. Stanley, to do him justice, bases his advocacy of a more rapid seizure of the unappropriated regions of the African interior largely upon philanthropic considerations. But it must be confessed that, even were we to admit at the outset the dangerous doctrine that the end justifies the means, the beneficent effects of British rule in Africa have not yet become so conspicuous as to warrant the belief that her influence regenerates whomsoever and whatsoever the hand of her power touches. But to whatever extent Mr. Stanley's knowledge of the wretched state of the barbarian tribes in the interior may be held to warrant him in urging a policy of energetic appropriation on the part of the British Government, it cannot justify his unwarranted and unjust charges against so respectable a body as the Society of Friends in general, and the Pease family in particular. The public will be glad to learn from Mr. Stanley that the statements referred to in an enquiry in the House of Commons, to the effect that the natives with the Stanley expedition had been "originally hired from Arab owners," and "had been returned to slavery at Zanzibar," are "utterly unwarranted assertions." Mr. Stanley denies indignantly that the hiring of labourers at Zanzibar by the British East Africa Company, for the Congo Railway, would stimulate slavery, and reminds his hearers that whoever buys an ivory-handled knife is guilty of buying "an article which has been obtained by murder, theft, and rapine." We need not stay to enquire whether there is not a material difference in the two cases, and whether the one is not a recognition of the institution in a sense in which the other is not. But many will regret that Mr. Stanley should have deemed it necessary or becoming to sneer at the advocacy in the press of righteousness in national affairs as "namby-pamby journalism," or at the promoters of peace as the opponents of legitimate enterprise. His statement that the Company in question had contributed £12,000 to the release of three thousand slaves, and his sneering inquiry whether the Quakers of England had contributed 12,000 pence to rescue "their

dark relatives from slavery" have called forth a stinging reply from Mr. J. A. Bright, who comments severely on "the ignorance of his subject shown by Mr. Stanley where he speaks of people who are well known to have poured out money like water in support of every good and benevolent object!" "The insolent sneers with which they are now rewarded," continues Mr. Bright, "will not meet with an echo from educated people in England. They remember by what religious body the anti-slavery movement was originated and has been mainly carried on, and the record of the Society of Friends is in little danger from such remarks, whilst the names of Fowell Buxton, Elizabeth Fry, Joseph Sturge, William and William Edward Forster, William and Stafford Allen, Samuel Gurney, and Joseph Pease remain unforgotten."

THE TRUTH ABOUT RUSSIA.

NO one who has ever met Mr. Kennan or heard him lecture can entertain the slightest doubt of his absolute veracity. It is not only that he tells his story in a perfectly straightforward manner; but he gives evidences and confirmations throughout by which his assertions may be tested. Names, localities, dates are all afforded with perfect precision, so that the gainsayer or the doubter may ascertain whether any attempt has been made to mislead him. In addition to all this, the evidence of Mr. Kennan has the still greater value of having been given, so to speak, under cross-examination.

This is not a matter of opinion or of mere one-sided representation, it is a matter of fact. Every one knows or has the power of knowing, that Mr. Kennan visited Russia as a friend, and on his first visit was favourably impressed by the country and its government. When he visited the vast Empire the second time, he had every facility afforded him by the government for making himself fully acquainted with the districts the condition of which he proposed to investigate. We know the result. Those articles of the veracious and courageous traveller, which have appeared in the *Century Magazine*, have let a flood of light in upon Russian affairs such as has never fallen upon them before. It is indeed possible, and there seems reason to believe, that the very Government of Russia, that is to say, the Czar and those about him are obtaining information about Siberia which they did not formerly possess.

It is very desirable that the information now obtained through Mr. Kennan's efforts should not be forgotten or lost sight of. It was rather startling to some of us to hear its accuracy called in question quite lately, and this by a countryman of the traveller from whom we had received it.

Mr. Dunston, Vice-Consul-General of the United States in Russia, not only accused Mr. Kennan of making exaggerated and sensational statements respecting the condition of the prisons in Siberia, but actually went so far as to institute a comparison between these and the prisons in the United States to the advantage of the former. But for the audacity of such a testimony, it could hardly have received any attention. In the first place, the accusation of having made exaggerated statements is of a character so vague as to be worth nothing unless put in a more definite form. But further, the real question is simply a matter of fact.

Mr. Kennan stated certain facts or alleged facts. He told us that men and boys, women and girls were dragged from their homes, and sometimes without a trial, or even an accusation, were sent into exile in Siberia, that whilst kept within certain village boundaries in that region, they were forbidden almost every kind of occupation except manual labour. He told us that they were imprisoned for the most venial offences, that women were insulted, flogged, sometimes killed. He gave us name after name, place after place, date after date. Either his statements were true, or they were false. Here is no matter of more or less, of exaggeration or simple, accurate representation. It is a matter of true or false.

If, therefore, Mr. Dunston is to constitute himself the defender of the Russian Government, his task is a perfectly simple one. He can obtain information on the points to which Mr. Kennan drew attention, and let us know the truth, if we have been misled or misinformed. A certain surgeon is said to have been arrested for a mere exclamation in a certain city. He is said to have been sent into exile in Siberia. While there he was forbidden to exercise his profession; but was nevertheless induced by the mayor of the locality to extract a bullet from his wife's body, the local surgeon being unable to do so, or not

liking to risk the operation. For this crime the surgeon, while suffering from fever, was carried off an immense distance to prison through a Siberian winter. Mr. Kennan tells this story with every detail of name, place and date. Is his story false or true? Was there such a man? Did he live in the city in which Mr. Kennan located him? Was he sent to Siberia or not? And if so, for what reason? These are the questions which must be answered. If Mr. Dunston, or any one else, can show that Mr. Kennan's alleged facts are not facts, that he has drawn them from his imagination, or that they are the record of second-hand information inaccurately conveyed, then the trustworthiness of the evidence will be brought into grave suspicion, if not absolutely destroyed. But it is such disproof, and not mere general statements about the testimony given being "exaggerated and sensational," that the public will demand, before they will consent to change or modify the judgments which they have formed about the Russian Government and the political prisoners in Siberia.

Such, doubtless, were the reflections which occurred to most persons who read the report of Mr. Dunston's utterances. They hardly needed Mr. Kennan's reassertion of his testimony. But it was pretty certain that in some kind of way he would utter his protest against his countryman's criticism; and this he has now done with perfect frankness through the sometimes invaluable interviewer, a Buffalo reporter. Here are some of his straightforward and important utterances in reply to the Consul:—

"I have little to say," said Mr. Kennan, "except that Mr. Dunston does not seem to have the most rudimentary knowledge of the subject upon which he talks. He says that he has lived in Russia for thirty years, and it is therefore fair to presume that he reads the Russian language. If he had taken the trouble to look through the official reports of the Russian prison administration for the last decade he would never have made, I think, the reckless and preposterous statements attributed to him. Even Mr. Galikin Vasskoy, the Chief of the Russian Prison Department, will smile when he reads the assertion so confidently made by an American consular officer that in many respects the Russian prison system is better than our own."

"As for the Siberian prisons in particular, I do not know what Mr. Dunston can possibly know about them, since he has neither inspected them himself nor read the reports of officers who have inspected them. He thinks that I misrepresent and exaggerate their evils. It is unnecessary to discuss that question, since their condition has been fully and frankly described by the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia in three official reports to the Czar, copies of which are in my possession. In the first of these reports Governor-General Anutchin says:—

"During my journey to Irkutsk I inspected a great number of prison institutions, and I regret to have to say that with the exception of the prison castles in Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk they are all—that is circuit prisons, forwarding prisons, and etapes—in a lamentable condition. The etapes are particularly bad."

"Speaking in the same report of the life of exiles on the road, the Governor-General says:—

"Parties of prisoners under guard of a convoy command go on foot from etape to etape, and are whole months on the way, while the hard labour convicts, who must go to the Upper Amoor, do not reach their destination in less than a year from the time when they enter Eastern Siberia. In the etapes the criminals and their families who voluntarily accompany them, are kept, as far as possible, in separate cells, but they spend the greater part of the day together. The scenes of debauchery to be witnessed here cannot possibly be described. All the shame and conscience that a prisoner has left is lost here completely. Here go to ruin also the families that voluntarily accompany criminals into exile without regard to age or sex."

"On the very report from which I have just quoted the present Czar has endorsed in his own handwriting the significant words, 'A melancholy but not a new picture.' Will Mr. Dunston try to maintain that the Czar of all the Russias is also a 'sensationalist given to exaggeration' of the defects of his own system of government?"

Whilst we write we have before us the report of a letter said to have been written by the Czar to the Queen of Denmark, assuring her that the state of the Siberian prisons shall be seen to. There can be no manner of doubt that every word spoken by Mr. Kennan may be implicitly believed. At least it is the duty of the Russian government to give statements as plain and circumstantial as his were before they can be brought into doubt; and it is a duty to civilization and humanity to keep alive a knowledge of the cruelty and misery under which the subjects of the Russian Empire are groaning.

Dr. Dixon, professor of hygiene at the University of Pennsylvania, has been making some experiments with air and dust obtained in street-cars. He has found in them the germs of many diseases, contagious and otherwise. Better ventilation and more effective cleansing are sorely needed.