

Dominion Churchman.

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THE WEEK.

THE Treaty concocted by the Russians appears to have given as little satisfaction to the Christian population of Turkey as to any one. Great displeasure is manifested in every direction at the arrangements the Treaty proposes to make as to the respective territories and positions proposed to be assigned to each by its "Russian protector." Even Bulgaria seems distrustful as to the large slice of the spoil awarded to her being intended to make her really independent. Bosnia and Hertzegovina are dissatisfied at being left to the tender mercies of their old masters, with a right of way for the latter to come in when they pleased. It is believed that, with the exception of Montenegro, which has always maintained a real independence in spite of all the forces of the Ottoman Empire in its palmiest days, no one in European Turkey is any better pleased with the Russian arrangement than are the Turks whom the Treaty proposes to drive out. The Christian populations of Turkey were willing enough, some of them, to join the Russian invaders in order to throw off the yoke of Turkish savagery; but it has been evident all along that they would have great objection to be placed under the iron heel of the semi-barbarism of Russia. The government of the Czar must have known very little of the nationalities it is proposing practically to appropriate, if it is imagined that the gratitude it might be expected to win by driving off the Turks would be shown by those nationalities slipping their necks out of one noose only to enter another with equal alacrity. It is now however patent to all Europe that Russia is unable to preserve the "gratitude" she supposes she has won. Count Andrassy appears to have wakened up to the fact, which has for a long time been self evident to many others, that the difficulties of the Eastern question are so enormous, that only the united efforts of Europe can settle them, and that it is impossible for Russia alone to do so. Indeed more than a generation has passed away since it has been clearly apparent that the Christian populations of Turkey ought to have been placed under European surveillance, irrespective of any other considerations whatever. So far as England is concerned, whatever "British interests" may appear to require, she has two duties in regard to this question. The first is to prevent as far as possible any repetition of Turkish atrocities; and the other, which is to see to it that Roumania, Servia, and Bulgaria do not become a second Poland. In her efforts to prevent both and each of these calamities, every friend to humanity must wish her God-speed. As for "British interests" we see none immediately connected with the question, except with those who have invested in Turkish bonds; and it may be relied on as a certain fact that they are irrecoverably lost.

The distress in China appears to be on the increase rather than otherwise. Not the slightest indication of any amelioration has presented itself. In a recent number of the *Celestial Empire* a letter appears, stating that in the province of Shansi the distress is terrible and absolutely beyond description. The writer also says that cannibalism is quite a common occurrence there. He saw numbers of the people lying by the roadside dying and dead. In some of the famine-stricken districts food may be purchased with money, and if this could be supplied relief might be obtained in such districts for the starving inhabitants. The distributors of the funds raised in Europe and America are missionaries, who either reside in the neighborhood or have gone there for the purpose of doing what they can to relieve the distress. Another gentleman states that in the four provinces of Honan, Shensi, Chihli, and Shansi, there are nine millions registered as directly affected by it—more than double the population of the Dominion of Canada. Season after season has followed without rain, until what was once one of the most populous and fertile districts of China, has become a huge wilderness, whose gaunt inhabitants, in their extremity, have gathered every green leaf and every blade of grass, have stripped the bark from the fruit trees, or mixing stalks and straw thatch from their roofs with yellow earth, are endeavoring by these means to prolong their miserable lives. He corroborates the statement previously made that it is an actual fact, horrible as it may be, that parents are known to boil and devour their own offspring, or to sell them alive in the market place as articles of food. The Secretary of the Famine Relief Fund says that the famine is so severe and ranges over so vast an extent of country that thousands are dying daily from sheer starvation; that there are immense districts and numbers of people where the cry of famine is heard, and among whom no aid whatever is dispensed. The cities, towns and villages are, in multitudes of instances, being devastated by the calamity, and the roads are said to be literally black with fugitives, many of whom, unable to travel further, lay themselves down to die, and their bones bleach the ground. He says the sale of women and children for a mere pittance is a common occurrence, and human flesh is ordinarily sold as a necessity of existence. These harrowing details are corroborated by a number of other witnesses; and appeals are made to the whole civilized world to come forward and stay the horrors of so terrible a calamity. The famine is likely to continue for some time; and the efforts that may be made to relieve it will in all probability aid materially the steps that will be taken to plant the Church of Christ among that remarkable people.

The natives of Hindostan who have been educated in the English Colleges, like the Irish priests trained at Maynooth at the ex-

pense of the British Government, have long been remarkable for their antipathy to the Government of Great Britain. This disposition has shown itself in India by scurrilous and treasonable articles appearing from time to time in the native journals. The freedom of the press there, is however, to be so far restricted that a stop is to be put to the publication of articles calculated to excite sedition among the people; and a bill has been passed by the Council of the Governor General for that purpose. It provides that when it shall be necessary, the magistrate or commissioner of police may, with the sanction of the local government, require the publisher of vernacular papers to execute a bond, undertaking not to allow the future publication of objectionable matter; or instead of the bond, the publisher may enter into a written engagement to submit the proof sheets of his articles to an authorized officer. Seditious and libellous writing has greatly increased, and has lately counselled open resistance to the Government by commenting on the supposed weakness of England. The operation of the bill is confined to the vernacular papers, they alone appealing to the ignorant classes. It is not needed for the papers published in English either by Englishmen or natives, as these are read only by the educated classes, and are chiefly local in character. Entire confidence is expressed in the loyalty of the great body of the people; but it is considered unwise to permit seditious writing to excite hatred and distrust against the Government among the ignorant and uncultured masses.

In closing his speech on the subject of the Bill for regulating the vernacular native Indian press, Lord Lytton said: I am unwilling to hamper the diffusion of honest thought; but I recognize in the present circumstances of this country, and in the present condition of the populations committed to our charge, the clear and obvious duty of checking the propagation of sedition, and preventing ignorant, foolish and irresponsible persons from recklessly destroying the noble edifice which still generously shelters its vile detractors. That edifice has been slowly reared by the genius of British statesmanship, utilizing the achievements of British valor. It was founded by English enterprise and cemented by English blood, and is adorned with the brightest memorials of English character. The preservation of this great Imperial heirloom is the first and highest duty of those to whose charge the inheritance is entrusted—a duty owed to the memory of our fathers, as well as to the interest of our children, to the honor of our Sovereign no less than to the welfare of all her subjects in India.

The accounts for 1876-77 show the Indian revenue to have been £56,022,277 sterling, and the ordinary expenditure £58,205,055 sterling. The loss entailed by the famine was £3,450,000 sterling, and £3,808,288 was expended in public works.