

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, AUG. 9, 1877.

THE WEEK.

WHAT a strange sort of man that must be who deliberately calculates upon obtaining influence or carrying his point by making himself so disagreeable or so obstructive that his acquiescence and support has, for peace sake, to be purchased! We are not altogether without specimens in Canada of this race, but amidst all the eccentric and disgraceful exhibitions which our representatives are sometimes charged with having made of themselves in the Dominion or the Local Legislatures, none probably have equalled the scene lately presented in the English House of Commons, when in consequence of the obstructive tactics of some Irish members the House sat continuously for twenty-six hours. The Government fortunately showed no wavering, but by an organized system of relays and constant changing of Speaker and Chairman, members of the Cabinet and supporters, sustained the Chancellor of the Exchequer's determination to "put through" the measures under discussion, cost what it might to do so. For the future, the House will guard itself by new Rules against such a scandalous abuse of the freedom of debate as has lately been made by a little knot of noisy Irish members.

As the aid which was given to the St. John people by churches, municipalities, societies and individuals in Ontario was but the expression of a generous and heartfelt sympathy that was deeply moved by an extraordinary calamity, and that certainly expected nothing in return, we may be allowed to rejoice at the spirit in which our offerings have been received in New Brunswick. All who care for Canada must be glad of anything that brings the various sections of our straggling country into closer union with each other. In 1867, and for several years after Confederation was an accomplished fact, the Maritime Provinces knew little and possibly cared less for the old Provinces of Canada. The politicians who in 1863-4 threw overboard in the Canadian Parliament the scheme for the Intercolonial Railways into which, in conjunction with the Maritime Provinces, they had solemnly entered, little knew how deep a foundation of distrust of their own Provinces they were laying in the hearts of their countrymen by the sea. Ontario especially came to be regarded as an overbearing, grasping Province, willing to make a cat's-paw of others and selfishly tenacious of her own interests alone. Gradually we are "living down" this which we fain believe to be a very false view of our character in the West, and we are glad, we repeat, that even out of this disaster at St. John a more kindly feeling should arise between us and the dwellers by the sea. And as with the people as a whole, so with churchmen in particular, we feel sure that closer acquaintance will but develop

warmer friendship. The entrance of the Maritime Dioceses into the Provincial Synod was a great step towards the consolidation of the Church in Canada. Before that time Upper Canadians looked upon their brethren somewhat as Phœnicians living beyond the borders, and they in their turn, in Hiram's terse language, regarded us rather as "Cabul." Now, however, ecclesiastically and politically united, we gladly hail everything that strengthens our bonds, removes prejudices, and increases our knowledge and appreciation of each other.

Since we last wrote an unexpected change has occurred in the Eastern situation, full significance of which we will attempt to explain. The Russians crossed the Danube, it will be remembered, at Sistova, and almost immediately pushed on a column to Tirnova, about 45 miles due South from whence they succeeded in occupying, and debouching from two at least of the passes of the main Balkan range. To protect the flanks of this advancing column a large force under the Czarewitch was detailed to mask the fortress of Rustchuk, some 40 miles below Sistova, and another force attacked and captured Nicopolis, some 25 miles above that point on the river. So far the Russian advance had been singularly successful. But a column, "feeling" for the enemy found him in force at Plevna, some 25 miles south-west of Nicopolis. The first Russian corps carried the Turkish positions, but advancing in the flush of victory without waiting for the arrival of their supports, they in their turn were driven back, lost all they had gained and were in fact, utterly routed by the Turks. Now as the river Osma, behind which the Russians retreated, is not above 20 miles west of the road from Sistova to Tirnova it is obvious that the Russian communications are in considerable danger of being interrupted, and if the Turks who fought at Plevna can but unite with the forces near Shumla, the Grand Duke at Tirnova and the troops that passed the Balkans will be completely cut off from their base of operations. Probably so great a catastrophe will be averted, and we may even hear soon that Rustchuk has been taken; but yet this reverse is very disastrous, and the check will, at all events it is supposed, prolong the war into another year.

It seems to be but too true that the Russian Cossacks are no less inhuman than the Turkish Basbi Bazouks, and had but the Bulgaria Mussulmans the same *vates sacer* in the person of an enthusiastic ex-Premier to sing their woes as their equally unfortunate Christian brethren found last autumn, England would ring with denunciations of Tartar barbarities, and would shiver with horror at the cold blooded cruelties practised by the troops of the Most Blessed Czar. But the edge is soon taken off the appetite for excitement, and a nation that has supped on horrors cares not to have the same menu for

breakfast. We have always regarded the excitement that was fanned almost into a flame last year about the "Bulgrocities," however praiseworthy in individuals, as somewhat humiliating for a national point of view. Scholars and thinkers knew well that there was little to choose between the wild hordes who served the Sultan and those who served the Czar, and that the Tartar does not lie so far beneath the cuticle of the Russian officer but that he might be expected to burn, as he has done, three hundred Turks in a mosque with as great *nonchalance* as a Pasha murdered Christian men and women at Philippopolis. However, we have the Czar's solemn assurance that the war is undertaken from a humane desire to improve the condition of the Christian populations, and as that is supposed to be best accomplished by destroying the Mussulmans wherever met with, perhaps there is a Christian humanitarian view which we ought to take of this matter. At present, we are unable to see through Mr. Gladstone's spectacles, nor those which the Porte holds up for our eyes.

Bishop Cloughton having been installed at St. Albans, the administration of the diocese of Rochester temporarily devolved, *sede vacante*, on the Archbishop of Canterbury, and His Grace has promptly taken advantage of the opportunity to grapple with the Hatcham difficulty. Summoning Mr. Tooth to Lambeth he pointed out to him a resolution adopted in 1867 by the House of Bishops, and concurred in by the Lower House, to the following effect:—"Our judgment is that no alterations from long-continued and usual ritual ought to be made in our churches until the sanction of the Bishop of the Diocese has been attained thereto," and he invited Mr. Tooth to accept this as an utterance of the "living voice of the Church"—no, that is hardly correct; for we cannot forget how His Grace snubbed those distinguished men who expressed a desire to hear the "living voice"—at all events, he asked him to submit to and be guided by that expression of the view of Convocation. Mr. Tooth demurs to this appeal and contends that the Resolution in question does not constitute or represent a Synodical Act of the Province of Canterbury, or that any lesson, ordinance or constitution on the subject had been "promulged or put in use" by the Archbishop or Convocation. To this His Grace replies that such had certainly not been "promulged and put in use" because an Act of Parliament expressly forbade such being done without the express sanction of the Sovereign. Did Mr. Tooth defy the opinion of Convocation because it had not defied the law, or did he not recognize its judgments unless they received the *imprimatur* of the Civil power?

From this dilemma Mr. Tooth finds he had to extricate himself, and he can only plead, with more or less evasiveness, that the Resolution is not a formally enacted ordinance.

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