

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1877.

THE WEEK.

IT is by the *Scottish Guardian* that the Archbishop of Canterbury has written to the Bishop of Edinburgh in reference to Bishop Buckle's extraordinary interference in the Scotch Church, on which we lately commented, to the effect that he has "never given any countenance, directly or indirectly, to Bishop Buckle's proposal in reference to the Episcopal congregations which stand aloof from communion with the Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church;" and his Grace intimated that he thinks these congregations have, under existing circumstances, no reasonable ground for maintaining their isolation. It is well to know that the Archbishop has not "countenanced" this move; but is this all that can reasonably be expected from him? An English Bishop, bound by his Consecration vow to recognize the supremacy of the See of Canterbury, and holding an English cure, proposes to make a schismatical Episcopal intrusion into the dioceses of a church in full communion with the Church of England, and the Primate can, or will do no more than declare that Bishop Buckle has received no "countenance" from him! Would Bishop Beckles have accepted a roving supervision of Episcopalians who rejected their own episcopate if the Archbishop had actively discountenanced his doing so? His Grace can act vigorously enough when he chooses.

The Italian Minister of Finance is in a happy and, for Italy, an unprecedented position, being able to show by calculation that, for the current year, that hitherto unattainable object, an equilibrium between income and expenditure, will not only be maintained but even exceeded. Signor Depretis estimates the income for 1877-8 at £55,880,000 and the expenditure at £55,400,000, a balance that even larger States would in these hard times be glad to be able to show on the right side of the national ledger. To attain this result no additional taxes are necessary, but the existing average maintained, and will, it is hoped, by careful supervision of the revenue laws, be rendered more productive. A European war will disturb all income budgets, but it may fairly be anticipated that Italy has passed the crisis of her financial difficulties.

It is somewhat premature as yet to say whether the "output" of the present session of the Dominion Parliament will be up to the average in useful legislation. We are afraid, however, that an undoubted characteristic of the session so far as the acrimony and intense personality which have characterized many of the debates and the party warfare, personal attack, abuse, retaliation, and recrimination seem unfortunately, like speeches from the chair, to be always in order in the House of Commons, whilst, outside, the party organs

most unscrupulously suppress all that makes against their own side, and garble and twist to their own advantage all that they do publish, so that even those who can afford time, trouble and money, to read and compare the asseverations of several journals, can obtain, after all, but a very imperfect idea of what really is passing at Ottawa. We hear a great deal about the strong language and vindictiveness of the press, but its real bane is its unscrupulous disregard of truth when party interests are to be advanced, or party delinquencies to be concealed. An oath hastily rapped out often meets with more condemnation than a well-considered falsehood; and so often the relative iniquity of scurrilousness and lying is often misjudged. A very considerable amount of time and temper has been spent in Committee and in the House over Sir John Macdonald's connection with the Secret Service Fund, which all parties will admit to have been somewhat irregular. Mr. Speaker Anglin admits that he did execute printing for the Government, and did receive therefore the amounts that appear against his name in the Public Accounts; but he contends that there was no "contract." Lawyers may decide whether the case as stated by the Speaker comes within the provisions of the Independence of Parliament Act; but it does not require professional acumen to see that the intention of the Act is to prevent members of Parliament receiving money from the Government, and that every member who does so receive it violates the spirit, even though he should scrupulously observe the letter, of the Act.

In times of excitement some one has to be thrown "to the lions," and the Opposition in the English House of Commons, failing in their endeavours to make a successful attack on the Ministry, have thought that Sir Henry Elliott might fairly be so treated. Of course the Ambassador's own hands are tied, but Mr. Bourke, the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, made a vigorous and spirited defence on his behalf. If he did not receive as early information as he ought to have done, or if he did not appreciate at their full importance the Bulgarian massacres, Sir Henry's grasp of the whole subject seems to have been a firm and sensible one. However, the English public is not satisfied as to his capacity; and, what is more important, the Porte would look upon his presence at Constantinople as proof that England had forgiven the past and would aid the Sultan in the future. So it is just as well that Mr. Layard is sent off to act as England's representative in the Bosphorus, while Sir Henry Elliott is "on leave"—a euphemism that may spare his feelings but deceive no body.

It is assuredly not a matter of surprise—at least to Churchmen—that an address should have been signed by such men as the Deans of St. Paul's and of York, and doubtless by a number of other dignitaries, and

presented to the Archbishops and Bishops, deprecating Parliamentary encroachments on the spiritual powers of the Church. This is the curt announcement that comes to us by telegraph, with the addition that the *Times* considers it "a most extraordinary address." Neither does this latter fact surprize us at all: for the *Times* is essentially an extraordinary Erastian, and it has always ridiculed the spiritual pretensions of the Church of England, which it looks upon as a mere department of the Civil Service, to be controlled in all things by the House of Commons, and, during the vacation, by the gentle autocracy of Printing House Square.

With more regret than surprize we read that the Church Missionary Society agents in Ceylon are asking for funds to erect four Churches which shall be independent of the Bishop's control. The question of "opportuneness" may fairly be raised concerning Bishop Coplestone's action towards the C. M. S. Missionaries, but that the stand which he took must eventually have been taken, and that the Bishop must be supreme among congregations of Episcopalians, no Churchman can deny. A letter from one of the missionaries to the *Rock*, in which the above appeal was made, contains the following choice paragraph:—"You and we are engaged in the same struggle against error and a bold attempt to restore Popery. We shall both, by God's grace, maintain our ground, and we need not dread the result: a severe and perhaps a long struggle, and then victory. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet must fall before the King of kings and His chosen army of saints, clothed in the robes of righteousness." Those who are not conversant with the eccentric jargon of a section of the so-called religious press may be somewhat astonished at this latest instance of "Rome-on-the-brain;" a monomania, which would be ludicrous were it not humiliating. There are persons who call themselves Churchmen whose occupation it seems to be to sniff Popery on every breeze. Everything which they do not happen to understand—and that comprises a pretty large field—it sets down as Romanism. Venture to disagree with them, and you are, with a meekness characteristic of the class, described as a votary of the Scarlet Lady. Show a preference for the doctrine and ritual of the Church in its full entirety, and the mystical denunciations of the Apocalypse are found actually to fit your case. The glibness with which these applications are made is only equalled by the ignorance and uncharitableness of those who make them. Was it not very gravely asserted the other day in a local contemporary as a demonstratable fact that the Cross was the "mark of the beast"? What the dispute between the C. M. S. and the Bishop of Ceylon has to do with Popery or "the beast" we do not profess to understand; but it is significant that the Bishop is meeting with very warm support and encouragement from true Churchmen in