

## AN HISTORICAL INCIDENT.

## THE QUEEN DISAPPROVES OF A DAY OF HUMILIATION.

One of the reasons for dismissing his Ministers, assigned by Lieutenant-Governor Letellier, in his letter to Lord Dufferin, which he did not, however, mention in communication to M. de Boucherville, was that the proclamation fixing the day of Thanksgiving was issued with his signature affixed, which he states he had not sanctioned.

The particulars of an allusion to a difference of the Queen with the Premier, Lord Aberdeen, in reference to a day of Humiliation, on the occasion of England declaring war against Russia, while not exactly a parallel, will, just now, when any point which can be construed into an historical precedent, is eagerly seized upon, be read with interest.

We quote it not simply for its reference to the Queen's views upon the particular subject, which are well worthy of being known, but also for the appropriateness to the present time in the nearness which appears to shadow our path, to the dark days of twenty-four years ago, when humiliation and mourning were spread like a pall over England, a repetition of which, we earnestly hope, will be averted, whatever the issue of the impending crisis may be.

The debate in both Houses (31st March, 1854.) on the Address in answer to Her Majesty's Message, announcing the opening of war with Russia, was worthy of so great and solemn an occasion. Before the debate began in the House of Lords, Lord Aberdeen stated, in reply to a question of the Earl of Roden, that it was proposed to set apart a Day of Humiliation and Prayer for the success of our armies by sea and land. This led to the following letter (1st April) to Lord Aberdeen, from the Queen:—

"The Queen rejoices to see the debate was so favorable in the House of Lords, and that it was concluded in the House of Commons.

"She is rather startled at seeing Lord Aberdeen's answer to Lord Roden, upon the subject of a Day of Humiliation, as he has never mentioned the subject to her, and it is one upon which she feels strongly. The only thing the Queen ever heard about it was from the Duke of Newcastle, who suggested the possibility of an appropriate Prayer being introduced into the Liturgy, in which the Queen quite agreed; but he was strongly against a Day of Humiliation, in which the Queen also entirely agreed, as she thinks we have recourse to them far too often, and they thereby lose all effect. The Queen, therefore, hopes that this will be reconsidered carefully; and a prayer substituted for the Day of Humiliation.

"Were the services selected for these days of a different kind from what they are, the Queen would feel less strongly about it; but they are always select chapters from the Old Testament and Psalms, which are so totally inapplicable that all the effect such occasions ought to have is entirely done away with. Moreover, to say (as we probably should) that the great sinfulness of the nation has brought about this war, when it is the selfishness and ambition and want of honesty of one man and his servants which have done it, while our conduct throughout has been actuated by unselfishness and honesty, would be too manifestly repulsive to the feelings of every one, and would be a mere bit of hypocrisy. Let there be a Prayer expressive of our great thankfulness for the immense benefits we have enjoyed, and for the immense prosperity of the country, and entreating God's help and protection in the coming struggle. In this the Queen would join heart and soul. If there is to be a day set apart, let it be for prayer in this sense."

The tenor of precedents was adduced in answer to the remonstrances of Her Majesty, against the name to be given to the day of national prayer; and a few days later she recurs to the subject in writing to Lord Aberdeen:—

"12TH APRIL, 1854.

"The Queen had meant to speak to Lord Aberdeen yesterday about this day of 'Prayer and Supplication,' as she particularly wishes it should be called, and not 'Fast and Humiliation,' as after a calamity. Surely it should not be a day of mourning. The Queen spoke very strongly about it to the Archbishop, and urged great care in the selection of the service. Would Lord Aberdeen inculcate the Queen's wishes into the Archbishop's mind, that there be no Jewish imprecations against our enemies, etc., but an earnest expression of thankfulness to the Almighty for the immense blessings we have enjoyed, as well as of entreaty for protection of our forces by land and sea, and to ourselves in the coming struggle? If Lord Aberdeen will look at the service to be used at sea, he will find a beautiful prayer, 'To be used before a fight at sea,' which the Queen thinks (as well as other portions of that fine service) would be very applicable to the occasion, as there is no mention of the sea."

The wish here so strongly expressed as to the character of the services to be used on the Day of Solemn Fast, Humiliation and Prayer, was carried out. Like the beautiful prayer referred to by the Queen, they were conceived in the spirit of devout humility, which while believing its quarrel to be just, places the issue of the struggle in His hands, who 'sitteth in the throne judging right,' with the prayer that He will take the cause of the supplicants into His own hand, and

judge between them and their enemies! In this way they met the feelings of the nation, by whom the day (26th April) was observed, not in form merely, but with the seriousness befitting a nation on the eve of a conflict, in which momentous issues were at stake, and by which the happiness of many homes was certain to be darkened.—*Life of the Prince Consort.*

## AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

Upon what principle are we to explain the indisposition of the legislature to make a thorough investigation into the causes which are at work disturbing the trade of the country? Is it from ignorance of commercial principles, or is it on party grounds merely, that we must look for the reason, for treating so cavalierly, the overwhelming commercial depression which pervades, it is said, every part of the community excepting "Ottawa"? If it really be the opinion of the "powers that be," that the causes of the calamity are "beyond the capacity of Parliament to remedy," then so much the worse for the composition of that august body, as it must be below the standard the people bargained for. The policy of covering up the facts or ignoring the extent of the distress is very questionable indeed; far from satisfactory, and not what should be expected at the hands of men chosen to legislate not for a party, but for the whole country. The Government must be aware that the public do not charge them in particular with the widespread ruin, but it is natural to look to those in power for at least an explanation of those causes which still embarrass industry, believing it is their place to define the "situation," if not to apply a remedy. But they look in vain for any earnest effort to discover the root of the matter.

If the Government therefore fail to satisfy the public expectation what shall we say of the Opposition? What have they done to earn that confidence which the party in power have forfeited? They are never found wanting in eloquent denunciations of "Steel Rail" and other minor jobs, but when a question of importance is submitted to their consideration they too fail the country in the time of need. May we enquire of those gentlemen who are ambitious to assume the responsibilities of power, what are your views of this absorbing topic? We cannot call to memory when either side of the House clearly stated the simple facts which go to prove an adverse balance of trade. Is it not therefore a little premature to unfurl your high tariff flags, your retaliatory banners before even venturing an explanation of the real difficulty to be overcome. You would ease our burdens, would you, by additional taxation? Do you not imitate the example of the physician who hastily prescribes before making a thorough diagnosis of the disease? It is but fair we think you should tell us what is wrong before applying your remedies, and, that you have not yet assayed to do. Please inform us distinctly of what you would accomplish. Say why the trade of the country runs in the *wanted grooves*? Is it from custom or from legislation? Is it the work of nature or of art, that we are so unceremoniously hurried along the high road to national bankruptcy? Why is it that this country is constantly engaged in exporting its capital? Can it not find more profitable employment? Define the nature of the adverse balance of trade? Tell us all that can be known on the subject; but refrain from repeating what the Government are constantly informing us of "that other nations are in as bad a fix as we are." It was very poor consolation to the unfortunate man who got his legs jammed off by a railway accident, to be informed that his next neighbour was in a worse plight, as he had lost his head! And if other industrial communities are at their wits end, surely they are poor examples for us to follow.

But why should the country be reduced to choose between two parties, the Grits and Conservatives? If one party is wrong, does it follow that the other is right? Why should not the business heads among the merchants, manufacturers, mechanics, farmers and bankers take up this question on its merits and settle it formally and finally, for the present and future? It is only a simple business matter after all. What the country does appear to require in the present emergency is a "National industrial Party" representing the business talent of the community—the style of mind suited to submit business and banking to a thorough overhauling—leaving no stone unturned, that the root of the difficulty may be got at. We must know why things are as they are, before presuming to apply a remedy. The adverse balance of trade which is the admitted secondary cause or occasion of the domestic distress, must in its character be definitely and unassailably settled. Next: why is it that the foreign balance is steadily on the increase against us, and necessitating the exportation of the capital of the country? Again: why is it that the best securities have little or no influence or bearing on the money market—say to the extent of *four hundred millions of dollars*? These are a few of the questions that press for settlement before any permanent relief can be extended to our suffering industries. We trust with the *Globe* that the last volume of the Canadian Hansard is being completed. There is now, we should say, a sufficiency of standard political eloquence salted down to serve as models for many generations of school boys. And we should say also, let the old political hacks of every stripe be relieved from their arduous labours, even at the expense of pensioning off if necessary. The age looks to men of a different style of mind as its leaders; men disposed to do a little less talking, and a little more thinking and calculating; backed up by a paramount love of truth and fair play; in order that there may be a little less legislating against our Canada in favour of other nations; and, that every member of the community may find profitable work, and be kept at it so that there may be no more grumbling.

ALPHA.

The movement for the celibacy of the clergy is said to be gaining ground among the priesthood of the old Catholic Church in Germany. But they must move in that direction slowly and carefully for fear of offending and driving out from among them their leader, Dr. Dollinger, who is strongly opposed to the movement. It will be hard to bring the German Church so near to Roman Catholicism as this change would indicate. All Germany has a horror of all Popery.