

# Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, JULY 5, 1877.

## THE WEEK.

Mr. Gladstone's visit to Birmingham may certainly be taken to be a noticeable event, marking, as it seems to do, very clearly one further step in that gentleman's progress towards—what shall we call it? The rejection by the House of Commons of his famous Resolutions, and more especially the admitted disinclination of the Liberal party to follow his lead, had, no doubt, influenced Mr. Gladstone in his acceptance of the homage of the Radical party, and his apparent identification of his own with their opinions. They, of course, are delighted to obtain such a leader, upon whom, by their spokesmen at Birmingham, they lavished the most fulsome praise—a form of bribery against which no political virtue is proof. The next thing is to consider what is the policy of the party with which Mr. Gladstone has allied himself. In exchange for their praise, he returns the compliment, by defining a Radical to be a man who is terribly in earnest, and there is no doubt that Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Bright are terribly in earnest in their hostility to the Established Church. It seems to be "in the air" that ere many months are past the same conscientious convictions which obliged Mr. Gladstone to disestablish the Irish Church will force him to be the champion of the like policy towards that of England.

The debate in the House of Commons leads to the inevitable conclusion that the obligations now laid on the holders of certain fellowships in the Universities to take Holy Orders will shortly be abolished, the majority, in a full house, against Mr. Goschen's motion to that effect having only been nine. We are inclined to think that the change, under proper provisions, is desirable, and that it will not detract from the influence or mar the usefulness of the Church.

Is it to be taken for granted that Nonconformists are at liberty to use what service they please in English churchyards? We fear so. Of course if the proposed alteration becomes law churchmen will acquiesce in it, though they may think the enactment unjust and one not likely to ensure peace. For "what will satisfy Dissenters? Neither the principles of the old Nonconformists nor those of staunch churchmen now. The old Dissenter wanted to be unlike other people. The aim of his modern namesake is to be like them. The old Dissenter stood apart because he was better, in his own eyes, than the Church; the modern Dissenter intrudes himself everywhere on the ground that he is as good as every one else." But why pursue a quotation which, taken from the most moderate of Church papers, only bears witness to a social and religious antagonism from which we are happily free in Canada? We cannot, however, watch the course of the discussion without interest, for we look upon

the opening of the churchyards as but a step towards a demand for admission to the Church itself, on the ground that one is as much national property as the other. The best solution of the difficulty—though even that presses hard on the Church—would, we believe, be the establishment of new cemeteries wherever any need for them exists. In these, we suppose, the Church would be allowed to consecrate a portion for her own exclusive use, though we do not feel sure that the principle of allowing Dissenters' services in churchyards does not involve also the right of holding their services, at the request of friends of the deceased, in the consecrated portions of cemeteries.

The Bishop of Carlisle in a letter to his clergy says: "I can have no doubt as to what is the right course for the clergy with regard to the vestments, namely, not to wear them. It seems to me that a clergyman may base such a determination upon the decision in the Ridsdale case, without introducing any complications arising out of considerations concerning the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeal. \* \* The supreme question is, *What does the Ornaments rubric mean?* May not any clergyman say: 'The rubric is undoubtedly very difficult to interpret; I am content, having reference to all the difficulties, to believe that the conclusion recently arrived at is the true one, and that the Ornaments rubric does not authorize the vestments? Therefore, as the law of the Church does not authorize them, I will not wear them.' This is my advice to you." \* \* "I cannot say how deeply I grieve concerning the advice which Dr. Pusey has given; it depends upon the assumption that the decision has been given 'under a bias.' I do not know what prospect of peace there can be if the principles which Dr. Pusey lays down should certainly prevail. A few wise words from his pen might have proved a true Eirenicon, and would have been indeed most precious. As it is, a grand opportunity has been lost, and, I fear, lost for ever."

In the Sermon, from which we lately quoted, in which Mr. Ridsdale defined his position, he said, "whether our Bishop will propose any relief or give any dispensation from the law of the Church, which it would be right to accept, or otherwise meet our conscientious difficulty, remains to be seen. He holds an opinion with regard to these State Courts in which it is impossible for us to acquiesce; unless, indeed, in Ultramontane fashion we shut our eyes and blindly confess the Infallibility of the See of Canterbury. As the Archbishop is the last person to desire that we may hope he will in some manner open a way of relief to those who, on the subjects of the Courts, respectfully refuse to subscribe to his opinion." On reading these words the Archbishop wrote to Mr. Ridsdale offering to use such authority as he possessed, either as Diocesan or Primate, to dispense with the

obligation which the Vicar of St. Peter's felt himself under to use Vestments, lighted candles, and the mixed chalice. Mr. Ridsdale, with some hesitation, accepts the proffered dispensation and acted accordingly on the following Sunday. He adds, however, in his letter to the Archbishop, this proviso, "I intend my obedience to this enforced dispensation to continue only until Convocation shall have had fitting opportunity to deliberate on the question. If it shall appear that the opportunity passes with the question being solved, I feel I shall not be justified in using the dispensation any longer."

The safe conclusion to which a Committee on Ritual, appointed by the Lower House of Convocation, came in 1866 is not without interest in reference to the above occurrence. "On the whole, the Committee are of opinion that the use of vestments in parish churches cannot be regarded as binding upon the consciences of the clergy, at all times of their ministrations, is a sufficient compliance with the rule of the Church of England."

The people of St. John are showing an energy and pluck under their calamity which is quite worthy of the stout-hearted old Loyalist founders of the city. Work is being commenced, not only in tearing down unsafe walls, clearing away rubbish, but actually on foundations of new buildings. We are glad to see that due consideration is being given to necessary and desirable improvements, streets are to be widened, awkward corners got rid of, and wooden buildings are to be forbidden. The site of Trinity Church is a fine one, and we hope Mr. Brigstocke will rebuild his School-house first, and then give due consideration to the structure and design of this Church, which ought to be worthy of its site. We publish, this week, an account of the laying of the foundation stone of the new church at Fairville, a mission which owes its existence to the energy of Revd. T. S. Dowling. It should be borne in mind that those who have not actually been burnt out are in many cases nearly, if not quite, as badly off as those whose houses are burnt; for they, with an unselfish generosity, are housing and feeding the others, and they have no claim for any remuneration from the relief fund, although probably the props on which they depended are burnt from under them. Such, we are afraid, is the case with Mr. Dowling's new Church, commenced on the faith of promises of assistance which it is now impossible for the promisers to fulfil, the enterprise is in danger of coming to a stop unless other aid is forthcoming. We can answer for it that the church is very much needed, and that the people have done their utmost to help themselves. Can none of our readers show them some substantial sympathy?

From a return of the Ordinations recently held in England, we find that 354 were altogether ordained, of whom 198 were deacons