

THE DOMINION AND THE EMPIRE—COMPENSATION FOR DISTURBANCE (IRELAND) BILL.

It has been the aim of the present writer to define, with the utmost possible precision and impartiality, the actual position and functions of a Governor in his political relations, so far as the same are capable of being determined by reference to authoritative documents and other unimpeachable sources of knowledge.

And in his Preface he says :

I would further remark that in this—as in my larger work—I have directed particular attention to the political functions of the Crown, which are too frequently assumed to have been wholly obliterated wherever a “Parliamentary Government” has been established. In combating this erroneous idea, I have been careful to claim for a constitutional Governor nothing in excess of the recognised authority and vocation of the Sovereign whom he represents ; while, on the other hand, I have endeavoured to point out the beneficial effects resulting to the whole community from the exercise of this superintending office, within the legitimate lines of its appropriate position in the body politic.

We, therefore, propose to lay before our readers some of Mr. Todd's views as to the proper position of the Crown in our constitutional system, and as to the power and functions of Governors in British Colonies possessing responsible government, and to cite some instances in which Colonial Governors have most beneficially exercised their legitimate influence and authority.

(To be continued.)

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There has probably been no Bill before the Imperial Parliament, since that for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, which has called forth such intense feeling among the educated classes at home as that which is popularly known as the Irish Disturbance Bill. Before it had passed the third reading in the Lower House it had already caused the resignation of one of the Ministry, the Marquis of Lansdowne ; and if report says true, had very nearly caused a fur-

ther split in the Cabinet by the secession of the Marquis of Hartington and Lord Spencer. Nor was it finally passed before two-thirds of the Liberal majority in the Commons had gone over to the enemy. Perhaps, indeed, it would not have passed at all had it not been considered certain that it would be rejected by the Lords, where, in fact, after a brilliant debate extending over August 2nd and 3rd, last, it was thrown out on the second reading by the enormous majority of 231.

After the first day's debate, the *Times* commenced a leading article on the subject, as follows,—we quote it for the purpose of showing the interest excited by the occasion :—

Seldom in our recent political history has the House of Lords been the centre of so much public interest as it was yesterday, when the Irish Disturbance Bill came on for the second reading. The body of the House, and especially the Opposition side, was crowded with peers to an extent very unfamiliar to those who are accustomed to see the red benches more than half unfilled even upon important occasions. The Peers' Gallery presented a spectacle of unsurpassed brilliancy, and every available inch of room accessible to spectators was invaded by an excited throng. Nevertheless, no critical division was anticipated, nor, perhaps any remarkable display of eloquence. The gravity of the question, however, to be decided by the Upper House in dealing with the Ministerial measure has been brought home to the public mind by recent discussion, not only in Parliament, but in the Press. It is not alone those interested in Irish landed property, or landed property elsewhere, to whom the debate in the House of Lords is a matter of direct concern. To many it appears that the legislation proposed by the Government calls in question the principles by which all proprietary rights whatever are guarded against unjust invasion by the State ; others believe that the Ministerial policy tends to whet the appetite of Irish agrarian agitation and to imperil the true interests of Ireland.

And after the division on the second day an article in the same paper contained the following remarks, which form a good introduction to those passages bearing upon the more exclusively legal aspect