

THE BRITISH NAVY IN 1878.

The naval power of the United Kingdom is just now invested with such peculiar interest, that it becomes worth while to define the extent and character of that fleet, which must always constitute the main factor of England's fighting strength, promising that a large share of the recent supplemental credit has been devoted to naval purposes, although the regular appropriation for 1877 exceeded 650,000,000.

At the 1st date covered by official reports—Dec. 31, 1875—the British war fleet composed of 241 vessels in commission. The number of men employed in the service was not less than 60,000, including upwards of 33,000 sailors and 14,000 marines. We need not say that the most important division of the force is made up of armored ships. Of these at the date mentioned there were fifty-eight, from which aggregate, however, should be deducted three constructed specially for colonial defence, and eight considered too old or too badly built to put to sea, leaving, therefore, a net total of forty-seven ironclads.

Such was the state of things at the beginning of last year. Let us now see what progress was made during the last twelve months. According to the programme put forward by the first Lord of the Admiralty, six ironclads were to be finished during 1877, and all the unarmored vessels then on the stocks were to be brought nigh to completion. It was promised, moreover, that a new ironclad of the first class should be begun, together with a ram of sufficient power to cope with certain redoubtable engines of war said to be building in continental harbors, and, in addition, an unarmored corvette, a sloop, and two sailing vessels. In a word, the Minister undertook that during the financial term of 1877-78 the national yards should add to the fleet more than 14,000 tons, while private contractors were to build for Government account almost half as much again.

Notwithstanding its inability to completely fulfill the above programme, the English Government has added a good deal to the veritable solidity of its naval force. Four colossal ironclads were finished and sent to sea in 1877, namely, the Thunderer, the Dreadnaught, the Alexandra, and the Temeraire. One of these, the Thunderer, ought to have been ready for service much earlier, but on the day when it was to make a trial trip one of its boilers exploded, causing an amount of damage which it required six months to repair. Besides the two engines of 6,000 horse power which move its screw, there are on board this vessel twenty-six other steam engines, and a hydraulic machine for the management of the helm, the revolving turrets, and other parts of the apparatus. The Thunderer is covered with plates about 14 inches thick, and carries four cannon, each weighing 38 tons. Its mean speed is said to be thirteen and a half knots. Besides armored ships of the same character, the English Admiralty has lately constructed a number of vessels not plated, and furnished with a relatively light armament, but designed to show exceptional fast-going qualities. Some distinguished specialists have severely criticised these experiments, and the controversy on the subject is far from being ended. It is said, for instance, that the new vessels are too powerful for simple cruisers and too weak to engage with ironclads. It is certain that one of the finest types, the Shah, was constrained after a few minutes to renounce the idea of coping with the Peruvian ship Huascar.

The remarkable results obtained by the Russians from torpedoes on the Danube and in the Black sea could not fail to awaken the attention of the English Admiralty. Numerous experiments have been made in the way of making extremely light steam vessels destined to lodge torpedoes under the flank of armored ships, or to launch that species of explosive provided with means of automatic movement. Essential conditions to the efficiency of such craft are unusual speed and a peculiar facility of evolution. After numerous tests, the English shipwrights have fixed upon a model eighty-four feet in length, and only eleven feet wide. So far but a single example of the type has been completed, but this with its powerful engines has attained a speed of nineteen and a half knots. It is reported, moreover, that fifteen others are now on the stocks, and that the builders have guaranteed a minimum speed of twenty-five knots. And here we may mention a curious fact bearing on the usefulness of such vessels, and demonstrated by recent experiments namely, that where their hulls are pierced below the water line, very little water penetrates provided the speed be as high as ten knots, and almost none if it exceed eighteen. We may add that the Admiralty have lately undertaken the construction of a submarine vessel intended to fix torpedoes under the keel of hostile ships.

Naval artillery seems to have made but little progress in 1877. Hitherto, England has contented herself with the Armstrong guns of eighty tons, which are regularly adopted for the armament of her ironclads. Up to the present time Italy alone has gone a little further in this direction, having furnished some of her armored ships with 100-ton cannon. We understand, however, that the famous English engineer is now constructing for Government account a cannon of 150 tons.

WINTER SPORTS IN RUSSIA.

BEWITCHING BEAUTY IN FURS AND SNOW BANKS ON "BUTTER WEEK."

A writer reports from St. Petersburg in Russia, during what is called "Masselintza" or Butter Week, the week immediately preceding Lent. He writes that it is devoted to popular rejoicing. A kind of fair is held at the Admiralty Place in St. Petersburg, and one of its main features is a couple of huge katoks facing each other. They are at least 15 feet high, and very steep, and as a continuous stream of sleds furiously dashes down the glassy side, the spectators wonder why serious accidents are of such rare occurrence. Here ladies are seldom seen, or females of any class; the sport is too rough and only now and then one of the fair sex will intrude herself to a professional coaster, many of whom hang around to initiate unsuspecting strangers into the bewildering mysteries of the sport. A favorite mode of coasting with the Russians is lying stretched out on the stomach but it takes considerable nerve to face the mad turmoil in that way. My own experience in this national amusement was gained at a private party, at a house in the suburbs of St. Petersburg, with a spacious garden attached to it.

The evening had been passed in social games and occasional dances, but all the fun was evidently regarded as merely preliminary or introductory to something better in store. Occasionally I caught a phrase, which pointed to something which everybody looked forward to, but I was entirely ignorant of its nature, and presumed it to be tableaux or theatricals. Finally, at about the hour of ten, a general call for furs and wrappings arose, and in a few minutes the whole company had passed into the garden. The moon had just risen, and its pale beams revealed the unsightly form of snow-covered trees and shrubs, the tops only of the latter protruding over the thick bed of snow with its glittering crust. In the center of the garden I soon discovered the attraction which had caused us to forsake the warm and lighted rooms—two katoks of moderate height loomed up before us, and a number of sleds were strewn about, ready for use. A general pairing off took place immediately, and in a few moments the sport was in full blast.

The two platforms faced each other, and the tracks ran side by side, so that the parties would dash past each other amid laughter and shouting. I looked around for a vacant sled in order to try my hand at the game, but just as I was climbing the steps to one of the platforms I was informed that no gentleman could be permitted to ride alone on such an occasion, and I was quickly provided with a passenger—a young lady from the country, endowed with considerable bonpoint. Without possessing the least confidence in my skill as a steersman, I was somewhat comforted by the thought that the well rounded form of my passenger, made still rounder by an ample fox skin robe, would not be liable to suffer any serious damage in case of mishap. With utmost nonchalance I adjusted my sled at the very edge of the dazzling, shining and glittering incline. It is necessary that the steersman should seat himself first, etiquette being entirely waived on the katoke, but when the fair Anna Ivanovna dropped down in front of me with the grace and ease of a snowflake, though a trifle heavier, and, to use the slang phrase, "cuddled up" to my manly breast with a glance full of charming confidence, my innate modesty and diffidence caused me to recede a little, and, as I was already seated on the extreme edge, there was a fall, a scream and a laugh, and the whole delightful performance had to be gone through with again.

At last we were both seated, and the sled adjusted, as I imagined, with the utmost mathematical precision, so as to run a straight course to the end of the track. Full of confidence, I gave the start, and, with an impetus that almost took my breath away, we dashed ahead—to land in the snow bank on one side, only half way down the incline. The force with which the sled struck the snow caused it to overturn, and my fare and I rolled down the snowbank to the level. My profuse apologies seemed to be altogether superfluous; the partner of my disaster was none the worse for it, and only remarked that it was very naughty of me to play that trick the first time. The innocent little bundle of furs thought I had upset us on purpose. With some misgivings on my part the experiment was repeated, with nearly the same result, and by that time it dawned upon the other participants in the fun that they had a "greenhorn" among them, and plans for mischief were concocted accordingly. One of the gentlemen approached me and observed that I seemed to be bewildered by the crowd dashing down before me and beside me, and that they would give me a chance of descending alone ahead of them all.

The company accordingly assembled on one of the platforms, and I took my place once more on the brink with my fearless passenger before me. The suppressed laughter and the mischief sparkling in everybody's eye might have warned me that some plot was afoot, but unsuspectingly and carefully I launched my sled exactly what followed I cannot tell, and would not care to enlarge upon if I could. In less than a second we had reached the level, and there my sled struck a broom-handle, or something of the sort and with a jump seemed to fly from under us, while we glided a piece down the track on our own responsibility my companion clinging to me for dear life; and then there came a shock, and then another and I don't know how many more, until the whole scene was exceedingly shocking; for as each succeeding sled dumped its load over us, the confused mass of laughing and quivering bodies became more bewildering, and the placid moon grinned down upon a sight it is to be hoped not often enjoyed by the chaste Diana's symbol.

At last everybody succeeded in extricating his or her own robes and furs and overshoes and limbs, and something like order and propriety was once more restored; but the mere consciousness of my spots innocence did not save me from being accused by all parties as the author of what they pleased to call "shocking mishap." Though very much bewildered and confused, I had in my mind one clear idea—that I was not destined to shine in that peculiar institution of Russian society, the "katoke."

CATHOLIC PROGRESS IN 1877.

England and Wales, as compared with last year, show an increase of 64 priests and 19 churches. New churches have been opened in the following dioceses: Nottingham, 10; Salford, 4; Liverpool, 2; Hexham 1; Northampton, 1; and Plymouth, 1. Liverpool has gained 10 priests, Southwark 12, Westminster 8, and others in lesser proportion. The hierarchy, we need hardly say, remains unchanged. Scotland shows an increase of only five priests—from 260 to 265; but her churches have increased by 14—from 239 to 253. The Eastern District has added seven priests, and the Northern lost 2. The Western District has had 8 new churches, and the other two divisions 3 each, which is an evidence that buildings have gone up faster than pastors could be secured. The obituary for the year contains the names of 43 clergymen—28 seculars and 15 regulars—and consequently there are gaps made each twelvemonth which require a steady supply of new candidates to fill up.—N. Y. Tablet.

WHO ARE THE HOME RULERS?

IS THE IRISH MOVEMENT GROWING IN PARLIAMENT.

Considerable misunderstanding seems to prevail as to the position of the Irish Home Rule party. The abuse heaped upon the Irish by the English press leads unwary persons to think that the Irish party is a disreputable lot. But an examination of the position and character of the leaders of the Irish party shows that they are as much entitled to public respect, as the leaders of the English and Scotch. We will briefly describe a few of them. The much-abused Mr. Parnell is grandson of Sir Henry Parnell, the last Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer. He is, we believe, a Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant, and Sheriff of Wicklow. On his mother's side he is grandson of the American Admiral Stewart, a distinguished commander. Mr. Butt, Q. C., the leader of the party, is also the leader of the Irish bar, and has sat in Parliament for twenty-five years. The whips of the party are Lord Francis Conyngham, the second son of the Marquis of Conyngham, and Sir Richard Power, whose grandfather sat in Parliament before him. At the election of 1874, the patriotic county of Tipperary returned Captain the Hon. Charles White, son of the Earl of Bantry, and the Hon. Wilfred O'Callaghan, son of Viscount Lismore, both Home Rulers. The Home Rule member for Westmeath is Lord Robert Montagu, son of the Duke of Manchester. Sir George Bowyer, Baronet, is Home Rule member for Wexford. To the same Home Rule party belong Mr. Maurice Brooks, Lord Mayor of Dublin; Mr. Kenelm Digby, cousin of Lord Digby; Sir Joseph Neale McKenna, a wealthy banker; Mr. Mitchell Henry, of Kilmorock Castle, probably the wealthiest commoner in Ireland; Major Nolan, Royal Artillery, a large landed proprietor; Major O'Garra, Sir Michael O'Loughlin Mr. E. Suiel, son of Sir Justice Shell, and grandson of Chief Baron Woulfe. Major Myes O'Reilly, of Knock Abbey, a large landowner; Captain O'Byrne, of the 2nd Dragoon Guards; the O'Connor Don, the lineal descendant of Roderick O'Connor, King of Ireland at the time of the English conquest; Sir Patrick O'Brien, Bart., a barrister; Mr. Morris, brother of the Chief Baron of the Common Pleas; and Mr. Dwyer Gray, the son of Sir John Gray, M.P. for Kilkenny. Amongst Home Rule members connected with the peerage we had almost forgotten the Hon. Charles French, member for Roscommon, and Son of Lord de Freyne, and Captain King-Harman, grandson of Viscount Lorton and first cousin of the late Earl of Kingston. The legal profession is ordinarily recruited from the higher middle class and is always conspicuous in Ireland for ability and eloquence, if not wealth. In the Home Rule ranks it is represented by Messrs. Callan, Downing, Dnnlar, Fay, McCarthy, Martin, Meldon, O'Donnell (an accomplished and impassionate speaker), Murphy, the Chevalier O'Clery (also a brave officer), Sullivan the author of "New Ireland", O'Connor (the brother of the O'Connor Don), Sherlock, Q. C.; O'Shaughnessy, Synan and Smyth (whom the Times singled out as having made the most eloquent speech of last session). Mr. Biggar is a very wealthy merchant and inherited a large fortune from his father, the chairman of the directors of the Ulster Bank; Mr., or properly Sir G. Errington, is a Knight of Malta, and Mr. Shaw, the Home Rule member for Cork, is Chairman of the Munster Bank. Such are the men who compose the Irish party. They have a vital stake in their country, and their aggregate talents and abilities would do honor to any civilized nation. The Newcastle Chronicle had lately an able and impartial review of the Irish party in Parliament generally, attributed to the pen of Mr. J. Cowen, M.P. The writer says:—

"The Irish members have done what the English Radicals have often talked about and often attempted—they have formed a distinct party in the House of Commons; they have a recognized leader and two duly appointed whips; they hold weekly meetings, and regularly issue circulars summoning their adherents to support their measures; they have an office at Westminster, where all information respecting Irish questions can be obtained; and they keep a secretary to act as the means of communication amongst themselves. The party numbers when all told fifty-eight men three of them sitting on the Conservative side, and fifty-five on the Liberal side. Notwithstanding the differences that have recently developed, and the repeated declarations of the English press about a split in the party the proceedings of the session show that on all Irish matters they vote with remarkable unanimity and steadiness. They answer the appeals of their 'whips' on important occasions with as much willingness as the followers of Lord Hartington or Sir Stafford Northcote do summonses issued by Sir W. Hart Dyke or Mr. Adam."

The Irish party, we may say, now holds the balance of power in Parliament. Unaided the Irish cannot, of course, carry any measure, but by lending their strength to any party they may decide the fate of any question. As Mr. Cowen points out:—

"The Tory majority in English counties and boroughs to day is 110. There are 289 Conservatives and 179 Liberals. The Liberal majority in the House of Commons during the last forty-five years have always been drawn from Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The relative position of parties in Scotland remains substantially the same. In Wales the Liberals have gained, but in Ireland the members, who were ordinarily the supporters of the Liberal party, have disassociated themselves from that body, and set up an independent organization of their own."

The increasing strength of the Irish party is noteworthy; the influence of Irish electors resident in England has secured "Glad's Baby," Jenkins, member for Dundee; Mr. Barren, member for Leeds; Mr. Burt, member for Morpeth; Mr. Macdonald, member for Stafford; Mr. Corbett, member for Oldham; and Mr. Jacob Bright, member for Manchester. The following members of Parliament have also spoken more or less in its favor:—Lord Randolph Churchill, son of the Duke of Marlborough; Lord Godolphin Osborne, son of the Duke of Leeds; and lastly, by far the most important, Mr. Gladstone. The Irish cause is thus a winning one. When it is remembered that the election of 1874 was the first at which Home Rule was made the political test of Irish members, the strength of the party is very conspicuous. It numbers fifty-five votes, which mean 130 on a division. At the present time the Irish electors are being most carefully registered in Ireland and England, and it is expected that in 1879 over seventy Home Rulers will be returned from Ireland, whilst in England, Irish electors will be able to turn the scale in favor of Liberals or Conservatives in forty or fifty English towns.—Pilot

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

At the Viceregal Ball in the Castle in celebration of St. Patrick's Day her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough wore a sprig of real shamrock gathered on the Rock of Cashel, adjacent to the historic ruins of King Cormac's chapel, sent to her grace for the occasion by the nuns of the Presentation Convent at Cashel. The dress which the Duchess wore had flourishes of Irish point lace made to her special order at the convent schools at Youghal. Her gloves were embroidered with shamrocks and harps in gold by the Sisters of Mercy, Convent of St. John the Evangelist, Blir.

THE FUTURE OF THE CIRCASSIANS.

REMARKS ON THEIR HISTORY AND HABITS.

An occasional correspondent of the Nation, writing from Pera, sends us the following remarks on the history and habits of those Circassians who are at present located in European Turkey, and whose future treatment is one of the puzzles with which those who are undertaking to settle the Eastern question will have to deal:—

Of the many perplexing questions to be considered at the conclusion of the war, there is one which though of considerable importance, seems to have been lost sight of altogether, and yet it is one which will yet obtrude itself, perhaps in a very disagreeable manner, on the notice of Europe—it is the future disposal of the Circassians in Turkey. When the Turks offered an asylum to these victims of Russia's lust for territory, Europe was loud in its praises of their humanity and philanthropy. It is not, however, generally known how Turkey, encumbered by debt as she was, managed to accommodate such a host of nomads. They were simply landed at various ports in Bulgaria and Armenia, in a starving, destitute condition, and told to shift for themselves. The effect of this order on such a horde of lawless marauders is better imagined than described. They speedily spread themselves through the Christian communities, and at first gratefully accepted the presents of land and cattle which were freely offered them; but as soon as they found their position in the country secured, the worldly wealth of their neighbours aroused their predatory instincts and robberies and outrages became of frequent occurrence. They plundered Christian and Turk alike, with a charming impartiality which speaks highly for their liberal tendencies. Finding cattle lifting amongst a timid and law-abiding people very easy and profitable, they gave up all pretence of husbandry, and soon waxed rich in flocks and herds. The Government, with its "douce far niente" policy exempted them from most taxes, and from compulsory military service, thus losing the services of a body of men which, with rigid discipline, could have been made as useful in the present struggle as the Ulians were in the Franco-German war. They are a cold-blooded, calculating race, never influenced by the fanatical tendencies which so powerfully sway Oriental peoples. The highest compliment that can be paid a young Circassian is to accuse him of systematic theft. He generally repies, with modest ingenueness, and a sigh, "that he will never be such an expert horse-stealer as his father." They rarely shed blood unless resistance is offered, simply because it causes trouble afterwards. A glance at their cold, sinister faces shows a lack of the usual virtues possessed by the most savage races; this is evidenced by the heartless sale of their daughters to the Turks. Their knowing look, and generally horsey get-up, with fur caps, long-skirted coats, and tight trousers, gives one more the impression of a Yorkshire horse-coper than of an Eastern brigand. At the outbreak of the war the Government distributed Winchester repeating rifles in an indiscriminate manner amongst them; and having a wholesome respect for the "Moscovite" they tried their new weapons on their neighbours' cattle, and occasionally on the neighbours themselves. Communications with the front have been interrupted for days, the Circassians having blazed away from passing trains at little birds which had alighted on the telegraph wires, the result of this fusillade being to bring down and cut the wires. They followed the armies, but only for purposes of plunder, and sneered at the notion that they would obey the commands of a Turk. During the month of September last I saw one of them at a station on the Philippopolis line, armed with repeating rifle and revolver. He was asked by bystanders why he did not go to the war. He gave the following characteristic reply: "Why should I fight is for religion? I care for none. Is it for the Padishah? I don't acknowledge his authority. I came for loot, and having got it I am going to sell it in Stamboul, and enjoy myself on the proceeds." During this war all semblance of restraint has been abandoned, and they have become veritable scourges. Since the rapid advance of the Russians on the side of the Balkans they forwarded their families and household goods to Constantinople, and remained behind themselves. Their custom was to fire off several volleys a short distance from a Turkish village, and soon afterwards gallop in, declaring that the enemy was upon them. This was usually answered only too well, the villagers flying terror-stricken, whilst they, having completed the pillage of the place, gave it to the flames—afterwards averting that it was done by the Russians. Some scores who were caught in the very act were brought down here, ironed a few days since. During the last fortnight they have poured in here armed to the teeth, driving pack horses laden with booty. They have established a regular fair and market in Stamboul for the disposal of their ill-gotten goods. Their demeanour is so insolent, and swagger so overbearing that the Turks now hate them as heartily as they do the Gipsies. Some feeble efforts were made to disarm them on their arrival here, but such resistance was offered to this that the authorities desisted, and have since contented themselves with shipping them off as rapidly as possible to the Asiatic side. They take the greatest pride in their weapons, and have an almost supernatural reverence for good fire-arms. A friend of mine, who has been on many sporting expeditions through the Dobrujska, generally carried a pretty little "Express" rifle. His feats with this weapon called forth enthusiastic encomiums from the Circassians. He was once very chagrined by a Circassian, with whom he had been on very friendly terms, saying—"I like your little gun, and would have taken it long since, but knew that I could not get cartridges to fit it." Although we in Constantinople have, for the moment, diverted the evil from our own doors, it is dreadful to contemplate the inevitable result of letting loose these untamable savages on the people of Asia Minor. It must also be considered that 70,000 of them were landed last Autumn in Armenia, no doubt to repeat the occurrences which have outraged humanity here.

A CHARGE OF POISONING.

For the last couple of days the most intense and wide-spread interest has been centred in a trial for murder by poison, taking place in the assize town of Galway. A young wife, aged seventeen, has been charged with murdering her husband, greatly her senior; the alleged motive for the fearful deed being that she was forced to marry him against her will, and that she was anxious to marry his nephew. The Attorney-General conducted the prosecution for the Crown, and the accused was defended by The M'Dermott Q.C. The case happily closed today, with an intimation from the jury that, in their opinion, the prosecution had utterly failed. They stated that there was no need to enter upon the defence, and the Crown would not proceed any farther. The Judge, Lord Justice Daesy, accepted the intimation of the jury, and bore his testimony to the attention and intelligence which they had devoted to the case. The result is hailed with universal satisfaction, first and chiefly on account of the youthful widow herself (who was an immense favourite with her teachers and companions in school), and secondly, because it lifts from off our national character a stain and a stigma, which had the charge proved to have any foundation, would have been undoubtedly fixed upon it.—Irish Commercial Gazette.

THE POLITICAL PRISONERS

AND THE TULLAMORE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

At a special meeting of the Tullamore board of guardians held yesterday there was a large attendance to hear Mr. James Lynam's motion that her Majesty's Government be petitioned to release the remaining Fenian prisoners. In moving his motion Mr. Lynam expressed a hope that the board would be unanimous in their opinion that mercy should be extended to men who had already suffered greatly. Mr. Tarleton seconded the adoption of the resolution. Mr. A. M. Berningham supported the motion. Mr. Jonathan Goodbody also supported the motion, which was unanimously adopted. Mr. Adams asked to whom would the petition be sent. Mr. Lynam said, to mark in some way their sense of the bad attendance of their county members during this session, and of Mr. E. Dwyer Gray's unceasing exertions in the cause of Ireland, he would move that the petition be sent to that gentleman. The board agreed in this proposal and the clerk was directed to send the petition to Mr. Gray for presentation.—Freeman.

WILD MEN.

In the island of Rio there are wild men who live in trees, and have no language but cries, and in Sumatra the residents of Palembang said there were men who lived in the forests, with whom not only the Europeans but the Malays could have no intercourse. He himself had never seen one. Yet, strange to say, they have a petty traffic with the outer world, yet not through the medium of speech. They live in the woods and subsist by the chase. They hunt tigers—not with the gun, but with arrows, which they blow out of a tube with such force, and which are so keen of point and touched with such deadly poison, that a wound is almost immediately fatal.

These tiger-skins or elephant-tusks they bring for barter—not for sale, for they never sell anything, for money is about the most useless thing they can have. They cannot eat it or drink it or wear it. But, as they have wants, they exchange; yet they themselves are never seen. They bring what they have to the edge of the forest and leave it there, and the Malays come and place what they have to dispose of and retire. If the offer is satisfactory, when they return again they find what they brought gone, and take what is left and depart. If not, they add a few trifles more to tempt the eyes of those wild men of the woods, and so at last the exchange is effected, yet all the while the sellers keep themselves invisible.

CONFESSION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Upon the above subject (which is at once grimly ludicrous and most appallingly prosa), the memorial addressed lately to her majesty cannot fail to be read by all Catholics with a mingled feeling of pity and contempt. We give it in full:

The humble memorial of the undersigned, members of the Church of England, who approach your majesty with the assurance of their devoted attachment to your majesty's person and government. Your memorialists, as sincerely attached to the National Church of their fathers, view with deep alarm the efforts now openly made by a considerable number of the clergy to introduce into the Church of England the teaching and practice of auricular confession, which they regard as contrary to the teaching of the word of God, alien to the doctrine, principles and order of the Church, fraught with peril to its existence as an establishment, and subversive of the principles of morality, social order, and civil and religious liberty. Your memorialists therefore humbly pray that your majesty, unto whom the chief government of all estates of the realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain, will be graciously pleased to use all the influence at your majesty's command to repress the practice of auricular confession which is so repugnant to the conscience and feelings of this Protestant country.

As a kind of additional reason that ought to weigh with the head of the English Church in deciding for the memorialists, her majesty is carefully informed that one of the signatories is no less a personage than the Maharajah Duleep Singh. The "Empress of India" will surely be propitious to him. Admirals, generals, colonels, majors and captains, quite a goodly number, have signed their names to the memorial, in testimony of their extreme reluctance to make known their sins. But, after all, what are these in comparison with the interesting Hindoo, who has in this most public and spirited manner signified his intention of going into the next world unabsolved and

With all his imperfections on his head!

Whatever we may think of the Protestantism of this gentleman, there can be but one opinion as to his taste. But, after all, what is it that these impulsive memorialists would have? They themselves object to Confession. Very well; let them stay away from it. No extra tax will be put upon them for this reason. But let them not, at the same time, try to curb the liberty of conscience of those amongst their fellow-citizens who feel differently from them upon this point.

Of course, the sheer absurdity of disturbing the quiet life at Balmoral or Windsor, by any question of religious differences or contradiction in the Church of England, will be apparent to all except Duleep Singh and the recalcitrant admirals and captains. It is almost a pity that the memorialists did not respectfully suggest to Queen Victoria some way in which she might put forth the exercise of that spiritual power whose aid they invoke, and which (they say) they believe to be residing in her majesty. We should like to see the form of an anti-Confession decree issued by the head of the Anglican hierarchy. How would it possibly commence? "It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us" would not be at all a bad beginning. But, then, it would read as such flat blasphemy, and, moreover, such a title belongs only to decrees which are issued by the Church of Christ. No; if done at all, it must assume the shape of an Act of Parliament, and we know already how much the Spirit of God enters into such things.

We are really afraid that her majesty will not feel at liberty to help her memorialists out of their spiritual difficulty, and we more than half suspect that she will be tempted to indulge in a hearty laugh at the innocent blunder into which they have fallen.

MR. O'DONNELL, M.P., AND THE NEW INSPECTOR OF FISHERIES.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday night, Mr. O'Donnell gave notice that on going into Committee of Supply he should call attention to the appointment to an office of profit under the Crown of a leader of the Orange secret society in Ireland, not otherwise recommended for the said office, and to move that such appointment is calculated to encourage and the expectation of reward, a class of riotous and disorderly persons in Ireland, and is a return to the worst traditions of British misgovernment of Ireland.