

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, OCT. 27, 1855.

THE SURPLICE.

We have published in another part of our paper, an editorial remark of the *Toronto Echo*, having reference to an explanatory letter of the Rev. Sargent Givens, and which also notices simply as a mistake, a tampering with the resolutions of a vestry meeting, that may with more propriety be styled a fraud. Our readers will no doubt have seen in some one or other of the Halifax papers, which in general delight in dishing up any clerical or religious scandal, heedless of the credibility of the source from which they derive it, a one-sided view of the surplice story, in which the Rev. Mr. Givens is represented as a stubborn Puseite, determined to flaunt an obnoxious garment in the face of the Bishop and congregation, after being warned that its use would be distasteful to the parish and the members of his flock. It is consoling to find from the letter of Mr. Givens, which we have also published, that all the pother has been about nothing at all. For ourselves, we sometimes wonder what a future age may think of the Christianity of this, that will light about the colour of a robe; and do not coincide with extreme opinions on either side, with reference to the surplice and other questions which are raised to agitate the Church of Christ, believing that they are rarely conceived in a Christian spirit, and are too often used as a cloak for maliciousness. We think we can listen with equal complacency to the truths of the gospel enunciated in either robe, well knowing that its hue cannot blind any one to the purity or impurity of the doctrine which its wearer teaches. While that is sound, and holds forth "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" as the sinner's only hope through faith, we can readily conceive, that there may be some reason after all in a Church which contends for Apostolic order and primitive usages, retaining a ceremonial garb; and that while the surplice may be the distinguishing robe of the Clergy of the Church, it is a matter of little importance as concerns edifying, whether it or the Dr. gown be worn in pulpit ministrations, so that every thing be done decently and in order. In this respect also we do not see why the Clergyman's predilections may not be entitled to as much consideration as the prejudices of the people.

R. M. STEAMSHIP AFRICA.

BRITISH dates to the 13th October, were received by the R. M. Steamship *Africa*, which arrived early on Wednesday morning. The news is important, and preparatory to great events, which we may expect to hear of, by the next arrival from England.

The English papers are very severe in their condemnation of the generalship displayed at the attack on the Redan; but if the dispositions of the British general were faulty, but little more can be said for those of the enemy, who repulsed the attack. It does not appear, but that the Russians might have held the key of their position, if despising the attack on the Redans, which the Malakoff commanded, they had been satisfied with keeping in check the allies employed there, and brought their main force to defend their powerful work against the French. General Pelissier alone was equal to the occasion, estimated all its difficulties, and made the best disposal of his force to overcome them; and he only prevailed by the Russians overrating the importance of the British and French attacks upon the minor points of their position. We almost shudder when we think of the folly that was preparing for another assault of the Redan, although the Malakoff had been secured, and at the vain sacrifice that would have been made of the lives of the brave men to be engaged in it, had the Russians not been wiser after the loss of the Malakoff, than in their measures for its retention. And we are glad that we have to rejoice over a great victory, and not to speculate upon the consequences that might have followed a second failure.

The tone of Prince Gortchakoff's despatches is in nowise cheerful. He is apprehensive of a demonstration against the northern forts, which strong as they may be in themselves, are dependent upon the retention of his communications with the interior and with Perekop. He does not like the appearance of things at Eupatoria, where the allies are collecting a large force, and will endeavour to force his entrenchments; and he fears their marching upon Perekop. We believe that he is about to evacuate the northern forts and to fall back upon his entrenched positions; and from the concentration of the allies in that direction, we may soon expect to

hear of a desperate battle, which it is very probable will decide the mastery in the Crimea. A smart cavalry affair has already taken place at Eupatoria, to the advantage of the French.

The allied fleet have paid another visit to Odessa, and will we hope be enabled to make a total destruction of all warlike stores, without any greater infliction of the horrors of war, — a bombardment of such a city, if it do not lead to occupation, is a wanton aggression, hardly warranted on the part of nations having pretensions to a high order of christian civilization. If they succeed at Odessa, their next object will be Nicolaïff, where we trust they will be able to give a good account of the remainder of the Russian Black Sea fleet; and if it be possible to get there, do their endeavours to prevent any further mischief from that quarter.

The Baltic fleet were about to return home to winter, and the Russians were busily employed in repairing the damages done to Swaborg by the bombardment. Measures will no doubt be matured for an attack upon Cronstadt during the next season, should the war continue, which depends entirely upon the disposition of Russia to relinquish her pretensions, and to confine herself to limits which shall not be dangerous to the liberties of the world.

With reference to the following paragraph, it is said that the Admiral on this station was informed by telegraph dispatch of the circumstance, and that the *Argus* steamer was promptly made ready to proceed after the suspicious craft, when another dispatch communicated information that the American government had taken the case in hand.

SEIZURE OF A SUSPECTED RUSSIAN VESSEL.—The United States authorities at New York have taken possession of a ship called the *Maury*, together with her cargo and tackle, on suspicion of her having on board arms and ammunition for the Russian government. The officers found, under a quantity of cotton, twelve large cannon, a quantity of powder, and other ammunition, together with a number of muskets. It is rumored that this craft was to have cruised under false colors in the Atlantic, for the purpose of capturing British and French vessels proceeding to Europe with valuable cargoes from the United States.

The seizure was made, it is said, on complaint of the British Consul, who alleged that her owners were about to sell her to the Russian Government for the purpose of intercepting and capturing the Canadian steamers.

Since writing the above, the R. M. Steamer *Canada* has arrived from Boston, and furnishes the following information:—

THE BARK MAURY.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.—THE SUSPECTED RUSSIAN FILLBUSTER DISCHARGED.

Oct. 20.—In the case of the United States vs. the bark *Maury*, which was libelled on a charge of sitting out for the Russian service, Mr. McKee, the United States District Attorney, received a communication from Mr. Chas. Edwards, counsel of the British Consul, stating that from explanations under oath, made by Messrs. A. A. Low & Brothers, he deemed it reasonable that the District Attorney should be left entirely free, and he thought it would be but fair towards the owners to "lift" the libel.

The District Attorney received the following communication, under oath, which he submitted to Mr. Edwards:—
To the Hon. John McKee, United States District Attorney:—

Sir:—The bark *Maury*, owned in part by the undersigned, having been seized by a process from your office, we beg to offer the following explanations, viz:—
That the said vessel was built by Messrs. Rosvelt, Joyce & Co. of this city, under a contract made in the month of April last, after the model of the bark *Penguin*; that she was designed for the China trade; that there is nothing peculiar in her construction apart from the rig, which was adopted with particular reference to economy in view; that in pursuance of the original intention she was advertised some three weeks since for Shanghai, since when she has been receiving freight for that port; that she has on board, from Messrs. Fogg & Brothers, 200 tons of coal, a quantity of naval stores, and a variety of ship chandlery, for their house in China, with a little other general freight, with which she is expected to sail the coming week, under the command of Captain Fletcher, for the port above named. We further declare that in addition to the ordinary armament of a vessel of her class, she has but two deck guns, supposed to be necessary in consequence of the great increase in the number of pirates on the coast of China; that the other guns, shot, &c., on board, as per subjoined list, were purchased under an order from an American gentleman at Canton, and shipped per *Maury* on freight; that said vessel has for spare parts, one foretop gallant mast, one foretop gallant yard, one main boom, one main gall boom, and six extra studding sail booms, and that her crew will consist of but twelve or thirteen men before the mast.

They furthermore declare that the vessel received the name of *Maury* in the month of May last, not to dishonor a man of whom our country has so much reason to be proud, but to bear upon an honorable mission the name of him who has done so much to improve navigation.

The undersigned pledge themselves to prove to the satisfaction of the British Consul, while the vessel is still under the charge of the United States Marshal, that the allegations made against the vessel are false, that she has no guns or materials of war under her coal, asking only that the expense to which they may be thus subjected shall be borne by said Consul, when, and only when, the statements upon which the vessel has been so unjustly seized, are fully disproved.

Finally, they declare that the Russians have no connection whatever with the enterprise in question.

A. A. LOW, of the firm of A. A. Low & Brothers
Wh. freight—10 tons, 62 boxes each.

Sworn to before me, this 18th day of October, 1855.

Geo. F. HERR, U. S. Commissioner.

I hereby swear that I am not cognizant of the facts mentioned in the foregoing statement, and that they are true.

NATH. P. PALMER.

Sworn to, at, Geo. P. HERR, U. S. Commissioner
Under this seal of mine, the District Attorney declared
and the vessel from the custody of the Marshal.

N. Y. Herald, Oct. 23

OUR NEUTRALITY LAWS.—A RUSSIAN CASE OR TWO.—THIS BRITISH vs. THE RUSSIAN MINISTER.—Mr. Crampton, the British Minister at Washington, has been found guilty of violating our neutrality laws in the matter of recruiting soldiers in the United States for the service of the Allies against Russia. It is reported that our Cabinet have, therefore, instructed Mr. Buchanan, our Minister at London, to demand the recall of Mr. Crampton and certain of Her Majesty's Consuls implicated in the same unlawful business. Now, we have a Russian case or two in the same category. A correspondent of one of our morning contemporaries puts the following case, in reference to the anticipated withdrawal of Mr. Crampton:—

"I wish to know what steps have been taken, or are to be taken, to have the Russian Minister withdrawn. The whole country has been publicly and repeatedly informed, in a boastful, triumphant manner, that James C. Thompson, the proprietor of the machine works on Quay street, Albany, has been offered the situation of Chief Engineer in the Russian navy. We have proclaimed that his salary is at £6,000 dollars a year, together with a free dwelling house, and it is openly avowed that Mr. Thompson had gone to Washington to complete the engagement with the Russian Minister."

On Wednesday, it appears, the United States Deputy Marshal, Horton, of this port, seized the ship *Maury*, on suspicion that she was engaged in the service of Russia, and had on board articles contraband of war—cannon, muskets, powder, balls, &c., being found among the materials of her cargo. This, however, is not yet proved so clear a case of the infraction of the law as that of the Russian Minister in the engagement of Mr. Thompson. The ship may be destined to some country not engaged in a war with a foreign enemy; but the admission that Mr. Thompson has been to Washington to complete his engagement with the Russian Minister, as Chief Engineer of the Russian Navy, under the very noses of the President, his Premier, and his Attorney General, is certainly a cool operation compared with the proceedings of Mr. Crampton. What says the Premier?

Our despatch from Washington states that it is rumored that Mr. Crampton, the British Minister, asserts that the recent attempt to convict him of violating the neutrality laws is a conspiracy on the part of foreigners to embroil the two governments, and he promises to substantiate this at some future day. It is also stated that Mr. Crampton has intimated that in the event of his recall no successor will be appointed. — *N. Y. Herald.*

IMPORTANT INTELLIGENCE.

THE WEST INDIA SQUADRON.

The London *Standard*, of 12th inst., on seemingly reliable authority, says:—"Her Majesty's ships *Powerful*, 84, Capt. T. L. Blaxland; *Cornwallis*, 60, Capt. Wellesley; *Penelope*, 60, Capt. Seymour; *Rosebud*, 6, steam-sloop, Commander Crofton, are all ordered to immediately leave Spithead, to reinforce the West India Squadron under Rear-Admiral Fanebawe. The first named goes to Jamaica, and the other three to Bermuda. Rear-Admiral the Rt. Hon. Sir M. F. F. Berkeley, K. C. B., arrived at Portsmouth yesterday from the Admiralty, and went out to Spithead in the steam-yacht *Ford* to inspect the above ships, and imparted instructions to their captains, after which he proceeded to Chichester. It is understood that the cause of these reinforcements is the reception of information by the Government of several mentions of war being in course of construction by American ship-builders for the Russian Government. These vessels, it is reported, are to be intercepted, as the American Government refuses to discountenance their construction.

FIRE.—We were "resting on our oars" last evening, between the hours of 7 and 8, in the expectation of being enabled to give our readers the benefit of Mail intelligence, when, we regret to announce, a most alarming and destructive fire broke out and obtained the ascendancy in that spot which we have ever dreaded—Tarranah-town, north of the city and directly to the rear of the Free Church and the Bank of British North America, which, together with the buildings immediately in range and looking down upon Water-street, were at one time in considerable danger, but happily preserved—thus, thank God! affording protection to the more important buildings. It is, however, painful to state that not only the whole of the tenements in that thickly populated "town," but an immense number of other buildings were destroyed. At present we have no means of giving anything like an estimate of the extent of the property destroyed, nor can we possibly give a correct statement of the hundreds of poor families who have been thus deprived of house and home, and who, in numbers of cases, will, we fear, require the fostering aid and protection of the government.

There was a lamentable want of water in the suburbs on the above unhappy occasion, so much so indeed that the civil and military engines were, at times, as we have seen, spiked mortars—otherwise a large amount of property would, most assuredly, have been saved. It was also painful to us to notice a number of lazy scamps looking on (as usual) with perfect indifference and not extending a hand to render the least assistance to their distressed fellow beings! — *St. John's, N. F. Times.*