

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 1877.

THE WEEK.

THE war in the East remains at this moment pretty much in the same state as when we last wrote, though a day or two may at any moment make a most important change in the relative positions of the combatants. In Asia Minor the Russians are steadily, if slowly, advancing, and it is almost a necessity that they will go on advancing if it be true, as we suspect it is, that the Turks are miserably provided with all the necessaries of war. The Porte seems to have concentrated its energies upon its Danubian forces, in a quarter where it supposed that the chief operations would be and where the eyes of Europe would be upon the combatants; but, with singular improvidence, it left its Asiatic Provinces very poorly guarded, and by that back door the enemy is entering and taking Turkey in the flank. Erzeroum is said to be totally unprovisioned, and Kars to be unable to hold out. The indications are that the passage of the Danube will shortly be attempted in earnest, probably at Rustchuk. The intention of the Russians is said to be, in Europe as in Asia, to mask the large fortresses and without attempting to take them, to press their advantage in open country. At sea Hobart Pasha retains the supremacy, but, besides bombarding Odessa, he can inflict little harm on the enemy's power or commerce.

Roumania has already declared its independence—a step that in any future arrangements will probably be sanctioned by the Powers. Would that we had greater confidence in the powers of the Wallachians for self-government and progress! The great desideratum is a nation, a form of government, or a man sufficiently firm and stable to form a rallying point for the scattered and oppressed races of Eastern Europe. None of us wish the Christians of the Danubian Provinces to remain subject to the always capricious, and frequently cruel, misrule of the Turks. But then what is to become of them? Torn by internal feuds, hating each other as Christian sectaries know, alas! full well to hate, and each jealous of his own little position, they cannot stand singly; they will not stand together; and the immediate result of their release from Turkish rule has always seemed necessarily to be their voluntary or involuntary subjection to Russia. If Greece had fulfilled even the lowest expectation formed of her future by the Philhellenes of fifty years ago, she would by this time have been in a position to step in and do the work of reorganizing and regenerating Turkey in Europe; and if Prince Leopold had gone to Athens such a result might have been attained. However, it has not been attained. King Otho left his subjects as unadvanced and as incapable as he found them, and the "coming race" must be looked for elsewhere.

We again this week give a few more extracts from English papers and writers on the Ridsdale judgment. The Council of the Church Association pronounces the "judgment in regard to the Vestments to be all that could have been desired," and that "on the whole and in its grand result the Protestant and Evangelical character of the Church of England has been most absolutely maintained and authoritatively pronounced." LAICUS, a well-known correspondent of the *Record*, does not seem satisfied with having things as they are, and some of the more hot-headed of the party are for proceeding to further measures to reverse the judgment in so far as it allows the Eastward position; and one gentleman, Dr. Gregg, has made the judgment an occasion of leaving the Church. As he has, however, immediately accepted an invitation to assume the leadership of a schismatical congregation, we may assume that his Churchmanship was of that feeble and half-hearted kind whose foundations are in the sand. On the contrary, Dr. McNeill considers the judgment should be by his friends received with thankfulness. While he rejoices that Vestments are pronounced illegal, yet, he adds, "to stand with their back to the communicants as they have always done while reading the Prayer of Consecration will prove a satisfaction to be enjoyed, without controversy, by the large body of old fashioned High Churchmen." The *Church Times* can see "no trace of judicial impartiality" in the wonderful discovery that the Ornaments Rubric is no rubric at all, nor any constituent part of the "Prayer Book," regarded as a schedule of the Act of Uniformity, but a mere casual 'Memorandum,' into which must be read a reference which is expressly excluded from it, and this reference be then interpreted as enforcing now certain quasi-public documents issued in Elizabeth's reign, which never possessed any legal authority, and which, even if they ever possessed it, do not touch the question at issue. * * * What the judgment comes to is that the Prayer Book is not only a mere vase of wax in the hands of the Privy Council, which it can twist at its pleasure by varying interpretations, but that it can also, at its pleasure, deny the Rubrical character of any part of the Prayer Book, declare any repealed law still valid, and repeal existing statutes." The *Church Review* says the meaning of the two great points of the judgment is just this—"the utter and complete elimination of the *divine* from the rites and ceremonies of our branch of the Church of Christ." And it concludes a bitter article with these words: "In the name of the Church of Christ in this country, we have already repudiated the Judicial Committee, and we now repeat the repudiation. No true Churchman can bow to its decrees, and we regard it as a fortunate accident that it disregards fairness and law as much as it disregards the fealty, never yet denied, of the Church of England to the universal Church of Christ."

Dr. Pusey, having been appealed to for advice, has written to the *Express* a letter to which necessarily much interest attaches, but which contains some rather strange advice. He first lays down the principles on which the old Tractarians acted. "We deliberately abstained from innovating in externals * * * We taught the truths which we had learned from Christ in the English Church and her divines, and the fathers to which they directed us, but made no individual changes, in theory, which related to our common worship. We were, on principle, non-ritualists. We were even jealous of changes in externals, lest the whole should be slighted as a matter of externals." How widely does this differ from the practice and policy of the ritualists of to-day! But what does Dr. Pusey advise clergy now to do who have adopted the Vestments? To consult and be guided by their Bishops, as the old Bishop of St. Asaph points out that each clergyman at his ordination promised to do? By no means, but they should betake themselves to their congregations! "To do nothing without the good will of the people," whether the rule be St. Cyprians or not, is undoubtedly a rule of great sense, and we wish more clergy would follow it; but we fail to see that the advice to "change nothing without the congregation wish it" is in accordance with Catholic usage. It subordinates the Bishop and the law to congregationalism, pure and simple.

That some changes in the Dominion Ministry were not improbable has for some time been asserted. They have now been made, and consist in Mr. Blake retiring from the Ministry of Justice into the comparative sinecure of the Presidency of the Council, a position, by the way, that ought, we think, to be occupied by the Premier—from which Mr. Cauchon moves to the Ministry of Inland Revenue, the head of which Department, Mr. Laflamme, becomes Minister of Justice. We are sorry to have to believe that it is owing to continued ill-health that Mr. Blake retires from a position where his talents and acquirements were of eminent use, but of which we do not wonder that he found the duties too onerous.

Apparently there is some trouble in store for the Old Catholics. It being supposed that the Synod which was to meet at Bonn in Whitsun-week would discuss the questions of the celibacy of the clergy and the revision of the Missal, protests have been sent in against every conclusion which violates the Catholic conscience and severs the historical connection with the Catholic constitution." The correspondent of the *Guardian* remarks "It is not probable that the Synod will determine the abolition of compulsory celibacy, but to take the extreme position that it in any way involves a "radical principle" will tend to strengthen the hands of the opposite side, and if saying Mass in German "violates the Catholic conscience," that conscience must be more Roman than Rome."

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