

averaging about 13.2, showed what they were made of, as they seemed to delight to get into these coulées, for the pleasure of scrambling out again. We reached "Eagle Creek" at half-past eight p.m. on the 12th, when the horses had the first drink of *aqua pura* that they had had since the morning of the 10th. They were beginning to show the want of it, for of course, eating snow was not sufficient for them although the Indian ponies seemed to thrive on it; and, as I said before, I could not spare the wood to melt it in sufficient quantities to give them all a drink.

At half-past five o'clock on the evening of the 14th, we got out of the "Bad" Hills, on to a fine open plateau, and the marching from there into the river was comparatively easy work. We struck the South Branch at half-past seven p.m., on the 15th, having marched thirty-two miles that day. I now felt that our troubles were nearly over, for at the river we could get both wood and water for men and horses. There is a telegraph station at this point (the first habitation of any kind we had seen since leaving Battleford), where I received a despatch, to say that the flying column had been cancelled. We were now within thirty miles of Swift Current, the nearest point of railway communication. I determined to give both men and horses a little easier time of it, and divided the distance into two marches. Leaving the river on the morning of the 16th, we marched to the "Fifteen-mile Lake," or more properly speaking "slough." Here we found this slough frozen solid to the bottom, so the horses had to go without water, and the men had to return to smoky tea. When I found this I intended to push on, but a heavy snowstorm and high wind springing up, I concluded to pitch camp for the night and march into Swift Current next day. The column reached Swift Current exactly at midday on the "17th of Ireland" (where I had ordered a good hot dinner to be prepared), having done the 210 miles in three hours under the nine days. I don't think any officers or men of Her Majesty's Service ever before enjoyed such a good square meal.

Our troubles and trials were now all over. No more getting up in the middle of the night, as it were, to strike camp and have everything ready to march by seven a.m. The Canadian Pacific Railway authorities, having received instructions, had coaches, baggage cars, and horse boxes ready waiting for us at the station; and we started for Moosejaw, 112 miles East of Swift Current, at sundown, reaching our destination about midnight, where Lieut.-Colonel C. F. Houghton, D.A.G., met us.

I must say that, considering the time of year and the hardship of the march, the non-commissioned officers and men deserve a great deal of credit for the cheerful and willing manner in which they performed their somewhat arduous duties; and I was glad to be able to report that I had brought my whole command in without any casualties to man or horse. We are now living in cantonments in Moosejaw, and anxiously waiting for orders to move to our headquarters at Kingston, Ontario.

J. F. WILSON, Major, Commanding "A" Battery, Field Force.

OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

SINCE the arrival of the latest number of THE WEEK in England, Mr. Gladstone has unfolded his scheme for the expropriation of the Irish landlords. Assuming the necessity of granting to Ireland a Local Government Bill of a more or less liberal nature, it follows as a simple act of justice that such an Act must be preceded by precautionary measures in the landlords' interests. If these unfortunate men cannot collect their rents, while the Queen's writ yet runs in Ireland, how can they hope to do so when their appeal must be made to Mr. Parnell's Parliament in Dublin—a Parliament which is pledged to estimate the soil at prairie value?

The principle, then, of linking an Expropriation Bill to a Separation Bill may be willingly conceded. But the limits of concession are in this case quickly reached. No sane man can subscribe to the details of Mr. Gladstone's plans, nor is it easy to believe that Mr. Gladstone himself regards his scheme as containing any elements whatever of finality. May he not be considered to have promulgated both the Separation Bill and the Land Bill with the simple aim of presenting to the Scotch and English constituencies a view of the alternative to coercion? In the absence of some such visible agenda paper, as the Prime Minister's proposals set forth in terms, how, it may be fairly asked, are the constituencies to get to business?

From this point of view the writer cannot but consider that Mr. Gladstone, the only man who possesses in an extraordinary degree the power of getting the ear of the country, has made an important contribution towards the settlement, though not necessarily on the lines he himself lays down, of this great question. It is not until the real nature of a disease, with its ramifications and possible consequences, is thoroughly known, that the wisest and most vigorous remedies can be applied.

The view that Mr. Gladstone has abandoned, even if he ever entertained, any serious hope of carrying his measures through Parliament in their present shape is strengthened by the common rumours which are afloat with regard to the actual course he intends to pursue. Such rumours, be their value what it may, are to the effect that Mr. Gladstone will accept all amendments that may be proposed, supposing the bills to pass their second reading, and will then quietly drop them both, leaving them "with all their imperfections on their heads" for the continual discussion and consideration of the constituencies. This may be latter-day statesmanship, but it is not what the English nation is accustomed to, and it would receive little credit at the hands of those who are attached to the old order of things, had they not of late received certain rude awakenings and reminders that "the old order changeth, yielding place to new." Seriously, however, can Mr. Gladstone expect anything but opposition of the most determined sort?

The writer will not attempt the discussion of the Separation Bill—*Non cunctis homini*. But when such men as Mr. Goschen and the Duke of Argyll, men of matured, experienced, and sober wisdom, fasten on Mr. Gladstone's infant Constitution, and attempt to strangle it almost before it is born, it is not to be expected that its appearance will be hailed with acclamations.

The Land Bill may well be treated less reverently. This measure received its first stab when Mr. Chamberlain blurted out the original price at which Mr. Gladstone had fixed the expropriation of the landlords, and which sum it was subsequently found he had "with a light heart" reduced by some fifty millions. The very exposition of the provisions of the Bill, a point on which Mr. Gladstone might have been credited with at least a temporary triumph, was felt in the House to have verged on a failure; while the unusual length of that part of his speech in which he set forth the reasons which had led him to undertake the measure raised a suspicion that he shrank from approaching the actual details of his plan.

The two most obvious objections that have been taken to the Expropriation Bill are these: First, it is felt that the security for the payment of even the reduced rent is absolutely valueless, and, in the second place, proof positive can be given that the sum named for the purchase of the land is far below that which will or may be actually required. But other and no less serious blots are being brought to light. One landlord produces figures to show that, precarious as is the income he receives through rents, such income will certainly bear a favourable comparison with the return his compensation in consols would yield. Another points out that the expropriation value will not even cover the existing mortgages. The proffered boon, in fine, is contemptuously declined by the very class in whose supposed interest it is offered. It may be answered that these and similar objections may be removed by needful amendments when the Bill is in committee. Granted that this is so, it may still be insisted that the success of the measure must in the end be wholly and entirely dependent on the good faith, the good behaviour, and the law-abidingness of the Irish people. Is it too much to ask that some guarantee should be furnished that such qualities as these are still capable of revival in Ireland? Willingly then would the English nation blot out the record of crimes, of ingratitude, of blind and unreasoning hatred, which has of late years become synonymous with the Irish name. Nor would she too carefully count the cost of the sacrifices which she might be called upon to make in granting a boon that would not be extorted from her by threats, but would be freely granted as a reward for repentance.

The issue between Mr. Gladstone and those who venture to differ from him is this: Are the Irish people to be treated with confidence before they have shown themselves worthy of it, or is their worthiness to be assumed? The answer should not be doubtful. C.

London, April 27, 1886.

BISHOP MARLEY had a good deal of the humour of Swift. Once, when the footman was out of the way, he ordered the coachman to fetch some water from the well. To this the coachman objected that his business was to drive, not to run on errands. "Well, then," said Marley, "bring out the coach and four, set the pitcher inside and drive to the well."—A service which was several times repeated to the great amusement of the village.

THE Rev. Dr. Alexander relates that there lived in Peeblesshire a half-witted man, who was in the habit of saying his prayers in a field behind a turf-dyke. One day he was followed to this spot by some waggish persons, who secreted themselves on the opposite side, listening to the man at his devotions, who expressed his conviction that he was a very great sinner, and that even were the turf-dyke at that moment to fall upon him, it would be no more than he deserved. No sooner had he said this than the persons on the opposite side pushed the dyke over him; when, scrambling out he was heard to say: "Hech, sirs, it's an awfu' warld this, a body canna say a thing in a joke but it's ta'en in earnest."