

Mahomet ruled there ; and naturally enough, the Russian regards the possession of the Sacred City by the Moslem with as much bitterness as a Roman Catholic would regard the occupation of the Vatican by a Protestant. It is a deeply cherished hope by the whole Russian people to see the Mosque of St. Sophia restored to the Patriarch. This war has thus more of a religious than a political character in their eyes, and consequently we anticipate, that Russia will tenaciously struggle to obtain all she has demanded, and if she cannot attain the City of Constantine, to-day, she will renew the effort to-morrow.

Therefore we fear England will feel herself compelled to fight, conference or no conference. If she does, Austria, impelled by Hungarian hatred of the Cossack, and her interests on the Danube, will doubtless muster sufficient courage to follow suit. Germany, may, for a while, stand aloof, out of seeming gratitude for Russia's moral support and non-interference in her last war with France ; but in reality to seize with greater advantage any chance of grabbing Holland or Belgium, or, to annex Austria, if she should seem to be worsted by Russia—a result which everybody in Berlin regards as a mere question of time. France lives at present, chiefly for one object, the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine. Italy has long been waiting for a favorable moment to seize Austrian Tyrol, and if France goes again to war, she would make considerable effort to recover from the latter, Nice and Savoy. It will be admitted then, there are here stimulants enough to fan the sparks now smouldering into a flame which would quickly spread over Europe, and the result of which, Heaven only knows.

JOHN POPHAM.

TEN THOUSAND MILES BY RAIL.

Great men, we all know, are divisible into three classes. Some are born great ; some achieve greatness ; some, again, have greatness thrust upon them. The travelling community may be ranked in three corresponding subdivisions. At any rate it is an undeniable fact that there are people to whom the knack of travel comes so naturally that they are never at home except on the cars. That there are travellers who literally achieve travel, nobody will feel disposed to deny just at this time when we are all listening delightedly to the story of Mr. Stanley's wonderful exploits in the interior of Africa. Finally, that there are travellers who are so solely because they have had travel thrust upon them, the writer of this is prepared to affirm from his own personal experience. It is not necessary, however, to detail here the circumstances under which he recently undertook a journey across this continent. It will be sufficient to say that he was impelled to do so by circumstances beyond his own control.

One fine morning in the latter part of last summer I arrived at Halifax, from Toronto, on my way to California.

It is unnecessary to point out to the intelligent reader that there are two ways of reaching California from Toronto, by way of Nova Scotia. The first is to keep straight on for a couple of months or so, taking in Europe and Asia *en route*. The other is to turn right back from Halifax the same way you came. For reasons good and sufficient, but supremely uninteresting to the reader, I adopted the latter course.

Halifax, capital of Nova Scotia, and headquarters of the British naval and military force in Canada, is a city of some thirty thousand inhabitants. For natural advantages and geographical position, it has and can have no rival on the Atlantic sea-board of the Dominion. Its magnificent harbour—a broad inlet extending upwards of ten miles inland—is capable of sheltering a dozen navies at once. As the most easterly port of the American continent, Halifax must for all time to come hold its place as a great commercial out-post, controlling more or less of the transatlantic trade. Its importance as a possible centre for military and naval operations has never been lost sight of by the Imperial Government. The surrounding fortifications bear testimony to this. At the same time, by the completion of the Intercolonial Railway, Halifax has become the natural winter port of the whole Canadian Dominion east of the Rocky Mountains.

The city is situate on the west bank of the harbour, about half way between the head of the inlet and the open sea. It is built on sloping ground, gradually rising from the waterside until, in the rear of the city, a height of nearly three hundred feet is reached. The summit of this hill is crowned by an extensive fortification called the citadel. This point commands a grand view. The landscape includes the whole length of the harbour, with a distant glimpse of the ocean, towards the south. Across the harbour lies the pleasant little town of Dartmouth, connected with the city by steam ferry. Further south we see the Provincial Lunatic Asylum, an immense building, grey and sombre of hue, yet harmonizing complacently with the dark background of spruce-clad hill-range beyond. Scattered here and there, towards the mouth of the harbour, are several islands, each armed with batteries of heavy guns. Along the shore line, both east and west, the hill side shows at every projecting knoll the angular and well-defined outlines of earthworks, distant forts commanding the entrance to the bay. Close at hand are the barracks and officers' quarters, with red-coated sentries solemnly tramping to and fro in full marching order.

There is nothing specially attractive about the city itself. The business portion is mainly included within a radius of a few hundred yards around the Post Office. The Province building is a gloomy stone structure standing in an enclosed space right in the centre of the city. Hollis and Granville streets, the two principal avenues, can boast of several neat business houses, but the general aspect of the streets is dingy in the extreme. The hotels are by no means up to the modern standard. Even the churches present few features of interest. The wealthiest Episcopal congregations in the city are content to worship in dilapidated frame buildings, shingled all over, roof and sides alike. St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) is the only ecclesiastical structure of note ; and even there one's chief wonder is how so much money could have been spent on so ineffective an exterior. A few thousand dollars might profitably be expended on improving the side-walks throughout the principal streets.

The wharves usually present a busy scene. Here we find an Allan Line steamship, just arrived. Among her passengers are a number of clergy from St. John's, Newfoundland ; and huge piles of baggage lie around, destined for all parts of the continent. Two other lines of Atlantic steamers call at this port, in

addition to several steamships from New England and other Southern ports. All through the summer season great numbers of tourists come here from Boston and Portland. The hotels at this time of the year are so crowded that one has to put up with a great deal of discomfort. One urgent need of the place is a short branch line of railway from the present terminus of the Intercolonial to the wharves. Until this is done the through freight business cannot be expected to develop. The new railway station is a large and handsome structure, admirably adapted for its purpose. But it is fully a mile from the city. The street cars, for some reason or other, have ceased to run ; and the omnibus ride to and from the station is by no means exhilarating.

Ordinarily there are two or three war ships to be seen in the harbour, but at the time of my visit the vessels stationed here were away on a cruise up the St. Lawrence. There were in garrison, however, the usual force of a few hundred men, drafted from two regiments. It was pleasant, on Sunday morning, to see the men filing off in companies to attend their several churches. At times a corporal's guard would march down the centre of the street, detailed on some special duty. Once a whole regiment, as it seemed, came tramping along Hollis street with the band at its head playing martial airs that made the windows rattle with the shrill clangor. The scene could not fail to remind me of that Home across the Atlantic, which I last saw seven years ago.

(To be continued.)

THE RECENT TORONTO SYNOD.

As spectators of events going on in our Canadian world we have viewed the late attempts to elect a Coadjutor Bishop to assist Dr. Bethune with mingled feelings of sorrow and gladness. We are sorry that that estimable prelate should have been led to take the steps he adopted to force the nominee of a majority of his clergy on the acceptance of an influential minority as their future Bishop. We are sorry for the disappointments evidently felt by that aged and venerable chief pastor. We are sorry that the name and character of such a man as the Venerable Archdeacon Whitaker should have been brought before the public in so invidious a manner. We are sorry that the Church should be scandalized by such purely worldly and party tactics as have been brought into display at and since the recent Synod. But, on the whole, we are glad at the result. Having no particular sympathy for either of the two parties which maintained the struggle, love of truth and principle compels us to say that we think the victorious minority had the right on their side. The Bishop's advisers must be very fallible men, and we have not the faintest idea that the Archdeacon was one of them. They induced him to call together the representatives of the Church from all parts of the Diocese for the election of a Coadjutor Bishop, seemingly without having thought that those representatives had a right to be consulted as to whether such election was either expedient or necessary. Obviously it is an extraordinary case which should necessitate the appointment of a Coadjutor. Such a case did perhaps occur, when the last occupant of the See was fast approaching ninety years. But no such extraordinary case of age and consequent infirmity exists now. The Diocese has been much curtailed in its proportions since Bishop Strachan died and its labour almost proportionally lessened. And in truth the need of assistance pointed out by the Bishop in his opening address was of the most insufficient kind, while his closing speech displayed the fact that he wanted one man, and one only, to be elected. But the minority have been much blamed for the *manner* in which they defeated the proposed election. Not being able to look below the surface of affairs as recorded in the papers, we confess that we hardly see wherein they are to blame. Party spirit we hold to be bad in Church matters, and perhaps it was party spirit which led them on. But we do not know. They seem to have availed themselves of all the protection which wise laws have placed around a minority of the Synod to secure them against the will of a dominant majority, but nothing more appears to outsiders. The Bishop admitted that they had the law on their side, and, as gracefully as he could, owned his defeat. Our sorrow at his disappointment is tempered by the thought that law has triumphed over party, and by the hope that the Right Reverend Prelate may not lay down his crozier till the Great Head of the Church shall call him to his account.

E. W. B.

THE JESTER.

To the Editor of the Canadian Spectator :

What's in a name? whether it be Jester, or Clown, or Fool? There's a tripartite quality in either. Shakespeare's clowns are pre-eminent—Launce, Touchstone, Launcelot Gobbo ; what a trinity of humour and travestie ! The clowns (first gravedigger) in "Hamlet," "All's Well that Ends Well," and "Twelfth Night," were never christened ; their lineal descent is doubtful ; they are not honoured with names, yet they are a wonderful trio ! The fools in "Timon of Athens," "King Lear," and "The Winter's Tale," though nameless, are—up to their standard—inimitable ! Among the *dramatis personae* of Shakespeare's plays there is but one Jester—Trinculo, in "The Tempest" ; his wit is of "a drunken order." There is another, by name Yorick, the King's Jester, of whose person and sayings we know nothing, though we are familiar with his quality. Hamlet calls him "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." Would we could honestly say as much for the *Jester* who first saw the light on St. Valentine's Day, A. D. 1878, in Montreal. His flashes of merriment will not set neither a breakfast, nor a dinner, nor a supper-table on a roar ; nor can we say, "We like thy wit well, in good faith." It may, possibly, improve when the watch of it is wound up, but we are afraid the mainspring is weak. At present it ambles ; it is not nimble ; it has nothing of that exquisite ebullience and overflow which we find in Mercutio ; nevertheless, we bear some charity to the wit of the *Jester*, on account of his youth. The mirror that the *Jester*, just as he is, in his infancy, is holding up to nature has a great deal of the quicksilver rubbed off—it is very non-reflective. The *Jester* says "his hits will be made in the very spirit of his great predecessors." Now, as they were a very numerous family—some nothing more than *silly fellows*, with not sufficient simplicity for a natural fool, nor wit enough for an artificial one ;