

decided in 1887 to submit it to the "preliminary censorship," in which case the responsibility falls on the Censor. "But the Press Department contrived even then to throw obstacles in the way, and at last, on the 20th of October, by order of the Minister Tolstoy, without the usual 'statement of the motives,' the paper was prohibited for eight months. The chief manager of the Press Department explained verbally that this penalty, equivalent to the fine of 80,000 roubles worth, was inflicted for a private letter written by the editor to the Censor, the tone of which the latter deemed insulting." Against this decision there was no appeal; no possibility of self-defence through the press, nor even of sending letters to each subscriber, as such letters would be looked upon as acts of hostility to the Government. If all this be true, M. Gatzuk may well say that he who knows the real situation of the press in Russia, and what an honest journalist, unable to sell his conscience, has to undergo, will not reprove them for the sudden irregularity in their editions.

It is difficult to fathom the ultimate purpose of recent diplomatic movements on the part of Russia in relation to Bulgaria. The Bulgarian question is, ostensibly at least, the European question at the present moment. Russia persistently refuses to recognize the present status in Bulgaria, which she declares, correctly enough perhaps, to be an infringement of the Berlin Treaty. With many protestations of unselfish regard for the welfare of the Bulgarians and that only, which may be taken for what they are worth, she refuses to admit the legality of Prince Ferdinand's election, and tries to induce the other Powers to endorse her refusal. Prince Bismarck, it is understood, is willing to accept Russia's view, and to join the other parties to the treaty in making representations to that effect. These representations, if resolved on, would be addressed to Turkey, and would take the ground that it is the Sultan's duty to undertake to convince the Bulgarian people that the person whom they now call Prince is not their legal ruler, but an usurper. The *North German Gazette* contends that the Russian proposal to make such representations to Turkey does not require the unanimous support of the Powers to warrant the Porte in taking action, but that Turkey can on her own initiative declare the present Bulgarian Government illegal, as being contrary to the Treaty of Berlin. The *Gazette* further asserts that Germany is prepared to give diplomatic support to Russia in making such a demand upon Turkey.

Thus far all seems tolerably clear. But what would follow in case, such representation or demand having been made, Turkey declines to act upon it, or Bulgaria refuses to act upon Turkey's suggestion? Either contingency seems probable enough, and the chances are largely in favour of one of the two as against the immediate deposition of Prince Ferdinand. There would seem to be weakness or incongruity in the course of the Powers if, having gone so far in the direction said to be pointed out by the Treaty of Berlin, they should allow the matter to drop without any practical effect having been produced. And yet Russia is represented as saying, through her ambassador at Berlin, that she does not think it compatible with her dignity to interfere in Bulgaria's internal disputes, and that she has no intention to prejudice in any way the liberty of the Bulgarians. She has from the outset, it is further alleged, rejected the idea of eventually restoring the legal status by force, though as a matter of course, until the removal of the usurper, she will continue to regard the situation as illegal. This position might perhaps be understood did Russia's actions at all correspond. But wherefore, in the face of all these protests of peaceful intentions, all those immense and constantly increasing armaments?

THE apparently slow progress of the Italians in their Abyssinian Campaign has given rise to some wonder at the extreme caution manifested, and some suspicion of reverses not allowed to come to the knowledge of the public. The real explanation seems to be that the Italians have no intention of climbing Abyssinia's mountain stronghold 7,000 feet above the level of the sea, or of attempting to repeat, in the face of solidly hostile tribes the march, which, notwithstanding the neutrality or sympathy of the intervening races, cost England nine millions of pounds sterling. What Italy really wants is, it appears, a secure hold upon the port and colony at Massowah, and what her forces are really trying to do, is to make the surrounding territory practically impregnable. If the Abyssinians show equal good sense by refusing to leave their native fortresses to attack the Italian fortifications on the seashore, not much blood may be lost in the campaign. At the same time the case is rather a hard one for King John and his people, who, it is said, want nothing but a right of transit through the territory in question to the sea coast. Massowah is, it appears, prac-

tically the only port through which they can carry on the commerce with foreign nations which they are anxious to establish. Had England remained in possession, this privilege would, no doubt, have been readily granted, and it is not easy to see what Italy has to gain by refusing it. It would seem certainly that King John has some reason to complain of having been left in the lurch by England, who, when she handed over Massowah district to another nation, might, in consideration of King John's friendly action in relieving the Soudan garrisons, at least have stipulated to reserve Abyssinia's commercial rights or privileges. Possibly a natural resentment may have had something to do with the failure of the recent British Embassy to King John to counsel peace.

OTTAWA LETTER.

AMONG all the peculiar and interesting phases of life at the Capital which will doubtless reward the observer during the Parliamentary Session this year, not the least peculiar and interesting is the wave of revivalism by which the city is at present submerged, even, if the evidence of our eyes and ears may be believed, to the base of the Government itself. The Rev. Mr. Hunter and his colleague, the Rev. Mr. Crossley, both ordained ministers of the Methodist Church, are entering upon the seventh week of their evangelistic labours in Ottawa, for which labours, if the good work they are believed to have accomplished prove but as lasting as it seems to be universal, they are not over-rewarded in the esteem and the enthusiasm and the five hundred dollars they take westward with them. How much of the interest that has attached itself to these meetings in classes of society not usually affected by the methods of revivalism is due to the frequent attendance of the Premier and Lady Macdonald would be difficult to say accurately and uncharitably, perhaps, to say at all. It is certain, however, that a much larger number of people who prefer, perhaps from Civil Service association, a little more red tape in the process of obtaining salvation, have been attracted to the "Hunter and Crossley" services than the history of any similar revival has shown in Ottawa before. As to Sir John Macdonald himself, his very hearty and sincere interest in the proceedings is easily evident to any one who watches his face as he sings straight through with genuine zest such stirring and popular sacred melodies as "The Lily of the Valley," or "The Handwriting on the Wall." It is also true that he has availed himself of the usual opportunities offered for the public manifestation of personal concern, all of which will naturally tend to make the most interesting figure in the recent history of Canada more interesting still in his direction of her business. Further than this, speculation and enquiry seem to savour of presumption. Perhaps even a Premier may be entitled to and entrusted with the sole management of his spiritual affairs. If there is a further public duty of observation and criticism moreover, it may be safely left to the gentlemen of the Opposition.

There is nothing remarkable, as might be imagined, about Mr. Hunter or Mr. Crossley, or the services they are holding, except the effect upon the people. The latter evangelist possesses a pleasant tenor voice, which he uses in such simple and suggestive songs as find an easy response in the sympathies of his audience. He talks with point, earnestness, and moderation, and in tolerably good English, but without special force other than that of honest and serious conviction. His co-labourer is of the utterly unorthodox type of revivalist in so far as forms are concerned, and uses to their full extent all the unconventionalisms with which revivals have made us familiar. If it were not for the unbounded egotism, the occasional vulgarisms, and the extraordinary grammar which appears in this gentleman's methods, it would be easier to understand his remarkable success. From another point of view these very characteristics may explain it; and Mr. Hunter may have a distinct purpose in introducing them.

Another "opening" has taken its place in the blue books of the Parliamentary Library, in the memories of those who witnessed the scene for the first time, and in the long line of similar pageants which some day will lend colour and picturesqueness to Canada's past. Our present Governor-General has performed for the last time the duty of representing his Sovereign and ours in her relation to her colonists of half a continent, and the colonists have sat decorously in rows and watched the ceremony, not without some sense of its meaning as well as of the unusual grandeur of their raiment, and the extraordinary humour of the genuflections of the Black Rod. It is doubtful indeed whether national circumstances ever before combined to bring the significance of the Speech from the Throne so strongly and sharply to the minds of those who heard it. Commercial Union, Imperial Federation, Annexation, Independence, however we would ballot for Canada's future, we cannot be deaf to the voices in the