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ART. VIII.—THE MONTH.

Those who believed that the Prime Minister would make some startling announcement at the Lord Mayor's banquet were greatly disappointed. The speech, however, was a success, equal in point and polish to the great statesman's happiest efforts. As to Afghanistan and the Turkish Question, it was discreetly silent. The aspect of public affairs, said the noble Earl, is much more satisfactory, and the revival of trade, which is unmistakable, is likely to prove of a permanent character. *Imperium et Libertas* is a "programme" from which Lord Beaconsfield's Ministry "will not shrink."

The English fleet has remained at Malta, and the Sultan will probably yield to diplomatic pressure in regard to the promised reforms both in Europe and in Asia Minor. Baker Pasha has been appointed Inspector-General of Turkish Reforms in Asia Minor. After the visit of the Czarewitch to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin the Triple Alliance, it is supposed, has been renewed between the Sovereigns if not between the Chancellors. The Treaty of Berlin will be upheld.

At Birmingham, the leading Liberal, or Radical, educationalists, have been constrained, happily, to change their position with regard to Bible reading in Board schools. It was left to "the Conservative party," as the *Guardian* remarks with regret, "to fight the battle of Holy Scripture:—

Is it to go forth to the people of this country that Liberalism chooses to identify itself not only with opposition to the Church, but also with repudiation, except under pressure, of the idea of religious education? The leaders of the Liberal party must look to this. If they persist in purchasing, at any cost, the support of the extreme Left—made up of the political Nonconformists and the Secularist party, who use them as tools—they can hardly be surprised if those who care above all other things for the causes which these men assail, are tempted half-unwillingly to rally round the banner of Conservatism; and they will find too late that they have raised against themselves an overwhelming power."

At the Norwich Diocesan Conference the Bishop called attention to a really practical question—viz., the union of small parishes:—

Small cures with small incomes are evils in more ways than one. It is an evil to have an impoverished clergy, and it is an evil for a clergyman not to have enough to occupy his time. Further, there is great waste of strength which could be utilised elsewhere, particularly in London, where with four times the population there is only half the number of benefices which exist in the diocese of Norwich.

The meetings called by Archdeacon Denison in support of "The Prayer Book as it is," were, at least, enthusiastic. The Earl of Devon, Mr. Reginald Wilberforce, Canon Woodard, and other speakers, protested against any legislation upon advice of Convocation as now constituted.

The Lower House of Canterbury, it is clear, has few friends, and the Ornaments Rubric compromise is dead and buried. The draft Bill, too, has met with a cold welcome. At the Chichester Diocesan Conference the speaking was all on one side; the Archdeacons alone had a good word to say for it. At Norwich, Archdeacon Groome, proposing to refer it to a committee, doubted the necessity for alteration in the rubrics, and thought the Bill proceeded from a desire on the part of Convocation to usurp the rights of Parliament. Canon Ryle proposed an amendment condemnatory of the Bill; but after an animated discussion, during which several speakers, both lay and clerical, expressed a decided want of confidence in Convocation, which they considered must be greatly reformed before its decisions would be accepted by the Church, the amendment was lost by 100 votes to 56. In Lichfield, and other dioceses, the Bill has been, practically, condemned.

The condition of things in South Africa and in Ceylon, ecclesiastically speaking, is deplorable. The Bishop of Colombo has refused licences to the Missionaries recently sent out to Ceylon by the Church Missionary Society. He declared that if any one attended "schismatic" services he or she would be cut off from all the rites of the Church—that is to say, that their children and families would be denied the sacraments, marriage, burial, and every other Christian rite.

The Report on Patronage will satisfy, probably, a large portion of even enthusiastic advocates of Church Reform.

Mr. Mackonochie has neglected the orders of the Court of Arches for years, and, possibly, he will now neither submit to the Law nor secede from the Church. His case, at all events, has proceeded a step further. The intervention of the Queen's Bench, evidently irregular, proved a failure, and Lord Penzance, as the Dean of Arches, has issued the order which for seventeen months lay dormant. The Incumbent of St. Albans is suspended *ab officio et a beneficio* for three years. It is stated (Nov. 20) that at a meeting of the Council of the English Church Union, Mr. Mackonochie himself being present, a "policy of resistance" was agreed on.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has received at Lambeth Palace a deputation of fifty delegates from Trades Unions. In reply to their complaint concerning attacks upon Unions in certain Church School Books, his Grace stated that the "offensive" writings would be withdrawn from circulation.