

certainly read the same proof in just such a prophetic utterance now more than thirty years ago, but of this more anon. Is our Prophet's name by the way, R. W. Perkins? For under the title of the publication we find this name written, as that of the author, with a pen? But Perkinoff or Perkinovich might, for purposes of espionage, be so mutilated, and, as we said we have reason to believe that this is no genuine prophecy but a publication intended to make the way smooth for our Russian invaders. Our suspicions, moreover, are strengthened by finding written also with a pen on the margin in a certain place, that after the overthrow of England it is strictly prohibited by Holy Writ that any resort shall be had to arms. Englishmen are to submit to their defeat and meekly accept their new position of Russian serfs. So boasts our Perkinoff, revealing once more his true character. But the whole document is so composed as to turn the hearts of colonists against England. She is to be the first of those ten toes irretrievably to fall. And that we should live to hear England compared to a toe, an irretrievably fallen toe! She the head, nay, the very topping of the whole universe! "Not whilst England shall endure" we are told again "will Christianity pervade the earth." And yet, again, 'England's present greatness is anything but a proof of God's approbation,' and, then, it is insisted upon that England is the 'Modern Babylon,' because Rome only exports cement, as we have seen.—But surely here the climax is capped. And now let us see how our pretended prophet, the wily Perkinovich, deals with Russia. The Greek Church, he tells us, will be the last to be overthrown. Of Protestantism meanwhile, English Protestantism especially, he has a very poor opinion. "The clergy," he says, "seem as greedy of filthy lucre, and to covet to enjoy the good things of this life as other folk; and materialism and unbelief are rapidly spreading and everywhere abound; and such is the disunion, dissension, and antagonism amongst the professing Christian community, that it needs a second advent to re-establish the truth." Our prophet, as we see, and herein we find a fresh proof of his double-dealing, since he can seem so very foolish, is not altogether a fool. This Protestantism, then, falls first of all, and after it the Catholic Church. The Greek Church however endures to the last, a mark of its superior vitality that we might well find put forward as a bait by a Russian emissary. But our Perkinoff reserves the crowning glory for the Russian hosts, who shall prove victorious until Heaven itself openly and immediately contends against them. Could the proudest son of the House of Romanoff itself make a louder boast on behalf of his armies than this? Oh, Perkinoff, Perkinoff, our eyes are opened to you. Under the pretence of a prophetic utterance and with all the authority of Holy Writ, you are seeking to seduce British colonists from their allegiance and to prepare the way for the successful invasion of the Muscovite. We recommend you to the attention of the gallant volunteers of New South Wales, and, if they do not occupy themselves with you, no one else need bother his head about your senseless rigmorale.

**SERIOUS CONSIDERATIONS.** Sir Edward Reed has written another letter to the *Times* in which he brings a terrible indictment against the Board of Admiralty—eight gentlemen who have during the last five years received nearly £100,000 for their services, and whose labours

nevertheless, have resulted in placing the English navy in a condition which would only have been intelligible had it been built under foreign control.—Sir Edward claims to have foretold the fate of the Captain so exactly that the late Duke of Marlborough and the present Lord Derby were forcibly reminded of his paper by the description given of the catastrophe when it had actually occurred. But the case of the Captain was a mere trifle in comparison with the state of things that now exists and has to be remedied. "Has to be remedied, I say," writes Sir Edward, "for whereas the fate of one ship and the lives of 500 officers and men were involved in the Captain's case, the fate of 10 ships, and of 6,000 to 8,000 men, is involved in the present case, and so involved that it can only manifest itself in the hour of battle and of national necessity, when their bodily overthrow would compromise the very safety of the State itself." The particular matter at fault is the armour of the ten ships of the largest class to which the writer alludes, and concerning which he says:—"Sir, I have to state, and am prepared to demonstrate to any competent tribunal, that there is not one of these ten ships, the latest added to the British Navy, that cannot be either capsized and sunk, or sunk without capsizing, without any shot or shell whatever being directed against those parts of the ship which are armoured." And again, he writes, "Sir, I write this more in sorrow than in anger, for I confess that although I am well aware that the Navy is subject, under our system, to the varying fancies and follies of the political members of the Board, who enter and leave it in swift succession; I am at an utter loss to understand how a man like Admiral Sir Cooper Key can have failed to protect his own great and glorious service from the appalling prospects which the introduction of these wretched mongrel ships has opened up. I should have thought that the prospect of British ship after ship capsizing in battle, before their armour had been violated or even touched, and in the presence of a cheering and jeering enemy fighting in really

armoured ships, would have been one against which he, at least, would have set his face with a determination that none could impair. But those of us who looked to him for help have looked in vain. The day may come, and may even be near—which God forbid!—when the present betrayal of our Navy by a set of politicians, admirals, and constructors, may wring from us a cry which the very ends of the earth will hear." Sir Edward Reed, then, appeals to the readers of his letter not to regard him as speaking under the influence of exaggerated fear, and he goes on to quote the opinions of several high naval authorities who coincide perfectly in his views. His conclusion is as follows:—"It will not be denied that, apart from politics, apart from foreign outlooks, apart from all passing fears and apprehensions, this is a most critical time for the Navy of this country and for the Empire which it is charged to protect. The fighting ships built of wood and propelled by sails, to the perfection of which all the long centuries of the past had contributed, have been swept away. Steel and steam and newly-devised gun-powders and gun-cotton and dynamite have become the means and instruments of naval warfare, and there is laid upon the British Admiralty the great, the immeasurable responsibility of seeing that under these altered conditions the Navy of this country is not surpassed or left behind from any cause whatever or in any part whatever. If I saw them nobly striving to acquit themselves of this high duty, I would gladly, knowing something of what the duty involves, applaud and assist them in every way. But I have for some time feared, I have since become convinced, and I now publicly assert, that they are unequal to the work they have undertaken and have become a source of grave national danger. Knowing that, in armoured ships at least, size is, as Mr. Barnaby says, a fair measure of power, they have carefully made our ships inferior to others in this primary quality. They have followed this up by withholding from these inferior ships even the defences which they could quite well have carried. They have not only stripped our ships of armour, and so exposed them to gun destruction, but they have offered, and are still offering them up as prey to the torpedo, and telling the seamen who are to take them into action that it is their business to prevent the ram or the torpedo attacking them. In short, the Navy is in grave danger, and it has been put in that danger needlessly and wantonly, in spite of multiplied warnings. I appeal to Mr Gladstone to put an end to this deplorable state of things. If he declines—and it is hard to see how he can well take the initiative—then I appeal to independent men who care for the country and care for its Navy, and I ask them to interpose. Thank Heaven, there are such men. Mr Goschen is one, and could act with effect. Mr. W. H. Smith is another, and has quite recently declared that no fear of any part of the blame falling upon him shall prevent him from advocating any naval measures which he conscientiously considers urgent. I shall not myself seek to take any lead in the matter, for I have neither the time nor the disposition, nor the influence to justify me in doing so. But this I will do, with your permission; I will here repeat in the most public and responsible manner that the Ajax, Agamemnon, Colossus, and Edinburgh, and the six ships of the Admiral class, are all utterly unfit to engage the corresponding French ships; unfit to enter the line of battle at all; unfit to be retained on the list of armoured ships; and I demand that they be at least afforded protection against that swift destruction from the fire of the smallest guns afloat which now awaits them. If this be not done, then upon the heads of the present Board of Admiralty must continue to rest, after this public warning, the responsibility of delivering ten British ships of the largest class an easy and certain prey to destruction should war arise."—With the prospect of immediate war before our eyes, all this, we must admit is hardly comforting, and whether it, with much more to a similar effect that had preceded it, has had anything to do in encouraging the designs of foreign nations unfriendly to England, as may well prove to have been the case, or not, it at least must seem very discouraging to those who depend upon the mother country for naval protection.

**MR. JOSEPH COWEN** who has often most ably advocated the cause of Ireland never made a happier utterance in such a direction than that which he made in the latest of his addresses, and which we

**ABLE ADVOCACY.** find reported in the *Times* of February 20. The speaker effectively, although no doubt unintentionally, rebukes the *Times* itself, which not long ago declared with disdain that thenceforward Irish affairs should have no place in its columns, and that a contemptuous silence, should be maintained concerning everything connected with them. Since that time, nevertheless, the newspaper in question has not ceased to stultify its own declaration by giving a very large portion of its attention to everything relating to Ireland—discussing them in its leading columns, and publishing lengthy correspondence from the veracious Dr. Paton, that worthy scribe whom it employs in Dublin to misrepresent the people and the popular cause, and whose silence is often, as the saying is, more eloquent than words, by conclusively pointing out to the well-informed what it is that the enemies of Ireland