

way, but so far as church property is concerned, Mr. Dowall is evidently afraid to speak out all he thinks. The bill provides for only a partial assessment of church property, when what is needed, in all justice to the community, is a sweeping measure for the abolition of the old superstition, which teaches that property used for ecclesiastical purposes shall be exempt from taxation. If there was ever a good and sound argument in favour of this exemption, it is no longer in force. At one time church buildings were centres of education and morals, and the object with which they were set up was to effect some moral and spiritual improvement in the immediate neighbourhood. But will any one say that such is the primary purpose for which churches are built now? Those fine structures, which so often have heavy mortgages upon them, and which fathers hand down to sons—which are shut six days in the week, sacred to bad air and damp, are too often but monuments to unchristian quarrels and pique and pride. It would be in the interest of the whole community, so far as its peace and morals and spirituality are concerned, if heavy assessments were made upon them—so heavy as to compel the sale of many of the over-weighted and little needed.

When will the trouble of the poor Oka Indians come to an end? Three times they have been tried for the same offence, and three times the jurors have been unable to agree. At the last trial, counsel for the prosecution delivered a most inflammatory harangue to the jury, dragging in everything but law and logic—the judge summed up the case against the accused as, thank heaven, judges rarely do in this Dominion—but, after prolonged consideration, the jury declared they could not agree. If public sentiment can bring no influence to bear upon the authorities at the Seminary to put an end to proceedings which look very much like persecution, Government should interfere. I hope some member of Parliament will be found who is manly enough, and sufficiently a lover of justice to ask the Minister of the Interior, who has charge of the interests of the Indians, what steps he intends to take in fulfilling his duties toward them.

Charity moves but slowly in Montreal. In this, as in most other matters, we have not much enthusiasm. Up to date, the Mayor's list shows less than \$1,000 for the Irish relief fund. This is bad indeed. We have had much fine talk on platforms and in the papers—wealthy men who love public place and honour have spoken a most emphatic sympathy with the poor Irish—but among them all charity has found but a meagre response to her call. What is to be done? Mr. Parnell's visit will not open the purses of those who can afford to give—the chances are that he will stop the poor dribble that is now coming in. What can we do? Nothing, only wait until it shall please heaven to give us a conscience.

By the terms of the Queen's Speech the Earl of Beaconsfield has secured the power to roam at large in search of accidents and opportunities for recovering the goodwill of the electors. Her Majesty was induced to leave her retirement in order to say nothing that the country expected to hear. The Treaty of Berlin, the Turks, and European Powers were received and dismissed with the barest nod of recognition. It may be that the Government has a policy with regard to Afghanistan, but it is carefully kept out of sight, excepting the one declaration that while the Queen is anxious for peace it is deemed by her advisers necessary to carry the war some lengths further, in order that the problem may be solved during the present Session. The domestic legislation promised is of the meagrest kind, and gives evidence that the Prime Minister is by no means anxious to try issues with the Opposition on some important measures. To meet the exigency in Ireland it is proposed to recommend promiscuous almsgiving and the appropriation of some portion of what yet remains of the Disendowment Fund.

The Earl is evidently going to put his trust in the chapter of accidents. Just after the Treaty of Berlin an appeal to the country would have been answered by the confidence of an overwhelming majority of votes; but the golden opportunity was allowed to slip by, and ever since the Jingoës have been rapidly dying off and the Con-

servative party losing its holds upon the general public. Every fresh revelation of what the Berlin Treaty really was told against the Government. Affairs in Zululand and Afghanistan and India have brought anything but credit upon the chief actors, and now the Earl can only wait for some stroke of luck abroad or at home to galvanize the enthusiasm of his party into life once more.

But Providence often fails to come to the help of expectant politicians. Already the Irish Home Rulers have made an assault upon the Government for the half-hearted manner in which it has proposed to meet the wants of the famine-stricken districts of Ireland. Lord Beaconsfield has much, probably most, to fear from the trouble which has arisen in Ireland; for a large portion of the Liberal party has declared that Government should in all equity devote some time to the consideration of Irish affairs. This, of course, is a "party move," for no politician worth counting believes or hopes that Irish discontent can be healed. For centuries past Ireland has been nursing its grievances, and making loud complaints over them, as if doomed to be the most persecuted of all nations. It cannot be denied that there has been, at times, ample cause for this. The story of the conquest of Ireland is one long record of an attempt, not merely to conquer, but to exterminate a people. Cromwell's inhuman policy was not improved upon by the Stuarts. Cruelty could go no further and do no more than that suffered by the Irish at the hands of their Anglo-Saxon conquerors. But the case of Ireland is not solitary. Many classes of the English people were compelled to suffer just as brutal atrocities. It was a time of cruelty and wrong. While in England, however, those black days are forgotten in the better and freer times now enjoyed, they are remembered by the Irish at home and abroad as if they had occurred a generation ago, and no effort at beneficent legislation had since been made.

But the truth is that Ireland has received more than her full share of legislative attention. The religious difficulty was made a *casus belli* between Irish M.P.s and every Government; they declared that justice would never be done to Ireland until the Church was disestablished. At last, the gigantic work was undertaken and completed by Mr. Gladstone. The religious grievance swept away discovered a land grievance behind it; that in turn was dealt with in the interests of justice to Ireland and peace. And then came the education question, over which there was just as much abuse heaped upon the British Government as if every Prime Minister in turn had been obstinately refusing to recognize the need for mending matters in the Emerald Isle.

As to Parliamentary representation, Ireland is better off than any other portion of Great Britain. With its five and a-half millions of population, it has 123 Members of Parliament; while Scotland, with its more than four and a-half millions of people—who are richer in every way than the Irish—have only 60 Members of Parliament. The rateable value of Kensington, a part of the city of London, is several times larger than that of all Ireland; but the whole city of London has only 22 Members of Parliament. Instead of the Irish having a genuine grievance against England, all Great Britain has a grievance against Irish M.P.s. They not only secure the acceptance of any measures upon which they may decide, but are constantly exerting all their force of numbers and will to shape legislation which is purely English.

It speaks volumes for English generosity that such large sums of money are being lavished on most determined malcontents. Mr. Parnell vilifies the people and Parliament of England; speaks of his fellow-countrymen as if they were oppressed by a most grinding despotism, and declares that they will never rest until the grip of the tyrant is shaken; and all the time they are asking for a most generous charity. That charity is being granted from the private and public purse of England, as well as from the overflowing benevolence of America; but English charity must be deep-rooted in the soil of national life when it can grow and flourish notwithstanding the cold winds of Irish discontent.

EDITOR.