

them a part of the English character. 'Le fond du caractère Anglais,' says a recent French writer, 'c'est le manque d'honneur.' And when we calculate no only the negative but the positive effects of this want of honour, we may begin to see what is the price the English pay for the mistakes of his great men. It is not only that hours on hours of innocent enjoyment have been lost by generation after generation, but that a compensation has been sought in the poisonous excitement of money-getting. They laid a burden on English society which it has never been able to shake off, and this is the ground of the general complaint we may urge against them; but there was also a particular and definite injury which they inflicted on us and on our fathers: they invented the sin of Sabbath-breaking. They called a thing wrong, and persuaded others to treat a thing as wrong, which had been held to be right through the long ages of Christian antiquity, and is still held to be right throughout the whole of continental Europe. They proved it was wrong by arguments which would be ludicrous if they had not been so successful. However weak their logic may have been, the fact remains that they succeeded. They invented the sin, and they established it; they raised a new external standard by which men have ever since gone on judging, each other's grapes and figs; they have ruined thousands who have been thrown into despair by being told they have committed this sin, and embittered the lives of thousands more who are not quite sure they have avoided it. They invented the sin of Sabbath-breaking as certainly and as effectually as the priests of Egypt and India invented the sin of killing a cow. It is frightful to think how much these sins of human invention have cost mankind, and how much the world has suffered even from men as honest as the Puritans.

It is easy to understand that those who have felt the tyranny which the invention and establishment of this sin have imposed on the inhabitants of Great Britain, should have been anxious to meet their adversaries on their own ground, and have been willing to test the Sabbath controversy by an appeal to Scripture. Text was set against text, and deduction against deduction. Even here the Sabbatharians have really had no means of making a plausible case; they have had passages enough to adduce, as any one may have who asserts any proposition whatever relating to the conduct of human life: but if has been found practically impossible for them to maintain an argument throughout without constantly shifting their premises. Still, all attentive readers of the polemical writings which have been poured forth in such abundance on this painful subject, must perceive that no real issue can be arrived at by these parades of conflicting texts. Before we permit selections made at random from the Jewish law to be made stumbling-blocks in our path, we must ask what the Jewish law has to do with us, and how the writers of the Jewish canonical books came to write what they did? If we are referred to the second chapter of Genesis, in which God is said to have rested after the labors of creation, we must make up our minds whence was derived the shape assumed by the Mosaic cosmogony, before we attach much importance to one of its details. The only satisfactory way of treating the matter is, in our opinion, to treat it historically. If the victim of a Scotch Sunday could but know the history of the day on which he suffers, he would at any rate start with something like a conviction as to his future duty. Rejecting all form of controversy, let us attempt to state what has been the real chain of facts by which men have come to keep, and to make others keep, the Christian day of rest as Mahometans keep the fast of Ramadan. Alas! even this parallel is imperfect. When the evening gun sounds, the Mahometan is set at liberty, he may eat and drink and be merry; but when our Sunday is over, it is Monday morning, and the poor man has to begin again his week of grinding toil.

We will attempt to give a slight sketch of what seems to us the probable history of the Sabbath. Without such an historical outline, it is impossible to approach the Sunday question satisfactorily.

It is clear, we think, that the Puritan Sabbath took its rise in the study of the Old Testament prevalent at the beginning of the sixteenth century. But it was impossible that the Vulgate should have been long studied and the Decalogue repeated as a summary of duty, without persons being found from time to time who mixed up Jewish with Christian notions. Almost as soon as Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire, the arm of the secular power was called in to enforce the observance of the Lord's Day. There was no attempt made to imitate the Jewish Sabbath, but there is undoubtedly a wide difference of feeling between the spirit which led St. Paul to leave the matter entirely to the conscience of each individual, and that which induced the promulgation of the imperial edicts. Constantine ordered that on the first day of the week all town occupations should cease, but that agricultural labors should be carried on (Cod. iii., 12, 3); and a century and a half later Leo, in addition, forbade the exhibition on that day of theatrical and other spectacles. St. Augustine is, as far as we know, the first of the great writers of Christendom in whose writings there is a distinct trace of Sabbatarianism. He hints, but does not state explicitly, that the transference of the obligation to keep a Sabbath from the seventh to the first day had already become a part of the teaching of the Church; and he himself entreats his fellow-Christians to keep the Sabbath (Aug. Op. x., 397). The Council of Laodicea stated that the observance of the Lord's Day was of Divine appointment, and commanded that there should be on it a suspension of temporal employments and pursuits. The Schoolmen, beginning with Thomas Aquinas, taught that the fourth commandment was ceremonial in so far as it prescribed the observance of the seventh day, but moral in so far as it prescribed the observance of some particular day. And Tostatus,

an eminent Spanish canonist of the fifteenth century, decides in his Commentary on Exodus that 'to travel on holy days in which Sunday is included, to read even theological books, to play for one's amusement on musical instruments, to write letters on ordinary business, are unlawful.' There certainly was a growing tendency in the writers of the Roman Church to desire that not only the Lord's Day, but the Christian holidays should be kept like Jewish Sabbaths, and possibly this feeling might have extended much further, if it had not been checked by the reaction springing from the Puritan movement. But we are not aware that it actually modified the habits or colored the popular opinions of Catholic countries; still less can we account for the Puritan Sabbath by the writings of the Schoolmen. The Puritans found their Sabbath in the Old Testament. Even in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, Erasmus (Ep. 207) observed with regret the tendency towards Judaism awakened and fostered by the study of Hebrew literature, under the auspices of Reuchlin, and had foretold the dangerous consequences to Christian liberty that might result from it. What could be more natural than that the study of the Old Testament should powerfully affect the minds of men to whom the contrast between the Canonical Scriptures and Judaism was the one all-important discovery of their lives and of the age they lived in. Especially where there was no education, no critical power, no extensive knowledge of the succession of great historical events, it cannot be wondered that men who thought the whole Bible literally inspired should cling to the doctrine of the Old Testament as peculiarly congenial to their manners and their moral tastes. To the educated of the present day the Old Testament has long settled into its proper place as a part of universal history, a prelude to Christianity. But give the rude and ignorant the Bible as a whole, with all its parts co-ordinate and co-existent authority, and what are they to make of it? Why should they refrain from seizing on the portions most adapted to their taste? A Chinese or a South Sea Islander, on opening the volume he is commanded to read, finds the Almighty represented as enjoining a human sacrifice, or commanding a prophet to commit adultery, and finds all the early saints indulging freely in polygamy. Even in the nineteenth century and in Christian countries, Mormonism, avowedly based on the Old Testament, has grown and flourished. The higher classes and the men of learning resisted the Puritanism of Great Britain: it was a purely popular movement, and received its impulse from the un instructed study of the Old Testament.

In Scotland the observance of a Jewish Sabbath was not of home growth. Knox, like the Geneva divines, while rejecting the keeping of holy days, retained the use of Sunday as a day appropriated to religious exercises and rest; but he does not appear to have prohibited recreation, or to have confused Sunday with the Sabbath. The doctrine of the Sabbath was imported from England about the close of the sixteenth century, and as the rigor of Scotch Puritanism had by that time greatly increased, an innovation which was so much akin to the Puritan spirit, found a ready acceptance north of the Tweed. The different bodies of spiritual governors immediately set to work, driving people to church, fining them, imprisoning them, and bewildering them with petty regulations, until, finally, they had cut off all liberty of action. Several collections of the ordinances of the Kirk sessions have been published recently, and there we have the whole record of this mournful but ludicrous history. There are scarcely any contemporary documents which equally set before us the life of the quiet homely citizen of the day, or show more clearly under what a frightful spiritual bondage he was gradually falling. All games were strictly prohibited. One man is set at the pillars for playing at bowls on the Sabbath, another is fined twenty shillings for playing at football. Salmon fishers gave especial trouble; some resolute sportsmen even bade defiance to the elders of the Kirk, and fished in spite of them. But generally, their tyranny was only too successful. We read of an unfortunate widow having to pay eight marks for having spits and roasts at the fire in time of sermon. Even peaceful exercise, and walking in the fresh air, was rigorously put down. 'Vaging' in the streets, or a stroll to Castlehill, was punished with imprisonment. An unhappy sinner named David Dugall was censured for going to Cramond on the Lord's Day morning with shoes, and was obliged to find surety against a repetition of the offence. The magistrates and their spiritual rulers were to see that the ordinances of the Sessions were executed, and it was directed that they shall go up and down the streets upon the Lord's Day, after the afternoon sermon, and cause take particular notice of such as shall be found forth of their houses, vaging upon the streets, and cause cite them before the session, to be rebuked and censured. The climax of folly and tyranny was, perhaps, reached by the Edinburgh Sessions, who ordered, April 5, 1658, that 'the magistrates is to cause some English soldiers go along the streets, and those outparts above written, both before sermon and after sermon, lay hold both upon young and old, whom they find out of their house or out of the church.'

In England also a considerable period elapsed between the Reformation and the institution of a Jewish Sabbath. Cranmer taught, as explicitly as Luther and Calvin, that we Christian men are not bound to the commandments of Moses' law concerning differences of times, days, and meats; and in his Visitation Articles he required the clergy to teach the people that they should grievously offend God if they abstained from working on Sundays in harvest-time; and by a statute of Edward VI. (5 & 6, c. 3) in the preamble of which it is recited that the observance of all religious festivals is left in the discretion of the Church, all persons are allowed, in case of need, to work, ride, or follow their calling on the Lord's Day. In the reign of Elizabeth, plays were performed on Sunday at Court, and Strype tells us that Aylmer, made Bishop of London in 1576, used to play at bowls on the Lord's Day. But the Puritans became strong enough, towards the end of the century, to make their wishes respected, even by Elizabeth. In 1581, the magistrates obtained from the Privy Council a prohibition against the acting of plays and interludes within the liberties of the City. Immediately after his accession, James I. issued a proclamation against indulgence on Sundays, in unlawful exercises and pastimes, such as bull-baiting and bear-baiting. Subsequently he attempted to make a stand against Puritan asceticism, and in 1618 published the celebrated 'Book of Sports,' in which he declared it to be his pleasure that the people should not be debarred, after morning service on Sunday, from such recreations as

dancing, archery, leaping, May games, and morrice-dances. In the early part of the reign of Charles I. an Act was passed, to the same effect as the proclamation of James I. against unlawful recreations, and another prohibiting carriers from travelling on Sundays. Charles I. like his father, tried to make a subsequent stand against Puritanism, and in 1633 received the 'Book of Sports;' but Puritanism was not to be put down by a king giving his subjects leave to dance; it soon had its own way, and laid down Sabbath regulations almost as tyrannous and foolish as those which had proceeded from the Kirk Sessions of Scotland. Even after the Restoration, and after that pattern of pious abstinence, Charles II., had reigned for a quarter of a century, the feeling of the country was still so substantially Puritan, that the Lord's Day Act was passed, which still regulates the English Sunday. By this Act every one pursuing his ordinary calling on Sunday is liable to a fine of five shillings, or, in default of payment, to be put in the stocks. Subsequent legislation has done little to add to, or vary this statute. A few acts have been passed to exempt particular trades from its provisions, and a statute of the date of George I. prohibits the opening on Sunday of places of amusement, and of public debate. During the eighteenth century, the Act of Charles II. received its construction from the Courts of Law, and the construction they gave was on the whole a liberal one. In the latter half of the century, general religious laxity had indeed a very careless observance of Sunday, and fresh attempts were made to procure parliamentary enactments for enforcing it rigidly. In 1794 and 1795 two bills for the purpose were brought into the House of Commons, but without success. How lax Sunday observance then was, may be judged by the speech of a supporter of the second Bill, who said that 'in the present year the building of great edifices is carried on openly, and in defiance of decency, on Sunday.' Fear of the French Revolution, the institution of Sunday schools, and the influence of the Evangelical party, combined to make the observance of the Sunday more strict in recent years; and modern Puritanism was at one period so strong, that it nearly procured the success of Sir Andrew Agnew's stringent Sabbath Bill of 1837. The first reading was carried by a majority of 146, and the second by a majority of 44. Public agitation and the prospect of a dissolution, which the state of the King's health rendered probable, made the House of Commons as afraid of their constituents as they have shown themselves in 1856. Fortunately, the bill could not be carried through all its stages before the King died. Parliament was dissolved, and Sir Andrew Agnew lost his seat.

(To be continued.)

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

The Tipperary Vindicator gives the following particulars of the reconciliation of the Rev. Mr. Crotty; whose apostasy some time ago caused such deep scandal:—"We subjoin," says the Vindicator "the following important and gratifying document. It has been written by the Rev. Michael Crotty, formerly of Birr, and whose schism which began in that parish so long ago as the year 1826, caused ruin to so many—the greatest scandal to religion—and universal anguish. With the origin and cause of that most unhappy schism, and with the wide-spread, disastrous consequences that resulted from it, many of our readers are well acquainted. We need not, therefore, enter into a detail of them. It was caught at with avidity by the enemies of the Catholic faith in every part of the empire. It was fomented by them—the Reverend Michael Crotty was encouraged and sustained in his course of rebellion by their co-operation—erected a conventicle of proselytism in the parish of which he had been the Catholic Pastor—and until within the last few months, when, touched by remorse and actuated by impulses of grace which he could not resist, he placed himself under the care of one of the Religious Orders in Dublin, and the result is told in language that cannot fail to be read with the deepest emotion in the letter we are authorised by his Lordship to publish. We may add, that the reading of the letter afforded unbounded satisfaction to all the Clergy present, and that the people were rejoiced when informed of its contents. The following is the letter:—

"Dublin, April 25th, 1856.

"My Lord—It may surprise your Lordship to receive a communication from me. It was my desire to wait on your Lordship, and throw myself at your feet, and implore that mercy and pardon of which I acknowledge myself unworthy, but which, I trust, will not be denied me at the eleventh hour. Circumstances are opposed to the completion of that desire, and I am compelled to approach you thus. Yet I entreat your Lordship to consider me as at your feet, one of the most unworthy Priests; but also one of the most sincere penitents that has ever knelt before your Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am not worthy to be called Thy son. Deep, indeed, has been my guilt—deep also is my contrition, and I hope, while life remains, to prove it sincere. 'The hand of the Lord hath touched me.' Yes, oh! offended Majesty! 'It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me.' Thou hast done it in Thy mercy to save me from perdition, and I am grateful for it. I kiss the rod, and adore Thy paternal hand. My Lord, I will not now say much, because I mean to act. Professions are useless where intentions are sincere. My object in addressing your Lordship is to make in some degree a reparation for the immense amount of scandal I have given. 'Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' I devote myself henceforth to repair the scandal I have given, in the hope that mercy may be extended to me. 'I entreat of your Lordship to publish, when you deem it prudent, this heartfelt expression of my sorrow, as some atonement of my apostasy, and as a proof of my sincere desire to be reconciled with your Lordship, and to be received again into the bosom of that Holy Roman Catholic Church, which I have offended and scandalised, but which, like a kind parent, will not spurn nor reject its repentant though unworthy child. 'With the most profound respect, I have the honor to subscribe myself, my Lord, your obedient, but unworthy servant,

MICHAEL CROTTY.

To the Right Rev. Dr. Vaughan."

It is said that the Rev. Michael Crotty is at present in Birr, giving the best example in reparation of the scandals of his former life. The Synod was then for-

mally proceeded with, and the proceedings, which were confined to the Bishops and Clergy, were concluded in two or three hours. The Curates of the diocese went into Retreat in the afternoon. The Right Reverend Dr. Ryan conducted the Retreat. Tipperary Vindicator.

Sir Thomas Redington has given twenty acres of land rent free to the Sisters of Charity at Kilcorran. Mrs. Redington, his mother, gave nearly £6,000 towards the convent. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd Convent most gratefully acknowledge the receipt of £5 from the Duchess of Norfolk towards the building.—Limerick Reporter.

SMITH O'BRIEN.—Already arise the sounds of welcome to greet the return of William Smith O'Brien to his native land. A meeting of Irishmen in London was held on last Sunday, for the purpose of inviting him to a banquet and presenting him with an address, and a resolution to that purpose was carried unanimously. "We are glad to find the warmth with which the case of our exiles was taken up in the Canadian parliament at a time when hope had almost died out in this country. But Irish blood and Irish sentiment are now everywhere, and those brave descendants of gallant Frenchmen too who voted for the motion, and defeated the endeavour of the government, know how to sympathise with men who strive for freedom.—Nelson.

The Munster News states that a strong popular desire exists in Clare, to return Mr. W. Smith O'Brien as a member of Parliament at the next opportunity.

THE PEACE ILLUMINATIONS.—On Thursday evening, (24th of May,) the public buildings of Dublin were illuminated, for the purpose, as well as we can gather, of commemorating at once the Queen's birthday and the peace so very glorious and satisfactory to England. A few private buildings too had crowns and stars and initial letters blazing away in front. The magnificent establishment of his Excellency's night-cap maker was positively dazzling, while the residence of his sole bootlace manufacturer resembled Mount Vesuvius. A pretty effect was created from time to time by the failure of the gas jet of some of the letters, or their being blown out by the wind, puzzling the wits out of the promenaders in the vain endeavour to make any recognised word out of the remaining visible letters. An immense crowd was congregated in the Phoenix Park, looking at the fireworks, which at intervals shot brightly up to the sky making the stars seem to hide their diminished heads. But only for a little time! When all was done they looked down and smiled at the drifting smoke, and the crowd that must pass from beneath them too, only a little more slowly.

FARMERS PROSPERITY.—A western paper (the Mayo Constitution) says—"When war's alarm ceased to be sounded, and for the clash of arms were exchanged the cooings of peace, ending in a national thanksgiving, farmers were frightened from their property, and a reign of "croaking" commenced which has not had long existence. The general cry was "cattle will sell for nothing, farmers are ruined, there will be no demand," and the usual amount of ill-reboding prognostications which are consequent on any great political or social revolution. But, extraordinary to relate, the prices of May, 1856, are just as brisk, and the demand much greater than in May, 1855, and this notwithstanding the depression of the corn markets—with potatoes and all other agricultural products a drug; still, prices are steadily advancing, and each succeeding fair indicates further advances. We have been informed by extensive farmers that not only cattle in condition are in demand at full prices, but also young stock, while sheep are unexpectedly much looked after, which may be accounted for by the present prices of wool, which range from 20s. to 22s. per stone. As for pigs, they have not been so dear for many years past, which is chiefly owing to the transit of stores by steamer from Westport and Sligo, and the abundance of potatoes in the country."

EXTRAORDINARY SCENE IN CLIFDEN.—On Thursday this hitherto quiet and peaceable town was thrown into the greatest state of excitement. It being a day of very particular devotion in the Catholic Church, the congregation were there assembled, and as they were returning therefrom and quite adjacent thereto, on the public street was placed the Rev. H. D'Arcy, J.P., having as his companion the Rev. W. H. Burke, formerly a Priest, intercepting the public, preaching to or rather haranguing the Catholics as they were returning home, and endeavouring to excite by finding fault with their religion. A posse of the constabulary was on the spot. The Parsons continued there for a considerable time, but his Reverend worship, finding his auditory both inattentive and most unruly, he, of necessity, shifted his stand to the square, to which place he was escorted by the police, amid the hooting and groans of the thousands, who by this time had assembled. At this juncture the Very Rev. P. M. Manus, P.P., was returning from the chapel to the residence of his colleague, the Rev. E. King; as he approached the crowd the feeling at once was changed; much cheering, and hats and caps filled the air. The Rev. Parish Priest, perceiving the excited state of the populace, advised them to depart. When the Parsons, feeling their security rather uncertain, were abandoning the police and approaching the Priest, it is thought for refuge; and he, knowing their perilous position, mounted an eminence and besought the people to go with him to the chapel, it being the surest way to divert their attention. This being done, the Parsons were "left all alone in their glory" and their game lost. The inhabitants of the town, feeling indignant at the conduct of the Rev. Mr. D'Arcy, held a public meeting in the chapel in the afternoon, for the purpose of calling the attention of the government to it. Amongst those present in the vicinity of the chair were Messrs. M. R. Hart, vice-chairman; and R. Joyce, D.V.C., Clifden Board of Guardians; John King, P.L.G.; Anthony Gorham, P.L.G.; Michael Lyden, Michael Joyce, Wm. Faherty, Peter Joyce, Patrick Joyce, Anthony Mullin, James Flanigan, &c. On the motion of Mr. M. Lyden, seconded by acclamation, the Very Rev. P. M. Manus was called to the chair. John King, Esq., was requested to act as secretary. Spirited resolutions were passed, and a committee composed of the chairman, Messrs. M. R. Hart, R. Joyce, John King, Peter Joyce, and James Flanigan, were appointed to draw up a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, praying his Excellency to remove the Rev. Mr. D'Arcy from the commission of the peace. Mr. R. Hart, Esq., was called to the second chair; and the thanks of the meeting having been given to the first chairman, the meeting separated.—Correspondent of the Galway Vindicator.