

From "The Tablet & Catholic Journal"

IRELAND.

We were obliged last week to declare, that we found ourselves utterly at fault in our attempts to discover the real principles upon which Ireland was governed. Since then the clouds that lowered over her political horizon have begun partially to clear away. Her prospects, so far as the administration of her affairs is concerned, are gradually assuming a favourable appearance. The struggles for the revival of Orange ascendancy, which were vigorously commenced the moment Lord de Grey landed on her shores, and which at once neutralized all the generous intentions by which, we believe, he was actuated when he first undertook the arduous task confided to his care, may now be said to have failed. His resignation is a decided symptom of that failure. This is one fact upon which we may rest secure; a most important, a most cheering occurrence it is; and even if there were no other to re-animate our hopes of better fortunes being in store for that country, we should place great reliance upon this most significant passage in her history for the present year.

But other transactions have also taken place, pregnant with auspicious auguries. Sir Robert Peel and Mr. O'Connell have been found voting together upon a question most intimately connected with the interests and views of the Orange party; and the latter were left in a decided minority. Further, the Premier declared that he would lend no assistance to that party in their operations carried on for the purpose of concealing their own evil deeds, and of protecting one of their members from the consequences of his own acts. This declaration, moreover, was made with reference to a person who holds, or at least did then hold, an important though subordinate station in his government. It is manifest, therefore, that the Orange faction have no longer any thing to expect from Sir Robert Peel. He has completely thrown them overboard.

But though not much spoken of as yet, another very material piece of intelligence has come to light, of the truth of which we have no reason to doubt; namely, that a most positive order has been transmitted from Whitehall to the Castle, directing that in future no appointment to any office at the disposal of the Irish government should be made without the previous sanction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. This is, in every point of view, an excellent measure. It strips the members of the faction who have got possession of the chambers of the Castle of their absolute power. It is very well understood that nominations to all appointments in Ireland, those only excepted which are of the highest rank, either originate with the inferior officers of that establishment, or are materially influenced by those individuals. The intrigues, therefore, the whispers, the suggestions, the schemes, of the Orange clique within or without the walls of that venerable building are no longer to be made available to their exclusive and injurious policy. They are hence to be placed under the strict surveillance of

Downing-street—that is to say, not so much of Sir James Graham, as of the Prime Minister himself.

But the issuing of this order has a further aspect, which is still more important than its immediate result. It is the first step, as we surmise, towards the abolition of the vice-royalty in Ireland. Hitherto the Lord Lieutenant exercised the power of direct nomination to all subordinate offices in that country. He very rarely consulted the Home-office upon the exercise of his functions in this respect; his appointments were never overruled. The patronage of the whole constabulary force is vested in him by law; so also, we believe, is the power of appointment to many other posts connected with his administration. The new order is so manifestly inconsistent with this state of things, that the lieutenancy becomes at once a mere superfluous office. The affairs connected with the immediate government of the country are principally carried on by the under-secretary and his confidential legal adviser. It is the principal business of the chief secretary to attend to any new measures which the cabinet may devise of its own motion, or adopt upon his suggestion.

In the enumeration of the new signs of the times, to which the unexpected alliance established between Sir Robert Peel and Mr. O'Connell against the Orange faction has given birth, let us not omit the treatment which Lord Stanley's meditated Irish registration bill has received. Need we recall to the remembrance of the reader the infamous character of that measure—the base, the un-English, the underhand, the pettifogging, low-attorney cunning by which that bill was intended to counteract all the beneficial effects which the Reform statute bestowed, or at least was meant to bestow upon Ireland? Need we repeat the denunciations of extinguishable hatred which that foul system of registration hurled against the Catholic people of Ireland—the open war it declared against the Act of Emancipation—the no-Popery cry with which it was hailed in the House of Commons, and the organs of the Orange press throughout the country?

STATE OF PARTIES.

A distinguished author, whose name we shall not for the present mention, expressing upon paper towards the close of last autumn his sentiments upon public affairs, after enumerating what then appeared to him to be the "signs of the times," came to the conclusion that, in his judgment, "a new era was at hand." He gave full credit to the declaration previously made by Sir Robert Peel, that, should he ever return to office, he would stand "by the fair and honest execution" of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. These are the words of the present premier, to which the author then referred:—"Even if the avowal of my opinions, and the declaration of the principles on which I would act with respect to the poor-law, with respect to the relief bill, and with respect to their fair and honest execution, should lead to the painful results of a diminution of confidence in my friends and supporters, then I

frankly declare, that, however painful that would be, I should prefer it to the purchasing the continuance of that support by withholding my opinions, or by my acquiescence in doctrines which I really repudiate."

The passage just quoted prompted the author to whom we allude to proceed as follows:—"It is fair to calculate that they who survive a long political struggle may come out of it very different from what they were when they went in. They may have lost in prejudice, and may have gained in experience. * * * I will not believe that any statesman who has been in the habit of fixing his attention upon the great and varied scenes of European politics for the last thirty years,—whose mind is sufficiently enlarged to comprehend the advantages of good government, and to estimate the dangers of bad,—and who is daily impressed with the immense importance of the station to which Providence has raised him,—I will not believe that he will be found wanting in the noble charge now entrusted to him, of regenerating a whole people, of annihilating those party feuds, and of enlarging those narrow views by which our legislation has been so fatally distinguished for so many years; which cripple the power of the country; undermine her resources; leave her a prey to internal divisions; abandon such large sections of her population to poverty and vice, and to the sport of cunning and malignant men; which expose her as a paradox before the moralist and the philosopher,—puzzling the moralist to discover under what influences peace and virtue may prosper, and tempting the philosopher to consider whether the most rational degree of liberty has any advantage over despotism, and whether the one or the other is capable of conferring any real blessings upon mankind. If Sir Robert Peel will but survey the scene before him from those heights of power from which he now commands, and will rise superior to all those jarring and petty interests which may still endeavour to weigh him down, and fix him within the confined sphere to which he, and those who have gone before him, have been so long condemned, his name will be for ever associated with the noblest achievements of a statesman, and he will not only enjoy the envied gratification of healing a suffering people, but of leaving, under the auspices of a generous and benignant sovereign, a happy, prosperous, and united empire, as a blessed and invaluable legacy to his successors."

BISHOP HUGHES.

The case of the Right Reverend Doctor Hughes, and the infamous junta of Gibraltar, had been heard before the judicial committee of the Privy Council, on an appeal of the Right Reverend Prelate, from the decision of the Supreme Court of Gibraltar. Judgment was given in favour of the appellant—thus reversing the decision of the court, and annulling the authority claimed by the junta.—*N. York Freeman's Journal.*

INFALLIBILITY.

The following communication on the nature and power of infallibility, we cut from our talented contemporary of New York, to whom it has been addressed by way of inquiry on the subject, in connexion with Protestant Catholicism. The writer hoped for clear views of doctrine from the Editor on the subject, but Infallibility, like the Real Presence, is a subject better calculated to manifest the learning and eloquence of the Churchman, than to elicit clearness and distinctness of views. A long editorial is given, but "W." is happier and brighter than we, if he can collect the Sybelline leaves. The first and last sentence seem to bear upon the point—in the first the Editor says what Infallibility is not.—*Cath. Herald.*

"The word *infallible* is sometimes used as if it implied the arbitrary right of the Church, or of particular portions of it, to say and do whatever it pleased. In this sense we have always disclaimed the word; and have seldom used it without a caution against any such construction of its meaning.

"When our Lord gave his commission to his apostles, he promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world. The promise was given not to one only, but to all the apostles; and it is our warrant for believing that the whole Church will never be permitted to fall from the faith of Christ."

However, after a good deal of matter in no wise relating to the question suggested by "W.," he concludes in words a little startling to those who glory in the liberty of the Spirit, and the true Protestant principle of the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible.

"From all which we conclude, that the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, do not rest upon the principle of private judgment, but on the principle of infallibility; in other words, that their members are not left like Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, Quakers, and Socinians, to take the Scriptures as they may chance to be explained by private individuals or modern confessions, but required to receive them in the sense given to them by the creeds of the Catholic Church."

From the Churchman.

"PROTESTANT INFALLIBILITY."

Mr. Editor,—The writer of this is an unlearned layman, but a sincere inquirer after truth. He resides in the country, and is very uniform in his attendance at the 'Protestant Episcopal Church' in his vicinity, the pastor of which, although a short man, is a very tall Churchman, and withal a man of simple and self-denying habits, of gifted intellect—and when he confines himself to what the writer has been accustomed to regard as the essential doctrines of Christianity, gives some of the best and soundest sermons I have ever listened to. With this gentleman I have held repeated arguments in relation to the claims that are very distinctly advanced, as I understand them, for the 'infallibility' of the Church. I use the term 'infallibility' as best expressing my meaning, and as best describing the distinction claimed for the 'Protestant Episcopal