

Reviews.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, April 1851: New York, Scott & Co.: Toronto, Mcleear.

We have been prevented by the large space which the reports of the important meetings held in this city occupied in our last publication, from then noticing the present number of this Magazine, and now we must notice it summarily to make sure of an extract we would like to give. Southey's memoir is continued and will be read with interest, "My Novel" and some extracts from "Modern State Trials" will repay perusal, but the most interesting article in the present number is that entitled "The latter days of the Free Trade Ministry," in which the political manœuvring of the Russell Cabinet during the late ministerial interregnum is exposed with admirable effect. From this portion of the article, we pass to that which concerns ourselves, equally with our brethren in England. The future prospects of the country, and the future duty of the people, as stated in respect of Great Britain, are equally applicable to ourselves.

"It is now the duty of every one to prepare most seriously for the coming contest.—In all human probability the existence of the present Parliament, as well as of the present Ministry, is drawing rapidly to its close. The ensuing autumn may not pass over—nay, probably will not—without the occurrence of a general election; and upon the result of that election depend in a great measure the future destinies of the country. The results of that change of policy which was effected by Sir Robert Peel were necessarily slow in their development, and could not be ascertained except by the aid of considerable experience. They are now before the country—although not yet to their full extent, for the depression of native industry, and the decline of the home trade, have gradually but surely been progressing; and the continuance of the experiment for another year would certainly demonstrate, yet more fully and forcibly, the havoc and ruin which Free Trade, in an old, densely-peopled, and burdened state like our own, must inevitably carry in its train. This much at least has been proved, that the agricultural interest cannot be possibly stand against the accumulated and increasing influx of grain and provisions from all quarters of the world. That position, however much it may have been contested eighteen months or a year ago, is now universally admitted. The advocates of free trade in foreign corn have been found wrong in every one of their calculations. Whether we assume, with Sir Robert Peel, that 56s. per quarter is the proper remunerative price of wheat in this country on the average, or take Mr. Wilson of the *Economist's* lower estimate, and fix it at 52s. 2d., it is perfectly apparent that the land of Great Britain cannot continue in cultivation as formerly, under a system of foreign importation which forces the averages of wheat down to 38s."

Again says Blackwood:—

"It is now for the nation at large to say whether—considering the magnitude and importance of this fundamental error, and the very disastrous consequences which have resulted from it—it is neither just nor prudent to persevere until we have reached the extremity, and annihilated or expatriated from Great Britain a large class of agriculturists, upon whose prosperity that of the home manufacturers of the nation is admitted in a great degree to depend. It is now established by experience, extending over two successive harvests of different quality and zeal, that prices cannot be maintained against the influx of foreign importation. All kinds of agricultural produce are similarly affected—the provision as well as the grain market—so that no change of husbandry can avail to recompense the farmer. It is also established that the importations may be increased to almost any amount, and that they do, at the present time, exceed fivefold the estimated quantity. From these positive ascertained facts we may safely arrive at an inference as to the possibility of maintaining in cultivation the greater portion of the soil of Britain. Let us see how this stands.

We shall take Sir Robert Peel's estimate of the remunerative price of wheat, upon the average of years, at 56s. per quarter.

Good wheat land, in high cultivation, will return 32 bushels, or four quarters per acre, which at the above price—the lowest remunerative one, be it remarked,—would fetch £11 4s.

At the present average prices, the return of the same amount of produce per acre would fetch only £7 12s.; being a loss to the agriculturist of £3 12s. per acre!"

We will give one more extract:—

"Hitherto we have spoken as if the agricultural interest could be considered apart from the other interests of the community. It is not our fault if we are forced to discuss it in this light—it is the fault of the men who have promulgated the false and unnatural doctrine, that one branch of native industry can be struck down and annihilated, without any distinct injury being inflicted on the others. The truth is, that Free Trade has not only prostrated the agriculturists, but has carried its desolating effects into the heart of every large town in the empire. The artisans, who are large consumers

of taxed articles, and who therefore contribute greatly to the national revenue, find themselves undersold and supplanted by the influx of foreign manufactured goods which have poured into this country in a perpetual stream, ever since Sir Robert Peel ventured to make his most dangerous experiment on the tariff. Native industry of every kind, and in every shape, has been assailed. The exporting trades alone have profited by the change; and even their advantage has fallen miserably short of that which they so confidently anticipated. The reason is perfectly plain. The stimulus which was given to foreign manufactures by our total abandonment of the protective system, has had the effect of creating rivals to our manufacturers in markets of which we expected to retain the monopoly, and at the present moment our merchants are engaged in a desperate but fruitless struggle to maintain that monopoly, by underselling their competitors at any cost. It is evident that they cannot continue that struggle long. Free access to the British market has given to foreign states a power which they never possessed before; and not content with supplanting our artisans at home, they never will rest satisfied until they can meet the Manchester manufacturers, on equal terms at those very outposts of commerce which the latter have long as their own particular preserve. In the mean time, our native artisans, whose sole dependence is on the home market, are thrown out of work. Our shops are filled with foreign articles ticketed at a price which appears to defy competition. Unskilled labour is driven from the country into the towns, is hired at famine wages to do the work of the taskmaster; and the handicraftsman, without knowing why, finds his wages weekly dwindling, under the operation of a system which professes to secure for him and his class comforts which were hitherto unknown."

THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW, April 1851; New York, Scott & Co.: Toronto, T. Mcleear.

The number of this Review for the past quarter has just come to hand. Its contents are varied. We have read with great pleasure "Recent campaigns in India," as embodied in the Reviewers notice of "A year in the Punjab," by Major Edwards, and "The second Sikh War," by Mr. Thackwell. We shall pass over "Mathematical Literature," "Revolution and counter Revolution" and other papers to the "Ministerial Crisis," in which we find an acknowledgment that we little expected to meet in the pages of this very ultra-liberal journal. A candid admission that the *demagogues* who have so long marred the prosperity of the British Empire have lost their power. That the people have discovered the humbug of their agitation and that the sacred sense of the middle classes is likely henceforth to sustain, not to oppose the upper classes.

"Perhaps," says the writer, "at no period of English history, have the mass of the people been less under the influence of dangerous leaders. We believe there is not one of that class that has at present any power of importance, and it is of great moment to the stability of our institutions, that before the next time of political activity arrives, the middle classes should have deserved and won the confidence of the working men. That universal sentiment of progress that we have alluded to, may be cast into almost any mould. Proportioned to the amount of education and of good feeling subsisting between different ranks of the community, it assumes an innocent or a dangerous form. A really patriotic and intelligent middle class, may enlist the working classes as champions of order, while a selfish middle class that neglects its duties, may drive them to the wildest anarchy. Democracy is everywhere growing into power, and whether it be Christian democracy building up a 'fabric of felicity, by the hands of reason and of law,' or un-Christian democracy unable to build anything, but able to shatter fearfully and destroy, depend mainly upon the middle classes of many countries to determine. In these days of money power, the middle class, where it is well developed, is chiefly responsible for the peaceful progress of the country, because it has the ability to secure it, and whatever may be our fears for France or Germany, we can have no doubts for England."

Romish aggression also gets a postscript blow. It seems that there has been an attempt lately to assimilate the English system of national education, with the Irish to conciliate Popery in the English manufacturing districts, and the writer thus proceeds:

"The Committee of Council now vote grants to Roman Catholic schools, without any stipulation that the Bible or extracts from the Bible shall be read in them, and with the perfect knowledge that such reading would not be permitted. They have even advanced a step farther. The Committee of Council have given their approval to a form of trust deed for Roman Catholic schools, in which the subject of religious instruction is disposed of by the following management clause:—

"In case a difference shall arise between the said priest or priests, or any of the said committee of management, hereinafter mentioned, respecting the religious instruction of the scholars, or any regulation connected therewith, the said priest or priests, or any member of the said committee of management, may cause a statement in writing of the matter in difference to be laid before the Roman Catholic Bishop for the

time being of the said district, or other ecclesiastical division—and the said Bishop shall inquire and determine the matter in difference, and the decision of the said Bishop in writing thereon, when laid before the said committee of management, shall be final and conclusive upon the matter."

"The Papal Aggression Bill in its original state, as introduced by Lord John Russell, proposed to render it a penal offence for any Roman Catholic prelate to assume the title of *Dean, Bishop, or Archbishop* of any district or ecclesiastical division. Lord John Russell, as a member of the Committee of Council, is himself a party to the recognition of these titles; and what is of much more serious moment (for mere titles we regard with indifference), he is a party to the extension of the authority of Roman Catholic Bishops to schools built and supported with public money; an authority which they have never been allowed to hold or exercise in this country since the Reformation."

Commenting on this he says:—

"Of all forms of religious endowments, the most dangerous, because the most insidious, is that which permits chapels to be erected for juvenile communications, and called schools."

"If the reader would understand the present working of the system, we refer him to the second annual report of the (Roman) Catholic Poor-School Committee; the report of last year. In it he will find the grateful acknowledgments of the committee for government assistance, and the following passage:—

"Images of our blessed Lady were presented in 1849, to fifty-nine schools, and have been found eminently useful in exciting the devotional feelings of the children, and, as is believed, in obtaining blessings from on high, for the efforts of others in their regard!"

"That is to say, the Committee of Council having, in numerous cases, relieved the (Roman) Catholic Poor-School Committee from the necessity of paying their own teachers, and purchasing their own books and maps, the funds of the Society have been rendered available for the worship, by children, of the Virgin Mary."

Was this the intention of the Legislature?

"Roman Catholics are to be admitted; not under the clause which provides that 'the reading of the Holy Scriptures in the authorized version, shall be a part of the daily instruction of the scholars;' but under the clause which embraces 'all schools allowed by the Committee of Council to participate in the benefits of a parliamentary grant.' This is working under cover; and as very few persons are aware of the fact that the Committee of Council now assist schools in which a Madonna is substituted for the Bible, we suspect that many of the supporters of the bill are the unconscious victims of a little dexterous (we must not say altogether innocent,) educational diplomacy. That pious Churchmen and orthodox Dissenters should be willing to share in the management of funds raised by a school-rate we can readily believe; that they are equally willing to share it amicably with 'the Roman Catholic Bishop of the district, or ecclesiastical division,' is, in these times, open to very reasonable doubt. We put all parties on their guard."

"According to the reports of Mr. Marshall, the government inspector, the Roman Catholics of Manchester and Salford amount to 100,000; a population chiefly of the poorer class. Imagine the bill passed; what will happen? School committees will be organized by the priests for the whole of this population. These committees will claim their share of a school-rate, and, in the schools built with the proceeds, the adoration of the Virgin, and the duty in religious matters of surrendering mind and conscience to the keeping of the priest, will be among the first practical lessons! Is this the price which the rate-payers of Manchester are willing to pay for the privilege of clearing the streets of Irish vagrancy? Is this the precedent, which, if set up, the people of England will be prepared to follow?"

THE ALL-ABSORBING CHURCH OF ROME.

From the Witness.

Again and again it has been affirmed that the poverty and wretchedness of Ireland are to be traced to the misgovernment of Protestant England. But the London correspondent of the *Edinburgh Scotsman*, (universally regarded as a high authority in political crisis), in the issue of March 29th, affirms that "this poor and oppressed country is calculated to have raised, from death-bed bequests, for the support of the Church of Rome, and her institutions, the sum of £30,000,000 sterling, since the year 1800!" This enormous sum is the product of only one branch of her revenues, namely, death-bed bequests! He states also that the Irish (Roman) Catholics are apprehensive that a bill is to be introduced into Parliament to cut off this source of supply, and that the agitation which they are now stirring up is directed rather against it, than the present Penal Bill. Thirty millions in fifty years! This shows us the gulf into which the wealth of the country has been thrown. The Church of Rome has been the chief means of sucking the life-blood of unhappy Ireland; for if she has raised the above sum by this indirect source of revenue, we are entitled to conclude that she has raised far more from direct sources. And now, since they have reason to fear that they will be cut off from

this wealth by righteous and wise legislation, no wonder that Dr. Cahill and his confederates are very angry indeed.

THE FAITHFUL PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD A TEST OF A TRUE CHURCH.

(By the Rev. Hugh M'Neill.)

We are surrounded (and we are even now reminded of it by these unseasonable noises) by thousands of mortal and immortal creatures—dying men and women, who can never die; dying flesh and living spirits; every one of whom must pass an eternity of penetrating sensitiveness. One prevailing characteristic of the teeming population around us, not only in this great metropolis, but throughout the empire, and in all the world, is habitual indifference on the subject of eternity. There are, indeed, passing checks, spasms, paroxysms of natural conscience; but these can be soothed and flattered into silence, or at least into such weakness that they do not effectually disturb the current of carnal and worldly indulgence. The great enemy of mankind is compared to a strong man armed, keeping his goods in peace; his great design is to guard against any disturbance, on the subject of religion; and all falsehoods under the name of religion, aim at supplying certain temporal palliations, to meet the rising alarms of the human heart and persuade men to go quietly and contentedly without any vital change. In the expressive language of the prophets of Jehovah, they say, "Peace, peace," when indeed there is and ought to be no peace. The aim of Christianity is precisely the reverse. It is to improve upon the misgivings of natural conscience: to show that there is indeed cause for alarm; that even where there does not seem to be any outward wound, there is the inward working of a fatal mortification. It is to detect with infallible skill, trace with unflinching finger, and to expose with unhesitating faithfulness, the root of men's disease and death, in order that on the dark ground of the fearful portrait, it may present in all the lovely pre-eminence of light and life eternal, Jesus Christ, the sinner's substitute, the sinner's friend, the physician to heal, the keeper of the law, the endurer of the curse, the magnifier of the Lord God. Now, when this is done, and, by the grace and power of God attended in any instance with success—awakening the convictions of the heart, and bringing in consequence renewal of life and conversation—immediately some commotion begins. The new-born child of God, though still in the world; he can no longer lie quietly with the multitude, and pass without a movement towards heaven, and drop off the surface of the earth without a sigh. A resistance is presented, and, of course, the current is disturbed. Salvation is a counter current in this fallen world of ours. Whatever it is, in progress there must be a commotion, and so long as it is carried on, the commotion must continue; therefore, be not impatient of rest. "There remaineth a rest to the people of God," but now is the time for contention, and to "fight the good fight of faith." Do not hearken to those who would put an end to religious controversy under pretence of peace. They are not the friends of truth or of wisdom who would do so; for heavenly peace is first pure, and only truth is pure. We are bound to contend for the truth. I have said thus much to guard against the rising dissatisfaction in some pious minds against controversy. It is one of our most difficult, one of our most painful subjects, that while we find ourselves constrained to maintain a controversy for the truth, we have the mortification to find that some of our most affectionate, pious, devoted people are impatient of it. They have a sort of resentment against it; they would rather have peaceful and devotional subjects, and consider that controversy is inseparable from a bad spirit. Now, truly, my friends, it is not so. The apostles were controversialists, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself maintained controversy throughout his ministry with the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the Herodians, and others, who endeavoured to entangle him in his talk. The preaching of the word, the pure word of God, the testimony of Jesus, is a test of a Christian church. Now this brings us from the ministry of our Lord, and the ministry of their immediate successors, down to the present times of controversy. When we say the preaching of the word of God is a test of a true Christian church, we do not allege nor imply that it is the only test; but whatever other tests there may be, this is one. We read in the nineteenth article of our own Church "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinances, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." Here are two tests—the preaching of the pure word of God, and the due administration of the sacrament; and these two include comprehensively all that our reformers deemed necessary as the definition of the Christian Church. The preaching of the pure Word of God is so essential a test of a true Christian church, that where it ceases to be done, there ceases to be a Christian church, although there may still be a society which