

# Northwest Review.

Senate Reading Rm dec 7

"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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## The Irish Situation.

Catholic Times.

THE Parliamentary session has not progressed far without bringing before the people of this country the eternally recurring fact pithily described in Mr. Gladstone's four words, "Ireland blocks the way"—a fact which, were it not for prejudice and partisanship, would be regarded by the people of Great Britain as an invincible argument for Home Rule. At the present moment there are a very great number of questions, both domestic and foreign, which pressingly claim the attention of our legislators, but so long as Irishmen are refused the right of managing their own affairs the attention of the Parliament will be very largely occupied by Irish affairs. It is true that there have been many efforts to remove Irish grievances and the work of providing remedies is continued; but, one after another, the reforms fail because they are never undertaken in a thorough spirit. Of late the isolation of Great Britain has been brought home to people's minds in a very remarkable way. In the days of Lord Beaconsfield, whatever may have been the practical effects of his policy, there could be no doubt that he maintained the prestige of the Empire at a high point. The voice of Great Britain was uttered with no uncertain sound at the counsels of European Statesmen, and its influence in the arrangement of international affairs was universally recognised. So great has been the change since then, even by the admission of supporters of the Government themselves, that it might almost be said there is no nation so poor as to do Great Britain reverence. Russia and Germany slice out for themselves portions of China, apparently without taking thought or account of the British Government. Under these circumstances men who are zealous for the national honour and renown have through the Press been insisting on the necessity of securing powerful allies in the face of possible danger, and the importance of cultivating relations of the closest friendship with the United States has been strongly advocated. But it seems to be forgotten that the electoral power of the Irish is a dominant factor in the politics of the United States, and that so long as they are antagonistic to this country but little confidence will prevail between Great Britain and the great republic of the West.

Whilst the conservatives are keenly alive to the advantages resulting from ties of interest and sympathy with the United States, they are pursuing a course which decidedly tends to prevent those ties from becoming solid and enduring, inasmuch as it can scarcely fail to arouse distrust and hostility amongst the Irish in the United States. The Government had in hand a Bill providing for the Establishment of local administrative authorities; but whilst undertaking what professes to be an ameliorative measure, it gives painful evidence of its indifference or its incapacity in respect to the task of meeting Irish wants. The inhabitants of the poorest districts are allowed to suffer starvation, and when at last action in their behalf is resolved upon it is of an entirely ineffective kind. So much for the Conservatives. The attitude of the Liberals is even more disappointing. They once pro-

claimed Home Rule as the chief cardinal feature of their policy. Again and again the Irish people were assured that they had nailed their colours to the mast, and would never take them down till victory crowned the cause. That was at the time when Mr. Gladstone was the leader of the Liberal party and Mr. Parnell was a power in the land. After the fall of the Irish leader and the retirement of Mr. Gladstone, the arguments in favour of Home Rule put forward from Liberal platforms became fewer, and the speeches of Lord Rosebery led many Home Rulers to suspect that there was really very little difference between the system of self-government which he would set up in Ireland and the local government administration which would be granted by the Conservatives. This feeling helped unmistakably to weaken Lord Rosebery's influence throughout the constituencies, and when he withdrew into private life one of the main grounds on which Sir William Harcourt's fitness for the post which he had vacated was urged was his supposed soundness on the subject of Home Rule. Sir William, though never formally chosen as leader of the party, has to all intents and purposes been such since Lord Rosebery's retirement. Yet, it cannot be denied that the Home Rule policy had been thrust more and more into the background.

Individual Liberal candidates avoided the question until they were compelled to make clear pronouncements, and the indications as to the future aims of the party seemed to show that the displacement of Home Rule from its rightful position was looked upon by certain Liberal statesmen as practically an accomplished fact. Mr. Redmond's motion on Friday night representing that the satisfaction of the demand of the Irish people for national self-government was the most urgent of all subjects of domestic policy was, therefore, by no means uncalled for. Mr. Redmond no doubt failed to obtain a true test of Liberal feeling by demanding the concession of "an independent Parliament." It seems to us that an Irish Parliament, to be of any practical benefit, should be independent in the management of Irish local affairs. But such a Parliament Mr. Gladstone's Bills of 1886 and 1893 did not propose to grant. Sir William Harcourt and his followers accordingly in voting against Mr. Redmond's amendment were able to say that they did so because it went beyond Mr. Gladstone's measure. Yet we think their attitude was not that of very staunch allies. They could have made their profession of adherence to Mr. Gladstone's scheme and voted with Mr. Dillon for the motion. Taking the whole affair into consideration, we think that something like an authoritative explanation of their views and intentions with regard to Home Rule is imperatively needed on the part of the Liberals.

As to the future in Ireland, despite the Local Government Bill, we hold it to be both dark and ominous. When want has already brought many to the point of death, the Government consents to give relief through the Board of Guardians, but it is to be given only on condition that the starving people submit to the "labour test," that is to say, those whose frames have been emaciated and whose phy-

sical strength is gone through hunger must work before they get food. What a mockery of human misery. We trust that the callousness of the Irish Executive will not be imitated by the people of Great Britain, but that they will try to make amends for the insensibility of the authorities by contributing generously to save the helpless poor from distress and death.

## Irish Virtue and Honesty.

Sacred Heart Review.

E. J. Lloyd, who was recently appointed constabulary magistrate at Cahirciveen, County Kerry, has found at least one of the so-called "disturbed districts" free from the vices which too many brutal Britons among the governing classes untruthfully lay at the doors of the suffering people of Ireland. He says: "I should like to congratulate the public and the police of this district on the fact that after four months of constant attendance as resident magistrate in this portion of Ireland, comprising an area of 1,000 square miles, I have never yet had before me a single complaint of theft and not one case of criminal assault on women or children." For the above statement this evidently just magistrate is to be earnestly commended, but his candor and firmness is deserving of even more praise, when he goes on to remark that both of the classes of cases to which he refers are terribly common in England. He emphasized, too, the fact that he was an Englishman, who had lived all his life in England up to the time that he relinquished the post of chief constable of York to go to Ireland. In conclusion he remarks: "I think it speaks volumes for the people of southwestern Kerry that they should be so strictly upright and honest, considering their great poverty and the hard times they now are so patiently enduring." There is only one thing that he forgot to allude to in this connection, and that was the people were all Catholics, who, following faithfully the precepts of their Church, could not be otherwise than strict observers of law, and patient endurers of the present hard conditions of their lives.

## Change in the times.

Remarkable Work By An Anglican Divine.

Canon Knox-Little's Life of St. Francis—The "Stigmata" or "Stumbling Block"—What Does this Portend?

Providence Visitor.

How it would have astonished John Henry Newman on that blessed day of his long-desired entrance into the welcoming bosom of Holy Mother Church, to learn that ere this wonderful, momentous, glorious, shameful century would have gone in the records of the past, the attitude of churchmen in England would have so changed towards things Catholic, that one of her most celebrated dignitaries, a canon of her national church, would blossom forth in the light of an able, persuasive, enthusiastic champion of St. Francis of Assisi, stigmata included! Yet, lying before us, is the substantial proof of this miraculous metamorphosis, in the reality of a bulky tome, bearing the title, "St. Francis of Assisi, His Times, Life and Work," by Canon Knox-Little.

The preface, short but significant, assures us that the volume consists of the enlarged and corrected versions of lectures, delivered by their distinguished author, "in the Ladye chapel, Worcester Cathedral, on some week days in the Lent of 1896." A strange

thrill of wonder possesses our being when we reflect upon the mighty oscillations of human opinion which such a work as this before us exhibits.

Saints, with a possible conciliation towards those living in apostolic times, and Catholic devotion to them, with its logical confidence in their ability and willingness to help and comfort their clients, have always been a seemingly insurmountable stumbling block in the way of Protestant acceptance. No matter how liberal the sentiment or unbiased the prejudice, no orthodox Protestants were inconsistent enough, a few years since, to admit the existence of modern canonized sanctity, much less to enter the arena of hostile public opinion by battling for its recognition as a powerful aid to devotion. And this, mark you, even of saints of less heroic mold, whose virtues were not so "glaringly grotesque," so entirely beyond the point of possible safe imitation. But to select St. Francis of Assisi, with his uncompromising carrying out of Christian Catholic ideals to the last letter, with his miracles, his fastings, his vigils and his prayers, his absolute poverty, and above all, his stigmata, as the fitting example upon which an end-of-the-century Christian should model his religious life, this it is that causes a thoughtful observer of the trend of the times, to marvel and speculate: "What next?" God alone knows the answer to the query. It is safe in His all-wise Providence. It looks, however, to the hopeful Catholic, strong in his faith as to the almighty power of persistent prayer, as if the long-deferred conversion of England were not an utterly hopeless affair of the imagination. "Let us not suffer ourselves to be betrayed with a kiss," was the sage advice of the patriotic Henry during the great revolutionary struggle. It is an excellent one to follow in the perusal of such a book as this masterly effort before our consideration. Let us remember that the demolition process of the Reformation was like all works of its kind, rapid and thorough. To upbuild is the slow and patient labor of ages. We must not look, then, for the impossible, and expect perfect justice and impartial sympathy from the outside champion, no matter how sincere his desire for fair play, or eager his enthusiasm for his sacred cause.

With an interest begotten, perhaps, of respectful curiosity we begin to read, anxious to discover what method of treatment is to be employed by this novel exponent of the spirit of St. Francis. The very first page dispels all illusion as to its novelty. It is the same old bowing-down in cautious circumspection towards the prejudices of the class who fear innovations, as they are pleased to term the strivings toward truth. We are forcibly reminded that the inquiries into the subject are to be undertaken upon historical and philosophical (by which read scientific) grounds.

This we presume, is to disarm all suspicion. O, Science, what shams are hoisted above an unsuspecting public in thy hallowed name! Then follows a hint that there is another method of studying saintly lives, perhaps a nobler way it is even conceded to be, and this is to approach the subject from a devotional standpoint. But it would be too rash for so honorable a man as the canon, to place this way as positively the most important, and for him to remain at the same time loyal to the scientific cult of his possible readers.

A lengthy chapter interse and picturesque English is devoted to the value of such a study as the one chosen, and all the weight of an ingenious array of practical advantages which cannot help resulting from so useful an investigation, is brought to bear upon the individuals who will have the temerity to assume so hazardous a responsibility. After encouraging and spurring assurances that of a certainty it will be no actual waste of time, but rather a gain on eternity, the daring reader is taken gently by the now willing hand, and propped up by a powerful quotation from one of Leo XII's encyclicals, on the occasion of the centenary of St. Francis, is duly installed into the second chapter, which deals in detail with the

appalling darkness regnant in the age in which St. Francis lived and moved and had his saintly being.

To a Catholic accustomed to regard the lives of the saints as second only in vital importance to the sacred Scriptures in the nourishment of his spiritual life, all this coaxing and sugar-coating of the pill of duty cannot fail to appear as pathetic, while at the same time it is absurd. This apologetic attitude which our separated brethren feel it necessary to assume when dealing with the most primary principles of religious belief is painful to the honest, fearless logical truth-seeker. But humanity is tenacious in its hold upon error, particularly when by this tenacity it earns its bread without the sweat of the brow. Men from Pilate's day down, with the truth within easy grasp, will wash their hands of it and sarcastically inquire what it is. We are not unprepared after this profuse introduction to have the Papacy receive the usual scoring for its presumptive claims to infallibility, nor to be obliged to wade through pages of the regular scathing arguments against the celibacy of the clergy which all well-bred Protestants feel bound to present upon every occasion. It would be too much to expect the time-worn tid-bits to be relegated to the larder of oblivion. They are too palatable to the taste of Epicures to escape duty as garnishing elements, even if they serve not for the "piece de resistance."

No doubt we should be grateful and flattered to find the lives of the saints receiving attention so serious and distinguished from the watchtowers of science, philosophy and profound learning, even if it come at the cost of additional doubts as to our pretended superiority and infallible rights.

It is, likewise, matter for regret, if we Catholics do not see in all this groping for the light which alone enlighteneth, a healthy sign which can bode nothing but good for the future welfare of the church in England. When a nation, religious to the core, such as England ever has been, is willing and eager to learn more of a saint whose life so closely imitated the public life of our dear Lord, and whose virtues more nearly resembled those of that divine Heart which loved men so much, than any other saint in the sacred calendar, then indeed, may we presage that the day of its salvation is close at hand. God grant that through the intercession and merits of the Holy one of Assisi, the fruits of the Passion and Death of Christ Jesus may soon hasten the day of England's return to the one true fold, where once she shone in undimmed splendor of faith and devotion to the glory of God and the salvation of men.

May the holy mortified life of St. Francis urge us on to lives of penance and prayer. May the knowledge and remembrance of his heroic sacrifices for God's interests, purge from our souls this debasing love of an utterly worldly life, and lead us to cast aside the dross of selfishness and sin, that we shine as alluring beacons, attracting our separated brethren by the holiness of our lives, on towards the rock, where lies moored the ancient bark of Peter, outside of which there is no lasting rest of conscience, no abiding peace of mind, no eternal salvation. E. L. VIRGIN.

Cordelia, Comtesse de Rotterdam, died on the 8th inst. in Paris, France, where she had taken up her abode since the death of her husband in 1859. She was one of the oldest members of the Canadian colony in the French Capital, being in her seventy-fifth year at the time of her death. Her father was the Hon. P. D. Debartzch, a member of the old Legislative Council of Quebec, who in 1837-8 was one of the staunchest opponents of the Rebellion. The eldest daughter became Mrs. (Judge) Drummond, mother of Father Drummond; the second, Mrs. (Judge) Monk, was the mother of Mr. F. D. Monk, M.P., a cousin of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Monk of Winnipeg; a third married Mr. A. E. Kierzkowski. Madame de Rotterdam was the last survivor and was much esteemed and loved by her many friends. The Marquise de Bassano (nee Clara Symes of Montreal) and Madame Duflos, mother of Mr. George Duflos of Fannyville, Man., watched by her bedside and surrounded her with every care and comfort. She died fortified with the rites of Holy Church, accepting death with great courage and resignation.—R.I.P.