

syllable he utters. Promise me solemnly—every syllable he utters.”

“I give you the promise, mam; and I’ll mind every syllable that comes out of his mouth.”

“And Tom, be sure, Tom, to mark well if my father lays his curse upon me!”

“He won’t do it, mam. You’ll find he won’t—God forbid he should.”

“Amen, amen to that, Tom! But, be on the watch for me—the path to the river-side, you say?”

“Yes, mam, for that’s the way the young masher’ll come, mam.”

“Oh, yes, now I recollect: but it is very dark, and somehow I cannot see as well as usual, but that is not to be wondered at—Good-night.”

“Don’t go too far anyhow, mam; if you don’t meet the young masher very soon intirely, sit down and wait for me, mam; and I’ll race after you, and overtake you as soon as ever I can quit the house agen, with safety to us all.”

“Very well, Tom—good-night.”

“May the Lord be wid you, mam; an’ the good-night kindly to you, mam.”

Tom, running towards the house, was soon lost to her view; and Helen, with her bundle on her arm, but unconscious that she held it, proceeded on her way to the river-side.

From the effects of the fall of the heavy mist, the path she chose was niry and clinging, and almost at every step, her feet nearly slid from under her. She had gone but a short distance, when one of her slight slippers fastened in the clay, and shortly after she lost the other. She went on, almost on her bare feet, over stiles and fences; the rough stones of the tortuous path, and the stumps and briars of the fences, often coming in contact with them and causing them to bleed. Two or three times she fell, and was severely bruised; and then there was the miserable consciousness of floundering through mud or wet grass, and briars, in the endeavor to regain her upright position. And yet, she made way against every obstacle with a single pertinacity. Her mind was, in fact, in a state of wretched confusion. It seemed to her, as if the hands of her angry father were, with resistless force, continually pushing her forward; and she felt a sensation of utter abandonment, because no other arm was offered to support her.

At length, the physical power to go farther quite failed Helen, and she sat down, from sheer exhaustion, not knowing the distance she had proceeded, or indeed the course she had taken. Then, it was a mercy to her that she wept, and wept profusely; by the indulgence of her tears, nature was relieved, and the exercise of her reason in some degree restored to her.

And then, too, for the first time, did she feel the hurts she had received, and confessed to herself the feebleness of her body; while also for the first time did she cast her eyes around her, in a reasoning effort to ascertain where she was.

The moon was now rapidly rising higher, and the pall of dingy clouds which had hitherto shrouded the whole arch overhead, was rolling itself up and away, leaving only some torn and loose fragments behind it; and the stars twinkled through deep blue; and the edges of these portions of vapor, nearest to the moon, began to assume a weak silvery tinge. The night was clearing up, in fact, and likely to become fine and lightsome.

But it was in vain that Helen, now capable of profiting by this favorable change, endeavored to renew an acquaintance with the objects around: they were strange, or nearly so to her; she had strayed, in fact, from the river-side path, in some direction not familiar to her perceptions; and yet she now called to mind that it was the river-side path branching to the house she had intended to take, in order to meet her husband.

“Heaven protect me!” she ejaculated, “we shall miss each other, and I fear I must perish if I am left much longer without assistance.”

Raising herself up, as well as she was able, Helen now listened anxiously for the sound of an approaching footstep. She only heard the noise of falling water straight before her; but even that was a slight relief. She knew that at this point the river was crossed by a weir, whence continued another path to the town, with which she was well acquainted; if once upon that path, she might succeed in gaining the town, and then her husband might be made aware of her situation; but how far was the river from her? And by what way was it approachable? She peered through the distance, half-chequered with the weak moonlight—fences and other obstructions were between her and the sound she heard; these difficulties she could not expect to overcome, and she again sank down despairingly.

The next moment, however, as the thought of the long, long night came upon her, she once more started up, and tottered in the direction of the river. The noise of the falling water grew more distinct. The clouds had now almost entirely passed away from the moon, which, quietly mounting higher and higher in the heavens, flung her almost perfect light over the open country; and gaining a little courage from this seemingly good omen, Helen, with increased pain and suffering, slowly proceeded on her course. She passed two fields, crossing their dividing fences with the utmost difficulty. She reached the summit of a third boundary; the noise of the weir came with certainty upon her ear, and she was sure that she saw the moonbeams glittering and dancing over the white foamy water which the barrier caused.—She praised God again, and scrambled, and sometimes crawled forward, on hands and knees. One field only remained between her and the river-side, and that was a rapid descent.

Suddenly, men’s voices, in angry discussion fixed her attention, and the sound seemed to arise between her and the very point she had to attain. This was terrible—instinctively, she looked round for a hiding-place. Above where she stood was a little hollow, on the hill

side, partially screened by briars and bushes. To it she crept, and down into it, again lacerating herself with thorns and broken branches; and crouching among the bushes, listened, with all her powers of hearing, to the very voices that filled her with horror. She had lost, without attending to the loss, her bundle, her bonnet, and even her cloak.

The loud talking ceased, and there was but one man’s voice now heard, but this one was fearfully harsh and abrupt. Then female tones in prayers and expostulation, mingled with it; then female screams, shrill, long, and piercing, rang through the night air; and then, Helen heard the noise of a heavy blow, and the long shrieks suddenly stopped, subsiding into a low, melancholy cry, followed by deep moans; and a second blow, accompanied by a hissing sound of the human breath, such as workmen utter, when they labour with the hatchet. Perfect silence ensued, for a short time, only interrupted by the whispering of the night-breeze through the grass, and through the bushes, and by the gentle fall of water, near at hand.

Oh, that was a pause of thrilling horror to Helen! For, above all her previous suffering, fear, and confusion, the conviction that she had overheard the doing of a murder, curdled her pure heart’s blood, and made her very soul cower within her!

Hasty footsteps entered the little hollow, and paused within a few feet of where she lay concealed.

“This is the place that the old devil bid us wait for him,” said a hoarse, deep voice but in cautious tones.

“It is,” answered another person—and the two words were spoken with a shudder.

“That was a black act,” continued the first voice.

“Oh, it was a bloody deed! Oh, the thought of this night will never leave my mind, never, never! I wouldn’t wish for all the world’s coin, if ’twas laid before me this moment, that I didn’t stop the hand of that hell-bird! Oh, she was a darlin’, poor young creature! Why didn’t we save her, Paul?”

“That oath! that frightful oath!”

“I’d break fifty oaths if I had the power of savin’ her over agen, or if I could bring back the life to my poor beautiful Mary—I would—I would;” and the man whom his conferees called Moloeth, or the wicked, suddenly stopped speaking, for his throat filled up to suffocation, and a throes of very agony was laboring in his black bosom.

“Bud her blood isn’t on our hands, Dennis?”

“No. Bud curses on our cowardly hands that didn’t save her!”

“Unless we tuk ould Darby’s life, an’ buried him wid the weight of a hill’s clay lying on his body, what use would there be in savin’ her to-night, Dennis? He’d meet her agen, an’ he’d have his revenge; an’ you know there’s others to stand by Darby the devil; so that we couldn’t be safe from him or them—”

“If it was to be done agen, I’d save her, if he called up forty red devils to his side!”

“Iusth! he’s comin’ on us—There’s no use in vexin’ him, Dennis!”

The only answer Dennis made, was conveyed by delving his heel into the sod, and folding his arms tightly across his breast.

Robin Costigan rapidly hobbled up the little ascent from the river, closely followed by the Babby; and Helen, in her hiding-place, could hear the puffing of his hyena breath, as he stood close to her.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHANGE FROM VICARS-APOSTOLIC TO A REGULAR HIERARCHY IN ENGLAND.

The Papal Bull for the establishment of a Hierarchy in England produced the utmost alarm, the fiercest opposition, and the enactment of an adverse, offensive, stupid, and impotent law. The Papal Bull in question was given at St. Peter’s, Rome, under the seal of the Fisherman, on the 24th September, 1850. It re-established “in the kingdom of England, and according to the common laws of the Church, a Hierarchy of Bishops deriving their titles from their own sees.” It would have been issued sooner, but that the tranquillity of the Holy See had been sadly disturbed by the revolutionary changes which had invaded almost all the countries of Europe, and had obtained a temporary success in Rome itself.

For nearly three centuries England had been deprived of the glory and strength of her Catholic Hierarchy. The succession of the old Catholic Bishops failed at the death of Bishop Watson, in the 26th year of Elizabeth’s reign. From that time delegates, or vicars, had been appointed by the Holy See to govern the Church in the Pope’s name. During some time, when persecution was hottest, they were not even invested with the episcopal order, but were merely priests. As the sky cleared, and some measure of toleration was obtained, these vicars were of the episcopal order; but they had no inherent authority, and were removable at will. They were without corporate organization, local superior, and power of synodal action. They derived their titles from ancient sees in the East, where the sword of Mahomet had extirpated the followers of Christ. Every good Catholic felt that they existed but for a season, and that either the faith would be altogether extinguished in England, or the old order of Bishops would return, perhaps, to fill the vacant and time-honoured sees. Nevertheless, reign after reign succeeded, and the scattered remnant of the Catholic flock was still ruled by the Archpriests or Vicars-Apostolic. During forty years after the death of Watson, Bishop of Lincoln, in 1534, the faithful, exposed to bitter persecution, were deprived of the sacrament of confirmation, and of other episcopal rites. Dr. George Blackwell was appointed Archpriest, with certain administrative powers, in 1593. He, in turn, was succeeded by Dr. Birkhead, also an Archpriest, after the death of Queen Elizabeth; and in July, 1615, the 12th year of the reign of James I., Dr. Harrison was appointed the third Archpriest. To have created a Bishop, or even a Vicar-Apostolic at the time, would have been a dangerous step. It would probably have resulted in the martyrdom of the prelate, and the enactment of severer laws, or the revival of half-dormant statutes against “Papists.”

Yet so strongly did the Catholics of England desire the re-establishment of episcopal jurisdiction, and so fully did they intend to recover their Bishops if it were possible, that the rumour of their designs reached the ears of King James I. His anger was aroused, and though the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, and scion of a long line of Catholic kings, he sent for the Spanish ambassador, and through him conveyed a message to Rome, that if such Bishops were appointed, he would pursue them even to death. If, however, a single prelate were commissioned privately, and took the title of no English

see, no objections would be raised, and his ministers would wink at the appointment. Accordingly, in 1623, Dr. William Bishop was consecrated Bishop of Chalcedon, and received ample faculties as Vicar-Apostolic. Bishop Smith succeeded him in 1625, just as Charles I. mounted the throne. The latter years of his life were spent in exile, and when he died in 1658, two years before the restoration, there was a vacancy for thirty years, leaving the Catholics in a dreary and desolate condition till the reign of James II. There was a strong desire among some of them in 1688 to bring about the establishment of a regular Hierarchy; but there were insuperable difficulties in the way; and it was some satisfaction to them to have succeeded, at least, through his Majesty’s good will, in obtaining the division of England into four Vicariates-Apostolic. Dr. Leuburn’s appointment as Vicar-Apostolic is matter of history; and, though James was soon after compelled to pay the penalty of much imprudence, and to vacate the throne, the Church continued to be governed from that time until the year 1840 by four Vicars-Apostolic. At that date the four vicariates were divided anew into eight, but both the clergy and the laity embraced every occasion of making known at head-quarters their earnest desire of possessing a regular Hierarchy. The present Bishop of Birmingham was foremost amongst those who negotiated this important matter, and he has furnished us with a detailed account of his proceedings from first to last. In recommending the division of England into twelve episcopal sees, the congregation of the Propaganda had special regard to that letter which was addressed to St. Augustine by St. Gregory the Great, in which the Pope contemplated erecting an Archbishopric in London, with twelve suffragans, and proposed to create a second at York, with other twelve suffragans at a future time. But the point to which particular attention must here be drawn in this—that while conferring on twelve bishops the titles of certain sees, the Holy Father was most careful to avoid all collision with English law. The Relief Bill of 1829 left Catholic Bishops free to adopt any titles excepting those actually employed by bishops of the Established Church. English statesmen, and Sir John Cox Hippisley in particular, had favoured the idea of ordinary bishops instead of Vicars-Apostolic, and Sir Robert Peel had expressly limited the prohibition with regard to episcopal titles. “I propose,” he said, “that the episcopal titles and names made use of in the Church of England shall not be assumed by bishops of the Roman Catholic Church.” Lord John Russell himself, who was five years later to set all England in a blaze of bigotry because Catholics did, according to law, far less than he, in 1845, urged that they should be allowed to do so—Lord John Russell then said, in the debate on the Catholic Relief Bill of 1845, “he believed that they might repeal those disallowing clauses which prevented a Roman Catholic Bishop assuming a title held by a Bishop of the Established Church. He could not conceive any good ground for this restriction.” Again, in the debate on the Relief Bill of February 5, 1846, Lord John Russell was equally explicit: “That part of the subject,” he said, “requires interference by the Legislature, so as to prevent persons from assuming particular titles, nothing could be more absurd and pernicious than to keep up such a distinction.” Knowing these to be the recorded opinions of the Prime Minister, the Holy See proceeded in the affair without even the fear of exciting his displeasure. It followed strictly in the line of British legislation, which had in an Act of Parliament—the Charitable Bequests Act—set the example of addressing Catholic prelates in Ireland by their respective titles; and the Colonial Secretary had, as we have seen, desired Colonial governors to conform to the rule thus set. In selecting titles for the twelve English sees, the Sacred Congregation had an eye to three things—they were to be ancient; they were to belong, as far as possible, to large centres of industry and population; and they were not to be held already by Anglican bishops. The Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation were, in all their arrangements, influenced greatly by Dr. Ullathorne and the late Dr. Grant, especially the former, who possessed the entire confidence of the English clergy, and had been chiefly instrumental in establishing a Catholic Hierarchy in Australia. It will not, of course, be supposed for a moment that the negotiations which were going on at Rome relative to the formation of a Hierarchy were unknown in England. No secret was made of them; and in a debate on the Diplomatic Relations with Rome Bill, on August 17, 1849, Lord John Russell, in reply to a question put by Sir Robert Inglis, said that he had never given his consent to the creation of Roman Catholic dioceses in this country, and that he should not give his consent if he were asked to do so. But he was not asked. No consent on his part, as Minister of the Crown, was required; all that Rome wished and sought was that there should be no infraction of English law, and no unnecessary irritation of English susceptibilities. In advocating diplomatic relations with Rome, Lord John Russell pointed out, as an advantage that might result from their being established, that the Pope might be induced not to create any dioceses in England without the consent of the Queen; but he added, with much force and emphasis, that it was impossible to restrain the spiritual authority of the Holy See, and that it would be very foolish to attempt to do so.

The absence of the Pope from Rome lasted from November, 1848, to April, 1850, and during that period the city was in the hands of the revolutionists. The establishment of our Hierarchy, though decided on, was delayed, for no congregations were held, and the cardinals were dispersed. But in September, 1850, the holy father, being reinstated in his rights, and supported in Rome by the presence of French troops, the obstacles to the promulgation of the decree for the Hierarchy were removed. Dr. Wiseman had been created a cardinal, and there was no precedent for a cardinal being Vicar-Apostolic, nor any wish to establish one. His Eminence was, therefore, made the first Archbishop of Westminster, with twelve suffragan Bishops, according to the plan originally projected by St. Gregory the Great. The apostolic letters establishing the Hierarchy were promulgated on the 29th of September, and were immediately met by a storm of agitation, as unexpected as it was noisy and absurd. It remains to be seen whether the Catholics of England will ever again be exposed to so insidious an assault; but, in the meantime, it serves them as a lesson and warning not to trust too confidently to the friendly assurances of those who may be in power. Though in a civilised land, and one that is called Christian, they are, in fact, in the position of the Catholics in China, who, though, after left unmolested, are liable at any moment to be assailed with violence through the spite of Mandarins, or the blind fanaticism of the people.—London Tablet.

SMITH O'BRIEN.—EMIGRATION.

FROM “ENGLISH ADMINISTRATIONS AND CATHOLIC INTERESTS” IN THE “TABLET.”

When Smith O’Brien entered the House of Commons on his return from Paris, he found there discussing a Bill relative to the state of Ireland. It had been introduced by the Whigs, and was warmly supported by the Tories. Its object was to make the open and advised incitement to insurrection, whether by speaking, writing, or printing, a felony punishable by transportation. The *Nation* and the *United Irishman* about this time were teeming with seditious addresses. “The time of the sword has come,” said the *Nation* of April 22nd. “The constitution is obsolete as Ogham stones.” “The time to be done,” wrote Mitchell, in the *United Irishman*, of the same date, “is to stop the thoroughfares, to cut off communication, to trench liberty in the heart of the capital, to split up divide, draw

into fastnesses, make powerless, and slaughter the opposing troops.” Though the mission of such incentives was in great part neutralized by the folly of its publication, the Government was bound to be on its guard, and to prevent as far as possible the shedding of blood. Smith O’Brien was, of course, of a different opinion, and when he rose to protest against the Bill, he was met by yells of scorn and indignation, not because he argued against the Act, which he had a right to oppose if he pleased, but because he was believed to have gone to Paris *pour d’amener* (they are Lamartine’s words) *des encouragements et des armes à la République Française*. He persisted, however, in making himself heard. He laughingly defied the English Parliament, in the name, as he said, of his oppressed, and plundered country. He boasted that he had advised his countrymen to rebel, and added, amid shrieks of disapprobation: “I conceive that it is the peculiar duty of the Irish people to obtain the possession of arms at a time when you tell them you are prepared to crush their expression of opinion not by argument but by brute force.” The die was now cast. Smith O’Brien returned to Dublin, took his trial, and was acquitted through one Repealer being on the jury. The same thing happened to Meagher. Mitchell was less fortunate. Being arrested on a charge of high treason under the new Act, he was convicted, sentenced to fourteen years’ transportation, and shipped off immediately to Spike Island, in a steamer waiting in the river. All things predicted for Smith O’Brien an ignominious defeat. The O’Connellites had attacked him and his friends at Limerick on the 29th of April, while the Catholic bishops and clergy everywhere abstained from giving the intended outbreak the smallest encouragement. To their prudence mainly it was owing that Ireland was spared the misery of another ‘98. Insurrection, even on a large scale, would inevitably have been crushed, not merely because the entire army and navy of Great Britain were arrayed against it, but because almost all the property and landed interests of Ireland itself would have been at the service of England. If Catholics required justice in ecclesiastical matters to be dispensed; if farmers needed tenant-right to secure them from ruin or loss, it was better to wait and obtain these benefits by legal means, than endeavor mightly to wrench them from a Government which might be entreated but could not be overcome.

The suppression of the Smith O’Brien outbreak was managed skillfully enough. The Clubs were to be disbanded. The editors of revolutionary papers—the *Irish Tribune* and the *Irish Felon* were arrested—amongst others; and though the peasantry and clubmen were supposed to be arming in different parts of the island, they were in fact doing little more than building their pikes and stiles into stone walls, or carrying them to graveyards with funeral escorts, wrapped in oiled flannel and laid in coffins, “in hope,” as some among them said, “of a happy resurrection.” The autumn was to have been the time of the “happy resurrection,” but many of the chiefs being already transported or under arrest, and the precautions of the Government being multiplied daily, the *Nation* and the *Irish Felon* precipitated the rising, particularly in their respective issues of July 22nd. The Habeas Corpus was suspended on the same day; and on the 25th Smith O’Brien and a few others made fruitless attempts at Mullinabone, Sliev.ugh, and Ballynaghy. The type and plant of the *Nation* and the *Felon* were seized on the 28th, and rewards were offered for the arrest of O’Brien, Meagher, Dillon, and Doherty, who were “in arms against her Majesty.” Infatuation attended all their plans. Smith O’Brien was captured at the Thurles railway station, with a small fancy pistol in his waist pocket. His trial commenced in Clonmel at the end of September, and was continued during nine days. He was condemned to death—to be hanged, and afterwards beheaded and quartered. His comrades, McManus, O’Donoghue, and Meagher, incurred the like sentence; but there was a general impression that it would not be carried into execution. They exhibited great fortitude during their trials, and even requested, after their condemnation, that they might die on the scaffold, and “have the extreme benefit of the law.” They were transported, however, to the penal colony of Van Diemen’s Land; and, at the same time, two editors of revolutionary papers, O’Doherty and Martin, were conveyed across the seas in another ship. On looking back at this ill-timed and disastrous attempt at insurrection, John O’Connell, in Conciliation Hall, might well point to the sad fate of those who had disregarded the councils of his father, and entreat the people to support him in moral and peaceable appeals to Parliament for the redress of their wrongs. The experience of the last twenty-three years has shown that they have not appealed in vain.

The beginning of 1849 in Ireland was marked by a continuance of national distress. The famine of the preceding year had been fearfully devastating, and its effects were felt even in England. Numbers of the priests in the Laneshire and the Northern districts had been swept off by the malignant fever that spread there; and among them was Dr. Riddell, the Vicar-Apostolic, who became a victim to his charity in Newenham, while labouring among the sufferers. The secret organizations which had excited the late insurrections still existed, and, in the language of the Vicar, when writing to the Home Secretary, they “sawred away capital, destroyed confidence, and rendered impossible the steady application of industry.” Multitudes of small farmers and labourers, with their families, were stowed into the pestiferous holds of emigrant ships; and poor Ireland was compelled to relieve poor Ireland by a tax called a rate-in-aid.

In January, 1850, Mr. Bright addressed the Irish residents in Manchester and Salford at some length, on the claims which Ireland had on the English Government. His speech was one of what may be termed a series on the same subject, remarkable no less for the purity of their eloquence than for the truly enlightened views which they develop. It is not needful, at this distance of time, to go through the various measures which he recommended for the redemption of Ireland; some of them have not been adopted, but others—and these the most important—having been carried into operation. Mr. Bright was, during many years, the teacher and inspirer of Mr. Gladstone, as regards his policy towards Ireland; and, although illness prevented the former from long enjoying the advantages of his high position when he came into the Cabinet, his councils were acted on, and the remonstrances of a long and consistent political career produced, at the last, a prodigious and happy effect. The reforms which he proposed had reference chiefly to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and the greater security and encouragement of the tenant in the cultivation of the soil. These, and most of the kindred objects which he had in view, have either been attained, or are in the course of attainment, and to have succoured an entire people must be in itself a reward worthy of half a century of labour. We may form some idea of what Irish distress has been, by calling to mind the million and a half of the population swept away by famine and fever during the five famine years, and by the subsequent emigration on a scale so huge that in 1852 it amounted to 368,764.

That vast exodus has spread the Catholic faith wider and wider over the face of the earth, and especially through the United States of America. But is it fraught with no danger to England? Were not the emigrants almost to a man inflamed with hatred of the mother country? And will they not, unless England continues and completes her policy of conciliation, transmit that hatred to their posterity, impart it to their neighbours, and raise up a terrible Nemesis against British power? Did not the injustice and severity of Laud and Stafford, the Star Chamber, the High Commission Court, and the Council, drive multitudes of Puritans into exile in the time of Charles I.? And was it not their des-

endants—the children of those harried and persecuted colonists of New England—who, 140 years later, defeated General Burgoyne at Saratoga, and Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, and compelled England to sign an ignominious peace? And is not history always repeating itself?

PERSECUTION IN GERMANY.

The German Legislature has not delayed to make good the threats that were not obscurely implied in the letter of the Emperor William to the Catholic Bishops of Prussia. The Reichstag has not as yet completed its second session, and already it has signified its hostility against the Catholic Church by an act of persecution.

The anti-Catholic press, which is also to a considerable extent anti-Christian, had been preparing the public mind for the measure. The insolence of the clergy in preferring to accept the interpretation of the Church on matters of faith instead of the dictates of the Bavarian Ministry or the Prussian Chancery, was the theme of continual denunciations. The freedom with which the episcopate maintained the right of Catholic children to an education in conformity with their faith, evoked the indignation of the Liberalist scribes of Germany. Finally, the not ill-grounded expectation that the immorality of the proposed compulsory Secular Marriage Law would find an uncompromising opponent in that Church which is the appointed guardian of morality, seems to have roused the party to uncontrollable wrath. The Catholic Church has been found to stand between Germany and the abyss of materialism and infidelity into which her blood-and-iron politicians are precipitating the country. Her influence over the portions of the population whose faith is sound and whose morals are pure is known and dreaded by the persistent enemies of both. It has been determined, accordingly, to attempt anew to control that influence by the terrors of the penal code.

The Statute Book of Imperial Germany is amply provided already with enactments in support of the powers that be. For the desired oppression of the Catholic clergy a special enactment has been deemed necessary. The notorious John Lutz, the Bavarian Minister of Religion and Miss-education, proposed it in the *Bundesrath*, or Council of the Confederated Governments. Prince Bismarck supported the proposal both in the Upper House and in the *Reichstag*, or Chamber of Deputies. The second reading was voted by an overwhelming majority, and it has been read a third time and passed.

“Every clergyman or other minister of religion” (thus runs the bill) “who, in the exercise, or in connection with the exercise of his calling, shall openly before any assemblage of persons in a church or other place set apart for religious worship, announce or discuss matters connected with the State in a manner which may appear to be calculated to lead to a breach of the public peace, shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding two years.” The bill is at once insultingly false and dishonestly vague.

When has the influence of the Catholic Church for this is what the measure implies, been exerted against the public peace—the Catholic Church, which is the firmest support of good Government and the strongest pledge of public security? The charge is a pitiful calumny, and its promoters are aware of it. We used to be told that the Church was too much on the side of Governments, too much opposed to revolution and disorder. The calculators of the faith cannot afford to be consistent.

But the deliberate vagueness of the wording in which the menace is expressed is not the least significant feature of the Bill. Any “matter connected with the State,” which is announced or discussed “in a manner which may appear calculated to lead to a breach of the public peace,” is to be a cause of imprisonment. When the State claims to interfere with everything, and to pronounce upon everything, no matter how foreign to its proper province, what matter may not be held to be “connected with the State?” And no matter connected with the State is to be announced or discussed in a matter “which may appear to be calculated to lead to a breach of the peace.” “Which may appear to be calculated”—was there ever such juggling with words? Writers on legislation tell us that a law ought to be precise; that nothing is more unjust and detrimental than vagueness or obscurity. But who is to explain the vagueness and obscurity of this appearance of a calculation of a tendency, for which Catholic priests are to be dragged from the very altar and thrust into the common jail? But the Lutz-Bismarck policy has deliberately left the law in such a condition, for it is not a law which has been made but a trap which has been set. “He would be a wily priest indeed,” writes the correspondent of the *Standard*, “who could see his way to evading the terms of this clause; on the contrary, the introduction of the words ‘may appear’ opens a wide field for any energetic German Whalley to indulge in his hobby at the expense of the priests.” It is after this fashion that the new Empire bids for the loyalty of the Catholics of Germany.

It is easy to see how the trick is intended to work. Minister von Lutz, the nominal Catholic, who allows his children to be educated as Protestants, holds that the Vatican Council is in opposition to the State. Prince Bismarck, through his obedient mouthpiece the Emperor William, has expressed a similar opinion. The doctrine of the Vatican Council, the ancient faith of Catholicity, is, accordingly, a matter intimately “connected with the State;” and since to support views condemned by the State and dangerous to the State, is evidently a course of conduct which “may appear to be calculated to lead to” anything a Government may be pleased to imagine, it follows that the Catholic Bishop or the Catholic Priest, “or other minister of religion,” who teaches the doctrines of the Catholic Church, can be sent to jail for two years, without even the option of a fine. Again, if the State decrees next year that the Catholic schools are to be infidelized or secularized, any clergyman who ventures to say that infidelity and secularism are anti-Catholic, is at once liable to punishment. A similar penalty will be incurred if the Church persists in saying that Holy Matrimony is a divine sacrament, and not a “contract of cohabitation.”

The German persecutors may proceed with their wretched essays at intimidation. We would ask them to read the history of the past if they would learn what is to be the issue of the petty tyranny. Do they really fancy that the Catholic Church will be more pliable to the caprices of Bismarck and Lutz than to those of a hundred dead and vanquished persecutors; or that the dungeons of Spandau are more terrible than the axes of the pretor and the wild beasts of the Circus? Do they dream that they will dare even to inflict imprisonment on the pastors of 12,000,000 of Germans?—London Tablet.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

Says the *Clonmel Chronicle* of a recent date: “There is just now a very remarkable and most satisfactory absence of crime throughout this entire district.—Our various local courts have almost nothing whatever to do; and magistrates assemble merely to congratulate themselves and the community upon the lightness of the calendars presented to them. At yesterday’s County Waterford petty sessions, for instance, the presiding justice, Mr. J. J. Shee and Colonel the Hon. Shalton F. Carew, simply took their seats *pro forma*, and then their leave. A blank page represented the record of offences for the past month.” Yet this “district” is usually represented as one of the most turbulent in Ireland!

The late census of Ireland shows that the population of the island is still diminishing. Since 1841,