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OFFICIAL EVIDENCE OF THE INTENTIONS OF THE WHIG CABINET.

(From the Tablet.)

The statement of late so frequently made, that the fanatical agitation of the English people is subsiding, is undoubtedly borne out by all the facts that come under our notice. Fever, whether in the body natural or in the body politic, cannot last for ever: and this fever, too, like others, seems coming to a close. The lead of Protestant wisdom, molten by the fire of an insane bigotry, no longer boils so furiously, and as the heat passes away, one naturally begins to inquire in what mould it will be poured, what ultimate shape it is likely to assume when it once more becomes cold and solid.

The correspondence published in last Saturday's *Warder* between the English and Irish Protestant Bishops, and the newspaper comments to which that correspondence has given rise, points with tolerable distinctness to one part of the issue,—that is so far as any distinct and decisive conclusion has been arrived at.

Our readers know the nature of that correspondence. In the address to the Queen of the English Protestant Bishops, they styled themselves "the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England," taking no notice of the statute—(39 and 40 Geo. III, c. 67)—by the omnipotence of which the existing establishment was manufactured into "the United Church of England and Ireland." The Church of England, to speak with statutory exactness, has had no existence since the Act of Union. The law created it; the law destroyed it; and by an Act of Parliament the Bishops who went to bed Bishops of the Church of England, rose in the morning Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland. Another Act of Parliament might unite them with Russia or with Turkey, and make them Bishops of the United Protestant and Mahomedan Church of England; Ireland, and Constantinople. Without going further into the reason, such, at all events, is the fact, and this fact does something towards expounding the rationale of the current English insanity—if, indeed, insanity can be said to have a rationale. An English Bishop, according to English Protestant notions, is a thing created by the law of the land; it is just what the law of the land makes it; and it changes from time to time with the changes of the law. A real English Bishop, therefore, is a person clothed with a civil function; one of the great officers of State; a manufacture of Queen, Lords, and Commons. For any foreign power, therefore, to make a real English Bishop, is to interfere with the Parliamentary patent; is to create a civil functionary without leave of the supreme civil authority; and thus to usurp not merely the supremacy of the Crown, but the very omnipotence of Parliament.

For the moment, it would seem this sublime theory of the origin of Ecclesiastical dignities was absent from the minds of those civil officers, the Protestant English Bishops; like many other people in this wicked world, they forgot their maker; and having been made, by statute, the Bishops of what is called a United Church, they "disremembered" the fact, and styled themselves Bishops of a Church which for just half a century has been abolished and destroyed.

The Bishops of the other portion of the United Church, however, finding themselves rather cavalierly treated; their very existence passed over in contemptuous silence; their Book of Genesis (39 and 40 Geo. III, c. 67) practically blotted out of the sacred canon; and a most awful apocrypha introduced into the Bible of their religion; took upon them to jog the memories of their English brethren, and to ask the reason of this strange forgetfulness.

The reply of the Archbishop is naive beyond description. He intimates that the English Bishops chose the wrong phrase, and addressed the Queen under a title which does not belong to them, because the wrong title was less "inharmonious" than the right; but his reason for omitting all mention of the Irish Bishops under any title, brings us to the heart of our present subject. The designation objected to "was employed solely because in the present instance the movement of the common adversary was immediately directed against ourselves. It did not appear to any of the Bishops whom I had the opportunity of consulting that we could properly invite the Irish Bishops to complain of an aggression which only affected the Church in England."

The meaning of these phrases is unmistakable. In the opinion of all the English Protestant Bishops whom Dr. Sumner has had an opportunity of consulting, the "Papal aggression" only affects "the Church in England," and is no manner of concern to the Irish Protestant Bishops. This being the carefully considered opinion of the Bishops, we may be sure it is the carefully considered opinion of their maker, the Prime Minister. We may take it without hesitation

to be the opinion of the Prime Minister that the grievance which the new penal legislation is to remedy affects England alone, and that Ireland has no sort of interest in it, and is no way affected by it. As is the supposed grievance, so, it must follow, is the imaginary remedy. The new penal code, whatever it may amount to, will touch English Catholicity alone, and will not affect the Catholicity of Ireland.

Of course, inferences of this kind, however weighty and well-grounded, are not absolutely to be relied on. But this particular inference is not only reasonable in itself, but flows so naturally from the circumstances of the case that we are disposed to place considerable reliance upon it. The *Times*, commenting on the Episcopal correspondence, adopts this view of the case, rebukes the Irish Bishops for their intrusion, and broadly asserts that the "measure for the protection of the Church of England"—(still "Church of England")—will not be extended to Ireland, because in the one we recognise the religion of a large majority, in the other of a small minority." But the words of the *Times* are too important to be given thus briefly:—

Grant that it is impossible to put down by law the existing titles of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in Ireland. If, for the sake of consistency, we refuse on this account to put down the new-fangled Hierarchy in England, it is easy to see what the Church of England will have lost; but what will the Church of Ireland have gained? Her position will be exactly the same as before, with this difference—the Church of Rome, by openly and with impunity insulting the Church of England, will materially strengthen her position here, and, as an inevitable consequence, assume a still more encroaching and arrogant demeanor there. The English branch of the Church will be degraded, and the Irish will receive nothing in return for her sister's degradation but the empty satisfaction of having dragged her down to the position which she has long occupied herself. If, on the other hand, an inconsistent law—that is, a law adapted to the different positions of the different Churches, and showing, as all laws of a free state ought to do, a suitable deference to the opinions of the majority—be enacted, prohibiting those territorial titles in England, the use of which we are compelled to tolerate in Ireland, we see clearly what we shall gain, but cannot discover what they will lose. Our Church will be placed in a position of security and dignity all the stronger and the more imposing from the ignominious repulse of the threatened insult. The Church of Ireland will be left precisely as she was, except that she will derive strength and countenance from the signal discomfiture of the attacks of the Pope upon the religious liberty of this island. Her position will, indeed, be less secure and commanding than that of the English Church; but, except in name, has it ever been otherwise?

It is, therefore, impossible to put down by law the existing titles of the Catholic Bishops in Ireland; but it is intended to prohibit in England those territorial titles which "we are compelled to tolerate in Ireland." We barely stop to laugh at this silly and impertinent rhodomontade. The law does in Ireland all that it can do—which is nothing. It makes the titles of the Irish Bishops illegal, and there it stops. It does not put down the Sees—and why? Because it cannot. It tried to do so by every artifice of the most bestial tyranny ever devised by man, and ceased the attempt when it had received a clear and unmistakable demonstration of its sanguinary impotence. It does not prosecute those who assume the titles; because, though the letter of the law gives it the power to do so, fact happens to be against the letter of the law, and such a prosecution would be a miserable exhibition.—In Ireland, therefore, no new law is needed to punish any Irish Bishop—except, perhaps, Dr. McHale and Dr. Slattery, who take the titles of their Sees. But yet, "Paul, Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland, and Delegate of the Apostolic See," presides at the Synod of Thurles—"John, Bishop of Clonfert," is Promoter of the Synod, and, jointly with the Primate, affixes his style and title to the document addressed by that Synod to the Catholics of Ireland. In the same way the other Catholic Bishops in Ireland—some more and some less ostentatiously, but all in fact—assume, contrary to law, to be Bishops of their respective Sees; every day perform acts which they can perform only on that assumption; and laugh at the foolish prohibitions of foolish laws, enacted to please very foolish politicians. Thus it is in Ireland. There is no lack of penal laws; the difficulty is, to get them executed.

How is it in England? In England to be sure, the Episcopal titles actually assumed are for the present legal; but suppose a law passed to make them illegal—what then? There are in England plenty of illegalities already which the ministers of the law dare not touch; and to pass a law rendering an assumption of the title of Westminster or Birmingham illegal would merely add to the number of those impracticable laws. The Cardinal would still be Archbishop of Westminster; Doctor Ullathorne would still be Bishop of Birmingham; and the law—what could the law do to change this state of facts?

The law has already more on its hands than it knows how to perform. The law makes a Jesuit a transportable animal; but, thank God! there are Jesuits in England notwithstanding. The law forbids Benedictine Monks, but that proscribed Order flourishes in spite of the law and of its makers. The law renders impossible Friars, Passionists, Rosminians, and Christian Brothers; but these, and half-a-dozen other Orders of religious men, flourish in England without troubling themselves to inquire into the stupidities of the law, and without caring one farthing whether the law denounces them or not.

In the same way, the law may forbid the new English Sees, and it is certainly within the competence of the Legislature to put such a law upon the statute-book—but to get it executed? We laugh the notion to scorn. We wish a hostile Attorney-General and Prime Minister no hotter curse than the task of enforcing such an enactment by a series of prosecutions. No Minister out of Bedlam would commence such an attempt, and, if he did commence it, it would end by sending him to Bedlam for his pains. A Whig who should endeavor to enforce such a law would discover that Sacheverell in the eighteenth century was a fool to a Catholic Bishop in the nineteenth. We believe that an attempt will be made to enact a new penal law; but we believe also, with an able writer in the *Morning Chronicle*, that the problem of the Cabinet will be "to combine the maximum of display with the minimum of reality."

But along with the display there will at least be some reality, and even a minimum is what it does not become us patiently to endure. This minimum, what ever it may be, will be confined in the first instance to England; but, if the small end of the wedge be inserted—if the weight of a hair in the way of persecution be inflicted upon England, every one knows the result. Each step gained, however trifling, will be an advance towards another and a larger stride whenever the next opportunity shall offer, and the Minister shall find it convenient to hound on the passions of an inflamed, though educated, rabble against the independence of the Church.

What will the minimum be? We have as yet, of course, heard nothing except guesses; but in the *Ami de la Religion* of Tuesday, we see a paragraph which deserves the particular attention of our readers on both sides of the Channel. It runs thus:—

"SWITZERLAND.—The Federal Council, by circular, dated the 20th December, invites the Confederated States to furnish it, for transmission to the English Legation, the existing concordats between the Swiss Cantons and the Holy See touching the administration of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the arrangements relative to the nomination of Bishops, and to the publication of Pontifical Bulls. It is of essential importance for the English Government to know if the Bishops are directly appointed by the Cantonal authorities of the diocese, or are appointed subject only to their approbation, and if the publication of Bulls or Briefs has place with or without previous notice, an authorisation on the part of the Government."

The reader will observe that this is not a mere guess of the correspondent of a newspaper, but is the outline of an official document. The English Legation in Switzerland has applied to the Federal Council for information, as on a matter of the last importance (*il importe essentiellement au gouvernement Anglais de savoir*), whether the Swiss cantons have a direct or indirect voice in the appointment of Bishops, and what jurisdiction they have over the publication of Bulls and Briefs.

Why is it of essential importance for the English Government to have this information? Because the English Government contemplates legislation on these matters; because it has no intention of stopping short at a silly legislation against titles, but contemplates either a positive or a negative intervention in the appointment of Catholic Bishops, and means to claim some sort of jurisdiction over the appointment of Bulls and Briefs.

These inquiries have thus come to light with regard to Switzerland; but, of course, they have not been confined to Switzerland. They have been extended, we doubt not, to every Chancery in Europe; to every Court in which England has an embassy or a legation. Everywhere the question has been, or is being, asked—"To what indignities has the Catholic Church been compelled to submit in this country? What fetters has she been obliged to wear? What handcuffs have they placed around her wrists? And how closely have her arms been pinioned together? It is of the last importance to England to know the lengths to which slavery has gone with you, because the fetters you have imposed will be used as a precedent to justify us in chaining and restraining the free action of the Church within the Queen's dominions."

These have been the questions asked, not only in Switzerland, but in France, in Prussia, in Austria, in

Russia, in Scandinavia, in Spain, in Portugal, and in Piedmont; and the answers to these questions the Whig Cabinet means, we take it, to make their thermometer of persecution.

We have said that we do not expect the penal laws will assuredly be proposed to have in the first instance, or on the face of them, an application to Ireland. They may or may not; but we are willing to take for granted that they will not. If so, what then? Will the Catholics of Ireland—will the Clergy of Ireland—will the Bishops of Ireland endure the casting of new fetters round the Church in England, simply because a narrow channel divides us from that threatened portion of the heritage of Christ? Is there any one base enough to fold his hands, and dream on in a shameful security, while such iniquities are contemplated and threatened, even if they should never be attempted? Is there any one so drunken with the chalice of Whig abominations—so infatuated with the allurements of that unclean seductress, as to bear tamely such an aggression on the Church, and say that it concerns not us. We cannot believe that in any quarter, however humble or however lay, such a depth of infamy and folly can be found.

If it were, mark only the extent of the folly, leaving the baseness out of account. It concerns not Ireland—we suppose it to be said—what fetters are thrown around the Church in England. In the same way, if this were true, it would not concern England what fetters were thrown around the Church in Switzerland, in Austria, in Prussia, in France, and in the other countries of the world. But is this so? Does England act as if this were so? Of course not. When she wishes to enslave the Church in England, she looks out for precedents—she examines all other countries, high and low, great and small, near and remote. She rakes into the filthiest nooks and corners, in the smallest canton among the Alps, in hopes of finding the precedent by which to justify her meditated aggression. And if a precedent in Switzerland, if it can be found, is "of essential importance" to the English Cabinet in infamous designs against the Church in England, can any one be so besotted as to pretend that a precedent once well established in England, would be of no importance to the Cabinet when it shall please to meditate a descent upon the free Church of Ireland?

At present, the Church in these countries is freer than in any other part of the globe, the United States only excepted. But the Whig Government comes with stealthy pace, hoping to surprise the guardians of the Church asleep, drowned in ignominious indolence, and lulled by the pleasant murmur of flatteries and cajolery. This is what they hope. They count upon Irish apathy and indifference; upon Irish folly and blindness. They think the majority of Irish Bishops, Irish Clergy, and Irish laymen, will not have the sagacity to discern and the honesty to resist their brazen and insolent pretensions. They think they have it in their power, here also, to divide and govern. They think, above all, that the Episcopacy of Ireland will be silent, and that they will look on in silent disregard, while England ransacks every Cabinet of Europe for precedents to aid her in forging another precedent, which would, indeed, have a fatal application to the Church in Ireland.

But these anticipations, we feel certain, are ill-founded. The Irish Episcopacy, Clergy, and laity, will show that they are fully alive to the importance of this great question; will bestir themselves; will register their indignant protest against this audacious assumption throughout every diocese of Ireland before the Imperial Parliament resumes its sittings.

The case henceforward is clear. It is now officially certain that the English Government is raking in the Swiss Chanceries for precedents to establish in England a dominion over the Church which, in its turn, would serve as the very best of all possible precedents to establish dominion over the Church in Ireland!

THE NO-POPERY CRY IN ENGLAND.

(From the Tablet.)

Whatever be the result, nothing can come from this storm but unalloyed good to the Catholics of the empire. If we had gone down on our knees to beg a special benediction from Heaven, and could have conceived such outrageous folly as that perpetrated by our enemies, we should have implored the Almighty to bless us with the events of the last two months.

If the Whigs do not enact penal laws against us, what fools they have made of themselves, and how they will have dragged their darling Protestantism through the mire! What ignominy they will have drawn down upon the No-Popery fanatics! How, before twelve months are over, they will have made the anti-Catholic fanaticism stink in the nostrils of all men of sense! What a moral superiority they will have kindly awarded us; what a load of humiliation they will have taken upon themselves! Before they have done with this business they will find, much to