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London, Saturday, May 21, 1892.

HOME RULE AND THE IRISH NON-CONFORMISTS.

A cable dispatch gives the information that nine hundred and ninety-nine Irish Protestant non-conformist ministers have addressed to Mr. Gladstone "an appeal against an Irish Parliament and the subjection of great Protestant communities to Roman Catholic rule."

The Grand Old Man received this appeal as it deserved. He informed the appellants that the document they sent him gave him no new information.

He added that "it was suggested to him that this answer might be thought contemptuous; but though on other questions his mind may be open to change, on the subject of Home Rule it is not open. He is not to be moved from the position he has taken, by the prospect which some affect to see in the measure, that the majority will begin a religious persecution, or they will oppress the minority, or that a civil war will be the result of its passage, as a means of escape from persecution and oppression."

It is not now that we are for the first time made aware that the non-conformist clergy of Ireland are against Home Rule. Two Presbyterian General Assemblies already almost unanimously passed resolutions to the same effect as the present non-conformist appeal, and it is, indeed, well known that the Irish Orangemen who on this question represent, if they do not constitute, a majority of the adult Protestant population of Ireland, are also opposed to Home Rule on the same grounds which are put forward by the non-conformist clergy.

It is not disputed, then, that the majority of Irish Protestants pretend to fear that they will be persecuted if the majority in Ireland be permitted to rule; but we maintain that there are no grounds for such a supposition; and as the Protestants know this well, their opposition arises from some other motive than the fear of persecution.

What is the state of affairs which these nine hundred and ninety-nine non-conformist ministers wish to perpetuate? Do they wish for peace and plenty and prosperity for their country? Surely not. It is under the present alien rule that the people of Ireland are subjected to periodical famine without any efficacious means being adopted for their relief. The trade of the country has been destroyed for the benefit of English manufacturers, the population has been driven into exile, so that, notwithstanding the natural advantages of the country, the population is diminishing every year at a most alarming rate. The people are regularly deprived of the fruit of their own labor, by legislation which hands over to the absentee landlords their means of subsistence. They are deprived of the liberty of endeavoring, by constitutional agitation, to better their condition. If they attempt a public meeting for the purpose of agitating for relief from their grievances, they are beaten with the batons of the police, hewed down with the cutlasses of the military, or remorselessly shot, as was the case at Youghal, Ennis, Mitchelstown and elsewhere. Impoverished by cruel laws, they are evicted from their homes, irrespectively of age or sex or condition of health, and left to perish by the roadside, as has been the case in every county in Ireland over and over again. Irish patriots, whose only crime was that they endeavored by peaceable means to remedy these evils, have been sent to prison, where, by cruel treatment, they were tortured to death, as in the case of John Mandeville.

These are grounds sufficient in other countries to justify a people to rise in insurrection against their rulers; but according to these clergymen, Irishmen should submit to be ground down by such tyranny.

How different is the theology of the Presbyterian ministers of Scotland when but a small proportion of the population are subjected to similar oppression! When the Scotch Crofters were made to endure the like outrageous

treatment we witnessed the solemn pronouncement of the Moderator of the Assembly that the people have the first right to live upon their land, and the Assembly approved of this declaration, and legislative relief was extended without delay, while the people of Ireland are left to suffer.

Why is there this difference between the respective attitudes of Presbyterianism in Scotland and Ireland toward the impoverished and oppressed? Is it not because Ireland is Catholic, and Scotland Presbyterian? There are two measures of dealing with the oppressed: one for Presbyterian Scotland, another for Catholic Ireland.

All this is quite in accord with the Westminster Confession, which declares—having Catholics and Protestants especially in view—that whosoever shall publish or maintain "such erroneous opinions or practices as . . . are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church . . . may be proceeded against by the censures of the Church, and by the power of the civil magistrate." (Chapter 20.) Indeed, of all the forms of Christianity in existence, Presbyterianism alone has made "tolerating a false religion," that is to say, any religion except Presbyterianism itself, a "sin forbidden in the second commandment." (Larger Catechism, Q. 109.)

We cannot wonder at the course of the Irish non-conformists, especially as they are mostly Presbyterians, that they consider it to be their duty to persecute the Irish Catholics, while they pretend, with Pecksniffian sanctimoniousness, to be only afraid that they will be themselves persecuted if Home Rule be granted to a Catholic people.

Mr. Gladstone is worthy of all honor for his noble reply to their appeal to him, inasmuch as he has told them that he is not moved by their appeal to perpetuate the evils of Irish misgovernment. When he becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain—an event which is now near at hand—he promises to undo the work of centuries of oppression; and he will undoubtedly keep his promise. But the boon of Home Rule will not benefit the Catholics of Ireland only. The Protestants of Ulster groan under the same tyranny with their Catholic neighbors of Leinster, Munster and Connaught. Home Rule is a political, and not a religious, measure.

The statement of the non-conformist ministers that they would be subject to persecution is a shallow pretence. They have themselves been the persecutors in Ireland, and they were enabled to be so by the ascendancy which it was the policy of England hitherto to give them. They want that ascendancy still, but it must be taken from them, and all Irishmen must be made equal before the law. This is what Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule measure will effect, though it is just what the Pecksniffian appellants against Catholic dominancy do not wish for. The Catholics of Ireland will not be persecutors. The best evidence of this is their willingness to work in harmony with Protestants to regain Irish independence, and their readiness to elect Protestant representatives of Parliament for the most Catholic constituencies, provided only that in politics their principles are sound.

We must add, in justice to the English non-conformists, that they have no sympathy with the intolerance of their Irish co-religionists. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that not very long ago three thousand seven hundred and thirty dissenting ministers presented an address to Mr. Gladstone expressing "sympathy with him in his efforts to reconcile England and Ireland." Mr. Gladstone then said that "Ireland holds the key to legislation," and that "as soon as the terrible facts regarding the suffering in Ireland are brought home to the upright minds of the people of England, they will unite to redress the errors of the past."

These are the sentiments which will produce mutual confidence between the two nations and consign past differences to oblivion.

We are happy also in being able to say that there are many Irish Protestants of every denomination who are not in sympathy with the bigotry of the majority of their clergy. Through these Protestants, together with the Catholic Home Rulers, even an Ulster majority is in favor of Home Rule.

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP.

By a vote of 69 to 46, and the assent of the Governor, the Freedom of Worship Bill, which has been for some months under debate before the Legislature of New York State, has at last become law, notwithstanding the determined opposition raised against it by all the organized Know-Nothing Associations of the State.

The societies under the names of Patriotic Sons of America, and similar titles indicating a purpose to maintain American institutions, have for their real object the persecution of Catholics by every possible petty act of tyranny. In this respect they resemble the Orangemen and Equal Righters of Ontario. The same cry of Romish aggression was raised against the Freedom of Worship Bill which we were accustomed to hear on this side of the line, during the Equal Rights agitation against the Jesuits, and during the last Provincial election campaign; and the agitation has been as utter a failure in New York State as the similar one proved to be in Canada.

The Bill, as it finally passed the

Legislature, provides that in all houses of refuge, charitable and penal institutions which receive public moneys or municipal grants within the State, all persons who have been committed to such institutions, or who have been taken in charge therein, shall be "entitled to the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship without discrimination or preference."

"The holding of religious services on Sunday, and for private ministrations to the inmates in such manner as may best carry into effect the spirit and intent of this Act, and be consistent with the proper discipline and management of the institution" are also allowed in accordance with the methods and rites of the denominations to which the inmates belong.

It could scarcely be imagined that any who desire to place all religions on an equal footing before the law should object to these provisions: yet it has been the case that those from whose tongues the cry of "civil and religious liberty" has been most loudly uttered have been the opponents of this measure of justice.

There was an evil to be met. The persons who had managed to control the directors of many of the public institutions of the State, had in every instance kept the inmates from the free exercise of the Catholic religion, and in cases of illness had even refused free access of priests to Catholic inmates. The law will now correct this evil, and such gross violations of religious liberty will be punished if prosecuted before the Supreme Court.

We regret that one clause of the Bill as originally brought before the State Legislature was expunged, as it would strike a very salutary terror into those who would violate its provisions. The clause we refer to is as follows:

"The wilful violation of any of the provisions of this Act shall be deemed a misdemeanor."

Without a pretty severe penalty for disobedience, there will surely be attempts at violation of the law. It is in the nature of noisy pseudo "Equal Righters" to evade laws enforcing equal rights; and to secure the purpose of the law it may be necessary for the Legislature to pass another law before long, equivalent to the clause which has been thrown out. At all events the principle of religious equality has been formally recognized, and the judges will surely give no consideration that the law must be enforced by rigid penalties if it be deliberately violated. If they do not do this, the Legislature would be stultified before the world unless it pass a further remedial measure.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL SUCCESSES.

In connection with the statement so frequently made by several anti-Catholic journals of Ontario, including, of course, the Toronto Mail, that Catholic schools are necessarily inferior to the Public schools, it is interesting to learn that the parochial Catholic schools of Manchester, New Hampshire, have for the second time, within two successive years, secured a decisive victory in a competition with the Public schools, notwithstanding that the Public schools have all the advantage which State aid affords them, none of which is given to the Catholic schools.

Last June, in a public competitive examination held at the request of the Congressman of the District, Mr. Luther F. McKinney, the first, second and fourth places for general proficiency were gained by pupils of St. Joseph's High School, the names of the successful pupils being Michael Byron, John Conway and Joseph McDonough. In March last another examination was held in Boston for candidates for a Cadetship at West Point, under the authority of United States officers appointed by the War Department. Mr. McDonough, the fourth on the Manchester list, took the first place at the Cadets' examination, which was very strict, lasting four days; and on March 21st he was officially notified by the Adjutant-General at Washington that the Cadetship was won by him. He will be admitted to the West Point Military Academy without further examination on presentation of himself there on the 12th of June.

Mr. J. L. Hughes, of Toronto, who in some public lectures spoke deprecatorily of all Catholic schools, might also profit by taking a note of this event. Incidents of the same kind are very common in all parts of the United States, and they reflect great credit on the religious teachers who have charge of most of the parochial schools of which these successes have been reported. The Manchester Catholic High School is under charge of the Christian Brothers.

The success of religious teachers is

not really very surprising when it is borne in mind that they devote their lives to their work, whereas secular teachers generally regard school-teaching merely as a means to supply them with money enough to enable them to pursue, after a few years, some other calling. The religious teachers, besides, do their work through the supernatural motive of love for God, while secular teachers do it mostly because it affords them a respectable means to earn their living. The latter may indeed do their duty fairly and efficiently enough to satisfy the public; but their motive is not such as will animate them with the same zeal which characterizes the religious orders in the prosecution of their noble work.

ASCENSION THURSDAY.

The festival of the Ascension, which occurs this year on the twenty-sixth of this month, was instituted by the Church in remembrance of the glorious and triumphant ascension of our blessed Lord into heaven forty days after His resurrection from the grave.

The fact that He ascended is mentioned in the gospels of Sts. Mark and Luke, but the details are given more fully by St. Luke in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We are here informed that during the forty days that Christ remained on earth after His resurrection He appeared many times to His Apostles, speaking to them of the kingdom of heaven. As the Resurrection was the greatest of the miracles which our Lord wrought during His stay on earth, it was to be the most powerful proof of His divinity and of the truth of His saving doctrine. It was, therefore, necessary that His Apostles should have indubitable evidence of an event of so much importance. If He had remained but a few days on earth there might be some reason to suppose that the Apostles were mistaken in His identity, but there could be no mistake when He remained so long with them, preparing them for the work of preaching His Gospel to the whole world.

From St. Mark's gospel we learn that the commission to His Apostles to "go to the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" was given on the occasion of His last interview with them. He promised, moreover, that they would have the gift of working miracles as a proof of the truth of His doctrine:

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils: They shall speak with new tongues: They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover."

It was immediately after this discourse that "He was taken up to heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God."

The evangelist then informs us that the Apostles afterwards "going forth preached everywhere, the Lord co-operating with them, and confirming the work with signs that followed." We learn, however, from the Acts of the Apostles that they did not begin their preaching until after they had received the Holy Ghost on the feast of Pentecost, ten days after Christ's ascension into heaven, inasmuch as He commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until they should receive the Holy Ghost, after which event He said: "You will be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth."

The ascension of Jesus took place from Mount Olivet, which is about half way between Bethania and Jerusalem. Before His ascension He visited Bethania, where Martha and Mary resided with their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. His purpose in visiting Bethania we may safely judge to have been to pay a visit to this family, which He loved much, and to bring them to Mount Olivet that they might with His Apostles be witnesses of His ascension.

From the statement of the Gospel that Jesus "sitteth on the right hand of God," we are not to infer that God has the form of man. The Holy Scripture frequently speaks in a manner suited to the understanding of man. Thus in the Apocalypse St. John describes the throne of God, surrounded by saints and angels. This, however, is not to be taken literally as if there were actually a throne on which God is seated. It is a metaphor by which God is represented as the ruler of the universe, so when it is stated that Christ sits on the right hand of God, it is to signify that as God He is equal to His heavenly Father and that as man He is next to God in power and glory. Thus the Apostle St. Paul says God "the Father of glory raised Christ from the dead, and setting Him at His

right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality and power and virtue and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Eph. i, 20, 21.

St. Luke relates that at the moment of our Lord's Ascension, He lifted up His hands and blessed His Apostles. On this is founded the form of blessing which is retained in the Mass, in which the Bishop or priest who celebrates raises his hands towards heaven in supplication to Almighty God, and then with his right hand forms the sign of the cross towards the congregation, while invoking the adorable Trinity: "May the Almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost bless you. Amen." We learn from the ninth chapter of Leviticus and the forty-eighth chapter of Genesis, that under the old law, a blessing was imparted in the same way, with the exception that the sign of the cross was not used until the establishment of Christianity. There is good reason to believe that Christ Himself instituted the form of blessing with the sign of the cross. Theophylact positively asserts this to be the case, and it is stated by Saints Chrysostom and Augustine that the "sign of the Son of Man" which will appear in the heavens when Christ will come to judge mankind is "the sign of the cross."

The feast of the Ascension was instituted at a very early date. It was universally observed in the fourth century, and St. Augustine says that it was derived from a tradition coming from the Apostles. The importance of the feast arises from the fact that Christ's Ascension is the immediate cause of our salvation, for heaven was closed to mankind until Christ ascended into it. This is indicated by St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. 14), where Christ's Ascension into heaven is made the ground "of our confidence to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy."

We should therefore celebrate the feast of the Ascension with great thanksgiving to our Lord Jesus Christ, who, by His Ascension, "opened the kingdom of heaven to true believers," as is stated in the thanksgiving hymn which is known as the "Te Deum."

THE UNION JACK IN PROCESSIONS.

At the very moment when the Orangemen of Ulster are threatening dire rebellion against the throne of Great Britain if Mr. Gladstone be sustained at the coming general election, the Toronto brethren are agitating for the passing of a city-by-law requiring all processions to carry the Union Jack. It is in consequence of the intended visit of the Knights of St. John to the city that this agitation has been inaugurated, and the object is to throw suspicion upon the loyalty of that Catholic society. It is with an ill grace that the Orangemen claim a superabundance of loyalty in the face of the facts that the most disloyal demonstrations we have ever witnessed in Canada were Orange demonstrations, as when the father of Canadian Orangemen raised the black flag in Brockville on the occasion of the first visit of Lord Elgin to that town in his capacity as the Queen's representative. It was only a short time previously that an Orange mob burned down the Parliament buildings at Montreal.

It is also well within the memory of many of our readers that when the Prince of Wales visited Canada, in 1860, he was grossly insulted by Orange mobs at Kingston, Belleville, Millbrook and Toronto. In view of all this it is well understood that the present agitation about the carrying of the Union Jack is dictated simply by the desire to insult the Catholic body.

There is no reason to suppose that the Canadian Branches of the Knights of St. John will have any objection to carrying the Union Jack in their procession; but most of the visiting Branches of the order will be from the United States, and it would be in very bad taste to make any special law for them that they should hoist the Union Jack. If they think proper to do so as a mark of amity, their motive will be appreciated, but we would be grieved to find that they were made to carry it under compulsion, in virtue of a law made especially for them.

The Toronto World takes this common sense view of the matter, that "the act (of carrying the Union Jack in procession), which should be a proud and honorable distinction, would become a mere observance of a civic by-law, without any distinction whatever. For our part we would not like to see any man or body of men in this country carrying the national flag under compulsion. If they would not carry it freely and gladly, no act of ours should compel them to carry it."

The Globe also endorses this sentiment of the World, and says, further: "The movers in this matter are making the error of confounding cause and effect. Carrying a flag will not produce patriotism; but if it be not deprived of its significance by a compulsory by-law it may be an evidence of patriotism. Leave the matter to the

patriotism, courtesy, and common sense of the processionists."

It is undeniable that there is in Ontario a certain amount of annexationist feeling, which, however, is not so considerable as to be termed a movement toward political union with the United States. This feeling is by no means confined to persons of any religion in particular, nor to those of any special race; and it has shown itself more markedly than elsewhere in the very Protestant counties of Oxford and Brant. It is a piece of un-called for insolence on the part of the Toronto Orangemen to single out the occasion of the projected visit of the Knights of St. John as a pretext for the enactment of a compulsory law for a special exhibition of patriotism. If the society were purely Canadian, such a law would not be so exceedingly objectionable as it would undoubtedly be to visitors from a foreign country. By all means leave them free to pay a tribute to Canada by raising the flag of the country, if they see fit to do so, but there should be no compulsion.

IS MARRIAGE A FAILURE?

Christianity placed marriage into a new position among the Gentile nations when they became converted to the faith. It is a sacred ordinance of divine institution on which depends the welfare of society, and so we are told by our Lord that "God hath joined together" the married couple, and that man must not put them asunder. It is a consequence of this that marriage should be always celebrated with religious solemnity and prayerfully, as is the practice of the Catholic Church. But the whimsical Salvation Army is putting this sacrament before its votaries in altogether another light, making it the occasion, apparently, for a dime museum exhibition of monstrosities. There was one of these shows in Toronto last week, in the marriage of "Staff-Captain Freidrich to Captain Meta Lemon." A great crowd assembled to see the fun, and when the doors of Albert street temple were opened there was a general rush for seats after the style of the variety theaters, and the huge building was filled to its utmost capacity.

The bride was attended by three Salvation girls, of whom one was the bride's sister.

"Captain" Horn was groomsmen, and "Commissioner" Rees united the couple, according to the method used by the Army. As the usual custom is to take up a collection to make up a dowry for the bride, we presume this feature was not omitted on this occasion, though on this point we cannot speak with certainty.

When the ceremony was completed the new husband was called upon by the noisy throng to sing. He responded by stepping forward to the front of the platform, and singing the hymn beginning,

"I have found a pearl of greatest price My heart doth bound with joy."

The audience was moved at this moment to loud laughter, and the singing was completely drowned in the uproar. The young man very quietly told them he could not sing while they made so much noise, and some kind of order was at last restored. The song was then finished, and the bride, being called upon, made a short speech. She was simply yet neatly attired.

Surely if it were not for the law of the land, which by wisely defining the social duties of a married couple ensures a certain amount of respect for the institution of marriage, very little regard would be felt by a couple for the contract entered into under such laughter-exciting circumstances.

The religious and sacred character of the institution is completely ignored at a ceremony like this, and it is no wonder that the tendency is, among Protestants, to regard marriage as a mere temporary arrangement which may be cancelled at will by the contracting parties, subject only to the limitations which are imposed by the laws of the land. Is it any wonder that marriages so contracted should be "a failure?"

In spite of all this, we hope the newly-married couple may be prosperous and happy.

THE NORTH-GUAGE A SCHOOL.

Mr. Dalton met at the suppression and the French West, collapsed ignominiously on Wednesday inst. When the consideration of the Bill, it was necessary was expected to keen debate, Co that the question till after the ready

After the really moved the Bill, and a still minutes, as it tion that he w with an eno Carthy was se the situation, ing into his d and the memb pecting him to last the spea motion be members joul and nays, and members." I joined, and put an end to in the membe

THE SITUATION.

The National Federation have addressed a stilted friends of Home Ru this continent to assu by sending in cont the establishment of to be used for the Nationalists during eral election in Irel

We are reminded tion of the Tory every seat in Irelan between the poverty the discussions amo ists, the solid phat Nationalist members be broken up, and s least, be captured by

The present is a period in Irish hist now have the claim recognized by the Scotland and Wales before has the symp British party been listed in favor of ju at the present momen completely demora trupted series of have experienced a and the London m and unless the peop selves, at the critica cause by perpetuat of the past two ye certain. Mr. Glad tained by a good from every part o and a satisfactory is sure to follow.

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wish that the un healed, and tha bickering of the p forgiven on both s this point have be that we can scarc with the expecta ences will be general election the country, but penetrate to the who can influen would recommen ence between the that the breach m it is too late.

We are please recent speech de McCarthy before that gentleman o tion that the pro ist party are muc they have ever tunate split which two hostile camps

It may be pr Carthy knows of and that there standing betwee two factions, in p Nationalists will impending elect front. If this b have no doubt th be victorious. T tions that this certain negotiat recently going are not over-sa tions, as there acrimony displa ers of the two p