

and confirming the Bull of his predecessor? "I answer (in the words of Father Tom Burke) that Alexander's letter is a forgery as well as Adrian's. I grant that there are learned men who admit the Bull of Adrian and Alexander's rescript, but there are equally learned men who deny that Bull and I have as good reasons to believe one as the other, and I prefer to believe it was a forgery." Strong words these but the judgment they express is by no means unfounded as a slight examination of historical facts will prove. For it could not be said of Alexander, as it has sometimes been declared of Adrian, that he knew not the man with whom he had to deal. Henry had supported the antipopes against Alexander himself, and had caused every Englishman to renounce his allegiance to this Pontiff, and it is very improbable to say the least, that he would have sent this ungovernable monarch to settle the affairs of the Church in Ireland. Alexander's opinion of Henry may be gleaned from one of his letters in which he addresses the following severe rebuke to the king: "Instead of remedying the disorder caused by your predecessors, you have added prevarication to prevarication; you have oppressed the Church and endeavored to destroy the canons of apostolical men." And it is this turbulent monarch who had proved himself a very thorn in the side of the Roman Pontiff; it is this unscrupulous king whose hands were still red with the blood of the martyred à Becket; it is this monster of cruelty, this incestuous defender of an adulterous traitor, whom the Vicar of Christ is said to have sent to Ireland as an apostle of morality. Surely, absurdity is stamped on the face of such an assertion. It is worthy of remark, too, that the rescript of Alexander III. is dated from Rome, yet at this very period, the Pope, owing to the troublesome times, did not reside at Rome, but successively at Tusculum, Segni and Ferrari. Three letters from Alexander to the Irish Bishops, written about the same date as that assigned to this Bull of confirmation, were dated from Tusculum. Why, then, was his Bull dated from Rome?

There is still another standpoint from which this question must be regarded.

Was Adrian IV. a Pope likely to grant such a request as Henry demanded of him? Certainly not. Adrian was a model of virtue, a man whose personal merit and sanctity had elevated him from the lowest rank in life to the Chair of St. Peter, in which exalted position, as historians unanimously testify, he ever distinguished himself by his noble and lofty sentiments and his scrupulous zeal in the discharge of the duties of his sublime station. Is it credible, then, that a Pope, so remarkable for the sanctity of his life and the purity of his views, so zealous for the cause of religion and the welfare of his spiritual children, should have granted so extraordinary a privilege to the turbulent king of England, to the spiritual and temporal detriment of so Christian a people as the Irish? Could he, the common father of Christians, have acted so carelessly concerning a matter of such vital importance to the Irish race—a race famed alike for its saints, its science and its glorious history? Assuredly not. He refused a similar request from Louis of France; why, then, should he grant so signal a favor to Henry of England to whom he was indebted for nothing, and from whom he had nothing whatever to expect?

Father Tom Burke goes a step further. He proves that the Church in Ireland did not stand in need of reform at all; that in fact, it was more prosperous in every respect than the Church in England at the same time. It is true, he tells us in his first lecture in answer to Froude, that 300 years of war with the Danes had sadly demoralized the Irish Church. But immediately after these wars had ceased, a great religious revival took place among clergy and people, and Ireland once more proved herself worthy of her glorious title of "insula sanctorum et doctorum." While three Irish saints, St. Malachi, St. Celsus, and St. Lawrence O'Toole, reigned together in the Church, Irish monks again became famous for sanctity and science, and bore to foreign lands the sister lights of faith, civilization and learning. Indeed, so prosperous and peaceful was the condition of the Church in Ireland, just previous to the Norman invasion, that it drew forth the highest expressions of praise from Lanfranc and St. Anselm, Archbishops