

turned. Three of the scholastics managed to cling to the boat until aid reached them, but he whom they all loved, the fair-haired young singer of the month of June, sank in the cruel waves.

Up to the present hour all efforts to find the body have been unavailing. May the sweet Sacred Heart of Jesus that he served so well have mercy on him, and grant unto him eternal rest.

OLD MORTALITY.

IRELAND'S GREAT DANGER.

The gravest danger of the present crisis is this—that it may end in putting distrust, and, it may be, discord, between Ireland and Rome, and thus effect what centuries of bitterest persecution failed to accomplish. In the Catholic view this is the greatest of all calamities, since it leads directly to the weakening or loss of faith—that is, to the ruin of souls, whose salvation is the Church's end and "reason to be"; and it deprives us of "that sole but incomparable glory" which places Ireland in the front rank of Catholic nations.

No man is worthy of the name and fame of Catholic Ireland who would not rather see the last of his race perish than that she should lose this priceless possession. While, therefore, there is time and opportunity, all who can think, or speak, or write to any good purpose on this momentous question of "Rome and Ireland," should add their quota to the public fund. It would be a capital mistake to imagine that discussion and action should be left to our spiritual chiefs. They must lead, certainly; but what is the use of their leading if we are not prompt to follow? And their initiative will be the more courageous if they know themselves to be backed by a loyal and devoted people. We must also bear in mind that we are not bound by the strict discipline which controls ecclesiastics. The military oath is the most binding of all sanctions in the secular order: it does not bind half so strictly as the obligations of ecclesiastics to each other and to the Church. The Archbishop of Dublin, no matter what he thinks, no matter how true it may be, cannot tell the Bishop of Limerick "Your teaching is rash, your methods are shockingly and ruinously wrong," for the Church must, as far as possible, present herself to the people as an unity, not only in essentials but in mixed questions. But we are free to say to Dr. O'Dwyer, "Your class has been the ruin of Ireland for the last fifty years, and the day is at hand when in self-defence the people whom you have betrayed, in conjunction with Rome, whom you have deceived and misled, will bring to an end your power of injuring them."

Before treating the policy of the recent decisions, it may be well to see what we are taught of the nature of the Papal authority and our relations with it. It is our duty no less than our right to analyze the situation, and so to discuss it as to leave the Holy Father, in his supreme office of chief teacher and ruler of all baptized Christians, untouched by the controversy, however strongly we may dissent from certain acts of his administration.

The imperishable authority and inerrancy of the See of Peter is the greatest gift of God; a possession, a privilege of each one of us, as much as of the Pope himself, or of the great dignitaries who surround his throne. The last child admitted into the Christian family has a direct interest in the Church's action; suffers or rejoices as it is free and beneficent, or hampered by incongruous associations, or by personal defect in her ministers. One and all, we are bound to acknowledge the gift with deepest gratitude, to prize it above all things, and to accept its teachings and ministrations with reverence and docility. Any estimate of the Holy Father's place and office less than the highest would be philosophically irrational, theologically false, and morally bad. And as the Church is the greatest of God's gifts to men, being the mode and channel through which all that is best comes to us, so the Pope, who is her concrete expression, should be the object of our deepest gratitude, veneration, and love. No human feeling can in his regard be too ardent; no expression of his majesty, beneficence, and power, exaggerated. The supernatural being the complement and perfection of the natural, we turn to its source with unbounded confidence and love. The Chair of Peter is the point at which the heavens touch the earth; the one thing perfect in a world of imperfections; the divine influence, without which mankind becomes little better than a herd of swine; and by the power

of which he is rendered capable of attaining to the dignity of angels.

But while we exalt and magnify the sacred person and office of the Vicar of Christ, while we render to him gladly and truly the best homage of mind and heart, we are all the more jealous of what may be done in his name which does not bear the character of truth, and which, therefore, cannot have the marks or authority of his teaching power; and still more do we resent the injustice which has, in regard to Ireland, been associated with his august name. Now, it would be mere folly to ignore the fact that a large and powerful element in the Roman administration is hostile to Ireland. Forty years ago Cardinal Cullen, then Superior of the Irish College in Rome (Letters to Dr. Maginn, B. of Derry), denounced the English intrigues at the Vatican as vigorously as could the extreme Nationalist at the present day; and the English intriguer had a Roman confederate then, as he has now a Cardinal Simeoni or Monaco. Look at the insulting terms of the Propaganda Rescript. "Parnell and his crew;" the Irish Church and people likened to scum; hangers-on, lacqueys, a worthless horde, unworthy of consideration! Then, the tender consideration for the "distinguished persons exposed to insult," while writing to a people whom the "distinguished persons" were engaged doing to death! The utter ignorance shown by this notorious letter of every fact and principle of the Irish movement is evidence as well of a mass of ingrained anti-Irish prejudice, which is capable of any mischief to Ireland and to the legitimate authority of the Holy See. It is evidence also of the fact that a large section of the Roman administration is accessible to English influence, and, we may suppose, without any fear of rash judgment, to English gold. Of his own money the Duke of Norfolk is said to have given this year in Rome £15,000; how much more of secret service money? God forbid that any Catholic should think or say that the Sacred College or the higher officials were exposed to such base influences. They are aged men, lifted far above human ambitions, having no family obligations or ties to make them worldly or selfish. But there are in Rome a crowd of clerics, neither priests nor laymen, supporting a hard existence on the pittance the robbery of the Church has left them. To numbers of these what we consider poverty would mean affluence; to some the English sovereign is more lustrous and valuable than the Sun of Justice. Now, in a bureau no one can tell who rules; in most cases it is not the nominal chief. Lord Hammond ruled every English Foreign Secretary for forty years, though his name never appeared at the foot of a treaty. And we cannot tell whose influence framed the Propaganda Circular or the Decisions of the Holy Inquisition. As to the moral nature and effect of the last, we may leave them to the Irish Church for final decision. As to their public aspect, I may ask again questions put before, and these should be repeated till the answers come: 1. Who asked the Holy Inquisition for the decisions? 2. Who prepared and presented the cases? 3. Who represented the Irish tenant when his conduct and fate were being decided? 4. Why were the Decisions first given to the London press, to be used to our wounding, and not to the Irish bishops, to be dealt with according to the proper ecclesiastical order? It must be further observed: The Decisions were given in accordance with the information and advice of the Irish Church or against them. The former supposition cannot stand, as we know the minds of Dr. Croke and Dr. Walsh, and of the majority of the prelacy whom they represent. If against the advice of those men—who may be said to hold the Irish nation in their hands—by whose advice was the folly perpetrated?

We need not fear to speak plainly if we speak truly. The Irish people have lived by truth; the Church has nothing to fear from its fullest expression, but everything to gain. She has all truth in the supernatural order for her inheritance and possession, and all truth in the natural order for her handmaid. She has been charged with obscuratism by those whose father was "a liar from the beginning." Yet nothing can be more opposed to her interest or her practice, properly understood. There is no kind of truth which may not be made to minister to her work, not one in the least degree hostile. Whether it be truth philosophical or metaphysical, scientific or historical, every kind subserves her purpose and supports her claims, if judiciously used.

Now, I maintain that the historical statement of the Irish question, done scientifically, is decisive of our cause. No