

stand or fall—or rather for ever to stand; for as to falling, the Union was to fall too if the Establishment so guaranteed should ever fail to be maintained. . . . *The Church defenders admittedly had the best case*, but Mr. Gladstone had the logic of big battalions on his side." This is the Protestant case stated impartially by an eminent Roman Catholic, whose early death we all deplore; but viewed from the Orangeman's standpoint there were other considerations which helped to intensify its force and to give Disestablishment the appearance not merely of "a violated treaty," but of a violation perpetrated under conditions of base ingratitude. The personality of Mr. Gladstone was felt very distinctly throughout the controversy, and the indignation and contempt of the sturdy and independent northern Protestants were poured upon himself and his measure in a perfect torrent of eloquent invective. He was frequently burnt in effigy holding the obnoxious Bill in his hand, and it was noted on one occasion as ominous that while the effigy burnt freely enough the Bill remained intact. Nearly everybody was excited. Presbyterians and Methodists made common cause with their Episcopalian brethren, and altogether the scene was suggestive of the stormy days of Catholic emancipation: but singular enough, of the literature to which the Disestablishment agitation gave birth only one famous saying lives in the popular memory, and it is that which stands at the head of this paper. It involves a question of historic accuracy, and, although interesting for other reasons, it is chiefly on this ground that I think it ought to be settled.

The saying has given rise to a great deal of controversy and no small amount of actual misrepresentation; and as I now find it, taken out of its original setting, I think the time has come when I may venture upon the task of settling the matter definitely, and particularly so as I happen to be the only one living capable of speaking decisively on the subject. A life-long friend of mine, and one for whom I cherish a very high regard, Mr. John White, of Newbliss, sent me a few days ago a copy of the *Daily Express* (December 19, 1885), and at a great Loyalist demonstration in Armagh the subject of "Kicking the Crown into the Boyne" was thus referred to:—

The Rev. Richard Graham seconded the resolution. He said that he believed the Orange party never suffered more than when a gentleman made the lamentable speech about *kicking the Queen's crown into the Boyne*. Hundreds of times he had seen the speech, quoted by such journals as the *Freeman* and *United Ireland*.

Several Voices—No Orangeman ever said such a thing.

Rev. Mr. Graham—It has been quoted.

A Voice—Mr. Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, said it.

Another Voice—You could not believe a word *United Ireland* or the *Freeman's Journal* says. (Cheers.)

Bro. T. G. Peel, in proposing a vote of thanks to the chairman, emphatically denied that any Orangeman ever used the expression of "Kicking the Queen's Crown into the Boyne." The man who was said to have used the expression was the *Rev. John Flanagan*, in the Botanic Gardens, in Belfast. He (Bro. Peel) was standing beside Mr. Flanagan on that occasion, and no such expression had been used. (Cheers.) It was a fabrication. Orangemen were incapable of saying the Queen's crown should be kicked into the Boyne. (Cheers.)

It was doubtless Mr. White's surprise on reading the above report that caused him to mark the paper and send it to me, because he was himself present when the alleged threat was made. It is curious to observe from the above report that several deny the statement *in toto*; others put it to the credit of Mr. Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, while another very worthy and intelligent gentleman supposes it to have had its origin in the Botanic Gardens, Belfast. The facts are these: There was an Orange soiree held in the Town Hall of Newbliss early in the spring of 1868, and among the speakers on that occasion was the Reverend John Flanagan, the eloquent rector of the parish in which the town is located. Mr. Flanagan was a distinguished scholar of Trinity College, Dublin, and at the time referred to held the position of Deputy Grand Chaplain of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, a circumstance that added greatly to the importance of his utterances on the question of Disestablishment.

The reverend gentleman was a remarkably fluent and eloquent extempore speaker, and holding ultra-Conservative views on most subjects, he expressed himself with great force and was specially indignant at the threatened spoliation of the Church to which he belonged. During the course of that memorable address in the Newbliss Town Hall he dealt pretty freely with the perfidy which had characterized the conduct of James II.; his violation of his coronation oath and the result of having had his crown kicked into the Boyne. Mr. Flanagan expressed unbounded loyalty to Her Gracious Majesty, and could hardly bring himself to believe that she would ever be induced to sign the Act of Disestablishment. I was then correspondent for the *London Central News*, as well as correspondent of the leading metropolitan papers, including the *Freeman's Journal*. I took a very full short-hand report of the speech, and in due course sent a full summary of it to

the papers. The *Freeman's Journal* by some mistake dated my despatch from Enniskillen, and wrote a very inflammatory editorial presumably based on the report, and amongst other things charging the Rev. Mr. Flanagan and the Ulster Orangemen with threatening to kick the Queen's crown into the Boyne. There was hardly a paper in the kingdom that did not follow the *Freeman's* lead and attack the speech in some form or other. Many of the papers called the speaker "the Flaming O'Flanagan," a designation that was kept up with great pertinacity ever afterwards, notwithstanding Mr. Flanagan's emphatic disavowal of the statements charged against him. The *London Times* called him "a clerical firebrand," and other papers were hardly less complimentary. Mr. Flanagan wrote a disclaimer to the *Freeman*, but that paper refused to give it publicity, and finally the matter was brought up in the House of Commons by Mr. McCarthy Downing, M.P. for Cork, and in reply the Attorney-General of that day said he was not able to inform the House whether or not Mr. Flanagan had been correctly reported, but he promised to make inquiry. Mr. Flanagan, however, wrote to the Queen assuring Her Majesty of his own unfaltering loyalty and profound attachment, and assuring Her Majesty of the unswerving devotion of the loyal Orangemen of Ireland to her throne and person. Mr. Flanagan complained of the report itself to the extent that "the titbits," as he expressed it, of his speech had been selected, and that there was a very clever combination of the *disjecta membra* of his address; but as this is true of any summary whatever, it lacked force, and as he never impugned, so far as I am aware—and we afterwards talked the matter over frequently—the general accuracy of my report, I never felt called upon to enter into the discussion. To my mind the innuendo was very distinct indeed, and perhaps, in the heat of an eloquent and fiery extempore address, was much stronger than the speaker intended that it should be. At all events he never said, either on behalf of himself or anybody else, that he would "kick the Queen's crown into the Boyne." The reverend gentleman passed over to the great majority some years ago, and it is but an act of justice to his memory to repudiate the disloyalty preferred against him, and to add that the charge, so far as the Orangemen have been identified with it, is as baseless as that other historic fiction which represents them as seeking to divert the succession in favour of the Duke of Cumberland. I will just add that this memorable incident is now for the first time given correctly in this issue of THE WEEK.

ROBERT KER.

### MR. GLADSTONE'S IRISH POLICY.

THAT the Government and Parliament of Great Britain should be so cowed by a display of disorderly violence in the House of Commons, or by an agrarian conspiracy which dare not show its head in the field, as to think of submitting to the dismemberment of the nation, would beforehand have seemed incredible. Still more incredible would it have seemed that the British statesmen should be bidding against each other for the votes of rebels, and of rebels who are in open alliance with the foreign enemies of the realm. But such, once more, is Party Government. It everywhere sinks the character of the public men below the general character of the nation. They enter public life by the gate of insincere professions, they lay down upon the threshold their integrity with their independence, and when they have entered they must subsist by faction and intrigue. In England are hundreds of thousands of honest and patriotic men whom nothing could induce to do what the political leaders are doing. While in high places there has been a series of scenes of shame, not a single private soldier, not a single Irish policeman, however pressed and tempted, has swerved or flinched from duty. But among the politicians the collapse of character is as complete, as astounding, and as disastrous as was the military collapse of France in 1870.

What Mr. Gladstone has been doing is, unhappily, no longer doubtful. Craving still for power, bent on appropriating to himself the credit of settling the Irish question, and feeling that his time was short, he, when disappointed of a clear Liberal majority, determined to turn out the Government by the help of the Parnellite vote; and with that object in view he proceeded, through his son, to float a proposal for an Irish Parliament. That he also laid his scheme before Royalty, of which he is not a constitutional adviser, is as yet unproved, and it is hardly conceivable that an aged statesman, however restless might be his ambition, should have so far disregarded the rules of Constitutional Government. His proposal appears to have been repelled by the best among the other Liberal chiefs. They see, no doubt, among other things, that Mr. Parnell is not likely ever to be so strong again as he is now, and that patience, though it may not suit an aspirant in his seventy-seventh year, is the best policy for the country. But Mr. Gladstone has already done irreparable mischief, and he has still