

THE MOST VEXED QUESTION.

Under this heading the Gazette of the 5th May returns to its attack upon the Home Rule policy of Mr. Gladstone; but does so in a more transparent manner than ever. Under the mantle of its phraseology it but poorly conceals the symbol of its purpose. The writer flings a thin veil of sophistry over the issue, but through the flimsy gauze the evil-eyed monster of Toryism glares out, and the creature's expression is rendered only the more hideous and vindictive by the tissue of fair words that drop between it and the observer. It is not the Liberal-conservatism of to-day that we perceive; it is that spirit of ultra-Toryism that loves to haunt the aisles of aristocracy, or autocracy, to lurk amidst ruins and hold communion with the owls. It cannot bear the day-light of progress, the advance of civilization, the broadening of ideas, the coming forth from the catacombs of effete tyrannies and the emerging into the sun-rays of justice, honest rule and popular rights. It has fed upon the disunion of Irishmen and has thrived upon their sufferings; it cannot bear to see its life-fool disappear and its only support vanish. It cries out disunion where harmony exists; it points to precedents where they are seen through the reversed telescope of its falsehood and appear heels up and head down, the reverse of their truthful position. Behold its argument!

"There has always been a part of Presbyterian Ireland more mindful of disabilities endured in common with Roman Catholics than of any advantage ever gained by Protestant ascendancy. Ulster Presbyterians took a signal part in the rebellion of 1798 until religious was added to political and racial strife. Some persevered in the cause of the insurgents to the bitter end. After the accomplishment of the Union, Presbyterians joined in the repeal movement; Presbyterians took a leading share in the Parliamentary reform agitation."

This is true, and it is in the fact that all Ulster is not Protestant nor is the majority of it; that all Ulster Protestants are not Unionists, nor are the Home Rulers amongst them few in number, that the Gazette sees the dangerous rock upon which the anti-Irish party is fast rushing and that it seeks to turn the rudder in mid-current by any means available. Referring to the conclusion adopted by the majority of the Presbyterians the article says:

"How potent that majority is compared with the dissentient minority, those who know anything of that important body have not to be told. The deputation from the General assembly which met Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Henry James a few weeks ago to protest against the Home Rule bill represented the intellect, influence and standing of the Presbyterian church in Ireland in a sense to which the counter deputation can by no means claim."

In the first place, we deny the superiority either in intellect, influence or standing of the one over the other; the sole superiority (if there be any) is in numbers—and taking the Presbyterian body of Ulster as a whole, that majority in favor of Balfourian tactics is small indeed. But admitting these statements to be true, let us employ the Gazette's argument in another field! "How potent that majority" of Irishmen all over the country, that vast, that ubiquitous majority, in favor of Home Rule, "compared with the dissentient minority" of Orange Ulster Unionists. "The deputation" of Home Rule members from all over Ireland "represent the intellect, influence and standing" of the Irish representatives "in a sense to which" the counter envoys, or the handful of anti-Home Rule members, "can by no means claim." These are almost the Gazette's own words; this is its argument in a nut-shell—an argument that

all the world knows applies to the present Irish Parliamentary party as the exponent of the views, wishes, hopes and aspirations of the whole Irish race. We exclude only the few northern blusters, who, instigated by Balfour, Salisbury, Saunderson and Company, exhibit their intellect in street riots, their influence in rowdiness, and their standing in the bravado of the bully and the subsiding of the coward.

But the worst stroke from the dagger of this anti-Home Ruler is yet to come. After telling its readers that the English and Scotch Catholics know nothing by experience of the situation in Ireland (a very poor compliment to a body of people living within calling distance—as it were—of each other) the article proceeds thus:

"Besides, the English Catholic is not the Irish Catholic; neither is the Scottish. What either of these excellent Christians might be or do in an England or Scotland where Protestants were few it boots not to enquire. As to the case of the Irish Catholic, no hypothesis is needed."

Are we to conclude from this that Irish Catholics do not come within the category of "excellent Christians?" Or are we to deduce from these remarks that were the Catholics in a majority in England or Scotland they would deal unfairly with their Protestant fellow-countrymen? We can find no other meaning in the language used; and if such is the meaning intended to be conveyed, then we say that historically and in every other wise are the conclusions false. In no land—not in Ireland, not in England or Scotland, in the days of Catholic power in these countries, can we find a single example of legislative tyranny on the part of the Catholics. The insinuation—for it is a mean one—is unworthy of any impartial mind or honest pen. The writer, echoing the arguments of the Unionist politicians, raises the cry of fear—a fear that vengeance for past injuries would be poured out upon the heads of the party so long in tyrannic ascendancy. However, he says:

It is, doubtless, satisfactory to know that a small fraction of Presbyterians and Unitarians (and there is also a quota of Anglicans and Methodists) contemplate without apprehension the passage and enforcement of the Home Rule bill."

But he qualifies this partial admission as follows:

"It may, perhaps, be admitted that the reflection that Ireland was so long a land of Protestant ascendancy and that Catholics, having succeeded to the post of vantage which their numbers constitutionally gave them, will also seek to establish an ascendancy based on religion."

There is no reason in the world for admitting any such thing. Sufficient safeguards against any danger to the religious minority have been given, and in no way could a Catholic majority domineer over the Protestants of the country. This all the honest, conscientious, and patriotic Protestants admit. Against these legal and constitutional safeguards the Gazette advances this childish argument:

"But the voice of the past—the past of the British Isles especially—is full of warning against excessive trust in professions of generosity by religious bodies endowed with power, whencesoever derived."

The fact is that the ghosts of evil deeds haunts the Unionist faction. Like the murderer, who well remembers every detail of his crime and every step that led up to it, they reckon upon the same course being taken by the once cruelly crushed majority of that unhappy country. But they forget that Ireland is Catholic—not Orange,—that the teachings of the Catholic Church is to return good for evil; that the people are not

animated with souls of vengeance; that they simply seek to escape from beneath the iron heel of their oppressors; that they are combined with the best and truest elements of Irish Protestantism; that these Protestant Home Rulers are, in themselves, a safeguard for their more bigotted and less patriotic co-religionists; and that the Catholics have ever practised the principles laid down by Longfellow, to

"Let the dead past bury its dead."

In spirit of faith, in principle of action, in theory and in practice, the Catholics of Ireland, Scotland and England are the same; otherwise they are but Catholic in name. This article comes with a bad grace from the Gazette: it indicates a smouldering hatred, the fires of which the organ dare not let flame too strongly, lest they might consume itself. It is not mere anti-Irishism, nor mere anti-Catholicism, that dictated such a covert attack upon the character, principles and honesty of a whole race: it comes from a deep-rooted political prejudice, alien to Canada but fostered in the old land. If the writer imagines that the importation of such ideas and principles into the Canadian arena will benefit the cause of those espousing them here, he is dreadfully mistaken. Come out squarely if you choose against the principle of Home Rule—thereby condemning our own existing constitution—and bear the consequences, but don't try to "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds."

We remember well, many years ago, in good old Quebec, a remarkable incident that took place on the occasion of the *Fete Dieu*, or Procession Sunday. The route of the procession was in front of the Anglican Cathedral, and while the Host was being carried past, the beautiful chime from the belfry of the Anglican temple, played the *Adeste Fideles*, in honor of the solemn act of devotion that the Catholic citizens were performing. It was one of these acts of courtesy, one of these spontaneous tributes that leave a lasting impression upon the observer. On last Sunday afternoon, when the remains of Salvageman O'Rourke were being carried to Cote des Neiges, as the funeral cortege passed in front of the Anglican Cathedral of Montreal, the bell tolled a requiem salute—another of those tributes, paid to an Irish Catholic, and to a man to whom the whole city should feel indebted and whose memory should be green in the grateful hearts of all Montrealers. Such acts of sympathy and kindly sentiment deserve more than a mere passing recognition; they serve to bind all classes together in a union of mutual fellowship that should exist, above all in a country like this. The tolling of those bells seems to us like the prelude to an anthem of peace, or rather like the death-knell of bigotry. Long may the spirit thus displayed reign in our fair Dominion.

We publish elsewhere an account of Bishop Emard's reception in Ireland. The following account of His Lordship's return to Valleyfield is from the pen of one of his flock:

"His Lordship Bishop J. M. Emard arrived home on Monday evening from Rome, after an absence of over four months; about twenty-five of the leading citizens went as far as Malone, N.Y., to meet him, including the Mayors of the town and the parish. On his arrival at the station here over one thousand people were in waiting, and a procession of nearly a mile in length was formed, the hand leading, escorted by mounted Zouaves. In the carriage with his Lordship sat the Revd. Mr. Santoir, Administrator of the Diocese, with the Bishop's secretary and the Mayor of the town. Arrived at the Cathedral a hymn was chanted, when his Lordship was con-

ducted to his throne and an address read by the Mayor of the town. The address being in French the Mayor spoke in English, assuring his Lordship of the hearty concurrence of those speaking that language in the sentiments contained in the address, and of their happiness in uniting with their French speaking brethren on that occasion. His Lordship responded with that ability and appropriateness which is one of the secrets of the great love and esteem of his flock for him. The ceremony was ended by the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the giving of the Papal Benediction by his Lordship and Te Deum. In his response, in English, his Lordship gave a short account of his visit to Ireland and how he had been presented with an address at Lurgan, not far from Belfast. In responding to that address he read to the people the one which was presented to him, as he said, by the son of an Irishman, Mayor of his episcopal town, on the day he left for Rome. This announcement brought out about the greatest cheering he had ever heard. He visited the grave of O'Connell, and saw where Parnell and all the great Irishmen were buried. He also said Mass over where O'Connell's heart lies in Rome, and celebrated Mass on the 17th March in the Irish college there. His Lordship's voyage was a continual success, terminating with one of the most hearty welcomes home that any prelate could desire to receive. It may well be said that Bishop Emard truly loves his flock, and in return is loved by them with all their hearts."

IN CONNECTION with Sir Mount Stuart Duff's book about Ernest Renan, the London Universe recalls the following anecdote related of Victor Hugo:

"In his senility the puffed-up man of genius was called upon by the baronet, and had no better inspiration than to tell him they—meaning himself principally—had made an attack on Catholicity, another word for Christianity, and that there would soon be an end of that religion. To the demand what would replace it, the answer was, "God, the soul, responsibility." Shortly after the poet retired to rest. Catholicity still exists, and the aged charlatan of philosophy has long since descended to the quietude of his vault in the Pantheon. There is no sign of the decadence of Catholicity."

Blessing a New Bell.

There was a pretty ceremony in the basement of the new Church of the Blessed Sacrament, on Mount Royal avenue, at four o'clock Sunday afternoon. It was the blessing of a new bell intended for the church. The bell itself was gaily attired in silk, satin and decked with flowers. It rested on a stand in the sanctuary and from it hung multicolored ribbons which the sponsors pulled to ring the bell. His Grace the Archbishop presided over the religious ceremony. Among the sponsors were the Mayor and Madame Desjardins, Judge and Madame Jette, and Madame Grenier, Ald. and Miss Villeneuve, ex-Ald. and Madame Rolland, Dr. L. E. and Madame Desjardins. The church was crowded.

Changes in St. Ann's Parish.

The Rev. John Catulle, parish priest of St. Ann's Church, who left on March 19 for Rome, will leave Liverpool, for Montreal on May 25. He has been appointed by the Superior General of the Redemptorist Order, as visitor to the two Houses of the Order in Canada and two in the West Indies. This creates a vacancy in St. Ann's parish, which has been filled by the appointment of Rev. Father Bancart who was born in Bruges, Belgium, in 1850, and was educated in that city. He was ordained a secular priest in 1875, and continued his work near his native place until about three and a half years ago, when he was sent to Montreal, and has since become attached to St. Ann's parish. Three other priests for the parish are on their way to Montreal by SS. "Sarnia," which will be in the city in a day or two.

These are the Rev. Fathers Vermeiren, Billian and Simard. The latter is a native of Ste. Anne de Beaupre and left for Belgium some six or seven years ago to undergo his novitiate.

A raincoat is a gentleman who offered a lady the shelter of his umbrella in wet weather.