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London, Saturday, August 15, 1896

THE LORDS AND IRELAND.

The House of Lords is again to the front in exhibiting its hostility to any measure calculated to better the condition of the Irish tenantry.

The present British Government is hostile enough to Ireland, as it depends for its support on the power of the landlords, still it admits the necessity of introducing some legislation for the benefit of the masses, and so it has introduced bills to encourage labor and to enable the tenantry to purchase their holdings on comparatively easy terms. With the large majority sustaining the Government it is not difficult to pass such measures as these in the House of Commons, though they do not go so far in the direction of tenant right and of relieving the needs of the Irish people as a Liberal Government would deem it advisable and even necessary. But to the passing of these measures the Lords are now raising all possible obstacles. The Irish Landlord's Bill has passed the Commons safely, and it was not expected that the Lords would throw obstacles in its way, as the bill is promoted by a Tory Government; but in its expectations the Government has been rudely shaken.

On the presentation of this bill before the Lords an amendment was introduced to favor the landlords, and this was opposed by the Government, as it is foreseen that in its mutilated state it will do no good to Ireland, and the consequence will be that the amendment will not be allowed by the Commons, and thus the bill is likely to be thrown out altogether. But this is not the only danger. It was freely asserted that the Land Bill now before the Lower House, and which is sure to pass in that Chamber, would not meet with any serious opposition from the Lords, who are supposed to be so closely allied to the Tory party that they would not set themselves in opposition to a reform deemed necessary by the party to mollify Ireland.

The Government have now seen that the Lords are intensely opposed to any measure which will be beneficial to Ireland, and the opposition to the Landlord's Bill indicates that the Land Bill will also be rendered worthless by the mutilations to which the Lords will subject it when it comes before them.

The Government is said to be greatly embarrassed by this condition of affairs, for already a number of landlords have signified their intention to move amendments which will destroy the objects of the bill. Among these are the Marquis of Londonderry, the Earl of Wintchelsea, and the Duke of Abercorn.

There is very little to be expected in the way of reforms beneficial to Ireland from the present Government in its best mood, but what little it is disposed to grant is rendered nugatory by the undisguised hostility of the Lords to every such measure. It will be a curious turn of the wheel if the Tory Government be obliged to take up the policy announced by the Liberals during the short tenure of office which the Liberal party held—Reform of the House of Lords—but it appears that unless such a reform be effected the Government will be totally unable to do anything for Ireland; and as the people of Great Britain are certainly better disposed towards Ireland than they were ten, or even eight, years ago, it is not outside of the political possibilities that the perseverance of the Lords in their obstructive policy will result in forcing Liberals and Tories of the popular branch of Parliament to unite on a measure restricting the Legislative powers of the House of Lords.

This would be a good result of the position of things. The very smallness of the vote whereby the Lords have on this occasion thwarted the will of the Commons is enough to show that they have outgrown their usefulness as a legislative body, and that the sooner their powers are restricted with in very narrow limits the better will it be for the country. The vote against

the Government on the Laborers' Bill was 25 to 19, or a total of 44 votes out of over 500 who have votes in the House. When only 8 per cent. of a legislative body take part in its deliberations on important questions it is high time it should be abolished, or at least reconstructed. Lord Salisbury was able to muster nearly 450 peers to record their votes against Home Rule when Mr. Gladstone's measure had passed the Commons, and, with the Lords who voted on the other side, there were 485 peers present. But it is very rarely that there are more than 70 or 75 to be found voting even on the most important occasions. This is very unlike the really patriotic body which wrested Magna Charta from King John. This was a body which had really the good of the country at heart, but their successors of the present day have at heart only the thought to make sure their own emoluments and sources of revenue. Ireland will not have any proper legislation until the Lords are either abolished or very thoroughly reformed, and the sooner this is done the better off will be the United British Empire.

THE DEAN AND THE PILGRIMS.

While the question of the return of the Anglican Church to the one fold is being so seriously discussed in Church circles, it is highly interesting to observe the strong faith and ardent piety which prevails among the Catholics of England, to whose good example much of the present movement in the Anglican Church is undoubtedly to be attributed. This piety shone out conspicuously on occasion of a recent pilgrimage of the Catholics of St. Ethelred's church, Holborn, London, who were joined by large numbers from all parts of the city anxious to make a pious visitation to the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was murdered on the altar steps of his cathedral at Vespers, by a band of ruffianly knights instigated by the impious King Henry II., who thus desired to get rid of the courageous prelate who resisted his attempts to interfere with the liberties of the Church.

St. Thomas had been a faithful subject of the monarch, and had served him both as a soldier and as a diplomatist, and it was with the hope that the saint would be a willing tool in his hands that the king nominated him to the Primacy of England. St. Thomas had really led a pious life amid all the revelry of the court, and was remarkable for his austerity toward himself, while he fulfilled his duties to the king, and when the latter nominated him to the Archiepiscopacy, he warned the king that in the office he was called upon to undertake he could not consent to the king's usurpation against the rights and liberties of the Church, and he earnestly entreated Henry to excuse him from the acceptance of so great a responsibility as the high office would impose upon him.

Henry was immovable in his determination to promote one whose fidelity had been so thoroughly tested, and the result was, as St. Thomas had foreseen, that he was compelled to oppose the tyrannical measures of the despot, and the contest resulted in the sacrilegious murder of the great Archbishop in the horrible manner we have indicated. St. Thomas is honored by the Church as one of her brave martyrs, because it was for maintaining her liberties that he was struck down at the altar of God while he was in the act of officiating in the divine offices of the Church.

Henry afterwards submitted to a humiliating penance to atone for this wicked deed, submitting even to be beaten with scourges by the monks of Canterbury, and thus the memory of the holy prelate and martyr was vindicated from the slanderous accusations brought against him by the king's partisans at the time, and by many English historians who have since grossly misrepresented the facts of the case in order to cast aspersions on the sublime character of the saint, who, by vindicating the liberty of the Church, was also the champion of the rights of the people against royal tyranny.

According to the London Tablet, the pilgrims after hearing Mass in St. Ethelred's church, Holborn, on the morning of the 7th of July, the feast of the Translation of St. Thomas, preceded by railway to Canterbury, reciting the rosary and singing hymns, and after a visit to the church of St. Thomas, where a relic of the saint there preserved was venerated, went to the cathedral, which is now in possession of the Established Church, and recited the Rosary for the return of England to the Catholic faith, before the altar where the saint was assassinated.

The scene was a striking one, and evinced a deep religious fervor on the part of the thousands who took part in the pilgrimage.

On their return to St. Thomas' Church, Father Bernard Vaughan, a brother of the Cardinal, preached a powerful sermon, proving by facts of history that, before the Reformation, England was loyally attached to the Apostolic See of Rome. This was in refutation of the theory which modern Anglicans are so fond of maintaining, that the modern Established Church of England is identical with the pre-Reformation Church.

Many Anglicans were present while the visit was being made to the altar where St. Thomas fell, and also at the sermon of Father Vaughan, and it was remarked that their deportment was respectful, as was also that of the spectators, most of whom were Protestants in that Kentish city. A few years ago there would have been great indignation at a public religious ceremony by Catholics, but there is throughout England a great change in the attitude of the people toward the Catholic Church, so much so that the hope entertained by many for England's return to the faith is not without some foundation.

But the final outcome of the pilgrimage is somewhat remarkable. Dean Farrar, who is now in charge of the ancient cathedral, looks askance at the Catholic visitors who testify the respect in which they hold the memory of the saintly Archbishop, and though the dean is well aware that the grand old edifice is in equity the property of Catholics, having been theirs until it was violently taken from them and handed over to the present possessors, he wishes to prevent Catholics from coming thither to visit the shrine of St. Thomas, or at least he desires to make money out of their devotion, and it is now announced that he will charge three pence, (6 cents) against all visitors to the shrine, and though they have hitherto been allowed to pray there without hindrance they are now to be hurried away by the vergers for fear they may obtain favors from God through the intercession of the saint.

The Dean is a Low Churchman, and for the last two years he has constituted himself the special champion of Low Churchism, and it appears he adopts this as one of the methods of waging his warfare against the spread of High Church principles. He is evidently forgetful of the fate of Simon the magician, who wished to purchase the gift of God with money, and was told by St. Peter: "Thy silver perish with thee because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money." (Acts viii.) If Simon had applied to Dean Farrar instead of St. Peter, the dean would readily have priced the gift of God at three pence.

A FALSE STORY FROM MEXICO CORRECTED.

A sensational story was published some weeks ago relating to the Indian revolt in the State of Oaxaca, Mexico, to the effect that at the instigation of the priests the Indians had made a systematic and brutal attack upon the Freemasons at the town of Juquila, burning alive several of the most prominent members of the order.

The story related that on their arrival at Juquila the Indians made special enquiries as to who were Freemasons, and then began to search for them, but most of the Masons escaped to the forest, four leaders only being found, namely, Octaviano Jigon, Master of the lodge, the Senior Warden, the orator and the treasurer. It was added that the son of the murdered Lodge Master laid complaint against the priests before President Diaz, who is himself a Freemason, and that the young man is in the City of Mexico soliciting aid for the distressed families of the victims.

Unlikely as the whole story is on its face, its publication in the daily papers was considered by many as a sufficient guarantee of its truth, and there has been a good deal of horror and indignation expressed at the intolerance and persecuting spirit of the Catholic priesthood wherever they enjoy power even in this enlightened age.

It now appears that the whole story is an invention as far as it concerns the priests and the Freemasons. There was an insurrection among the Indians, but it was directed against the civil authorities on account of some real or fancied grievance in the form of a special tax which the Government ordered to be levied on them, but the Freemasons were not at all the objects of attack, and the priests had no hand in the uprising.

The Archbishop of Oaxaca has writ-

ten to the Rev. C. J. Smith, of the Oblate order in San Antonio, Texas, a full account of the unfortunate events which took place. The revolt began in Teniatlan and extended to Juquila, and the first person killed was a good Catholic, the father of one of the best priests of the Archbishop's diocese. All the share the priests had in the event was to use their influence with the Indians to prevent the atrocities they were committing, and they succeeded at last. The parish priest of Juquila even risked his life in his endeavors to save the victims. There were none others than the priests who could restrain the Indians, and for his success in so doing, and his charity in inducing the officials to take refuge in the church, a sanctuary which the Indians respected, the parish priest was greatly eulogized by the Oaxaca press.

It is to be remarked that the papers which published the false account of the revolt have not given the correct version, and thus they have shown their desire to misrepresent grossly the Catholic clergy.

SECTIONAL AND RACE ISSUES.

An interview obtained by a special correspondent of the Montreal Star from the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell is published in that paper of the 3rd inst., and the Mail and Empire of the 4th. This interview is of special interest, inasmuch as it throws some light upon the causes which led to the complete overthrow of the late Government, and fully justifies our remarks made in a former issue of the CATHOLIC RECORD wherein we commented upon the mischievous consequences of the unfair course taken by the Mail in representing the defeat of the Government as a sectional victory for the Province of Quebec, and as a victory by which the people of Quebec would endeavor to secure unfair advantages over the rest of the Dominion.

It is not the business of this journal to defend specially the politicians of Quebec any more than those of any other Province, and we would pass over this matter in silence were it not for the evils which must result from any endeavor to create sectional, religious and racial dissensions between the populations of our various Provinces, as the Mail has so frequently done.

Sir Mackenzie Bowell is somewhat disposed to accept the Mail's version of the case, and to attribute the decisive vote of Quebec to race prejudice; nevertheless there is enough light shed upon the matter in his remarks completely to exonerate Quebec from the reproach of having dealt with the case from such a point of view, and still less does the sister province appear to have had the iniquitous intentions attributed to it by the Mail.

Sir Mackenzie Bowell says:

"I was not so much surprised by the general result as at the vote cast in the different provinces. When I reflect that the Conservative party has been in power continually for about eighteen years, and particularly think upon the events of the past two years, and the circumstances and surroundings under which Sir Charles appealed to the country, the result is not so remarkable."

He admits that in Ontario there were appeals to creed and race prejudices, but he was so convinced of the "good sense and liberality of those composing the great body of the Conservative party in Ontario that the vote in that province would not on that account be materially changed from that recorded in 1891."

He considers the vote of Quebec to be incomprehensible, "unless it is the outcome of a determination, which it is feared exists to a great extent, to have a French-Canadian Premier, no matter at what sacrifice of principle," but he adds, "there may have been other reasons." That there were other reasons he afterwards shows to have been the case, for he confirms unhesitatingly the statement already made by Sir Charles Tupper to the effect that when the latter came over to Canada from England, he found the party completely "demoralized." Sir Mackenzie states the same thing in the following words:

"It is true the party was disorganized and demoralized when Sir Charles returned to Canada. He joined, no doubt unwittingly, the disorganizers and demoralizers, and now he is suffering the result. From all I could learn from newspaper reports he was the only one who went manfully into the fight, at least in Ontario. Of course it may be, as has been intimated, that others had to look after their own individual seats, while his was secure."

In regard to the Manitoba school question Sir Mackenzie states that he certainly believed that the policy of the late Government in granting relief to the Catholic minority would have been approved by the people of Quebec, but

that it was not this expectation which induced him to pursue the course he did, but because he believed the policy of the Government to be right. We fully admit Sir Mackenzie Bowell's manliness in undertaking to grant justice to the Manitoba Catholics in the face of a strong revolt on the part of his followers, and we admire his continuous consistency in the statement he makes now that the vote in Quebec has not changed his opinion, nor will it affect his future course upon that question, whether in or out of Parliament. He adds:

"The fact that men are led by prejudice or race to do a wrong is no reason why others who believe in the correctness of a policy which they had laid down for their guidance should desert it. To do so might be what politicians call 'practical politics,' but it would not be honest, nor would it be statesmanship."

It will be noticed that Sir Mackenzie inclines to the belief that the people of Quebec were influenced by racial and religious feelings to support Mr. Laurier, and it is possible that such feelings may have had some weight in determining them to support a Reform Government on this occasion, just as it is known that the question of race and religion had considerable influence on the contest in Ontario, for there can be no doubt that these considerations had very much influence both in leading many Ontario constituencies to oppose the Government, and in making many of the Conservative candidates, variously estimated at from 31 to 36, declare that they would support the Government in its general policy, but oppose it on the school question wherein it proposed to do an act of justice to an aggrieved Catholic minority.

We submit that the people of Quebec had the right to think that there were other issues beside the school question and to record their votes accordingly, without being accused of raising a race or sectional issue, and their right to exercise their liberty was all the greater, as they were convinced that a new Government would be as much bound to see justice done in Manitoba as was that of Sir Mackenzie Bowell or Sir Charles Tupper.

It is in human nature that such considerations as national and religious predilections will influence individual votes, and we do not doubt that they influenced some in Quebec as they did others in Ontario in their choice of party, but there is no reason to believe that such motives were very general in the contest in Quebec, for while there were a few Quebec journals which laid stress upon them, there were many more in Ontario which did the same in a contrary direction, and with greater pertinacity than in Quebec. Mr. Mackenzie's other reasons for the Conservative defeat are much more potent as causes for the Conservative discomfiture than this one, as far as Quebec is concerned. Was it not enough to ensure defeat that both the present and late leaders of the party admit that it went into the contest in a thoroughly disorganized and demoralized condition, torn by internal dissensions and personal jealousies? How could a party expect to achieve a victory under such circumstances? It does not require that we should suppose unworthy motives to have influenced the people of Quebec, when the leaders of the party themselves acknowledge that they went into the contest under such disadvantages. The people are not such idiots as not to see when a party is not in a fit condition to enter on so gigantic a contest, and we cannot be surprised that entering upon it so, the people should put but little confidence in its promises and engagements. This is what happened, and there is no reason for calling the result a victory for Quebec. It was the natural outcome of the disorderly condition of the party, and the disorders existed more in Ontario than elsewhere, but they were more visible to the other provinces, and especially to the people of Quebec, who took a deep interest in the matter because of the influence of the anti-French cry which was heard arising from most of the Ontario constituencies.

We admit that it is true that in proportion to population, the upheaval was greater in Quebec than in Ontario; but this is not surprising, since there is more homogeneity of population in Quebec, and the same influences would naturally have greater effect for this reason; still the change in Ontario was almost equal to that in Quebec, as the Conservatives lost only one seat less in this province than in Quebec. It is, therefore, unjust to say that the victory was especially a victory for Quebec, as the Mail has been persistently maintaining ever since the election.

A DEARTH OF COMMON SENSE.

The Orangemen of Ulster have not yet become animated by the spirit of toleration and Christian charity which is supposed to pervade the people of the present generation. After celebrating the Twelfth of July at Sheepbridge, near Newry, the Orangemen of the district, finding that they were not molested in any way by the Catholics or Nationalists, resolved to become the aggressors, and while the people were congratulating each other on the exceptional quietness which had marked the celebration, a party of the celebrators went to the handsome National Hall in the town and set it on fire early on the morning after the night orgies of the Twelfth. The conflagration illuminated the country for miles around, and many people hurried to the scene to extinguish the flames, but they had made too much headway, and the building was entirely consumed. The papers of the National League were scattered about, some having been abstracted and others carried away, but fortunately they were not of much importance. The culprits were seen hurrying away when the people arrived and their regalia was distinctly seen, though the identity of the wearers could not be established in the darkness of the morning.

THE ASSUMPTION.

On the 15th of this month the Church celebrates the feast of the most glorious assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven. The commemoration made on this day is of a two-fold character. There is first celebrated the happy departure of the Virgin Mother from earth, and, secondly, her wondrous assumption into heaven. St. Liguori says that the death of Mary was precious both on account of the special graces which attended it and on account of the manner of it. As death is indeed the punishment of sin it would seem that the Holy Virgin, exempt as she was from every stain of guilt, should not suffer the penalty attached to crime. But God, in His inscrutable wisdom, decreed that the Mother should be like the Son, and, as the latter had died, so also He required that Mary should die. God also wished in the death of Mary to set an example to the just of the happy death prepared for them. There are three things which make death painful, sad and bitter, namely, attachment to earth, remorse for sin, and the uncertainty of salvation. All those were absent in the case of the Divine Mother. Her death was, even as her life had been, marked by a complete detachment from earthly things, by a most perfect peace of conscience and a certainty of eternal happiness. "What joy," says St. Liguori, "must the divine Mother have felt in learning that her death was at hand; she who had the fullest security of enjoying the divine favor, especially after the Angel Gabriel had assured her that she was full of grace, and already possessed God! 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Thou hast found grace.' And well did she herself know that her heart was burning continually with divine love, so that, as Bernadine de Bustis says, Mary, by a singular grace not granted to any other saint, loved and was always actually occupied in loving God every moment of her life, and so ardently, that as St. Bernard says, it required a perpetual miracle to preserve her life in the midst of such burning flames."

The circumstances of the death of the Blessed Virgin also rendered her death most precious. To St. Elizabeth it was revealed that Jesus Himself appeared to her immediately before her death with cross in hand, to show the signal and special glory He had obtained from the redemption, making acquisition by His death of this blessed creature who throughout eternity was to honor Him more than all men and all angels. St. John of Damascus relates that Jesus gave His mother the Holy Viaticum, saying to her: "Take, oh my Mother, from My hands that same body which Thou hast given Me." And the mother answering, said: "My Son, into Thy hands I commend my spirit; I recommend to Thee this soul that Thou, in Thy goodness, didst create even from the beginning, rich in so many graces, and, by a peculiar privilege, hast preserved from every stain of sin. I commend to Thee my body, from which Thou didst deign to take flesh and blood." Then, speaking of the holy disciples surrounding her, she added: "I commend to Thee, also, these my dear children; they are afflicted at my departure; do Thou console them, who

lovest them more than I do; and give them to do great things for God. St. Anselm holds that heaven is not only to prepare in paradise, but also to accompany her in heaven. St. Bernardine of Siena, contemplating of the assumption of Mary, says it is even more than the ascension of Christ, while the angels only accompany the Redeemer, the Holy Virgin met by the angels and saints represents the Divine. "I descended from heaven to give glory to Mary, and to pay honor to her, and to ascend again into heaven, and to accompany her to paradise."

St. Antoninus says that the glory of the Virgin is incomparable, so that the glory of the Virgin is greater than that of St. Idephonsus deacon, works of Mary in merit the works of the reward and glory not be conceived. That God rewards a it is certain, as St. the Virgin, who ex both men and angels exalted above all the

St. Bernardine other planets are sun, so all the blessing light and joy from He likewise affirms God ascending to the joy of all its St. Peter Damian blessed have no Heaven, after God presence of that Mother and St. Bonaventura God, our greatest joy is from therefore, should r tion and glory of They have in that throne of God itself atrix who knows miseries and wea then, be all honor constant recourse.

SIR MACKENZIE

Early in May I from a correspondence published in the dated 23rd of that meant to convey Sir Mackenzie responsible for the Remedial Bill—a unwillingness be passed, but the lead the Governm was charged with from day to day parliament rende it could be passed said on May 23rd session was now bling of the stor distance, and yet electric condit Premier Bowell o he had nothing r line of the Remed We were given to charges against made by some s servative Govern constituencies, d as an excuse for Remedial Bill. ice that we shou mter in regard made a plain sta preferred again received the fo days ago:

Dear Mr. Coffey: Your letter of reached me here o return from Europ your not receiving If anything cou to political events the statements of do so. My positio Bill is altogether to in a letter. I ha your correspondent either entirely ig perverting facts, truth in any of his to which you call possession of the t exact nature of t my door, I should them. I very mu attributing to me has been guilty.

When sorrow the soul it offer stagnant fen o which sprout t will and unbeli God. If that s outward, it to and beneficence of blessings!