

INDIRECT AND DIRECT INFLUENCE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

(From the Tablet.)

As the past year has been closing in, the fury of our Protestant brethren seems for the present to have nearly exhausted itself. There is at last a pause in the storm, and words of peace, which awhile ago would have been useless, may here and there find an ear when the madness of the people is abated. It occurs, therefore, that we may just notice the dispute in some aspects which have been little regarded, but which surely deserve, even from Protestants, not to be entirely overlooked. The whole multitude of those who have spoken on that side—Bishops in their charges—dukes and earls, and squires of high degree, on the hustings, where they are supreme—Dissenting Ministers in their chapels—the tag-rag-and-hob-tail breaking the windows of Catholic chapels—all alike have viewed this business of the Hierarchy as the work of crafty and designing men, a silly old Pope, (strange they should fear him so much, if he is so silly!) an ambitious Cardinal, heading a set of sacerdotal conspirators. A plan had been laid to subjugate England once more; it was all a connected scheme, beginning with Catholic Emancipation; sowing the seeds of Puseyism, and fostering its manifold development; making good first a step in Ireland, then a step in the Colonies; letting slip no opportunity of strengthening its position till the time came for a grand attack; condescending even (so the Rector of Rugby thinks) to interest itself that Popish letter-carriers should be appointed to earn seven shillings a-week by ten miles walking a-day. In short, they consider a grand conspiracy is organised, which has achieved certain definite results by the exercise of human policy and foresight.

We, on the contrary, who live behind the scenes, perceive, equally with the Protestants, that the progress of the Catholic Church has been great; but we differ from them as to the means by which that progress has been brought about. It is not so great as they suppose in their blind fear; yet, it is, no doubt, remarkable enough for us to thank God, and to confess how wonderfully His wisdom has ordered it. But how, then, has it been effected? By the Priests, perhaps, the Protestants will say. Alas! there are in all England but 700 Catholic Priests, and they are hearing confessions from morning till night. They have no time to devise conspiracies, if that was the way to win England to the Faith. They are generally out of the way of the disputes of Anglicanism, which arose quite independently of them, and humanely speaking, was an unforeseen accident in the circumstances which surround them. To attack, either by force or subtlety, the huge Establishment, defended by its sixteen thousand State Clergymen, is really and truly not the work that the great majority of the Catholic Priesthood have been called by Providence. You think too much of yourselves, my lords and gentlemen, when you suppose it. Your paroxysms of fear are, in truth, in a great measure, the emotions of pride. We shall tell you presently in what way you really have been, and are, deeply and anxiously thought about; but it is not in the way that you suppose. The Catholic Priests are really engaged in very homely work, sitting for long hours shut up in confessional boxes, in an atmosphere at once close, cold, and pestilential, trying to beat down the dominion of Satan amongst the wretched and the ignorant, or else visiting the poorest of the poor—bringing the Most Holy to abodes more humble and lowly than the manger of Bethlehem—courts and alleys where "the Clergyman" is rarely seen, unless provoked to emulation by hearing of a zeal, no natural growth of his own Church, which is not a Church.

But while we declare that the action of the Catholic Church and her 700 or 800 Ministers on the millions of England has been, from the force of circumstances, rather indirect than direct, one point of view there is, and this is one chiefly forgotten by Protestants, in which her action, though unseen, has been direct and immediate. Have our Protestant friends dwelt much on the idea that numbers of Catholics have been incessantly praying for their conversion? Do they know that for many years past there has not been a day in which, from many thousands of charitable souls in France, in Italy, in Belgium—yes, from multitudes of, we will not say merely charitable, but heroic souls in poor oppressed Ireland, prayers have ascended to heaven that England once more might become Catholic?

THE PAPAL AGGRESSION.

(From the London Enquirer.)

THE REMEDY.

What is to be done? Granting all that has been said about the dangers of Popery, what are the practical measures which should be taken against that religion which is unfortunately professed by at least one-third of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom? This is now the question which, as men find it more and more necessary to ask themselves, they also find it more and more difficult to answer. "Something must be done," men say, according to the formula usual in cases of utter perplexity; but as usual it is not the wisest who are most ready with specific prescriptions. Lord Winchester would have us make war upon the Pope, and others would repeal the Roman Catholic Relief Act; but our statesmen are scarcely prepared for either of these bold enterprises. The Queen, in the answers which she gave this week to the addresses of the Corporation and the Universities, plainly intimated a determination to maintain the principles of religious liberty; and this is, of course, the determination of the Cabinet. But then how are the excited feelings of the nation to be satisfied? Some great act is almost universally looked upon as

necessary to prevent the agitation from becoming an object of general ridicule. Here becomes manifest the shadowy and deceptive nature of the whole controversy. The new Catholic hierarchy has no temporal possessions, or legal privilege upon which the law can take hold. Their power, real, extensive and dangerous as it may be, inasmuch as it depends upon voluntary obedience, is beyond the grasp of Parliament. But the titles—the territorial titles—may be prohibited. Yes, it has positively come to this—that a law against the titles is likely to be the great end for which the whole empire has put itself into commotion. The new grand and impregnable bulwark of our Protestantism is to be an act prohibiting Dr. Wiseman and his colleagues not from calling themselves Bishops, but merely from calling themselves Bishops of cities or towns in Great Britain. This surely will be a mountain bringing forth a mouse.

A conclusion of this kind would indeed be supremely ridiculous; but its absurdity would only concern its supporters. We should also object to it on the ground that, in spite of its triviality, it might produce new mischief. Whenever an act intrinsically harmless, or which is properly amenable only to conscience, is made a crime, there is always a danger of enlisting the honest convictions of a portion of the people against the law. A penal statute touching religion is precisely one of those edge-tools, in the handling of which a Legislature is always likely to cut its fingers. Let us suppose a law to be passed against the territorial titles. It is true that it might be like the clause against titles in the Emancipation Act—a sham—a dead letter—which no Government would think of enforcing; but in the present state of the public mind this is not probable. A bona fide attempt would be made to establish the principle in some practical way. The result would then wholly depend upon Dr. Wiseman. If he thought it his duty to yield implicit obedience to the statute, he might take credit for his loyalty, and push his religious plans as vigorously as ever; but if he should think himself still bound by the Papal Rescript, he would have no choice but to submit to the penalties. Now, let any one coolly consider all the consequences of bringing Dr. Wiseman into the Queen's Bench, and of sending him from thence to Newgate, for calling himself by what he declares to be a purely spiritual title, connected only with the organisation of his church. It is true that he might go to prison amidst the hootings of the mob, and draw down upon himself the more weighty condemnation of the educated majority of the British people; but how would Popery be thereby checked, or Protestantism promoted? We say nothing of the resentment likely to be produced by such a proceeding in the minds of nine millions of British and Irish Catholics; but looking only to its effects upon Protestants, and considering how readily sympathy is called forth by any acts which savors, no matter how slightly, of oppression, we think Dr. Wiseman would be found more dangerous as a prisoner, than he ever could have been simply as a prelate. We apprehend therefore that a statute against the new titles, while it will add nothing to the strength of Protestantism, may be the beginning of interminable embarrassments.

There are some, however, who, upon grounds of political policy, think it absolutely necessary that the Roman Catholic Church should, here as elsewhere, be subjected to some legal restraint. They say that in this aristocratic country nothing but an aristocratic Church can maintain an influence over the higher classes—that for those classes as well as for the mass of the poor and the ignorant, Popery has many attractions—that Dissent, except during intervals of enthusiasm, is too feeble to resist it—and, therefore, that the existing Establishment requires to be jealously upheld and protected, in all its dignities, as our only preservative against Catholic domination. The first thing to be said of this argument is, that it allows nothing at all to the power of religious truth. It obviously assumes that, where Protestantism and Popery are placed upon an equal footing, the Papal system will prevail. But such an assumption appears to us inconsistent, not only with a firm Protestant faith, but with the most notorious results of experience. It cannot be said that the United States are about to fall under the power of the Pope, or, indeed, that there is proof to be found anywhere of a remarkable progress of Popery at the present time, except in the bosom of that very Church which we are told to look to as the bulwark of Protestant freedom. We cannot, therefore, for a moment, admit that the security of Scriptural Christianity in England depends upon the temporalities or dignities of her Establishment; but even if it were granted that it did—that Protestantism had no inherent strength, and could not be sustained but by force of law—the political supporters of the Church of England would still find it difficult to show in what way our laws can be made to place any effectual curb upon its Roman Catholic rival. The propriety of doing so has been urged repeatedly and with the greatest force, by two classes of statesmen—namely, those who strenuously opposed every concession of political power to Roman Catholics, and those who desired to see them both included and interested in the Constitution, by arrangements which would give to the Government a certain control over their hierarchy. We need not at present argue with those who, as they consistently opposed the Emancipation Act, would now as consistently repeal it. Wise or unwise, that was a deed which cannot be undone. The alternative remains to negotiate with the Pope. Strange as it may seem, there are men notable for sagacity and comprehensiveness of mind, who think that this course is still open, that Roman Catholic Bishops might, in some way, be brought under the influence of a British Cabinet, and that a British minister might be found to stake his political fortunes on the attempt to carry out such an arrangement. We should certainly not think this scheme desirable even if it were practicable, but we really

do not think that anything less practically was imagined amongst the projects of Laputa. If there be a single point established by the present agitation, it is that the English people will resist all further connection between Popery and the State. The House of Commons is much more likely to be driven to repeal the Maynooth Bill than to sanction a Concordat. The very idea of a negotiation with Rome would instantly crush any Cabinet that was suspected of it. We conclude, therefore, that the present is not a case for statesmanship to deal with at all. The protection of national Protestantism by law is a notion as vain and delusive as the protection of national industry. If our religion be not a truth which can stand alone, no parliamentary ingenuity will avail to prop it up.

THE FRENZY OF THE STATE CHURCH.

(From a Correspondent of the Tablet.)

To the cool, moral, and reflecting mind, contemplating the present position of England, what humiliating scenes must present themselves! There is that something in the English character for which it is difficult to account. Give the English a leader in accordance with their prejudices, and onward they rush, reckless of the consequences. Right and wrong, reason and justice, must equally yield to their impetuosity; and then only do they see the injury inflicted upon their country, their neighbors, and themselves, when a return of self-possession places before them the direful effects of their lawless ebullitions. How long on the scale of reason must their present conduct reduce them in the estimation of foreign nations! Has not England but too much cause to blush for the undignified, inconsistent, and unprincipled conduct of her Prime Minister, and other leading authorities—the Minister of a moral and gracious Sovereign, who, if not misguided by the interested bias of those around her, would, evidently, render equal justice to every class of her subjects. The determination expressed by foreign Powers to require—before they come to the Exhibition of 1851—a security from the English Government that they shall not be insulted on account of their religion, supplies a sufficient index to their sentiments.

ENGLAND.

THE ARCTIC EXPEDITION.—Accounts from the Sandwich Islands, dated Oct. 19th, announce the arrival of H.M.S. "Herald," Captain Kellet, on the 16th, from Behring's Straits, after a vain search for the expedition under Captain Collinson. The "Herald" brings no tidings of Sir John Franklin; and as the season was fast closing, it is to be feared that for some time to come we must look to the northern coast of the North American continent in the Canadian route, and to Dr. Rae's and Lieutenant Noulton's exertions for further tidings.

Lord Shrewsbury is stated by the *Univers* to have expressed, in indignant terms, upon reading Lord John Russell's letter, his conviction that every Catholic ought to withdraw his support from the Whigs.

In the course of an article on "the Poetry of Pope," recently delivered by the Earl of Carlisle to the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds, the *Morning Chronicle* makes the remarks:—"Everything we know of his lordship (Lord Carlisle) leads to the belief that he very strongly disapproves of Lord John Russell's summons to the 'war ecclesiastic'; yet it may be confidently predicted that he will leave the duty of rating the Premier to Lord Grey."

THE BIRKENHEAD RIOTS.—When peace and good neighbourhood were near being restored in Birkenhead, their worship the magistrates excited animosity anew by arresting five or six persons for the riot nearly a month ago. A respectable shopkeeper was arrested amongst the rest. Their case was adjourned from the Petty Sessions on Monday, to the Petty Sessions in Chester on Thursday.

Dr. Wiseman is the tenth English Cardinal that has been created since the death of Wolsey, in 1530. The first was Fisher, in 1533; the second, Pole, in 1536; Peyton and Allen received the hat in 1557 and 1558. Then there occurred an interval of about one hundred years, after which Howard was created Cardinal. In 1830, Doctors Eskine, York, and Weld were created Cardinals; in 1842, Dr. Acton, and in 1850, Dr. Wiseman.

SALE OF A WIFE.—The Stockport Mercury tells a strange tale of a sale which is alleged to have recently taken place at the New Inn, Horwich End, in the county of Derby, between George C., agent to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, and Elisha G., cattle dealer, by the said G. offering to sell the other his wife, for the sum of £5 ls, which was the more readily agreed to in consequence of the purchaser being a widower, and very desirous to obtain so fair a partner for so trifling a sum. After some consultation it was arranged between them that the purchaser should go to claim his purchase on the following Monday, when he did accordingly, on entering the house he made known to Mrs. C. the purport of his visit. The unfortunate wife gave vent to a flood of tears at being thus shamefully disposed of.

PROTESTANT CHAPEL AT ROME.—The London Daily News, on the authority of its Roman Correspondent, last week stated that the Pope had determined to close the Protestant American Chapel in that City. It now appears, on the authority of the same Correspondent, that there was no foundation for the statement, and that there is no interference with the privilege granted by the Holy See to American Protestants. The same Correspondent remarks that the Holy See, on a previous occasion, had "permitted the existence of a Prussian Protestant Chapel."

A resolution unanimously adopted by a Coroner's Jury, at Walworth, April, 1850, bears very notable testimony to the purity of England. Resolved: "That in consequence of the great and increasing number of illegitimate children, and the degraded and helpless condition of their mothers, the dreadful and unnatural crime of infanticide is daily becoming more frequent; and that, with a view to improve the morals of the people, it is the opinion of this jury, that Government ought to provide a suitable National Asylum for the reception of illegitimate children."

A MODEL KING!—A letter from Hamburgh, dated the 5th December, contains the following:—"The latest news from Copenhagen is of the 1st instant. According to the rumor circulating in the capital at

that date, there is reason for believing the King of Denmark had resolved to separate from Madame Rasmussen, the mistress whom he lately married and ennobled. The motives which may have led to this resolution are vaguely understood. Should it be realized, Madame Rasmussen will make the third legitimate wife from whom the King will have separated within a few years. The first was daughter of the late King, his uncle, Frederick VI.; the second, Mecklenburgh princess;—third, as every one knows, was one of the ballet corps at the Copenhagen opera. As the price of this matrimonial rupture, the Countess Rasmussen is to receive an annuity of 12,000 dollars besides apanages.

UNITED STATES.

LORD AND HIS LECTURES.—It appears that the notorious Lord has been recently holding forth in his usual style at Newport, R. I. His reception we are rejoiced to hear, was not by any means flattering, which speaks well for the common sense of the community. A correspondent of the *American Celt* gives the following account of his visit to Newport:—"A week or two ago, the people of this place were edified and enlightened by a Lecture from an itinerant Preacher, named Lord, on 'St. Bernard and the Monastic State.'—The editor of the *Newport News*, who has on more than one occasion shown himself to be a lover of truth and fairness, attended the Lecture, having found that the Rev. Rigmorle was not much addicted to truth in his stories of the Monks, plainly told him and the public so in his paper next day. Next, Mr. Lord tried his hand at 'Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, or the 20 years War,' and the editor of the *News* shewed the public the reverse side of the picture again. Finally, the Lecturer announced that he would descant the third and last evening on 'St. Ignatius and the Jesuits,' but being apprised, doubtless, that his preceptor was also well versed in the history of that illustrious order, he concluded to take himself off to some more congenial quarter, without fulfilling his engagement. I really think he ought to pay our friend Cranston handsomely for the excellent historic lessons he has given him.—We are frequently reviled by the press through this country, the magnanimous conduct of the editor of the *News* is as refreshing as an oasis in the desert to a weary traveller. His kindness shall not be forgotten."

FATHER MATHEW, writing from Pensacola, gives a cheering account of his late Temperance labors in the Southwest. He purposes, in the spring, visiting Nashville, Louisville, Cincinnati, &c., and arriving in New York in August. He will return to Ireland in the fall.

A frightful accident took place in Twenty-first street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, Wednesday afternoon at half-past one o'clock. Six new five story houses belonging to Mr. Thomas A. Emmett, fell to the ground with an awful crash, killing six men, and injuring more or less severely many others. Accidents of this kind are now of frequent occurrence, and yet rascally contractors, and greedy speculators are allowed to proceed in their career of villainy without any effectual check from the city authorities.—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal*, Jan. 18.

DISTRESSING CALAMITY.—The Convent of the Loretan Sisters at Cape Girardeau, in Missouri, was thrown down by a hurricane on the 27th of November last. By this severe visitation the pious community has been deprived of a home, and their works of charity interrupted. They now appeal to the charity of the public to enable them to restore the building. The Bishop of this diocese authorizes us to say, that he will cheerfully transmit the offerings of the charitable which may be spontaneously sent to him for this purpose.

The postage bill has passed the House of Representatives, by 130 to 75. Its provisions are chiefly as follows:—

"On each letter, weighing over half an ounce, three cents—no post office or route shall be discontinued, or compensation to postmasters be diminished, in consequence of this act—on printed matter of no greater weight than two ounces, one cent; bound books weighing not over thirty ounces to be deemed mailable matter—newspapers delivered in the state where printed, chargeable with only half of foregoing rates—no postage on those marked to actual subscribers in the county where printed, or within thirty miles—fifty per cent. to be deducted from postage of magazines when pre-paid—three cent pieces, three-fourths silver, one-fourth copper, to be coined—stamps, as now, to be provided and sold at post offices, the forgery of them to be punished by fine and imprisonment—million and a half dollars appropriated to meet deficiency in revenue—letters uncalled for, for the period of two weeks, to be published once only—Post Master General to establish suitable places of deposit for letters in cities and towns, to be collected and delivered by carriers at one or two cents each.

SEIZURE OF THE BRITISH STEAMER "NIAGARA."—The following is the information on which the Niagara was seized:—"On the sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord 1851, certain goods, wares, and merchandize, to wit: fifty packages of silks, fifty packages of satins, and fifty packages of lace, being of the value of \$5000, and being subject to duty in being imported and brought into the said United States, were imported and brought in the said Steamboat from a foreign port or place into the United States, to wit: into the Port of Boston and Charlestown; and that there afterwards, on the same sixth day of January, the said goods, wares, and merchandize, having been imported and brought as aforesaid, were unladen and delivered from said steamboat within the United States, to wit: at the port of Boston and Charlestown, aforesaid, without a permit from the Collector, or Naval Officer, or any other competent officer of the Customs, at our said port."—*American Celt*.

On the 1st instant, our community was convulsed by one of those violent excitements, before which customary barriers gave way. A horrible murder was followed by a summary and terrible punishment.—The details of the tragedy, as accurately as we can ascertain are these:—About 2 o'clock, P. M., of Wednesday, a negro, accompanied by a white man, called at the mayor's office. The object of the negro was to have a paper purporting to be a certificate of his freedom from the county clerk of Lincoln county, countersigned by the mayor and recorder, in order that he might travel up the river. Recorder Chester at once discovered the certificate was forged, and descended into the streets to have the negro arrested; he called on Messrs. Poston, Walden, and Frazer, the latter of whom made some remarks to the negro relative to his conduct; and Mr. Chester went in search