

IRELAND AND THE ENGLISH CATHOLICS.

Those who, at this distance, imagine the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Denbigh, and Mr. Edwin de Lisle to be the responsible spokesmen of Catholic political opinion in England, and the deputed leaders of a solid English Catholic party presenting an unbroken front of opposition to Irish public opinion will do well to read "Ireland and the English Catholics," by "One of Them," a recent brochure, addressed to the clergy of Irish race who labour in England, and containing some account of the events leading up to the appointment of Monsignor Persico as Papal Commissioner to Ireland. It points to an opposite conclusion. "They are noisy, but few: I can count them on my ten fingers," is its opening sentence—the words being those of the most eminent of English ecclesiastics in speaking of those of his fellow countrymen who have made the name "English Catholic" a reproach to Irishmen the world over. The purpose of this very instructive and very opportune publication, is to arrest the erroneous, but, unfortunately, commonly prevalent conclusion that any considerable portion of the Catholic people of England are opposed to the amelioration of the political condition of the Catholic people of Ireland, and the author premises by saying that it has been entered upon "partly in the hope that at this moment it may be welcome to the Catholics of Ireland, to be assured of the warm good will of every English Catholic who really is, what the corner of the phrase has failed to prove himself, 'a Catholic first and an Englishman afterwards.'" The words, it will be remembered, were used by Lord Denbigh on the occasion of his first speech in Parliament.

It is only too obvious, as the author contends, that the anti-Irish alliance of to day is as distinctly anti-Catholic a movement as it ever was. "Poets like Swinburne sang of Liberty till we grew sick of the word, they have indited odes to Mazzini, and have hung Pope and Prelate with strings of verse. They gloried in the barricades of Paris, and they screamed poems over the breast of Porta Pia. But when Ireland also would fain have freedom, such as the wisest and truest English statesmen are willing without warfare to cede her, the poet of Atheistic revolution has no voice except to hymn the praise of Imperial unity. It is not that he loves liberty less, but that he hates the priests more." The secret of the opposition of Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain to the Home Rule movement, may be similarly understood. It is not so much that they have turned their backs on their old political principles as that hatred of "the priests" is, with them, what the writer calls "the root and sap" of their opposition to Mr. Gladstone's recent legislation. The truth of this in the case at least of Mr. Bright, whom Lucas called the apostle of the "old hypocrisy," is beyond question. Against the church he makes cause in common with the Orange Tories. But their opposition, the writer says, would have been unavailing "except for Liberal seceders bound to the chariots of anti-Popish prophets so diverse as Swinburne and Bright." He insists that this be understood. "The balancing power which has beaten the Bills is hatred of Catholicism and contempt for the clergy. Were the Irish people faithless to their pastors they would win the support of the English Atheistic poets and Dissenting Politicians. The price they pay for their fidelity to heaven is still, as much as ever it was, the refusal of English Protestantism to think 'Papist rats' fit for Freedom." This being so, and the process of civilizing Ireland, consisting mainly of perverting Irishmen from the faith, "English Catholics, whatever their politics, might, one would suppose, be reckoned upon to right the balance and to restore to Catholics, as Catholics, across the channel, what Protestants, as Protestants, took away." As a matter of fact, he answers, a great part of that force is so ranged. "There are even Catholic Englishmen who are Tories in all else, but Gladstonians in Home Rule. Mr. Wilfrid Blunt nearly converted Lord Randolph before Mr. Gladstone's hour had come. The *Weekly Register* was never called a Gladstonian paper until Mr. Gladstone appeared as the prophet of Home Rule. As for the English Catholic clergy, the *Tablet* it-

self candidly admits that without distinction of race or of party they are nearly all on the side of Home Rule. The truth of the statement can be easily tested in London, where on that side, which is the side of the Metropolitan himself, are to be found at Farm street, several ardent Home Rulers; at the Oratory, a majority of the community; at Bayswater, nearly all the Oblates of St. Charles; at the Kensington Pro-Cathedral Monsignor Harington Moore, an Oxford convert; at Kensington also Monsignor Tylee; at St. Ethelreda's, Father Lockhart; Dr Graham at the Hammersmith Training College; Bishop Weathers at the Seminary, and so on, in mission after mission."

What, then, is this influence which unites a group of English Catholics with the most determined opponents of Ireland, and puts them into "odious opposition" with another Catholic people? Not, the writer answers, because they are Englishmen, still less because they are Catholics; it is because they are landlords—using the term as including besides the solitary owner of the soil, his uncles, cousins, and aunts' husbands, and the endless relational ramifications of proverbially large families. Indeed, the head-centres of this anti-Irish feeling are not English Catholics at all, but Irish land-holders like Lord Kenmare and Lord Emly moving in Catholic society in London, telling their tale of woe to all comers, and attracting the sympathy of those with whom they mix, and whom they assure that the land war waged now in Ireland will be carried into the English counties if it be not summarily crushed out. And recruiting this army of the actual martyrs of a great economic movement are "a group of eccentrics familiar to every cause." "If they are a mystery to the world at large," says the author, "they are a perplexity even to their friends. Their opinions are vehement in proportion to their ignorance of the facts and figures on which reasonable opinions are based. They make up in rhetoric what they lack in logic. If they want to speak of the Archbishop of Dublin, or the Archbishop of Cashel, or the venerable head of the Irish college in Rome, they speak of him as a 'mitred malefactor.' The Irish clergy, as a body, are 'surpliced ruffians.'... That these fastidious persons should ever find harbour and refreshment in the Catholic Church is to some a surprise; but to all surely a joy; since their presence proves the breadth of that maternal bosom, which they themselves at times almost imagine they monopolize. Yet, I shall ever contend that they are what they are politically, in spite of the Catholic Church, and in defiance of Pope Leo. There is no political astronomer whose calculations are not confused by the appearance of these eccentricities in the heavens—these astonishing comets. Like poets, they are born and not made; and they have their far-famed high-priest in Mr. Edwin de Lisle, 'the mildest mannered man who ever scuttled ship' or bated bishop." There are other and even more extraordinary specimens of this manner of men—types only of themselves, and representing nothing but their own idiosyncracies. As a rule, our author truly says, converts to our religion are distinguished by their sympathy with the needy and the oppressed. It is this sympathy which has attracted them to the Church by which "the Gospel is preached to the Poor," and it is this sympathy which makes them, as Catholics, the grateful friends of Ireland, to whose people, persecuted for centuries for the Truth, they know that they owe, under God, their knowledge and possession of the Faith. As it was with Lucas, it is to-day with Cardinal Manning and Lord Ripon, with Mr. Nasmyth Stokes and Mr. Orby Shipley, with Mr. Burnand and Lord Braye, Mr. Martin Edmunds and Mr. J. G. Kenyon. But Messrs. de Lisle and Lane Fox are not to be so classed. These gentlemen, who assume to speak in the name of the English Catholics, recently held a meeting, "as private as the presence of thirty eager-tongued persons could permit it to be, to discuss the means by which they could bring before the Sovereign Pontiff the pain, and shame, and scandal caused to English Catholics by the Irish bishops." Sir Alfred Trevelyan and a Mr. Monteith were the busiest promoters of the demonstration over which the Duke of Norfolk presided,