

men anxious to save her from ruin but without the ability.

Can political contrivances restore the nation to her former grandeur?—We doubt it; the heart must be first changed and corrected, the mind enlightened. Will education accomplish this noble work? What people is there amongst whom education and secular intelligence are so widely diffused, and yet have not the words "a smart man" received a very suspicious construction? Liberty will close her career with the rising generation, unless some better spirit be breathed into the great mass of the nation, to redeem it from the disasters into which it has been hurried by demagogues of every description, political and religious.

They who delight so much to allude in contemptuous phrases to Catholic nations; they who permit their fancy to extract hideous pictures of humanity from bigoted historians of the "dark ages," will act wisely by devoting some attention to their own country. Here Protestantism has had hold of the reins of power; the present generation has grown up under its teaching, and yet with all its boasted superiority over Catholicism, it has failed in the great Mission which it has assumed. Our Church in the United States has been but as a drop in the Ocean in comparison with the balance of the population, our religion has, happily, no Representatives in the General or State Governments, our people are nearly all of the working class, and whatever other faults may be laid to their charge, it must be at least granted, that they are industrious and unconnected with the great speculating fraternity which has filled the land with confusion—not the honest speculator who may justly venture his Capital, but they who have speculated to plunder the ignorant. Let those who are so fond of villifying Catholic nations look at home before they wander forth on errands of false Charity; let them first remedy the disorders here, and then they may cross the Sea to stare at other nations and condemn their religion, because they understand neither its spirit nor its doctrines.

Religion is the only conservative power which can restore us to true prosperity.—There are many eminent citizens, many deep thinking Statesmen whose views, could they be realized, would doubtless remedy numerous disorders in the body politic; but for the hundreds whose natural talent could stem the torrents, there are thousands led on by passion and partizan animosities. Religion, then, is the only ally whom we should seek; not the religion of this man or that, but the religion of the great God such as it was revealed of old, the religion which corrected the disorders of Paganism, converted all nations and held a check over the consciences of men which no other creed possesses. Banished from England, the people are now glad to be taken again to her bosom; persecuted in Prussia, her Monarch has discovered the grievous consequences of such foolish policy. This is the conservative power to which the condition of the times declares that men must have recourse; she will not narrow their liberty, yet she will give stability to their institutions if they listen

to her voice. They may resist her as they did in France, as they do in Spain, and as they have done in some of the South American republics where infidelity crept in to disorganize her designs for the amelioration of the people, but for these partial defections, we see nations true to her spiritual dominions for a thousand years and more, like Belgium, and enjoying every temporal blessing; and other nations, like Ireland, trodden down by the oppressor, yet contented since she had not been taken from them, and whose people have been ever faithful. The industrious classes and the men of property, must naturally look for support to some such power which can give stability to political institutions, which can regulate the desire of wealth, and if necessary, curtail some temporal aggrandizement for the sake of the general good and the elevation of the soul.

Give a country like the United States to the control of Catholicity; let her imperishable spirit be breathed into our Constitution and laws; keep the spiritual and temporal power apart; but let them sympathise for the public welfare, and men will feel that there is truly a Providence watching for their happiness.

We expect not that such an event will take place, without the immediate influence of heaven, but they who know what humanity is, they who know that education alone will not save the human race, and that a mind enlightened by science is not necessarily pious, will look in vain for any other means to elevate the character of this or any other nation. Religion is the only authority, which can direct the soul to good and keep in its proper channel the current of public opinion. This is the province of religion, not a changing religion, a mere creed of men, but the Faith which God preserves in soundness of doctrine, and for whose discipline and preservation he has been ever interested. Let nations endeavor to find it, for it is the rock on which there is safety from human passion.—*Catholic Telegraph.*

IRISH LAW CHURCH.

Count Montalembert, in his Sketch of Ireland, a work abounding in acute observation and graphic delineation, thus speaks of the Irish Church Establishment.—*N. E. Reporter.*

"It is this law established church that constitutes the real scourge of Ireland—that irritates her ever festering wounds—that weakens the country, by absorbing whatever wretched resources the principal proprietors, who are culpably absent, have left behind. A system of permanent and monstrous actions has become the basis on which the existence of the body of men, to whom we can hardly give the name of a church, essentially depends. We have seen churches plethorized with riches in the midst of a population devoted to their worship, enthusiastically attached to their ceremonies, and receiving, in exchange for their offerings, prayers and religious consolations, which did not seem to them too dearly purchased. But we have never seen, except in Ireland, (what posterity will learn with surprise and indignation,

as to devour the riches of a country which is inspired with an utter aversion for her, to feed herself on the substance and sweat of people whom she proclaims to be impious and idolatrous.

"The Spanish priests, at the conquest of America, were much more modest; they made proselytes before they made tributaries. But it has been otherwise in Ireland. The law-church ministry, in default of conviction, have demanded money; and Protestantism, blighted from its birth with a perpetual sterility, recompenses itself from the purses of the people for the little empire it holds over their affections, and has systematically pillaged them for three centuries. Let us calculate by numbers. The population of Ireland amounts to seven millions: of these, five millions and a half, at least, are Catholics; one million are Dissenters, chiefly Presbyterians, and all as ill affected towards the Established Church as the Catholics. There remain, then, at most, but 500,000 Protestants, and it is for the sole advantage of this portion of the inhabitants that the establishment is maintained. It is divided into 22 dioceses. In these there are 1263 benefices, and the annual produce of each is, on an average, £500—the entire of the church revenue is divided between less than 2000 individuals. This enormous income is composed of glebe and church lands, and tithes. All the foundations which the pious munificence of Norman as well as Irish Catholics had consecrated to the support of churches, convents, colleges, and hospitals, have passed, as if a legitimate inheritance, into the hands of the Protestant clergy. They also possess immense confiscated territories, which belonged to insurgent chiefs at the Reformation. The lands attached to the sees and benefices of the Establishment cover about a ninth part of the total surface of the Island.

"All this is not enough for the ever-rend spoliators; it is but a moiety of their resources. Tithes are levied with inexorable severity on the produce of the soil. At each vest the tithe proctor enters the field of the peasant, and takes without pity the tenth even of his potatoes, which are his only support for the subsequent year. Individual resistance to these exactions became so alarming, some years ago, that what is called the composition act of Mr. Goulbourn was introduced.

Even in those parishes where this composition is entered into, it is still a grievance. The unhappy tenantry are not less oppressed, and tithes are not less unjust and absurd. Ireland is entirely divided into Protestant parishes, and in each of those, no matter whether Protestants reside in it or not, there is always a rector, most frequently a curate, and clerk, and tithe is levied on all the inhabitants without religious distinction. As the greater part of the 500,000 Protestants are to be found in the cities east and north of the island, there are not many resident in the country parishes, and in some of them not a single Protestant at all!

The saintly rectors of these benefices have thus the advantage of receiving the tithes and revenues arising from Catholic

donations, without being bound to any kind of religious service. When they reside on them, (a thing quite unnecessary, and which one-third of them do not observe) they spend their time in improving their glebes, rearing their children, visiting the neighboring gentry, and hunting. How many times have I read, in Irish advertisements, of which the following is a sample:—

"The living of—is vacant. There is little duty to be done in it. It is situated in a pleasant neighborhood, and in an excellent country for hunting and fishing. The rivers are well supplied with fish, and there is a great abundance of hares, partridges, snipes and woodcocks."

These farming and hunting rectors have each a church, to which they repair, once a week, to read the liturgy, and a sermon, if the number of their hearers seem to expect it. Observe, that a great many of these churches were built by Catholics. Having been transformed, by the most scandalous usurpation, into Protestant temples, they are generally too large for the scanty congregations that possess them, and who should blush at their small number in beholding those monuments of the ancient faith which they would exterminate. They have the precaution to barricade the choir with hangings or wainscoting, and there to celebrate their weekly service, allowing the winds to whistle, and the children to play, in the vast naves which were once filled with a fervent population. As these churches often require to be repaired and improved, it might be supposed that the bishops and rectors would find sufficient resources for the purpose in tithes and ecclesiastical foundations. But the wisdom of the English Parliament has judged otherwise, and has determined that the expenses for ornamenting and repairing churches, and even building new ones, should be raised by an extraordinary contribution called a vestry tax. This is rated by the rector and Protestant churchwardens, and is levied on the people of each parish indiscriminately. These laws are not a dead letter, but are always carried into execution, for in Ireland there is no lying allusion of this kind. Some weeks spent in the country will put the traveller in possession of this strange system. In one county a Protestant rector imposed on his Catholic parishioners an annual tax of £35 for the repairs of his church organ. In the county of Louth, another annually levied in his parish £1120 for tithes, besides £640 in vestry taxes, and yet, in that parish, there was, for a length of time, but one Protestant family, who had lately become Catholics.

"In the diocese of Kildare, a group of Protestants, finding themselves ill at ease in the old Catholic church which they had occupied, declared that it was too large and too cold; that it should be thrown down, a new one, smaller and more comfortable should be erected. Their wishes were, of course, complied with, and the necessary expenses levied, merely by way of supplement to the vestry tax, which had been already paid by the Catholic population."