

politics with religion. On the general question of such interference we offer no opinion; but we cannot help remarking that there are various ways in which a Catholic Priest may exercise his influence on votes, and that while some of these may be natural, harmless, and desirable, others may be most injurious to his character and influence as the Father of his flock. The giving of private advice to such poor voters as consult him is a very different thing from mounting a platform at a stormy political gathering, and taking part in proceedings in which, whatever else may be displayed, Christian charity certainly has no share.

On the undesirableness of any open dissensions between the Bishops and the parliamentary representatives of Catholic interests there surely can be but one opinion. Whatever may have been the desirableness of the appeal to the Pope against the Bishop of Ossory, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, surely no Catholic can doubt that it would be very much better if such circumstances never arose. We do not for an instant pretend that Bishops may not be wrong, or Priests and laymen right, when they disagree; nor do we question the indefeasible right of every Catholic to appeal from a subordinate authority to the Pope, and its practical expediency in some cases; but we do maintain that no Catholic member of parliament can carry any weight as a Catholic in the House of Commons or the country, who is believed not to enjoy the confidence of the Catholic Hierarchy as a body. If it is once supposed that the English and Irish Episcopate, as a whole, condemn many of Mr. Lucas's proceedings—if it is believed that what is termed a "soreness of feeling" exists between them—farewell all carrying out of those beginnings which he has so happily inaugurated in the House. If a member of parliament aspires to the work of breaking those fetters of legal and official tyranny which still produce such desolation in our army and navy, in schools, hospitals, and work-houses; and, to fight the good fight for Monks, Nuns, and Priests, he must be willing to merge his own opinions as to what is practically expedient in those of the Hierarchy. If he and they are known to be at issue, liberal government and Tory opposition will join in snapping their fingers at him.

If the Bishops are not agreed among themselves, this only makes matters worse. But we do say that any man, whatever he be, who pushes forward certain secular schemes, however harmless in themselves, which he knows must tend to produce disagreements between the Priesthood and the Episcopate, or between the members of the Episcopate themselves, undertakes a responsibility which ought to make the boldest tremble. We hold that no external gains can compensate for a diminution of internal strength. If we are not united; if we let the world imagine that half of us are pulling in one direction, and half in another, and that our internal discipline is not what our professions require; then we are at the mercy of our antagonists, and the best thing we can do is to hold our tongues, and learn to mend our ways. Surely we have had enough of the blessings to be hoped for from divisions of opinion in the Episcopate, to make us pause ere we ask for more. What would official intriguing have done in former days in Ireland, if it had not been known that half the Bishops were of one way of thinking, and half of the other?

As for the distinction which has been drawn between the internal discipline of the Clergy and the conduct of laymen in the settling-up these politico-religious combinations, they appear to us un-Catholic in the extreme. What right has any man to say, "It is no concern of mine what rules Bishops make in spiritual matters for their Clergy"—(as if the Priesthood were a species of private Episcopal property?)—"I shall go my way in politico-religious affairs, without troubling myself for an instant about their influence on the relations between the Hierarchy and the Priesthood?" We declare that no Catholic has a right to set up any such distinction. The harmonious action of Bishop and Priest ought to be as dear to the Catholic layman as if he were a Bishop or Priest himself. It is perfectly monstrous to pretend, that because it is not a layman's business to interfere between a Bishop and his Clergy, he therefore commits no faults if he is reckless of doing that which he knows must tend to pit them one against another.—We say that the discipline of the Clergy is every man's concern, and that no man has a right to do that which will needlessly interfere with that discipline. You may as rationally pretend, that because it is not my business to protect all the shop fronts as I walk along the streets, I am therefore at liberty to amuse myself with tossing stones in every direction, heedless of the windows that I am certain to smash.

We believe, then, that the advancement of Catholic interests with regard to the state and the world in general requires a perfect freedom from all party ties on the part of our Catholic representatives. A Catholic member may have his own personal politics, and as an individual representative freely act upon them, without the smallest damage to the great and good cause; but the moment he enters into an alliance with any men, no matter who they are, which necessitates a mixing up of party tactics with the carrying through of measures of religious interest, that moment the Catholic is more or less lost in the partisan.

Whatever has been Mr. Lucas's success, it would have been much greater had he not been notoriously the patron, or the ally, of persons of more than questionable Catholicism, and had he been content to forego the gratification of playing the executioner on the deserters from his camp. The function of arbiter of the destinies of Wigs and Tories, Ministers and Oppositionists, is one which cannot now really be filled by any Catholic as a Catholic. As parliament now is constituted, a devoted, able, and business-like Catholic may become a real power in the House; but if he stoops to the quarrels and in-

trigues of mere party, he is lost in the herd of place-hunters and place-holders; and what is worse than all for his influence, he is pretty certain in the end to sink down into the class of those whom the House of Commons looks upon as bores.

A NEW THEORY OF THE WAR.

(From the Tablet.)

In the present distress of the world only one fact seems to be certain, that war is going on in the Crimea, but why it has begun and why it is persevered in nobody seems to know, or, at any rate, nobody will tell us. At one time we were informed that we went into war to defend the Turks, the natural enemies of the Christian faith; we were afterwards told that we went to war in the general interests of Europe, for the preservation of the balance of power, and this view was modified into the more intelligible notion that the war was necessary because Russia must be brought low. The members of the late Cabinet, who inflicted this war upon England, have never yet told us what they meant by it; and as that Cabinet is no longer in "the nature of things," it is just possible that the present form of it may have utterly different notions about the final cause of an European calamity.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, a member of both the Cabinets, has given another theory of the war. According to him "the contest is one of representative government against despotism." This is certainly strange, for our allies are despotically and well governed; the Turks whom we defend are under a despot, and the Austrians, whose assistance we long for, are absolutely strangers to representative government. Yet the contest, according to the Marquis of Lansdowne, is one of representative government against despotism. This, we believe, is the latest and, perhaps, the strangest explanation given of the great war. Hitherto it has been imagined that representative government was so beautiful and attractive as to captivate all affections. It was the offspring of pure reason, and required no defence save that of argument and honest exposition. Now it seems war is necessary, and we are fighting in the East against a despot, with a despot, and in defence of another, to uphold representative government. This is the reason of a doubled income tax, of extravagant expenditure, of unroasted coffee, and gallant soldiers perishing for want of food. Is it worth while to risk so many lives for such an object as this? Are we quite sure that representative government is in danger, and that we have taken the right way to defend it? It is just possible that recent events may have gone far to shake people's confidence in the Anglo-Saxon creed. It may be worth the trouble for the Marquis of Lansdowne to consider whether he could have had the assistance of France if that country had still had an upper and a lower house, a limited monarchy, and responsible ministers. It is not a matter beyond all doubt that Louis Philippe or the Bourbons would have sided with us against Russia. Let people remember M. Guizot and the monarchy of July, and then tell us whether England and France could have ever fought side by side.

People not in the secret do not see any difference between a despot who is supposed to govern for his own interest, and the members of the late and present Cabinet. France is happier, more thriving, more united under Louis Napoleon than it has been since the old monarchy of the Bourbons was destroyed, and England, under a representative government, can scarcely furnish herself with a dozen men to carry on her affairs. Was Lord J. Russell more disinterested when he broke up the late Cabinet than Louis Napoleon when he seized on the chief power of the State?—Was it all patriotism in the former and greedy selfishness in the latter? No despotic state can show us ministers, convicted of incapacity, promoted to high places like Lord Palmerston and Mr. Sydney Herbert. Those admirable individuals contrive to save themselves while their country is perishing, and they waived no personal consideration whatever for the public good. Wherein do they differ from a despot? As for responsibility, none seems to exist; nobody is responsible for the avoidable ills of the war, and of course nobody is punished. A real government protects the subjects, and if it does not reward, punishes the wrong doer. But here is England fighting against despotism, and meanwhile suffering herself from the meanest form of despotism, clerks in the Government offices, who, irresponsible to anybody, kill their fellow-creatures with impunity through mere neglect, and a censured Cabinet resumes power in order to perpetuate calamities, which have no parallel in the history of the world.

AUGMENTATION OF THE ARMY.

(From the Same.)

The army of Britain is the laughing-stock of the military nations at present. The degradation of British arms dates since the Durham epistle. After this epistle the member for Hertford rose like some disastrous planet to disgust a nation of soldiers and to shed a baleful and hated glare upon British councils, and the armies of Britain have consequently withered into rags, contempt, and calamity. The Ministry now propose to swell the diminishing numbers of this withering army. But first they must augment the rural population, and recal from the grave the myriad victims of years of famine. "Ere long the Catholic peasantry," according to the *Edinburgh Review*, "will have passed away from the troubled land." It may be so, but with the Irish peasantry the British Empire will likewise pass away. In England the military spirit, according to Mr. Sidney Herbert, is dead. It is impossible, in a country which swarms with inhabitants, to get a soldier, the millions of the manufacturing towns reject military service. The Orange scoundrels of Ulster, so heroic at Newtownlimavady, shrink from the horrors

of real war. The veracity of Mr. Sidney Herbert is proved by swarming cities and vacant depots. On the other hand, German chivalry, we believe, refuses the ill-gotten money of the "traffickers in human flesh." As to the childish striplings who are inhumanly and uselessly lured into the army and shovelled into the Crimea, pestilence, swifter than cannon balls, sweep them into their shallow graves before the fiery breath of war reaches them. They only serve to manure the fields of Tartary, and will make future harvests grow for Russian colonists.

The blackened gables and roofless cottages—in short, the surface of Ireland strewn with ruins—tell with mute eloquence why soldiers cannot be had, and proclaim that the crimes of the landlords are the downfall of the empire. The Czar has a mission.—He is God's avenger of ruthless extermination. He is summoned from the pole to punish wholesale homicide. The Protestant landlords who destroyed the peasantry, and seized on their improvements, must be punished by the Righteous Ruler of the universe, and the Czar is God's instrument in this punishment.—When the Catholic peasantry had doubled the value of the landlord's property, extermination was their reward. The perpetration of this outrage proves that the injustice was possible, but the thunder of Russian war tells us that it is likewise punishable.—Backed, as they were, by British cannon, the Protestant landlords twelve months ago chuckled at the woe-begone faces, the ruin and rags of the Catholic tenantry. But God has silenced the cannon of Britain on the heights of Sebastopol, and the power on which the landlords relied has proved a broken reed. The industry of the Catholic farmers enriched the landlords, while their intrepidity defended and their valor widened the empire. Now, the Irish landlords and the British Sovereign equally deplore the decimation of a nation of soldiers. The artisans of Britain who have reached years of discretion—full grown men in the prime of life—will not enlist, because in them the military spirit is killed by drudgery. "It is certain," says Lord Bacon, "that sedentary and within-door acts," and "delicate manufacturers that require rather the finger than the arm, have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition."

The cities of Britain swarm with these "delicate manufacturers," who swell the census and lessen the muster-roll, and constitute "great population" and "little strength." The army cannot be augmented by such men for this reason, that the medical authorities will reject them as unfit for service.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

THE POLICY OF IRELAND—SIGNS OF LIFE.

The year 1855 is destined beyond doubt or question to be a famous year, and richer than many of its predecessors in the record of events and revolutions which it will leave behind it. Every week brings news of a very interesting, and not infrequently of a most exciting character. The eyes of men all over Europe are turned to the battle-field whereon before the struggle shall have ended the sons of every race in the western world, and many from the East will be engaged. In this tremendous struggle the minds of men in every country are musing on the manner in which the interests and the honor of their own nation will be affected for better or for worse by the pressure of events so stupendous. Of these the Russians look for extended dominion and increased power—the Franks, if we mistake not, contend for kindred objects—but for the English, with whatever views they may have entered into the contest, it is clearly for them just now an effort of a conservative character—to maintain the position, the rank, and the influence they have for the last three-quarters of a century held among European States. Even here in Ireland, where the public mind, frozen by the coldest selfishness, has lain ice-bound for the last two years and a half, even here one can see abundant symptoms of returning life, and hope, and activity. For men are asking themselves—and whenever three men meet in the market-place, on the Queen's highroad, or at the chapel, they are asking one another: Will Ireland be no better when the war is over—no better after all the blood shed for England and the treasure expended, will she or her old religion be made no whit the better by the fine opportunities which we sighed for so long, and which the war brought to our doors so abundantly? By these questions, and the quick tones and the sage airs with which they are put, we know well that the pulse of Ireland is once more awake, and may soon again be in the full play of healthy energy and sanguine manhood. Sold, and bought, and gagged, and chained, as we have been by the very champions chosen to win us liberty and life, it is passing sweet to see the light of heaven once beaming in through the flaws, and chinks, and breaches in our dungeon. For two years we have not struck a single link from our fetters. We have aided and assisted in keeping Lords Aberdeen and Russell, and Keogh, and Monsell in office, and this is the work that two long years can show, and besides this nothing. In return, we have got, first, shame, dishonor, and disgrace, and then insult in silence, new wrongs inflicted, and old ones perpetuated, rivetted. Verily it is a maddening little history, and no wonder, when reflection awoke, that remorse has set violently in. When the thoughtful and the conscientious behold the shattered and feeble state of parties in the House of Commons glancing at the mute ranks of our venal and hireling representatives, how must they feel, comparing what is *with what ought to be*? How must they burn with mingled indignation and shame, looking on this debauched, degenerate herd of place-beggars and helots, useless and enervated, and without one generous throb in their hearts, one noble idea in their heads, and comparing them with all that they might now be, a party, omnipotent to achieve for Ireland, at the present moment, anything, and everything. That the country loathes the policy of the place-hunters, for the last two years, that it deplores and anathematizes the degrading con-
 rection, by whomsoever accomplished, with the worthless Aberdeen party, is plain long since, and is every day growing plainer. What else has county after county been proclaiming for the last three months—Kilkenny, Tipperary, Wexford, Mayo, and this week Clare!—What else is Louth, and Longford, and other counties we could name, preparing to proclaim? Who

thinks of upholding the policy of Keogh, Sadleir, and Monsell, now in Ireland? Why, hardly could a dozen men be got throughout the Island to subscribe publicly to that infamous and deadly policy—we mean of course a dozen men, and not so many self-seeking slaves. It is most satisfactory, and argues it well for the future, that many men of that party, their abettors, and supporters, have lost their reputation, either for common sense, or common honesty, and often for both. It is most satisfactory and cheering to find that those who have clung to the policy of Independent Opposition, have gradually grown dearer and dearer to the hearts of all the men of discerning patriotism and religious feeling in Ireland—that they are cheered and feted from province to province, and from county to county—that their name is a spell word to the men of Wexford as to the men of Meath—to the men of Mayo as to the men of Tipperary.

It is equally gratifying and still more significant that just in proportion as men grow deep in the persuasion that something great can now be done, and as they grow earnest in the purpose of really doing something, it is to the policy of independent opposition they turn their regards, hoping from it, and from it alone, the realisation of their hopes and wishes.

Last week the working men of Liverpool held a meeting for a purpose imposingly practical—to protect themselves and their children, from having their blood spilled by the sanguinary brutality of the Liverpool Orangemen, and to save their churches from the pillaging and burning publicly threatened by these same impious bigots. And it was the wish, and became the resolve—and a very wise and necessary one—of the meeting to have a strong representation made in the House of Commons to the Home Secretary on the subject of these atrocious threats and proceedings of the Orangemen. The poor Irish in Liverpool, may God help and defend them! On the part of Mr. Lucas we return them our best thanks for the very flattering, enthusiastic demonstration of confidence which the meeting gave him while committing their case into his hands. But in the present connection we wish merely to note the fact that such serious matters are not trusted by our shrewd discerning countrymen to any of the knaves, who used to sit, and we suppose, may still sit, on the Treasury benches. Again, everybody knows how the great counties of Clare and Westmeath have been served by their immaculate representatives. Well, 'tis something that we have this week—reasons from both for supposing that they have not fallen in line with the knaves of the Treasury benches. At the meeting in Clare a resolution was passed entrusting their petition for tenant right not to their own members but to the members for Meath.—Our readers will peruse for themselves the Lenten Pastoral of the Bishop of Meath. It speaks for itself—its significance just now, in all the circumstances of the present hour, is immense. The evils are there pointed clearly out, which weigh like a mountain on the soul of Ireland. The land laws, the Established Church, the army and navy, Chaplains and schools, the bigotry which, during the last administration, reigned and rioted in all the public institutions of the country, and all these crowned by the graduated scale of insulting religious ascendancy that came from under the hand of Mr. Sidney Herbert—one of the hopeful worthies of the benevolent Administration; and then comes the remedy—the only remedy—which Bishops, Priests, or people at all acquainted with our affairs, put any hope or trust in.—

We therefore earnestly exhort you, in the exercise of your constitutional rights, by county and parochial petitions, to urge on the Legislature the prompt and satisfactory redress of the monstrous grievances to which I have adverted. The peace, the happiness, and prosperity of the empire are all involved in their full and speedy removal. You will remind your representatives of their pledges at the hustings, and assure them that a constitutional opposition to every government, be it Whig, Tory, or Coalition, embarrassing the minister who will refuse to redress grievances so intolerable, will be the only evidence of the sincerity of former professions which you will accept when they next seek the renewal of your confidence.

This is a solemn appeal to the Clergy and people—we trust it will not be lost on either in Westmeath.—*Tablet.*

CATHOLICITY IN IRELAND.—In a late number of the *Gazette de Lyons*, which contains a magnificent description of the solemnities attendant upon the announcement made by His Holiness in St. Peter's Church of the Dogmatic Decree of the Immaculate Conception, a touching and truthful tribute of respect is paid in the following paragraph to the fidelity with which Ireland has clung to the ancient faith. The article is from the Roman correspondent of the *Gazette*:—

"I know not why none of the accounts given of this festive occasion make mention of the presence here of the Irish Bishops and Faithful. If for no other cause than the fact that so many of the children of Erin have come here at the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff, Ireland well merited this distinction. But she has a right better sustained and acquired. Does there exist a Church which has given to the world a more magnificent proof of perseverance and fidelity than the Church of Ireland in her resistance of persecutions of all sorts! For nearly four centuries Ireland has exhibited to the entire universe evidence of what a vivid and strong faith can do in a struggle with all the elements of violence which lay at the disposal of the most unscrupulous despotism. Mention has been made of the English and American Bishops present in Rome. This is just. But why forget a people to whom, in the midst of all their misfortunes, the Catholic Church of England and America owe, we may say, its very existence? To repair as far as possible, this involuntary omission, permit me to remark to you here that there have been present at Rome at the Feast of the Immaculate Conception three Irish Archbishops, and three Irish Bishops, viz:—The Archbishop of Tuam, senior of the Irish Bishops present; the Archbishop of Dublin, the Archbishop of Armagh, the Bishop of Clogher, the Bishop of Clonferri, and the Bishop of Cloyne."

From the Pastoral of the Bishop of Meath, just addressed to the clergy and faithful of his diocese we transcribe the following remarkable passages every word of which will be read with delight:—"In addressing you on the present occasion, we feel called on to express our sympathy and to exhort you to Christian patience and resignation under the many social and religious grievances which it is our sad lot still to endure. The un-Christian cruelties practiced under the oppressive and iniquitous laws which enforce the rights without compelling the duties of landlords—an evil which banished millions of our country-