

THE RECTORY FUNDS.

THE distribution of the funds arising out of the properties, the revenues from which were monopolized so unjustly for many years by the wealthy Church of St. James', Toronto, ought to engage the anxious attention of the Committee in charge of this problem for some time. The interests involved are much too serious for hasty action, which can hardly fail to result in some crude scheme that will do neither justice to some of those entitled to a share, nor honor, nor benefit to the Church. The object intended to be served by those from whom these properties originally came as gifts to the Church should be well, indeed mainly, considered, as that object has every right to be, seeing that its claims caused the diversion of the funds from a monopoly to a general distribution amongst those now in possession. It would be worse than an injustice, it would be a grave scandal for those funds to be so distributed as to perpetuate in any case, or to any extent, the wrong which the diversion of them from St. James' was intended to remove. That wrong was the enrichment of one clergyman and one congregation by funds which his circumstances and the needs of his flock did not need. Thus money given for the extension and sustenance of the Church was in one case drawn off into a private fortune, and in the other used for work that ought to have been maintained by individual contributions. Unless these funds are distributed with severe regard to the interests of the Church there will be seen several smaller cases akin to that existing before the old monopoly was broken up. There are clergy entitled to a share in the surplus whose present incomes are amply sufficient for all their needs, when compared with their clerical brethren they are very well provided for by their congregations, some of them by private resources are, by this comparison, in affluence. Others of the claimants are laboring with praiseworthy zeal in parishes where the income is not enough for ordinary comfort, in the households of these clergy the pressure of straightened means is felt as a daily burthen. These parishes contain so many poor that a faithful priest moving amongst his people feels keenly how hampered he is by being also as hard pressed to make both ends meet as are his flock.

It is not far from the truth to say of town and city clergy that their incomes are in inverse proportion to their necessities. Rich congregations not only provide their pastor with a tolerably good income, but place in his hands the means to meet the demands of charity. A poor congregation shows the reverse of this.

In all Christian fairness is it right, is it honest, is it fulfilling the law of the Master, is it to the interest of His Church that those clergy who have no personal or parochial needs should take out of these Rectory funds the same share as their brethren whose necessities, both personal and parochial, are pressing and oppressive? The question answers itself—it would be a scandal to so distribute these funds as to ignore what equity and Christian feeling

and Christian principle dictate. To give certain clergymen a sum from these resources would be simply a present to a number of their lay supporters. We know whereof we speak, for we have heard many laymen declare that they will reduce their contributions in the ratio of the amount given their rector from the St. James surplus. Thus, as we have indicated, in such cases the very worst phase of the Rectory fund scandal would be perpetuated. It seems to us that it would be far the wiser course to treat the income from this source wholly apart from any personal or particular parish claims in perpetuity. The Church is now rapidly developing around Toronto, new parishes are springing up, and a fund like this should be made elastic enough to flow wherever it is most serviceable. Any form of permanent parochial endowment out of it seems, in our judgment, not desirable. Whatever else is done we trust that no "rule of thumb" arrangement will be adopted, because the difficulty is great of satisfying all interested.

We are well aware that the problem needs much careful thought, and will involve no little tedious labour. But the members of the Committee must remember that they each have a most grave responsibility in having this problem to solve, and in honour they are bound to give to its solution their most careful consideration in a spirit of high-minded regard to the imperative claims of equity and charity and the interests of the Church.

Since writing the above we have learnt that the Executive Committee has decided to divide the funds regardless of the merits of the case. This is doubtless a very easy way of getting over a difficulty, but it hardly needed so important a body as the Executive Committee to make such an arrangement, any school boy could split a fund into so many equal parts. If this is really the decision of the Committee the next Synod will demand a settlement on a more equitable and rational basis.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE POPE.

THE Churchman Magazine for July, contains an interesting article on "Home Rulers and the Papacy" in which the position Mr. Gladstone has been placed by the Papal Rescript is thus commented upon.

"Time has brought about a singular revenge upon Mr. Gladstone. In 1874 the Liberal Premier defeated upon the Irish University Question by a combination of Roman Catholic priests, and having failed to rehabilitate himself by an appeal to the country retired awhile into private life with the purpose of compounding thunders against the Vatican. The result was a pamphlet in which the monstrous results which logically flow from an allowance of the Vatican claims were duly set forth, and Mr. Gladstone seemed to discover what had long been a common place amongst Protestants, that a man who surrendered to the Vatican his moral and spiritual independence must virtually surrender also his civil allegiance.

The Pope has waited fourteen years for an effectual retort and now he has his opportunity. The former advocate of an endangered civil allegiance has become the champion of revolution, and those who have made surrender to him of their political independence have to follow him into encouraging dishonesty and outrage, against which even the Vatican protests in the name of religion and morality. The avenger is certainly complete. Who could have foreseen—we will not say fourteen, but three years ago that Mr. Gladstone would so soon come to see with complacency the plan of Campaign, and the cruel, pitiless boycotting, with all their hideous sanctions; while on the other hand the Sacred College, so often identified with blurred and distorted moral teaching, for the greater glory of God, comes forward and boldly proclaiming the evils by their English names, so that Latinity could give no excuse for pretending an ignorance of what was meant, condemns them for what they are—sins against God's law and human charity? * * * * In most countries the Roman priests are a caste apart from the people. But in Ireland they are men of the people by birth, education and modes of thought, one with the classes from whom the enemies of the Saxon and the landlord are drawn. They have found their sacerdotal powers and privileges to be handy and serviceable weapons in the cause of their peasant brethren; will they now turn those same spiritual powers of terror and compulsion to the destruction of what they have been helping to build? We doubt it.

The danger in England was from the wholesale demoralization of the Gladstonian Party, who were rapidly following their leader into a toleration of every kind of excess. Crimes and dishonesty which would two years ago have shocked the consciences of all but half a dozen abandoned politicians, were coming to be excused, and almost applauded, and it really seemed as if where the greater glory of Mr. Gladstone was the object, hardly any act could be pronounced immoral. That even the proverbially lax Roman Court should be roused to protest against a state of things approved by the most Puritan section of this virtuous country could not but startle many amongst us, and we believe that it did lead some to consider to what mischievous lengths the tide of political partizanship can carry even respectable and God fearing-folk.

For the modern Irishman have vanished, his faith, chivalry, manhood and sense of honour, which till lately characterized the race. Ireland can never recover her place among the nations till her people have learned that it is better to tell hard truths than easy lies, more profitable to toil than to remove a neighbour's land mark, and more manly to put a shoulder to the wheel than sit by the roadside and call upon Hercules."

—If that which thou thinkest be not amiss, and yet thou partest with it for God, and followes the opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.