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THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 1868.

THE IRISH ESTABLISHED CHURCH—PAST AND FUTURE.

I. THE PAST. The vote reached on Saturday, April 4th, in the British House of Commons, in regard to the abolition of the Irish Established Church, has been received with very general satisfaction in this country. Believing that the result of that vote will be to place Protestantism on a much better footing in Ireland and elsewhere, we see no reason to regret the vote. But there are many facts in the history of the Irish Church, and many popular mistakes current in regard to it, that call for a discussion on wider grounds than it has yet received.

The grievance of an English Church established in Ireland is one of which Romanists, as such, have no right to complain. The English Church in Ireland—and the Establishment has been nothing more—is a part of the English conquest of Ireland, a conquest commanded by the only English Pope who ever wore the tiara. As for the first four centuries of its existence as a Roman Catholic Church, so also for the last three centuries of its continuance as a Protestant Church, it has always been simply the Church of the invading army, the Norman and Saxon garrison, as purely such as the Presbyterian Church has been the Church of the Scottish colony in Ulster. Now, if there is one historical event for which the Papacy must stand sponsor, it is that English invasion. Up to that time the Irish Church, and not the Irish Nation, was the thorn in the side of Europe. While in every other part of Europe the ecclesiastical system had been conformed to the civil Roman Constitution,—while consul, pro-consul, and praetor had been everywhere else reproduced in Patriarch, Archbishop, and Bishop—while the Papacy itself held divided empire with the Caesars in the rest of Europe, in Ireland the most recent and most important part of the Roman Empire, and the primitive social organization, as in the Scottish Highlands, was the only one known. And so, as if by some law of assimilation, the Church took the form which most resembled the civil polity of the nation. Ecclesiastical co-arcs or chieftains ruled ecclesiastical clans and septa. The Bishops were but a new style of Christian druids and bards, often seven in a town; often also, under the rule of a female abbess. The canons seem to have been as free and easy as the Brehon laws. And any proposal to change these things met with the same violent resistance that has made the Anglicization of Ireland a failure, after centuries of effort.

The pope dealt with Ireland as the Inquisition deals with heretics,—did his best for them "spiritually," and then handed them over to the civil power. The infallible See did not perceive that the ecclesiastical institutions which he wished to thrust on Ireland were merely as human and civil in their origin and form as those that he wished to supplant.

With the Anglo-Norman army went the Anglo-Norman Church, each alike hostile to Irish institutions. Each alike set up the Anglo-Norman institutions within the Pale around Dublin, and wherever else by force of arms they could secure a footing. Each alike were opposed with the united energy of every patriotic Irishman, sept and soggarth, priest and clansman. Each alike, for four hundred years, held their ground only by the support of the English nation and the Papal See. Each alike extended its bounds or retraced its footsteps, as, by the fortune of war, a larger or more contracted territory fell to the share of the English. Each alike lost many adherents through colonies of English being so cut off from the Pale that their only safety was to go over to the enemy, and so becoming *Hiberniores Hibernis ipsis*, "more Irish than the Irish themselves," as an old act of the Irish Parliament declares. To such an extent was this the case, that in the intensely Irish province of Connaught, it is this day disputed whether one-half, or only a third of the people are of Norman blood. Each alike received a sullen submission on the part of its foes, as the English rule extended over the whole island. Each alike exulted in the favor of the Papacy and was sustained by the public opinion of Western Europe.

The Reformation brought a sudden change on all hands. The Anglo-Normans who had been for centuries the most subservient vassals of the Papal See, became its most determined enemies, and their Church in Ireland, like their Church in England, became Protestant. The Pope changed as suddenly as the Nobles. The Church of "the Wild Irish," against which the Papacy had unleashed all the hounds of war, was now

taken under the patronage of its grand persecutor. For a while, the result seemed dubious, and a generous policy on the part of the English nation might have saved the day, so far as Irish religion went. Home the bitterest religious enemy of all nationality, and England the bitterest political enemy of Irish nationality, competed for the favor of the outraged nationality of Ireland. Had the efforts of such men as Bale and Ussher been seconded; had the advice of Spencer, that it was "ill preaching among drawn swords," of Bacon, that Irish Bibles and Irish preaching be provided, been taken; had they, as the dean of Cork puts it, "sheathed the sword and sped the preacher," centuries of bitterness and rebellion might have been saved, and the grand anomaly of a Romish nation asserting its rights against a Protestant one, would never have existed. The chance was lost. The Irish Church became more really than ever the Church of the English garrison,—not till 1685 was the Bible in Irish published,—the ability to speak Irish was actually made a disqualification for holding a benefice. The old policy of repression, distrust and enmity, of stamping out all traces of a separate nationality, was continued, while the Pope, wiser in his generation, took all that he had for centuries waged war against, under his protection. The Bishops and Deputies and Rectors of the Establishment were filled with the off-scourings of the English Church, or as Swift sarcastically puts it, "not with the godly bishop appointed by the English government, but with the highwaymen who stopped them on Hounslow heath, robbed them of their credentials and took their places."

The result may well teach both England and Rome that "what a man soweth that shall he also reap." If Ireland is to-day a source of weakness and not of strength to the empire, something that England cannot leave to itself and yet cannot consistently with her own abstract principles of political right retain; if the wrongs inherited from the England who obeyed the Pope cannot be abandoned by the England who defies him, it is because the generous Church policy, which has, within a century and a half, turned the Scottish Highlands from a disloyal, half-civilized, Romish country into a loyal, intelligent Protestant section of the nation, even in spite of political blunders, has not been pursued also in Ireland.

And if to-day one of the only three European countries that sincerely adhere to the Papal See, is unable to throw a feather's weight of influence in Rome's behalf into the great European scale, if a Protestant sits in every See of the Irish Church, if the vast preponderance of Irish property and prestige is in the hands of English Protestants; if the disposal of all the Church property in Ireland depends on the votes of an English Protestant Parliament, then Rome also is only reaping what she sowed. Papal Bulls gave Henry the right in his own eyes, and in the eyes of all Europe, to invade Ireland, and the English occupation of Ireland, if it be a wrong, is one of those wrongs whose redress would now be a greater wrong.

Especially amusing in view of these facts are the words of the Romish Archbishop Manning when in reply to the Englishman's allegation that:

"As for laws and administration, Ireland is on the same footing with England; and where there is a difference, Ireland will be found to be better cared for than England."

He says, "Let the endowments of the Church of England be transferred to the English Catholic Bishops and clergy; let the Anglican archbishops and bishops be liable to fine for assuming their ecclesiastical titles; let the land in England be held by absentee Irish landlords by title of past confiscations, and let their soil be tilled by tenants at will who may at any hour be evicted, and I shall then think that Ireland and England are on the same footing. There is yet one thing wanting. Let some Irish statesman reproach the English for their unreasoning and unrelenting animosity, their self chosen poverty, their insensibility to the dignity and benefits of being thus treated by a superior race."

Well may the *Universer* that "this is inflexible Fenianism," that it is Irish opposition to English rule simply as English and not as Protestant; for these wrongs—an alien Church, an alien land, proprietorship and slavish land-tenure resting on confiscation, and the insulting domination of race over race, are what Romish England, backed by the Papal See, inflicted for four centuries on Ireland. The wrongful occupation of Ireland is a wrong inherited from unreformed England, a wrong which prescription had made right, as far as prescription can make anything right, long before the English Reformation.

The Alexander Presbyterian church, at Nineteenth and Green streets, will be dedicated on Sunday next.

THE BUFFALO PRESBYTERIAN UNION CONVENTION.

Although this was a much smaller body than might have been expected from the great Presbyterian population within easy reach of that hospitable and beautiful city, it was composed of representative men from three of the bodies interested—Old and New School and United Presbyterian—and it accomplished results which, we think, will be found of no little importance in shaping the Union movement. It gave leading Old School men, like Dr. Lord of Buffalo, Dr. Hall of Rochester, and Mr. Rankin of Black Rock, not to mention younger men on the same side,—opportunity to express and defend the most liberal views that any sincere Calvinist in the New School would wish to bear. Mr. Rankin's argument from the language of the Confession, and from doctrinal cases reported in the Digest, in which, as he showed, wide differences of doctrinal views were plainly allowed by the highest authorities in the Church, was of the most complete and satisfactory character. From one case thus reported—we think it was that of Hezekiah Balch—he showed that the General Assembly had refused, when the matter was brought before them on appeal, to condemn the Governmental Theory of the Atonement, a heresy over which the hyper-orthodox professor of Allegheny makes such an ado. Following up these demonstrations, Dr. Wisner of Lockport, and Dr. Heacock of Buffalo, ably argued for the clear and frank expression of such views in the proposed doctrinal basis. The speech of the latter was pungent, witty, eloquent, and overflowing with the generous sentiments that well so spontaneously from the heart of Dr. Heacock. Dr. Walter Clarke, of the First Church, as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, brought in a paper, altogether in the same liberal strain, to which an amendment was offered by Rev. W. Calkins, calculated to test fully the strength of the liberal sentiments so freely uttered by Old School men. This amendment, as amended by Rev. C. F. Mussey, of Batavia, and accepted by Dr. Clarke, read as follows: "Such differences of interpretation of that symbol [Westminster Confession] as are now allowed in the separate branches of the Presbyterian Church shall be freely and honorably allowed in the united Church." The amendment, as first proposed, read: "differences of doctrine;" but men of both schools denied that the differences were so deep as that language implied. They preferred to regard the differences, for example, of limited or general atonement, of mediate or immediate imputation, as differences of interpretation. With few exceptions, there seemed to be a shrinking on all sides from the imputation of a difference in doctrine, albeit the General Assembly, in the case of Craighead, referred to by Mr. Rankin, declared that the doctrines of Craighead, which they agreed should be tolerated, as not fundamentally erroneous, were "different from those of the Reformed Churches." (Digest, p. 306.) And Dr. Heacock pertinently reminded the Convention, that when the plea was made for Mr. Barnes on his trial, that his view was only a difference of interpretation, he was answered that his interpretation destroyed the doctrine itself. "If," said Dr. H., "our different views are to be treated in the future in the same manner, what security is there in the toleration of diversities of interpretation only?" Dr. Meers followed on the same side, urging that there were peculiar doctrinal views in the other branch of the Church, like those of Baird, which would need the protection of an explicit and generous toleration. Nevertheless, under the almost universal understanding that "differences of interpretation" was a term sufficiently broad to cover all the extant diversities in the separate branches, the amended form of expression was preferred and the resolution, as amended, was adopted unanimously. The whole series of resolutions will be found in another part of the paper. We believe the doctrinal basis thus formed will be found decidedly in advance of any other—even preferable in definiteness and safety to that of the Joint Committee itself.

A CURIOUS CONFERENCE was lately held Feb. 17th, in the Hall of Zion College (Cong.). Rev. W. Rogers, Rector of St. Botolph's, who convened the meeting, presided. The Bishop and clergy of London and leading non-conformists, including especially James Martineau, and Miall, Editor of the *Nonconformist*, were present. The main purpose was to hear from Dean Stanley a friendly exposition of the grounds on which he claimed that the Church and State should be united. He showed that no secession had ever taken place simply because of this connection; that it did not essentially involve the State's endowment of the Church, or the assignment of a civil status to its ministers (Italy and Russia be-

ing cases in point,) and that the fundamental principle underlying such a union was the encouragement, by the State, of the expression of the religious sentiment, and the acknowledgment of a common Centre and Source of their life. He maintained that those who asserted that the State had nothing to do with religion (like those who assert that the Church has nothing to do with politics), whether they be High Churchmen or dissenters, are reviving an old Romish dogma that the Church is spiritual and the State profane, that the former is the only embodiment of the kingdom of heaven, and the latter, necessarily, of the world and to be governed by worldly maxims,—a dogma protested against by the Reformers, who maintained, with the Apocalypse, that the kingdoms of this world are become rightfully the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. He claimed that the State was the best representative of that Christian community, which, for five centuries, chose the bishops and ruled the Church in the market place; that its supremacy as a judge in matters of faith was virtually recognized in every suit for the possession of a dissenting chapel; that from the days of Caiaphas and Pilate, and when the Erastian Paul appealed from the Jewish Church to Cæsar, the tribunals of the State had always been fairer than those of the Church, and not less competent; that State connection ensured the intellectual independence of the clergy, while what voluntaries called the headship of Christ often meant the supremacy of the green-grocer in the next street to the chapel; that dissenting preachers had in history proved as worldly and subservient, and Churchmen as independent and patriotic (e.g. Wm. Penn and Bishop Keir) as their neighbors. He looked on dissenters as "dissenting members of the Church of England," desired their recognition as clergymen, and their admission to the pulpits of the Church, alleging that it was almost if not altogether legal to admit Presbyterians now; that the religious life of the nation would be most seriously injured by the abolition of the Establishment.

Mr. Miall admitted that most of these arguments were new to him, and not such as to admit of an immediate answer, and that the main objection of the dissenters was to the assumption that religious teaching lay within the sphere of the State.

The Bishop of London wanted a National Church on a wide basis, and hoped for more such conferences as a means of removing misunderstandings.

Rev. Jas. Martineau professed himself in unity with what was said by the Dean and the Bishop, and thought the State had a right to look after the highest as well as the lower interests of the people.

The proceedings lasted to a late hour.

*Dean Stanley alludes especially to the fact that part of Canterbury Cathedral is by law set apart for the use of the French Protestant Church, which has a minister resident in the place.]

PASTOR, OR CHURCH?

Our dailies of week before last gave somewhat extensive accounts of a scene which occurred in the Eleventh Baptist Church, on the previous Sabbath. The affair was one which must by this time have become deeply mortifying to all concerned. The published accounts are not luminous respecting the origin or conditions of the controversy, but so much as is obvious, that the sermon of the pastor on Sabbath morning became so pointed, or as his opponents would say, offensive, that he was interrupted, questioned and finally told to desist. Failing to silence him by other means, resort was at last had to the organ, and amid the tumult the congregation dispersed. When the pastor returned for evening service, he found the doors locked. The law has since been resorted to for a settlement, or probably an increased non-settlement of the difficulty.

We notice the affair only because it so aptly illustrates the working of a certain system of church order. Congregationalism is the form of church government with the Baptist churches, and the most of them are very tenacious of the so-called liberties of the people, as against the prerogatives of the Pastors. In the by-laws of the Eleventh Church, this jealousy of the pastoral prerogative takes organic form in an article providing that the *devotional exercises of the congregation shall be under the direction of the church*. Whatever in this case may be the underlying merits of the controversy—a point of which we have no means of judging—it appears pretty plain that the mass feature of it, if not the whole, grew out of that article; and, taking our human nature into the account, it was a pretty natural result. We do not know whether a fully developed Congregationalism recognizes any such thing as pastoral authority, or if that is too stiff a word, say oversight; but be this as it may, if

the office does not involve the direction of the public religious services, it is next thing to a stark absurdity. Under the by-law, we do not see why the whole scene in the aforesaid church was not ecclesiastically regular. The devotional exercises of the congregation were under the control, not of the pastor, but of the church. When they thought his sermon was becoming unedifying, it was their right to interrupt him and tell him that he could not be tolerated, and to order out the booming and screeching of the organ pipes to drown his voice to silence. But concerning the spiritual wisdom of a system which exposes our Christian worship to such shameful scenes, our readers can judge for themselves.

AFFAIRS AT THE CAPITAL.

WASHINGTON, April 13th, 1868.

The Supreme Court adjourned last Monday, thus postponing to next December the adverse political decisions to which the Obstructionists have looked with so much expectancy. On the last day of the term, decision was declared in the famous "Gaines case" by which at last Mrs. Gaines is put in possession of the property left by her father in New Orleans. For thirty-six years has this indefatigable woman pressed her suit, out-living two husbands, spending the large fortune of the last and pledging a large part of the property now secured in lawyer's fees, through poverty, reproach, affliction and civil war, and is at last by the highest court in the land declared to be the rightful owner of property which makes her the richest woman in America. The history of this case would possess all the interest of a romance, and it is to be hoped that Mrs. Gaines who has the legal ability to do it may give it to the world.

The defense of the President reveals at its commencement the inherent weakness of the case. The opening speech of Judge Curtis, though adroit and indeed almost wonderful as a piece of fine spun sophistry failed of any decided effect. Such legal quibbles, as that the Civil Tenure act did not apply to Mr. Stanton, or that Mr. Johnson did not remove Mr. Stanton but only tried to do so, could scarcely have any effect upon Senators except to convince them that no stronger arguments could be urged. One of the Senators remarked at the close of the argument that all the points presented by Judge Curtis were made in secret session when Mr. Stanton was re-instated.

In the production of testimony the defense has been equally unfortunate. Gen. Thomas was their first witness. Inconsistent, perverting, doubtful and confused, there has been scarcely a point in his testimony in which he has not contradicted himself or given a double version of all the facts connected with his attempted entry into the War Department. Gen. Butler characterized him on Saturday as "a weak vacillating, vain old man just fit to be pampered by a little bribe to do the thing which no brave man would dare do." Taken by itself his testimony would tend to weaken the charges against the President. Not that he has brought new facts to light or disproved the testimony of other witnesses; but his appearance makes the attempt to dislodge such a man as Stanton a great farce. It would not be strange if the counsel for the President should use Thomas's testimony in a way to surprise the witness, and claim that if the President had designed to remove Stanton he never would have employed such a man as his tool. The masked ball was a more fitting arena for him than the head of a revolution.

The testimony of Gen. Sherman, however, shows that the President's intentions are not to be interpreted in the light of the final selection of Gen. Thomas as his tool. Sherman testified that on two occasions the ad interim situation was offered to himself and both times declined. The chief purpose of the defense in calling Gen. Sherman to the stand seems to have been to introduce conversations between Mr. Johnson and himself, in which the former had explained his purposes in making the appointment.

The Democrats seem determined to present Judge Chase in a false light before the country. This week they have claimed him as the author of a long and heavy article in the *Intelligencer* which endeavors to prove that the successor of Mr. Johnson cannot be Wade or Colfax, but must be Chase. The taste that would be exhibited by the advocacy of such opinions in such a manner at this time does not shock these new admirers of Judge Chase; but the charge of producing the malignant editorials of the President's organ is too gross detraction, and is authoritatively denied.

The reason for the decided opposition of the Democracy to the impeachment of the President has come to light—he has threatened that if removed he will enter the Presidential canvass at once in favor of the Democratic nominees. No wonder that they fear the consequences of impeachment.

FENWICK.

City.—At a meeting of the Central Presbytery of Philadelphia, held on Tuesday, March 31, in the matter of the complaint of a portion of the Second Presbyterian Church, against the consummation of a union between the Second Church of this city, Rev. Dr. Beadle, pastor, and the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Rev. Mr. Conkling, late pastor, it was, by a large majority of the Presbytery decided that such union was undesirable and inexpedient, and therefore disapproved.