

MR. MIALL'S PROPOSED CAMPAIGN.

From the London Spectator.

The Dissenters have taken their final resolve to raise at once the question of the disestablishment—we suppose, but are not sure, that they mean to raise also the question of the disendowment—of the National Churches of England and Scotland, and on the 9th of May Mr. Miall is to bring forward his motion for the dissolution of the union between Church and State. Mr. Richard, M. P. for Morfhyr Tydvil, and Mr. Miall, who addressed the conference at the City Terminus Hotel on the subject on Wednesday, were both fully conscious of the great responsibility they were undertaking, and however much they may disagree with them in their object, it is impossible to deny that the spirit in which they spoke was all that could be wished—was one of dignified, earnest, honest, almost reluctant conviction. They do not propose to agitate their proposal in any degree as Dissenters' grievance. They say very wisely and truly that it is a question of wide policy affecting the nation at large first, the Church itself next, and the Dissenters, merely as Dissenters, only last. If it cannot be shown to be for the success of which would be far more mischievous to the British people than these gentlemen themselves even suppose that it will be beneficial. We shall not venture to prophesy their failure, for there has been so much fatalism of late in the success of crises generally assumed to be popular—and the cry is likely enough to take with the householders of the great towns, though at present, as Mr Miall frankly admits, there is no enthusiasm for it,—that the result hardly depends on the relative force of the reasons adduced on the opposite sides, but rather on the prevailing impulsion, whether false or true, as to the "popular" character of the cause. But we shall venture to oppose to the cry, whether popular or not, a resolute and tenacious opposition,—not on the ground of loyalty to the Church of England as a theological teacher, for we have found, and shall continue to find, plenty of fault with her in that character,—but solely on the higher ground on which Mr Miall proposes to fight his campaign,—on the national ground that the attempt to separate religious and secular questions is a futile and artificial attempt, which can never succeed and ought never to be attempted in the disestablishment cause. We hold that the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England would be the greatest blow that could be struck at our very germain rural civilization; and that, so far from purifying the great variety of creeds really included under this one Church, it would narrow, lower, and petrify them.

In the first place, and to take the lowest ground, the disestablishment of the National Church must involve the surrender to individual caprice of a vast capital now applied to civilizing and humanizing purposes (to say no more); and though it is clear that this may be justified on sufficient public grounds, yet it takes very strong public grounds to justify it. However, we freely admit that this is no argument to those who believe that the property now appropriated to the National Church is worse than wasted—mischievously employed. But it must greatly enhance the pain with which those who think otherwise look upon the movement.

But next, whatever view may be held as to the comparative purity of Established and Non-established religious bodies, can any one deny that the parochial division of the kingdom, and the guarantee that in every parish, however thinly populated and desolate, there shall be some minister of religion to think both for the physical and the moral wants of the people, are provisions full of beneficence, the loss of which would throw back many of the wilder districts of England into something like total barbarism? The most candid of the Voluntarists themselves admit that their system is weakest just where strength is most needed, and think that while it secures a great spiritual energy in populous districts where there is already much, it fails to provide it where there is little or none. Its principle is a most illegitimate application of the Gospel saying "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

But again, it is even true that in the fields where the voluntary principle works at its best advantage, side by side with the principle of Establishment, the Voluntarists always or even usually surpass Churchmen in the properly religious character of their work? Mr. Richard says that the action of the State "has fettered the freedom, destroyed the discipline, impaired the purity, secularized the spirit, and paralyzed the efficiency of the Church itself, and made religion, instead of a principle of union to bind men's hearts together, appear at least to mean or the occasion of engendering discord, bitterness, and social alienation." These are strong but vague words, and it is not easy, to the absence of examples, to know precisely to what Mr. Richard alludes. But it shows the same perplexity, with one exception, might fairly have been used by a State Churchman to describe the effects, as he understands them, of the voluntary principle. No one can deny it is continually maintained with very plausible arguments from well-known facts—that the voluntary

principle has repeatedly, and as we should think habitually, "fettered the freedom" of the various voluntary churches. Is the Scotch minister so free in the Free Kirk as in the Established Kirk—in the Kirk of Dr. Begg as in that of Dr. Macleod? and to speak of what is more important, the freedom of the laity—how many voluntary churches are there, besides the Unitarian, in which the layman who wishes to take part in the symbol of Communion with Christ is absolutely entitled to do so without being questioned or harassed as to the exact state of his theological tenets? Certainly nothing is more plausible than to maintain that it is not the State, but Voluntarism which has fettered freedom. As regards the destruction of "discipline," we may perhaps admit, if we rightly understand it, Mr. Richard's case; but then we regard what Mr. Richard means by ecclesiastical "discipline" as at the present day a name for what is almost purely mischievous—an attempt at a rude and superficial inquisition into the sins which offend the social feeling of the moment, a process certain to end in Pharisaic judgments, false estimates, and a morality fashioned to earn the praise of men. That Voluntarism has "impaired the purity" of the religious principles subjected to its influence is, of course, one of the commonest and most plausible of assertions. When preaching is bound to be popular, it is not very likely to insist on unpopular elements. It is said, for instance, that the great Church of authority, in which obedience is of the essence of faith, cannot help so far degenerating from the principle of authority in Ireland, where it is a voluntary Church, that its ministers give but faint discouragement, and often half-support, to the Fenian patriots. Is it possible to conceive a greater impairing of the purity of a faith than this? Then, as to the "secularization of the spirit" of the Church—which in one sense we do not admit to be an evil, but a good, though in another sense a means, of course, the simple destruction of the very life of the Church—where have the very earliest of all forms of religion usually been preached, among voluntary or established churches? Was it a Churchman or Dissenter who taught us "How to make the best of both worlds?" There are, of course, a vast number of voluntarist writers and preachers of the highest spirit; but Church for Church, it would certainly be very hard to show that there is not more frequently the tone of secular life, of a self-interested morality, of a materialized and contracted theology, of a business view of the soul's prospects, among the voluntary sects than among the established Churches. It is hard to judge the real effect of the system when the advantages of education have been so much on one side, but assuredly *prima facie* the case of the Dissenters would rest chiefly on the worldly character of the Anglican Bishops, not on that of the majority of the clergy or laity; and on all other sides of the case they would probably themselves admit that they have very little to show for their assertion, while the Churchman might show a good deal in favor of his belief that Voluntarism secularizes religion much more than an establishment. As to the relative "efficiency" of voluntary and established Churches, that depends on the standard by which you judge efficiency. If you take the stringency of the sermon, the amount of popular "movement," as your standard, it must be granted at once. If you go by the amount of faithful and often very plodding spiritual and moral work got out of the two systems, we should think the advantage lay with the establishments. And as for the disuniting effects of an establishment, the charge reads almost grotesque. What do the various distinct sects outside the Church know of each other, by comparison with the mutual knowledge of the various distinct schools inside the Church? Is it not precisely the breadth and equity of the State-rality which enables men so widely apart in opinion to meet so frequently on common ground where they can learn to admire and appreciate each other? The apparent division of the National Church is the mere index of its far larger union. The sects know too little of each other to discuss and dispute; and yet it is by the discussions within the Church—the proofs that different minds study each other and estimate their differences—that the Voluntarists are encouraged to affirm that an Establishment produces "discord, bitterness, and social alienation."

Certainly, judged of on the true ground, as a question of national policy, Mr. Miall and Mr. Richard will have hard work in their crusade. If they succeed, it will be by the help of the skeptics and the pure destructives, of whom there must be many in the working class; and through that tendency to blench before crises supposed to be popular, which is more and more eating the heart out of political discussion.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

PHILADELPHIA AND READING RAILROAD COMPANY, Office No. 27 FOURTH STREET. PHILADELPHIA, April 25, 1871. A Special Meeting of the Stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company will be held at the Office of said Company, in the city of Philadelphia, on the 8th day of May, 1871, at 12 o'clock P. M., when and where the following articles submitted by the Board of Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and the Board of Directors of the Northern Liberties and Penn Township Liberties and Penn Township Railroad Company into the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company will be submitted to the said stockholders, and a vote by ballot, in person or by proxy, taken for the adoption or rejection of the same.

PHILADELPHIA AND READING RAILROAD COMPANY, Office No. 27 South FOURTH STREET. PHILADELPHIA, April 16, 1871. A Special Meeting of the Stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company will be held at the Office of said Company, in the city of Philadelphia, on the 8th day of May, 1871, at 12 o'clock P. M., when and where the following articles submitted by the Board of Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and the Board of Directors of the Northern Liberties and Penn Township Liberties and Penn Township Railroad Company into the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company will be submitted to the said stockholders, and a vote by ballot, in person or by proxy, taken for the adoption or rejection of the same.

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

CAMPDEN AND AMBOY RAILROAD AND TRANSPORTATION COMPANY. NOTICE.—The Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the CAMPDEN AND AMBOY RAILROAD AND TRANSPORTATION COMPANY will be held at TRENTON, May 19, at 12 o'clock, M., at the Company's office, for the election of seven Directors to serve for the ensuing year.

THE UNION FIRE EXTINGUISHER COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. Manufacture and sell the Improved Portable Fire Extinguisher. Always Reliable.

DR. GUNNELL, GENERAL AGENT. Office, No. 118 MARKET ST., DEVOTED HIS TIME to the treatment of Piles, blind, bleeding, or itching. Hundreds of cases deemed incurable by other means have been permanently cured. Best city reference given. Office, No. 21 N. ELEVENTH STREET.

DR. F. R. THOMAS, No. 917 WALNUT ST., formerly operator at the Cotton Dental Rooms, devotes his entire practice to extracting teeth without pain, with fresh nitrous oxide gas.

DISPENSARY FOR SKIN DISEASES, No. 216 S. ELEVENTH STREET. Patients treated gratuitously at this institution daily at 11 o'clock.

THE PENNSYLVANIA COMPANY FOR INSURANCES ON LIVES AND GRANTING ANNUITIES. Office No. 304 WALNUT STREET, INCORPORATED MARCH 10, 1813. CHARTER PERPETUAL. CAPITAL \$1,000,000. SURPLUS UPWARDS OF \$750,000.

RECEIVE MONEY ON DEPOSIT, returnable on demand, for which interest is allowed. And under appointment by individuals, corporations, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, TRUSTEES, GUARDIANS, ASSIGNEES, COMMITTEES, RECEIVERS, AGENTS, COLLECTORS, ETC.

SECURITY FROM LOSS BY BURGLARY, ROBBERY, FIRE, OR ACCIDENT. The Fidelity Insurance, Trust, and Safe Deposit Company OF PHILADELPHIA. IN THEIR NEW Marble Fire-proof Building, Nos. 329-331 CHESTNUT STREET.

THE PHILADELPHIA TRUST, SAFE DEPOSIT AND INSURANCE COMPANY. OFFICE AND BURGLAR-PROOF VAULTS IN THE PHILADELPHIA BANK BUILDING, No. 42 CHESTNUT STREET.

THE PHILADELPHIA TRUST, SAFE DEPOSIT AND INSURANCE COMPANY. OFFICE AND BURGLAR-PROOF VAULTS IN THE PHILADELPHIA BANK BUILDING, No. 42 CHESTNUT STREET.

GROceries, ETC. LONDON BROWN STOUT AND SCOTCH ALE. ALBERT C. ROBERTS, Dealer in Fine Groceries, Corner ELEVENTH and VINE STS.

EDWARD PONTI & Co., IMPORTERS OF FOREIGN PRODUCE, Wines, Oils, Fruits, Cigars, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL. No. 904 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

INSURANCE.

STATEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE PHENIX MUTUAL Life Insurance Company, OF HARTFORD, CONN., On the 31st of December, 1870, as made to the Auditor-General's Department.

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes Capital, Assets, Liabilities, and Surplus.

STATEMENT OF THE ASSETS. First Mortgages on Philadelphia City Property. United States Government Loans. Pennsylvania State Loans.

STATEMENT OF THE LIABILITIES. Amount of cash premiums received. Amount of cash premiums not paid in cash during the year.

ASSETS OF THE COMPANY, November 1, 1870. United States Six Per Cent Bonds. State of Pennsylvania Six Per Cent Bonds.

1829. CHARTER PERPETUAL 1871. Franklin Fire Insurance Company OF PHILADELPHIA. Office, Nos. 435 and 437 CHESTNUT ST.

Union Mutual Insurance Company OF PHILADELPHIA. INCORPORATED 1864. Fire, Marine, and Inland Insurance.

THE ENTERPRISE INSURANCE COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. OFFICE, No. CORN FORTH and WALNUT STREETS. PERPETUAL AND TERM POLICIES ISSUED.

INSURANCE.

Fire, Inland, and Marine Insurance. NORTH AMERICA, INCORPORATED 1794.

Table with 2 columns: Description and Amount. Includes Capital, Assets, and Losses paid.

STATEMENT OF THE ASSETS. First Mortgages on Philadelphia City Property. United States Government Loans.

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THE PHILADELPHIA FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY. INCORPORATED 1822—Charter Perpetual. No. 510 WALNUT STREET, opposite Independence Square.

INSURANCE.

FIRE ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED MARCH 17, 1850. OFFICE, No. 84 NORTH FIFTH STREET.

AMERICAN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY. INCORPORATED 1864. CHARTER PERPETUAL. Office, No. 211 WALNUT STREET, between Third and Fourth streets, Philadelphia.

EMERALD FIRE INSURANCE CO., LONDON. ESTABLISHED 1850. Paid-up Capital and Accumulated Funds, \$5,000,000 IN GOLD.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS. BRIDGES, SEWERS, ETC.—OFFICE OF CHIEF COMMISSIONER, No. 104 SOUTH FIFTH STREET. PHILADELPHIA, May 3, 1871.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS. SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Highways, until 12 o'clock M., on FRIDAY, 5th Instant, for the construction of a sewer on the line of EIGHTH STREET, from Vine street to Willow street.

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