

P A P E R S

ON

LORD MORPETH'S BILL.

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THESE Papers have already appeared at intervals. Their republication in a more compact form has been suggested as likely to aid, however feebly, in removing ignorance and dissipating prejudice from around a measure of vital importance to the peace and well being of these kingdoms. They originated in a desire to draw public attention to the much calumniated and misrepresented measure of Lord Melbourne's Administration, commonly known as Lord Morpeth's Bill, which passed the House of Commons, and was lost in the Lords during the last Session. Unfortunately for the Church and for the Country has that Bill been lost; but the Question of Church Reform has only thereby become one of more anxious interest and of more extensive importance. The remarks offered on this measure of Ecclesiastical Reformation have not been confined to the letter of the Bill. They embrace many collateral subjects; all, however, strictly connected with Church Reform, and many of them

necessary to be taken into consideration, in order to obtain any thing like a comprehensive view of a Question widely ramified throughout the Institutions of the State—most complicated in itself—surrounded by prejudices—and involved in greater and more various difficulties than any other which can occupy the mind of the Statesman, or of the Country. Yet, is it one of such pressing necessity that some settlement must be made of it before the energies of the Empire, and especially of Ireland, can be exerted with that unshackled vigour, now, alone, wanting to carry forward its destinies to their utmost comprehension.

P A P E R S, &c.

THE Established Church, as an instrument for the dissemination of the truths of the Gospel, according to the reformed creed, has not answered its purpose. It has signally, most signally, failed. Church-of-Englandism during its existence in Ireland has increased numerically,—has increased according to the course of nature, by the multiplication of the original stock, and by such additions as immigration has made to this original stock. It has not, however, made its way amongst the professors of the Catholic creed. On the contrary, numerous Catholic families are to be found in Ireland whose ancestors were of the Reformed Church.

Now, assuming what will be allowed by every impartial person who has investigated the subject, that the constitution of the Established Church, consisting of bishops, priests, and deacons, of archbishops, archdeacons, rural deans, and deans and chapters, having as earthly head over all the King, is of great antiquity, tried by the course of ages under very different circumstances, and has not been found wanting in a greater degree than any other ecclesiastical constitution of human invention; assuming, what impartial thinkers will likewise allow,

that as an ecclesiastical polity it is admirably suited, if its principles be carried out into action in a spirit congenial to its own, to promulgate the truths committed to its charge; assuming likewise that these truths are the truths of the Word of God as fully as revelation has given them to man; assuming all this, and farther, that its principles are those of civil and religious liberty, it is at least a curious inquiry, if not, as alas! it is, a most monstrous anomaly, why failure has clogged the course of the Established Church through centuries of unlimited power, and of unlimited resources. Its constitution is excellent—its system of polity admirable in theory—its power great—its wealth boundless—its objects pure—its intentions beneficent. To destroy the efficacy of such an institution more than ordinary or transitory causes must have conspired.

Yet it has been universally acknowledged—there has not been a dissentient voice against the startling truth—that the Established Church has been inefficacious in its working. This cannot be attributable to want of power, for, close in connexion with the State, it added the political and moral strength of the existing Governments to its own almost overpowering influence. Want of means to employ Ministers in number sufficient, in ability of the highest order, cannot be alleged in palliation of its inefficiency, for its wealth was at least ample enough to command the exertions of able men in abundance. An imperfect Constitution cannot be asserted in

excuse, for its Constitution is coincident with the Roman Catholic Church, and that has wrought well for its purposes against all disadvantages. There has been no deficiency of wisdom of the highest legislative character in the formation of its ecclesiastical polity. Ignorance of human nature is not perceptible in the provisions of its enactments. No narrowness of view—no mere adaptation to the circumstances existing at the period of its foundation—checks its course as the stream of time rolls onward. Amidst the blaze of knowledge—the widely-diffused liberty—the almost perfect civilization of the present period—its principles are undimmed. At no period were these principles found to lag behind the most expanded freedom of the times. Whatever the practice of churchmen has been—whatever spirit they may have displayed—the theory of the Church of England held ever forwards in the vanguard of liberty—its spirit ever consentaneous with the spirit of advancing freedom. Yet lamentation, and mourning, and woe, have been caused by the professors of this most tolerant Church, because its spirit was not the pervading spirit of its members—its principles not the guides of their action. Alas! for poor Ireland, that this has not been so—that a factious few, clothed in the garb of religion, with craft sufficient to use as instruments for their base and selfish purposes the prejudice, and ignorance, and interests, and fears of the many, have hitherto paralysed the efforts of these principles for the amelioration of the

temporal and eternal—the political and the spiritual—interests of a noble and a mighty kingdom. It is not then from without but from within proceed all the hindrances to the political extension of the Church of England in Ireland. It is not the want of means—of time—of power—of wealth—that has checked its progress. It is the mal-distribution of these means. It is from the abuse of power to party purposes—from the abuse of wealth to family aggrandizement—from the loss of ecclesiastical time by the devotedness with which Ministers followed the pursuits of merely mundane, transitory objects, to the neglect of the apostolic precept:—*meditate upon spiritual things, give thyself wholly to them*—that the stationary or retrograde character of the Church has accrued. Forgetful of the apostolic intimation, that “no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.”

A few words more previously to entering on a consideration of the basis of this bill of Church Reform. In the year 1603, more than two centuries and a quarter ago, Lord Bacon, one of those rare men who appear at long intervals amidst the waste of time, pronounced his opinion on the necessity of Church Reform in his day. If such a necessity

then existed, what can be said to show that no such necessity exists at present? And if such a necessity existed in England then, who will be hardy enough to deny a necessity still greater in Ireland now? "Why," he asks, "the civil state should be purged and restored by good and wholesome laws, made every three or four years in Parliament assembled, devising remedies as fast as time breedeth mischief, and contrariwise, the ecclesiastical state should continue upon the dregs of time, and receive no alteration now these forty-five years or more?" He inveighs against non-residence, pluralities, the sole exercise of ordination and jurisdiction by the bishop, conceiving that the dean and chapter should always assent, &c. Revert one moment to the period when the enlightened mind of Bacon perceived so clearly the necessity for the purgation and restoration of the state ecclesiastical, and compare that dark period, when knowledge was confined to the few—when the few who were enlightened above their fellows were congregated together, unable to diffuse their knowledge beyond a narrow circle—when civilization was only beginning to shed its mild influence over that very England which is now all-glorious beyond the fondest aspirations even of this far-sighted statesman;—compare such a period with the present, when the light of science, diffused over the whole land, maintains a steady and brilliant lustre;—when the lighter literature bears on its rapid wings, and presents to the least informed

mind, in the most intelligible and most fascinating manner, truths in former times too weighty for any save the profound philosopher;—when this knowledge, thus brought down from the almost inaccessible heights of its former residence, is diffused over the land, pervading even the cottage of the peasant;—at such a time when the Commons House of Parliament have burst the bands of their lordly bondage asunder, as in times posterior to Bacon's the Lords emancipated themselves from the political thralldom of the high monarchial principle, in his time all powerful in the state;—at such a time, when the ecclesiastical state has continued “upon the dregs of time” for upwards of 230 years—who will be hardy enough to deny the necessity of an ecclesiastical reformation? No one, certainly, of sense, of enlightenment, of knowledge, and of disinterestedness. No one, certainly, who prefers the welfare of the community to filthy lucre and the eternal interests of his countrymen to his own selfish aggrandizement.

This bill has been mangled rather than analysed by the high Church Tory Press, and hence it happens that the clergy, who draw their political information from such polluted sources almost exclusively, are so very ignorant of the real nature of Lord Morpeth's bill. Its basis, principles, and details, are equally misunderstood. And thus a measure calculated,

under the extraordinary circumstances of the present period, to benefit the working classes of the clergy, to strengthen and enlarge the church, to ensure the interests of Protestantism, and almost to guarantee—after the present transitory excitement has passed away—the expansion of the Anglo-Irish Church, has been repudiated by the wisdom of the Upper House, as an attempt to annihilate church, clergy, and laity.

And yet the basis of this fearful bill, clearly enunciated by Lord Morpeth, is :—THAT THERE SHALL BE NO PART OF THE DOMINIONS OF THE STATE WITHOUT THE PALE OF THE RELIGION OF THE STATE. Is not this a basis broad and solid enough to proceed upon in restoring the Ecclesiastical State to an efficiency contemplated by its founders? In fact, it is a broader basis than the present system so far as it is carried out into practice. For it is too notorious, that large tracts of Ireland, for the spiritual superintendency of which large revenues are allocated, are never even visited by the Clergyman, who annually draws these revenues. Under Lord Morpeth's bill this could not be, for its provisions are strictly in accordance with the great fundamental principle—that *every part of the land shall have its pastor*.

The basis then of this Bill is :—THAT NO PART WHATSOEVER OF IRELAND SHALL BE FROM UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH ; and that NO PART WHATSOEVER OF IRELAND SHALL BE FROM UNDER THE ACTUAL SPIRITUAL CHARGE OF A RESIDENT CLERGYMAN OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH. Such is the broad fundamental principle of this Bill, so decried by a baffled faction, as intended to overthrow the Established Church. A principle in every point coincident with the pervading principle of that Church ; and a principle intended to be carried out by the provisions of this Bill much farther and with more efficacy, than can be effectuated by the Established Church in its present state. This truly statesman-like foundation, for a superstructure more important to Ireland than any measure brought forward within present memory, is indeed worthy of all admiration. It is not the principle upon which an Administration desirous of catering to the prejudices and interests of party would have acted. But it *is* the principle upon which an Administration that has won its lofty 'vantage-ground by the popular confidence in the integrity, impartiality, and enlightenment of its members, was determined to legislate ; and sternly to carry out this great principle into all its practical details. But alas ! for Ireland, and alas ! for the Irish Church, those who were once the mighty of the earth have given strong evidence of their peculiar political bias, by throwing out this most use-

ful Bill. Had those aristocratic legislators compared its provisions for the strengthening and extension of the Protestant faith, with the actual state of the Anglo-Irish Church—a noble structure, indeed, beautiful in theory, but in the practical working of its theory lamentably deficient—they had acted otherwise.

Nominally, all Ireland is under its spiritual care, actually large districts are as absolutely extra-ecclesiastical as far as the spiritual care of the Pastors of the Established Church is concerned, as the buffalo-haunted prairies of Western America. Yet how loud, how deafening, how simultaneous was the screech of execration which followed the announcement of this measure of needful reform. Still above the uproarious din Lord Morpeth's voice was heard, calm and clear, and as comprehensive a conception, received a local habitation and a name, as ever statesman uttered.

Rivalling "the voice of the desert, never dumb," the clamour of a despairing party was pertinaciously kept up. Never was there a more remarkable instance of the trite remark, that "party is the madness of the many for the gain of the few." The ignorant partisan shouted, "Down with the Bill!"—the knowing leader *whispered* applause. Then uprose a cry of popery ! infidelity ! perjury ! and what not ; and the knowing leaders—those wise and crafty few, who hoped to coin these shouts into guineas—laughing applause, supplied fuel to the hollow blaze.—

Every assemblage of men is essentially a mob and *δημος* was never noted for wisdom. But the cool and interested leader, wise in his generation, saw enough in this Bill to defeat for ever his hopes of battenning upon the spoils of his country—of triumphing over the liberties of his noble-hearted countrymen—of aggrandizing his family at the expense of the best interests of humanity—and anon arose from out the lurking places of a secret faction the yell of ignorant terror and of fell despair.

By this much calumniated Bill every Irishman would have been enabled at any time to obtain the spiritual assistance of a Clergyman of the Established Church. Such, however, is not the case at present. Many and many a Protestant family throughout the broad lands of this most splendid country, have never been visited by a Protestant Clergyman. The Parson at his watering place revels in luxuries purchased with the revenues of a Church which never, in its original structure, contemplated the possibility of such a sacrilegious alienation of sacred property. He revels in possession of the *opima spolia*, heedless of the famishing souls left to perish in absolute destitution of that spiritual food, which he is the commissioned minister to offer in sustentation of their immortal existence. This would all have been at an end had Lord Morpeth's Bill been carried into law. But it has not been carried into law, and well will it be for Ireland and for the Anglo-Irish Church, if it ever become the law of the land.

The principles of this remarkable Bill—remarkable as well for its legislative wisdom as for its untimely fate—are equally worthy of admiration. They are the suggestions of severe justice. One of these principles is, that there should be no pay where no work is to be done. This is founded not only on strict justice, but in perfect accordance with the spirit of the Anglo-Irish Church. The revenues of that Church were allocated to each district in remuneration for specific duties—for the amelioration of the spritual and temporal condition of the population of the district—the temporal amelioration contemplated being two-fold: intellectual amelioration by educating the youth—and physical amelioration in the exercise of alms-giving and hospitality towards the adults. It may seem an objection to the purity of this principle that £5 should be allotted to a neighbouring Clergyman for the spiritual incumbency of a parish containing no Protestants. This, however, is for the purpose of realising the fundamental principle of the measure, that every part of Ireland shall have its Minister of the Established Church. Let those factious men, who cry aloud against the smallness of the sum, blush and be silent, recollecting that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, having the Primate of all Ireland at their head, allotted a still smaller for a similar charge.

Another of these principles is, that remuneration shall strictly accord with the work to be done. Benefices where the labour is light, yet sufficient to

justify the appointment of an Incumbent, the income is lowered to £300 a-year. Larger remuneration, in proportion to the amount of work to be done, is made to the Incumbent upon whom a heavier charge is laid. Districts which are now absolutely denuded of all appearance of Anglo-Irish Protestantism by the want of a Church—of a parsonage-house—and by the alienation of the Ecclesiastical revenues to an absentee Parson, would have obtained, under the provisions of this Bill, the spiritual incumbency of a neighbouring Clergyman; or would have a pastor under the title of a separate Curate receiving from £75 to £150 per annum, and obliged to reside; or an actual *bona fide* resident Incumbent. Such districts being farther provided for by the allocation either of £150 to erect a place of worship, or £15 annually to rent one.

Another principle of this Bill is, that the work which the clerical workman stipulates to perform must be performed in his own person, or under his immediate personal inspection. The Incumbent should reside within the district from whence he drew his revenues. Hence those monstrous and most unholy anomalies, called pluralities and unions, some parishes of which, as in Burnchurch, for instance, an union of fourteen parishes, are at opposite extremities of a county, were to be for ever abolished.

Is not this a good Bill for the Protestant laity, and for the conscientious Protestant Pastor? But it is unquestionably a very bad Bill for those who can

contemn the voice of conscience, and heap benefice after benefice upon the ignorant and too frequently vicious son or nephew; and equally bad for those who regard Church property as a waste attached to their estates, upon which they have a right of commonage for the worthless scions of a manorial house. It is a very good Bill for the Protestant laity and conscientious Protestant Pastors; better, it is to be feared, than they can expect to be offered again under the existing circumstances of the country; but a very bad one, certainly, for the idle and brainless parasites who love to gorge at leisure upon the good cheer of the Church.

Having considered the necessity for Church reform; having stated, and enlarged upon, the great fundamental principle or basis of Lord Morpeth's Bill to effect this desirable object; and having stated and examined the subordinate principles, and found them in accordance with the severest justice, the next subject appears to be what may be classed under the head of provisions. These include the specific objects of Church reform, which Lord Morpeth proposed to effect, and the means of effecting these objects.

Ireland presented—would that the past tense would suffice—Ireland presents to the anxious gaze of an enlightened statesman a field for legislation, deformed by every kind of obstruction which can be conceived likely to stay the progress of legislative amelioration. The whole population arrayed against

each other to a man. The banner of their array being pseudo-religion. Two hostile churches enclosing within their influence hosts of eager combatants. The one arrayed in all the splendour of rank and wealth, and making up for the comparative paucity of its numbers by that tower of strength the King's name, and by the power and influence of the state. The other marshalling its ranks by millions, presenting an impenetrable phalanx, under a ghostly discipline the most perfect. For ages, until lately, it has been without the pale of the law. Stripped of its property, degraded from its ancient grandeur, enfeebled in its powers even of defence, deprived of its privileges, persecuted in its members, driven from the broad light of day and from the civilized districts of the land, it found a desolate harbourage amid wilds and caves, safe even there only under the redoubled dreariness of the night. Yet in these adverse and almost overwhelming circumstances, it preserved the fire of its altar. Its priests were episcopally ordained, its bishops episcopally consecrated, without even a momentary intermission, although, at one time, death were the consequence of conviction. The members of its communion clung with desperate fidelity to their allegiance. Incapable of retaining or acquiring property, stigmatized as degraded outcasts from the pale of society, hunted to death like beasts of chase, its members held fast by their native church, unchilled by poverty, unshaken by degradation, and

fearless of death. The progress of knowledge and civilization relaxed the severity of the penal enactments. Untiring in their efforts, they succeeded in obtaining political power, felt their numerical and moral strength, and burst asunder their bonds. In this state they are now found by the statesmen, free and formidable by their numbers, adding tenfold difficulties to the always difficult task of legislating for Ireland. Each party—for these notices only regard them as political parties—each party, though differing in the sources of their strength, have power nearly equal in degree, and so formidable as to task the faculties of the legislator to the utmost. If the one are fewer in number, the numerical deficiency is compensated for by the moral influence of station, of powerful connection, of rank and wealth territorial and chattel, whilst the other compensate their deficiency in these sources of power by a numerical majority, by the attachment of each individual to his party, and by the political power consequent on numbers.

It was, consequently, impossible for any administration, desirous of acting impartially towards a kingdom thus circumstanced, to legislate for one party exclusive of the interests of the other, when a measure was introduced equally, though, in different ways, affecting each. No statesman would be worthy of the name, who could evince so little political wisdom as to attempt to legislate for a country containing nearly eight millions of in-

habitants, by a measure affecting all, yet tending only to the benefit of a few. For any measure of Church Reform could not be confined in its effects to the clergy alone ; nor yet to the church consisting of clergy and laity ; it necessarily would embrace the interests, the temporal interests—for, after all, it is to these only the measures of the legislature can properly be directed—of every individual of the kingdom.

As these notices are not intended to flatter the vanity of either party, but are solely for the purpose, however feeble in execution, of drawing attention to a measure conceived with consummate political wisdom, enunciated with great ability and honesty, and exhibiting in its details vast practical skill in legislation, it may be permitted to state the numerical strength of the opposite parties, the one at two millions, the other at six millions. However this preponderance in numbers may be balanced by the less numerous party, a statesman legislating under the Reform Bill cannot recognise, as an element in his decision, masses of concentrated property, the superstitious reverence for conventional rank, or the domestic influence of conventional station, because in comparison with numbers, these, formerly so powerful, are politically weak. He must suit his measures so that they may be carried through a popular assembly, and he must do this without trenching on the rights, or hurting the legitimate interests of any party.

These considerations show the great difficulties Lord Morpeth had to contend against, and prepare the way, in some measure, for the dispassionate examination of the provisions of a Bill at once protecting the rights of the Protestant Clergy, conferring great advantages on the Protestant Laity, and yet satisfactory to the vast mass of the Catholic population.

The first object of Lord Morpeth's Bill is to provide an ample maintenance for the Clergy of the Established Church. Under the provisions of this Bill they were to have an annual income, not nominal but actual, having no drawbacks ; equal to the wants of a Christian ministry circumstanced as the Clergy of the Established Church. The parochial income attached to an ecclesiastical district, absolutely without members of the Established Church, was to be sequestered on the removal by death, or otherwise, of the present Incumbent. The Protestant Laity cannot reasonably complain of this, because this portion of the ecclesiastical property in no way advanced the interests of Protestantism ; but, on the contrary, a Pastor without a flock, drawing annual revenues on the pretence of ecclesiastical duty without having any duty to perform, was one of those remarkable abuses connected with the Irish establishment which has sunk that establishment so low in public opinion. To the Clergy, this sequestration ought to be matter of rejoicing rather than grieving, for where is the truly conscientious Christian Pastor who would not

feel degraded in self opinion, and dishonest in the sight of his master, by taking the wages of duty without the power to perform the duty? And where is the active, working, devoted Minister, the true servant of the Church, who does not grieve at every instance of the desecration of his holy orders, in the person of a sinecure Incumbent?

The parochial income attached to an ecclesiastical district containing few members, above fifty, of the Established Church, was intended to be reduced to 300*l*. Much clamour has been raised against this point, not directly and openly, but indirectly and covertly. Few Clergymen, it is to be hoped, can be found so devoid of decency as to make a clamour, because future Incumbents, who might have had under the old system, before the tithe war began, more than sufficient for their wants, would have, under this Bill, a sufficiency, but no superfluity. The Bishops and the beneficed Clergy are aware that the succession of the incumbency of the Established Church is, by right, in the Curates. They would be the actual successors were church patronage more equitably dispensed. Now these Curates—the rightful successors—are men, generally speaking, fully equal in orders, education, ability, and good breeding, to the Incumbents. Generally, too, they have wives and families; yet the wealthy Incumbent, the bloated Pluralist, the all-powerful and over rich Bishop—look on, and have looked on for ages, with the most contemptuous coolness at their Curate-successors,

struggling to maintain existence upon a pittance beneath the acceptance of a bungling mechanic, below the remuneration of a gentleman's groom.— Let not then any Bishop or Incumbent be so shameless as to object to an enactment calculated to dry up this source of misery, the most excruciating to a patient and laborious class of their clerical brethren. And let every Curate rejoice that the provisions of this much calumniated Bill testify a desire on the part of the present Administration to better their chances of ulterior maintenance, by taking away the temptation from the wealthy and the powerful, to fatten their callow young with the Church revenues.

During the progress of this Bill through the House no means were rejected to injure it in public estimation. It was said at the time that, had the intention of Ministers been to benefit the Church, meaning thereby the clerical portion of the body, exclusive of the laity, they would have introduced a clause to ameliorate the condition of the Curates. Is not this an objection much stronger against the present system of Church management than against Lord Morpeth? If the Curate's condition be one of almost intolerable hardship, if the lot of the poor working Minister of the Church be so calamitous, if public sympathy be so strong, and public indignation so loud, in his favor, should it be left to his Majesty's Ministers to relieve him? Is it not the bounden duty of the Ministers of Him who desired his followers "to do to others what they would others

should do to them," to see this clerical grievance removed when they have the power, if they had the will, to do so? Should not immediate justice be done him by those tender-hearted Bishops and considerate Incumbents, who apprehend all manner of evil will befall their unlucky successors—fancied successors, not the present Curates—obliged with little parochial duty, to exist upon a miserable income of 300*l.* a year, while day after day, and year after year, they have quietly contemplated the painful struggles for existence, patiently borne by their brother ministers, the Curates, who ought to be these successors, doing, as they best might, the duties of the largest and most laborious parishes for a remuneration, varying from 18*l.* Irish to 75*l.* English currency. But his Majesty's Ministers have not been neglectful of the Curates of the establishment. This Bill is an evidence that they have not been indifferent spectators of their hardships. The severest justice, the most marked delicacy towards existing rights, were the guiding moral principles in the formation of this Bill. And consequently, although Parliament is powerful to increase the stipends of the Curates, as has been done already more than once, *as far as such legislative enactments can*, yet the circumstances under which these acts were passed were widely different from the circumstances under which this bill was conceived. It would have been scarcely possible to have introduced a clause into a Bill like Lord Morpeth's to take the property of an Incumbent

and hand it over to the Curate, without an infraction of that principle of strict justice towards existing interests upon which the Bill rests. And loud, indeed, though of a different sort, would have been the clamour, had such a discrepancy been perceived between the prevailing principle of the Bill and such a clause as this. To test the sincerity of the present Administration in this matter, let a Bill to such effect be introduced from the episcopal bench, or by those calling themselves "the friends of the Church" in the lower house, and who have thus acquired the confidence of the Clergy—how truly it were well for the Clergy to consider—and let this Bill state the lowest income of the Curate at £300 a year, the instant payment of which to be made by every Incumbent to every Curate *at present* actually employed, and then will be seen the real attachment of his Majesty's Ministers to the interests of the working Clergy. In the mean while, let the provisions of this Bill be dispassionately considered, and every comprehensive mind will perceive that their effect would have been to ameliorate the condition of the Curates of the Establishment, without trenching on the interests of existing Incumbents.

It were easy to continue this subject; it is even difficult to leave a theme so fruitful. What has been written, however, may serve to suggest reflections sufficient to carry the mind very far.

“The friends of the Church,” as they are pleased to call themselves, might have been taunted with the convenient obscurity in which they permitted the Curate to pine away, during the long and almost uninterrupted possession of power for fifty years. They might have been taunted with the total neglect of the real interests of the Laity in connection with the Established Church, in order to keep a body of well-disciplined and powerful auxiliaries in good humour. Hence have been seen men, only distinguished from the herd by belonging to a family of political influence, exalted suddenly above the most meritorious Clergymen, and placed, even to their own surprise, on the episcopal bench. Hence has proceeded that distribution of the patronage of the Church, so strongly condemned by all—benefice accumulated on benefice, to form a plethoric income for an absentee Parson. Hence have parishes been left to the immediate care of Providence, while the Incumbent, so careless of his spiritual charge as not to appoint a Curate during his absence, solaced himself with the recreations of a fashionable watering place for many months, after the exhausting fatigue of reading prayers, and a sermon, hebdomadally, for a few successive weeks. Enough!—“the friends of the Church” have not been taunted with these and many more such enormities, which grew and flourished under their fostering influence, until the wide-wasting upas spread desolation over many a fair field of spiritual exertion.

Not another word need be said about this wretched maintenance of £300 a year. Notwithstanding the anticipated misery it has caused to "the friends of the Church," the sight of a laborious Curate snugly ensconced in a tolerable parsonage house, standing in the midst of one of those small-work parishes, with the certainty of £300 a year, and no drawbacks, might not be absolutely heart-rending, except, perhaps, to one of those "friends of the Church" who would desire to persuade him that £30 was better than £300 against the evidence of his senses, accumulated during many wasting years.

Every one acquainted with the internal interests and working of the clerical portion of the Established Church knows that the dissolution of unions, the separation of pluralities, the reduction of the larger incumbencies to a working standard, an obligatory residence of Incumbents, would certainly tend to the advancement of the Curate from his present state of degradation and famine to a situation of comfort and independence. These all-important provisions for the bettering the condition of the Church, both Clergy and Laity, were contemplated by this Bill of Lord Morpeth's; and however much "the friends of the Church" may extol themselves, and however loudly they may be extolled by their interested and foolish followers, not one of these important improvements was ever contemplated by such sincere friends throughout the long course of fifty years of power unclogged with a Reform Bill.

But Lord Morpeth was not satisfied to leave the Curate thus unsloughed, and winging his way delightedly through the sunny atmosphere of a £300 incumbency. The happy man was to be made still happier, as far as income could induce happiness, by an accession of income proportionate to the accession of work, thereby holding out a strong inducement to exertion. If the Protestant parishioners increased in number, so accordingly increased the means to meet the consequent increase of work. If he were found equal to a larger charge, a more extensive sphere of usefulness, and were removed from the smaller charge, he had a necessary increase of the means of being useful to his family and his parishioners.

How the enemies of all that is spiritual, of all that is just, upright, and honorable in the clerical character—of all that is pure and disinterested in clerical conduct, came to be designated “friends of the Church,” except in bitter irony, it were hard to conjecture. How these friends of all that is destructive to the religious interests of the Laity, of all that is abandoned in the clerical character, of all that is subversive of the sway of a religious institution over the minds of a reflecting people, could ever have been permitted to desecrate the pure and lofty interests of a Protestant Church with their friendship, must be left to the consideration of family aggrandizing Bishops and absentee Parsons—of wealthy and indolent Incumbents, and luxurious

and intolerant Pluralists. The conscientious portion of the Clergy, and the enlightened portion of the Laity, have long since doubted the strength and purity of that friendship which used the best interests of the Church as instruments to obtain a political purpose. Another day has risen—other times have come—other men have power—and these workers in darkness are shrinking from the strong light of observation which is gradually revealing their most hideous deformities. The cry of Atheist, of Infidel, of Revolutionist, is becoming weaker and weaker, as men rouse themselves from the lethargic slumber in which they have politically lain for half a century. The dream of Toryism is becoming more tedious than a twice-told tale, and the waking spirit of reasonable improvement is abroad, never to sleep again.

£300 per annum was the sum contemplated by Lord Morpeth for an Incumbent appointed to a parish where there were only fifty Protestant individuals. If the number much exceeded fifty, and the labour consequently severer, this sum was to be increased accordingly. When benefices became vacant, this Bill provided that, upon a report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, with whom, in all cases, was to be associated the Bishop of the diocese, the Lord Lieutenant in council was to decide whether any reduction be made. If the parochial revenues were found to be disproportionate to the parochial duty, there was to be a proportionate reduction.

This reduction could only be made in a parochial income exceeding £300 a year ; that being the least sum contemplated for the maintenance of an Incumbent. Now, in benefices where there is an income larger than £300 a year, and little work to be done, it will be found to hold good, almost universally, in Ireland, that the Incumbent employs a Curate, whose highest stipend is £75—the lowest need not be mentioned. In such a case it will be found to prevail as an almost universal usage, that all the wearying, fagging work of the parish is done by the Curate, while the Incumbent conceives that he acquits his conscience of every duty imposed upon him by the receipt of the parochial income, by taking a share of the Sunday duty, that is, alternately preaching and reading the prayers. In most instances he confines himself to this so exclusively as even to leave any burial or baptism, or other occasional duty occurring on the Sunday, together with the catechising and Sunday school, if such things are, to the Curate. The Curate then may be said to perform all the duty of the parish, visiting the sick, burying the dead, baptizing the children, instructing the young, reproofing, rebuking, exhorting, and consoling the parishioners from house to house on the week-days ; in short, all but a sermon or reading prayers on alternate Sundays. Surely, then, if the duties of the largest parishes are found thus committed to the care of a Curate on a stipend of £75 per annum, there can be no hardship in mak-

ing this Curate, who ought to be the successor of the deceased or removed Incumbent, a Beneficed Clergyman on £300 at least, and whatever more a Nobleman, in council of the most eminent persons in the country, may think just to allot? Such a hardship would certainly seem light to the promoted Curate, whatever those tender-hearted "friends of the Church" might feel at so melancholy an event.

It may happen, however, on the vacancy of a benefice that it would be found to be composed of more than one parish. These parishes are to be immediately dissevered. If they be found to contain fifty individual members of the Established Church, they become at once so many distinct benefices;—not likely, indeed, to be eagerly sought for by the son of a Bishop, or a large landed proprietor, but still very snug nooks for a Curate, who hitherto had at the most only £75 a-year. If they be found to contain a number of members of the Established Church, not amounting to fifty, they are suspended until they shall contain that number. In the meanwhile, if the members of the Established Church amount to nearly fifty, or such a number as to justify the appointment of a Clergyman to the parish, a separate Curate was to have been appointed, with an income not less than £75 a-year; but which might be any greater sum, not exceeding £150 a-year. This really would be no bad thing for very many—too many—Curates of the Established Church. Should there not be a Church in such a parish, the

sum of £150 to be allotted to build a place of worship—a very ample allowance—or £15 to rent a house for that purpose. Surely the parishioners of a parish, where neither resident Clergyman nor Church ever had been, can find no fault with a Bill which thus provides them, few as they are, with both one and the other. And assuredly the Curates—who form no insignificant portion of the Irish Clergy, if they do not, as is likely, exceed the Incumbents in number, as they certainly do in the quantity of work performed—the Curates can find no fault with such a Bill as this, which they must regard, as soon as they are acquainted with it, as the most considerate of their condition and interests of any which has ever been brought forward by any Administration, though composed even of the very *elite* of the psuedo-friends of the Church.

In case, however, of a suspended parish being absolutely without members of the Established Church, such a district is not in consequence declared extra-ecclesiastical; on the contrary, it was to have been put under the charge of an actually resident Clergyman, residing within a convenient distance of the district. This Clergyman—most likely one of those Curates so slenderly provided for under the present *regime*—was to be remunerated for his imaginary trouble by an annual sum, varying from £5 to £50 a year. Really this is good—enough to make every Curate in Ireland—always excepting those conscientious persons who consider anything short of a

benefice composed of accumulated benefices unworthy the claims of their passed-away political family interest—to pause and ask himself who is his real friend? Is it the Tory who, with inward contempt and compassionate countenance, tells him to starve patiently, and to resist all improvement in the working of that system under which his heart bleeds, and his life wastes, and his family grow up boorish as the boors around them? Or is it the Whig, who makes no offer of friendship, who does not arrogate to himself the exclusive title of a “friend of the Church,” but yet who feels—deeply feels—for the destitution in which so many servants of God are permitted to remain through so many dreary years, until the better part of life has fled—until the sons and daughters of the Curate’s family shall have grown into manhood and into womanhood, without the power to put the one forward in the world according to their father’s station, or to raise a little hedge around the other to protect them against the spoiler who comes to quicken the work of want, and woe, and wretchedness!

Regarding the effect of the provision to suspend parishes, or rather to sequestrate the revenues of parishes, containing less than fifty members of the Established Church, there is an objection which it would now be unnecessary to notice, had it not been frequently urged against the Bill by Clergymen of liberal

and enlightened minds, generally favourable to the Bill itself, and perfectly coinciding with the present Administration in their views of policy. The objection arises from a partial knowledge of the provisions of the Bill. The Bill provides for the dissolution of unions generally, and in the event of the parishes not containing fifty Protestants, the revenues were to be sequestrated. It appears, however, that there are several benefices in Ireland, consisting of more than one parish, where the members of the Church of England are congregated together in a single parish far exceeding fifty in number, while the whole, or far the greater part, of the revenues of the benefice are derivable from a parish or parishes, not containing the prescribed number. The objection has been raised on cases such as this, and were there no provisions in the Bill to meet this exigency, then the Bill were so far imperfect; but such cases have been provided for. The 70th clause, which provides for the dissolution of unions, enables the Commissioners to obviate this objection. It provides that "in case of parishes forming parts of unions, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners *may, if they think fit*, separate such parishes from the union, and deal therewith as separate parishes." And still more particularly is the objection met by the 72d clause, which empowers the Lord Lieutenant to take into consideration the circumstances of the union, to make such deductions as he may think necessary, and if need be, not to make any deduction at all.

Connected with the sequestration of the revenues of parishes not containing any members of the Established Church, a very painful consideration arises in the mind which looks into the future, and contemplates the spiritual condition of such members of the Established Church as may hereafter become located in such a district. A little reflection, however, dissipates the painful feeling. The Bill places the district under the superintendency of a neighbouring Clergyman, whose duty and interest would combine to make him watchful over the appearance of Protestantism in the district. The principle of the Bill—the more work the more pay—directly comes into operation. The Clergyman appointed to the care of the district would—setting aside higher considerations which statesmen cannot calculate upon—find it his interest to report the accession of Protestant inhabitants, knowing that his income would be increased accordingly.

Should the members of the Established Church increase to the required number of fifty, the Bill makes special provision for such a case. The 84th clause directs that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in concurrence with the Bishop of the diocese, make report of the fact to the Lord Lieutenant, and the Lord Lieutenant is empowered to make immediate provision for the case, by removing the suspension from the parish, and by appointing an incumbent.

There is profound practical wisdom in legislation evinced in this Bill, calculated to reflect honour on

Lord Morpeth, whose name is so intimately associated with it. The moral principles which guided its formation have already been passingly alluded to. The basis, testifying so careful a concern for the interests of Protestantism in Ireland, has been remarked upon at considerable, though scarcely sufficient, length even for notices slight as these. The principles, so strictly in accordance with the severest justice, have been stated, not as fully as they might have been, but yet sufficiently to show that they were assumed under the sanction of the moral principles which pervade every, the remotest, and most insignificant, portion of the Bill. The appropriation clause has been connected with this Bill to make it more fully answer its great object of restoring the Church,—meaning thereby, not the Clergy alone, nor even the Clergy and Laity together, but the instrument for bettering the spiritual condition of the people—of restoring the Church to that state of efficiency for ameliorating the temporal and spiritual condition of the subjects of the state, which was contemplated when the ecclesiastical property, in possession of the state at the reformation, was, in part and on certain conditions, allocated to the Church then reformed and established in connexion with, and in subjection to, the state. The provisions of this Bill, which have been in part remarked upon, are numerous, all strictly accordant with the fundamental principles, and calculated to carry into effect, in the most efficient manner, its subordinate principles.

It is indispensably necessary, in order to obtain a correct conception of a measure calculated to make changes the most extensive, the most comprehensive in their usefulness, and the most permanent in their effects, clearly to perceive the real nature of the object about which legislation, so perfect in its kind, has been employed. In ordinary language, the Church means the clerical members of the Church only, and with this prejudice on the mind, every measure of Church Reform, such as this, must be misunderstood. The true idea of the Church is much more comprehensive. Properly, as the subject of the statesman's consideration, the Church is an instrument for teaching the gospel to the subjects of the State ; of keeping its eternal truths permanently before them ; and of transmitting these truths down from generation to generation. They who work this vast instrument are the Clergy ; and they who are wrought upon by it are the subjects of the State. In contemplating, therefore, changes intended to render this instrument more efficient, to regard either the Clergy or Laity, the one exclusive of the other, would lead to error the most fatal to the good of the whole ; or regarding them together, to omit the consideration of the perpetuity of their existence ; or, comprehending within the view the combined members of the Church, Clergy, and Laity, and their perpetuity, to overlook the political parties into which the Laity of the kingdom, as a whole, may happen to be divided ; or taking all these several considerations into account, error will still

attend the conclusion formed, unless the nature of the instrument, distinct, either from those who work it or from those who are wrought upon by it, be perceived. Added to all these, the statesman, to legislate efficiently for the Church, will find it necessary to conceive clearly the difference which exists between the politics of Church and State; that the laws which govern them rest on different principles, and that, accordingly, legislation founded on the principles of the civil state, will be found at variance with the spirit of the state ecclesiastical—the conformation of the ecclesiastical state differing in many important points from the civil.

These suggestions are thus cursorily thrown out for the consideration of such as are too just to join in unprincipled clamour against a state measure, conceived and enunciated with legislative ability of the highest order; but yet who may inconsiderately be carried away by the stream of the interested and the ignorant.

Legislation on the most ordinary subjects involves principles very subtle—lying far beneath common observation, and far beyond the grasp of ordinary minds. When these principles—the more subtle guiding the conception of legislative enactments, and the more obvious and broader enunciated in them—take the form of a measure of vast political compass, how patient must have been the attention, how extensive the knowledge, how all-pervading the observation, how just, comprehensive, and prac-

tised the judgment, how subtle and discriminating the understanding, required to attain even an inferior degree of perfection in an achievement so arduous ! So true is the remark of Chateaubriand, that “*La politique est cet art prodigieux, par lequel on parvient à faire vivre en corps, les mœurs antipathiques de plusieurs individus.*” But, alas ! for the utmost effects which legislation might produce in ameliorating the political condition of the people, no sooner is any proposition enunciated by the statesman than clamour is raised, factious opposition is made, and

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread !

The bill provides for the sequestration of the revenues, if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners shall think fit, of 860 parishes.

Lamentable hearing for all future expectants of plethoric sinecure incomes ! The glory has passed away from the Irish Church ! No longer will the famishing curate—famishing no longer if this Bill had passed—no longer will the famishing curate be enabled to solace his actual misery with the dignity reflected upon him from the sinecure incumbents of a Church so lustrous in its splendour, as not only to irradiate with its brilliant beams its actual dignitaries and wealthy beneficiaries, but to impart an imaginary halo even to the brow of the lowly Curate—its poor serving man ! Alas ! for the day when the “*friends of the Church*” loosened the grasp of power by which they held so firmly and so long these tempting sinecure baits to the greedy

propensities of their immaculate followers ! Dreadful, soul-harrowing, the change which placed the power in the hands of statesmen, who, rejecting every thought of establishing their influence on any other basis than justice, impartiality, the manifestation of legislative ability, and the consequent strength of public opinion in their favour, at once threw into the treasury of the nation those funds which previously had been thought necessary to the stability of ministerial power !

But this is digression. The present theme is the sequestration, at the will of certain Protestant Commissioners, of 860 parishes.

Falstaff's men in buckram were nothing to these 860 parishes. The Tory press seized upon them, hugged them, were delighted with them, magnified them into 860 benefices, peopled them with resident Clergymen, venerable for their age, dignified for their virtues, exalted by their abilities, respected for their learning. Families of delicate females clung around and brightened their existence ; their sons rose above these interesting daughters, like oaks of the forest, prepared either to fight the battles of their country, or to urge on the rapid roll of modern science, or to speed the winged shaft of divinity against vice and irreligion. But, alas ! a change came o'er the spirit of the dream ; the rose-covered parsonage-house disappeared, the antique Church passed away as an exhalation, the delicate daughters, like fairies of these favoured districts,

vanished as so many trooping ghosts—the day dawned, and they were gone!—the trump of battle sounded, and no responsive heart-beat from these oak-like sons; science called—they gave no answer; divinity commanded—they obeyed not. And why? The Whig Commissioner had been in the district. No mild blue eye beamed upon him from the Rector's daughter. No manly recognition was made by the Rector's son. No venerable Clergyman, with more of heaven than earth, greeted him with hospitable welcome. No rose-covered parsonage offered its shelter to the way-fairer. No Church, with its silent finger pointing to a region of peace, and joy, and blessedness, opened its doors to the sinner penitent, supplicating, and grateful. At the touch of the Commissioner's pen these 860 parishes appeared in their real shape—districts deserted by the Incumbent; the most favoured having only a few Protestant families, their united members not amounting to fifty individuals, and the less favoured being absolutely divested of Protestantism.

After so glaring a misrepresentation as that just attempted to be pourtrayed, it can scarcely be matter of surprise that the Clergy, led by these false statements, should feel repugnance towards a Bill which was summarily, as the Tory press represented, to dispossess 860 Clergymen of their parishes, deprive them of their incomes, and send them and their families houseless wanderers over the face of the earth! Every man of feeling and of just principles

would execrate the horrid proposal. Where would the wretches be found capable of a conception so wantonly cruel? How could they rise into eminent station? How obtain so mighty a power as to wield the destinies of a nation greater and more enlightened than the world ever saw before? Would not the blood of their nobility rush with fatal rebound upon their hearts, and slay the hardened monsters? Would not the high-principled people of England rise as one man, and lead the miscreants, titled and untitled, to the block, or send them abroad amongst the nations, fearful beacons to warn others from the path of ruin? But the proposition was introduced into an assembly composed of the most eminent men in the country; was introduced by a nobleman whose political opponents conspired to praise for his "spotless character, private virtues, and public principles," was discussed, night after night, by the highest individuals of both parties; was sanctioned by a majority of that assembly; and became, as far as the representatives of the people were concerned, the law of the land.

What trust then ought to be placed in those writers, who disregard every interest, how sacred soever, but that of party? What shall be said of journals which, in reporting the Parliamentary discussions on this Bill, put all the objections prominently forward, but carefully excluded the answers to these objections? Journals, almost universally patronised by the Clergy of the Established Church, in which the

speakers on the opposition side of the House were carefully and fully reported, while many of those on the ministerial side were not reported at all, and those that were, very imperfectly, and only so far as it answered the party purpose of the journalist. To such journals the Clergy of the Established Church give their confidence; and the consequence is, imperfect political intelligence, leading them to acts tending only to their own embarrassment, distress, and ruin. Hence the Clergy have so frequently placed themselves in positions derogatory to their dignity as educated and influential men, and hurtful to their generic characters as Christian Pastors. It is to be hoped that all this will be rectified. It is to be hoped that the Clergy, as a body, will shake themselves free of the political trammels in which they have hitherto been held for the selfish purposes of a few leaders who have bartered their interest for personal and family aggrandizement. It is to be hoped that the Clergy generally—like so many clear-sighted and comprehensive-minded men amongst them, whose influence not being concentrated, is not sufficiently felt,—will rise superior to the base consideration of this world's lucre, and manifest a heartfelt spirituality which would at once silence the contemptuous taunt that they have made a gain of godliness, and shut the pointed finger of scorn which marks their track amongst the people. Many and many bright examples are to be found amongst this body of Clergy of every virtue which

can be sought from a holy, though still an erring man. But such men are quiet, and reserved, and humble; lowly in their wordly aspirations, shunning the noise of the crowd and plunging into the depths of obscurity; exerting powers of the first order to raise the peasant from his degrading ignorance, to brighten his domestic hearth with the light of the gospel of Him who was meek and lowly, and to point out that onward way to Heaven, which he, by faith and grace, endeavours to find and continue in himself. Such men are as roses in the desert, beautiful and fragrant; oases, shaded and green, amidst the arid sands around; the waters of life flow freely through the districts of their charge, the asperities of the erring heart are smoothed away, and spiritual peace and joy assume a dominancy which gladdens the heart of the holy man, who is the honoured, though humble, instrument of so much precious good which abideth everlastingly. In a region thus blessed with the spiritual superintendency of a spiritually-minded man, the hovel of the poor becomes a temple to the immortal God; the widow's heart sings aloud for joy; a ray of gladness brightens the existence of the desolate and distressed; the very pauper feels a lowly dignity in his brotherhood with that glorious Being who sitteth at the right hand of Him who dwells in light inapproachable, the Eternal, the Invisible;—and God, in his Spirit, diffusing inappreciable blessing around, walks this portion of earth, as once, face to face with man, He trod the ambrosial bowers of Paradise.

The provisions of this Bill for supplying the 860 sequestrated parishes with clerical superintendency, have been remarked. It has been shown that, under the operation of the Bill, these parishes] would be much better provided with spiritual care and sustenance than they are at present. In every instance they were to be placed under the superintendency of a clergyman of the Established Church, either actually resident within the parish, or actually resident within a neighbouring parish.

It may be observed here, that the census, upon which they were to have been sequestrated, was the one used by the Commissioners of Public Instruction, and, consequently, independent of any reduction which might appear *after* the return was made to the House of Commons. This is a direct refutation of a cavil too ridiculous to be mentioned, except as one of the numerous absurdities started to run down this bill. The proposed sequestration of the revenues of these parishes has been unblushingly called an inducement held out to the Roman Catholic to murder his Protestant neighbour, if he happened to be a member of the Established Church, and located in a parish so thinly stocked with Protestants as to escape sequestration only by a few individuals above the prescribed number. Admitting for a moment—and only for a moment can so shocking a supposition be admitted—that Roman Catholics could be found so divested of common sense, and of all feeling, as to take the life of their fellow-countryman, their co-

parishioner, their neighbour, their acquaintance—perhaps the playmate of their infancy, the companion of their boyhood, the friend of their manhood—to increase a general fund for the purposes of providing a decent competence for poor curates of the Established Church, and for educating the mass of the people, the act would be as useless as it would be insane, as barbarous, as cruel, as fiendish as, thank God! it is utterly incredible to every rational mind not so absolutely perverted by party feeling as to be capable of seeing in their Catholic fellow-countryman only an incarnate demon. How dreadfully must party feeling have indurated the sensibility, and destroyed all the nobler mental attributes, before such an idea could find harbourage in the heart of a Christian man! Yet, harrowing as is the thought, the fact is incontrovertible, that such feelings do find harbourage in Protestant bosoms, tainting the social atmosphere with their noxious exhalations, and blighting every fond hope of amity and kindly intercourse with such political bigots.

Such a cavil against such a measure could only have obtained even a momentary currency, in consequence of a maxim universally held by a particular party amongst Irish Protestants, that no Catholic would hesitate to murder his Protestant neighbour could he do so with any hope of impunity. And as a corollary to this Christian maxim, it is held implicitly that were it not for the existence of a certain society, which has, of late, obtained considerable

notoriety, no Protestant would be suffered to exist one moment to pollute the air with his heretic breath. Monstrous as this may sound, it is the truth—too notorious to be denied; and one of those mournful truths which shed so baneful an influence over the kindly feelings of Irish society.

So execrable a maxim could only be held in consequence of a widely and carefully diffused feeling, that the Catholic of the present day is the same being, under the same circumstances, as the Catholic of 1641, and of the dark ages. As ready to rise and slaughter his Protestant brethren *en masse*, and as ready to place himself under a sovereignty not the Sassenagh. But are men in these enlightened times in the same condition as in the dark and barbarous times of 1641? Can they be induced, like sheep, to follow a bell wether? Will all jump when one jump, although only the imagination of the first was disturbed, and he fancied an obstruction where none existed? Are the Catholics of Ireland so in love with all the horrors of slavery, which they suffered so long under penal enactments, from which they are now happily free, as to place themselves under a foreign despotism as bad—if any such foreign despotism exist? Assuredly the Sovereign Pontiff at Rome is not that despot. Look to his own dominions—what is the nature of his sway over his subjects? Not certainly despotic. But, despot or not, the Roman Pontiff has no longer the power, even had he the will, to disturb for politi-

cal purposes the government of these kingdoms. Look to the Catholic states on the Continent, and where is his power? Consider that were the Pope of Rome as powerful now as when he placed his foot upon the neck of an emperor, as when kings bent the knee, humbly requesting his holiness to accept their crowns, and rose to hold the stirrup of his mule's saddle to enable the lowly man to mount the easier, what could he effect in a Protestant nation like the British empire? Ireland has six millions of Catholics. Supposing he could command every able-bodied individual amongst them to array themselves under his banner against their oath-bound allegiance to their lawful and natural sovereign, what would be the result? They would be swept off the face of the earth! The Protestants of the empire are somewhere about twenty millions. Under such circumstances there would not be a moment's hesitation in the mind of a Protestant between his king and the pope. Every Protestant man, of every persuasion, able to bear arms, would rush to the standard of his king, his religion, and his liberty. Hopeless then would be the lot of the infatuated Catholic. Not only the whole Protestant population of the empire would be banded together as one man, but the enormous Protestant wealth would be poured into the coffers of the state, and the widow's mite would not be wanting to aid the glorious cause of civil and religious liberty.

But what an insult to the understanding—to the

civil principles—to the moral obligations of the Roman Catholic—does such a supposition offer! Does the Catholic so differ as a citizen of the state—as a member of the community—as the possessor of property, deeply interested in existing institutions—as the father of a family, to whom he desires to transmit the liberty he enjoys—as a man of understanding, of good sense, of good feeling;—does he so differ from his Protestant fellow-citizen, as to renounce his freedom—enslave his family—destroy his property—violate his solemn obligations—become a traitor to his king—a betrayer of his country—and for what?—That he might exchange liberty for slavery—peace for war—plenty for want—domestic comfort for public broil—respect for degradation—honor for shame—eternal happiness for present misery! Let no Protestant lips utter the heartless absurdity; but let it be widely known that except in the article of religion, except in the choice he makes of the means of attaining heavenly happiness hereafter, the Catholic of equal rank stands in all civil relations on an equality of feeling with the Protestant.

These 860 sequestered parishes which have formed so delightful a theme for conservative vituperation, cannot be so easily parted with. They may be permitted to occupy the scene a little longer. That they are a large number to leave without the paternal care

of an incumbent must be granted—a very large number to place under the care of a separate minister, called a curate ; or, perhaps, not even so well provided for, having only a sort of telescopic glance from a neighbouring clergyman. Evils, however, which cannot be altogether removed may be alleviated, and such seems to be the intention of Lord Morpeth. Unable by any legislative measure as yet discoverable by modern law-makers, to cause Episcopalian Protestantism to grow in any specified district as luxuriantly as grass ; and no power of transmutation having been, hitherto, found successful for turning any required number of Catholics into Protestants on the sudden ; and the days having gone, for a generation or two, perhaps, when tolerance was carried so far as to the reciprocation of congregations between priest and parson, the one lending the other any number of his flock for the nonce, what was Lord Morpeth to do ? He was legislating, not for a party, but for the nation. He found a nation divided into two great parties, the one three times the numerical force of the other. Did he, like a craven coward, side with the stronger ? Did he not rather, with ancestral chivalry, throw his protecting shield over the weaker, whose strength was failing fast in the prolonged combat ? Did he not draw his bright and trenchant blade, and sever the inexplicable knot which baffled his gallant and ingenious predecessors ? He did all this certainly, but this Gordian severance was a daring deed, for by it he severed

860 incumbents, never resident, from 860 parishes;—a very *κῆρυξ ἀχέων* to country gentlemen! But what shall be said if he found no fewer than 1,500 parishes, under the present management of church affairs, in a state of destitution far worse than he proposed to leave the 860 sequestrated parishes? And whereas these 860 parishes were, in 151 instances, without a single Episcopalian Protestant; in 194 instances contained less than 10; in 198 instances less than 20; in 133, less than 30; in 107, less than 40; and in 77, less than 50: the 1,500 parishes left destitute of the care of an incumbent at this moment, must, in 640 instances at least, contain a greater number—perhaps a far greater number—of Episcopalian Protestants than the prescribed 50; and in the 860 remaining instances of the 1,500 deserted parishes, there may be in each a greater number likewise, as there never has been any rule or custom of the church to justify a bishop in permitting the absence of an incumbent from numerical considerations. As the larger parishes in income have generally the larger number of Protestants; and, as the larger the income, the greater the probability of an incumbent gratifying his love of travel, of change, or of ease; and as the indulgence granted by bishops too frequently bears proportion to the wealth of the applicants, varying in degree from the curate's pittance up to the pluralist's thousands of annual income, the presumption is, that the 860 parishes of the total 1,500 *may* contain—as the other moiety of 640

must—more, many more, than 50 members of the Established Church.

The desertion of these 1,500 parishes by their present incumbents is, as yet, only assertion. The proof, however, is easy to comprehend—simple in its process, solid in each step, and leading to a conclusion undeniable.

By the operation of Lord Stanley's Act, a few parishes have been already sequestrated. As the argument will be strong enough without them, these parishes may be allowed to form five benefices, which, being subtracted from 1,385—the number returned by the ecclesiastical commissioners—leaves 1380 benefices now in existence. These 1380 are shared amongst 889 incumbents, who may be regarded, for the present, as actual *bona fide*, resident incumbents. By a simple rule of arithmetic, 889 being taken from 1380, leaves 491 benefices without an incumbent—more than half the number of incumbents, by the way—and thereby giving a glimpse of the number of present pluralists. Well! Lord Morpeth's 860 parishes form altogether only 177 benefices, something more than a third of 491. For the attainment of a clearer line of argument, the 40 benefices which exceed the third of 491, may be allowed 160 parishes, which, of the 860, leaves 500 for the calculation. These 500 parishes, allowing that Lord Morpeth's 860 parishes to 177 benefices be a proportion applicable to the whole 1,380, which is a reasonable assumption, would form benefices, in number, only a third of 491 ;—

consequently, multiplying 500, the third part of the parishes contained in 491 benefices, by three, the product is 1500. Fifteen hundred parishes left without an incumbent in the present state of the Church! Now, let a cry be raised of confiscation! spoliation! sacrilege! Let real conservatism join in the Protestant cry! Let it be heard loud as the thunder of Heaven! Let it wing its way as the rapid lightning! Let it pervade the land like sun-light! Shout it aloud from mountain top to mountain top! Let it reverberate amongst the echoing vallies! Send it across the grassy plains, startling the very herds that browse the luxuriant pasture, "forty feeding like one!" Let the broad blue lakes vibrate as the mournful tones glide over the surface! Let it be caught up on the verge of the mountainous sea-surge, and sent along the resounding shore! And let the western winds sweep it from the Atlantic to the Channel, and

*αὔρα, ποντιάς αὔρα,
ἄτε ποντοποροῦς κομίζεις
θοῶς ἀκάτους ἐπ' οἶδμα λίμνας*

waft it to the astonished ears of every quiet burgher, of every hurried calculator, of every landed proprietor, of every belted noble throughout the broad lands of Great Britain! And, when the cause of the outcry is sought, let it be known that the Established Church permits 1,500 parishes to remain without incumbents; and then let it be added that Lord Morpeth's Bill, which passed the House of Commons

and was crushed in its farther progress into law, would have reduced these 1,500 parishes by 640, and have limited the application of the sequestrating clause to 860 parishes, having each less than 50 Episcopalian Protestants.

Who now is the confiscator? Who the spoliator? Who tainted with sacrilege? Is the incumbent, who receives the revenues allocated to each of these deserted parishes to be spent within the district of its allocation, and yet does not spend them there, the confiscator of the revenues of that parish? Is he the confiscator, or is Lord Morpeth? Is the incumbent, who stipulates to perform in person certain spiritual duties within certain districts, for the discharge of which duties he receives annually a revenue from that district, and yet does not perform those duties, though he takes the revenue—the spoliator of the property of the church? Is he, or Lord Morpeth, the spoliator? Is the incumbent, who solemnly declares at the altar of God, when he voluntarily presents himself at mature age to dedicate himself, by holy orders, to the service of the sanctuary, that he comes there urged by the Holy Spirit to assume the awful charge, to minister faithfully the gospel of the blessed Lord to immortal souls, and that, denying the pomps and vanities of a wicked world, he desires to be separated from them and to give himself wholly to spiritual things, labouring zealously amongst those committed to his ministerial care—not for the sake of filthy lucre, but

from obedience to the commands of his heavenly Master, and from love to the souls of perishing sinners—is such a man, so bound at his entrance on the ministry, and afterwards, when he is appointed incumbent of a parish, specifically bound to the discharge of his lofty and all-important ministerial duties within the district which supplies means for his subsistence, is he, deserting the district, taking the ecclesiastical funds without returning any equivalent, is he the sacrilegious spoiler of the temple of God, or is Lord Morpeth and his Majesty's present Administration ?

Tithes ! tithes ! tithes ! the sound is excruciating. For years it has been so. Before party excitement seized upon this mode of clerical remuneration, the best payer of tithe in the country was the Catholic peasant—the worst the bravadoing Orangeman. The sturdiest oppositionist, because conscientiously so, the Presbyterian ; and the meekest and most passive in his unconquerable resistance, the Quaker. Now, this matter has undergone a change. The Quaker and the Presbyterian hold objections to its payment as indomitable as ever ; the Orangeman has taken it under his protection, and pays when he is obliged—but the strength of his affection has almost crushed it to death ; the Catholic has declared he will not pay any longer ; and the mind, redolent of Shakespeare and his magic creations, his breathing

thoughts and burning words, fancies it hears some rustic Hotspur shout in the ears of an astonished tithe-proctor, in reply to his demand for tithes—

I'll keep them all ;

By heaven, he shall not have a scot of them—

No, if a scot would save his soul, he shall not :

I'll keep them, by this hand.

And so accordingly he draws bolt and bar upon pig and cow, and all things titheable, and leaves the disconsolate proctor, and still more disconsolate incumbent, like a pair of Orlandos,

To chew the food of sweet and bitter fancy.

Now, what is to be done? What *can* be done? That is the question for the statesman—the practical politician. What ought to be, abstractedly considered, or what might be, if the execrable suggestions of party exterminators, or the dreams of narrow-minded partisans could be realized, are not questions he can entertain. He can only deal with things as they are—not as they ought, or might be.

Accordingly Lord Morpeth contemplated the actual state of Ireland, and he saw how much had been attempted, and the complete failure ; he saw bands of armed soldiers, and numberless police, under the command of the civil authority, rendering their appropriate services ridiculous, and their occupations detestable to the great mass of the people, by vainly endeavouring to force from the clenched fist of the peasant, his petty share of the revenue of the minister of Christ. He saw the ministers of

Him who healed the wounded ear of Malchus, and ordered the sword, drawn in defence of his liberty and life, to be sheathed, compelled, for their own and their families' preservation, to receive, even shudderingly, the blood-stained revenue from their reluctant parishioners. He saw horsemen and footmen arrayed in the panoply of war, marching, with hostile intent against their fellow-countrymen, around waggons supplied by the government to draw the tithe in kind; and he, doubtless, shrunk back in amazement at a sight so nearly realizing the horrors of a civil or a servile war. He calculated the cost sustained by the nation in this disastrous state of society, and he found it to exceed enormously the amount of ecclesiastical property collected at such a fearful waste of moral and of social feeling.

He saw all this and more; his mental vision penetrated the walls, which shrouded from less interested observers the shrinking delicacy, the unconquerable humanity, the unaffected spirituality, proof against care, and distress, and famine, which marked the dignified bearing of the humble and scrupulous follower of his dear Master. He saw these noble-minded men—noble with a heavenly nobility—wasting away in silence and unresisting, rather than force by violence and by sword their legal, and just, and moderate maintenance. He saw them clutched in the gripe of poverty—knew how undeservedly;—he appreciated their merits, and aspired to

serve them. This much calumniated and little understood Bill is testimony to his benevolent desires. Under happier circumstances more might have been done; under the present, great firmness, decision, and impartiality, were required to attempt so much.

There was a time when tithe might be defended on a broad principle. It might have been shown that it was a portion of that equivalent for the land, which every tenant undertook to discharge when given possession. It might have been shown that if taken from the clergy, it could not find its way into the pocket of the cultivator. The tithe-proctor, that blood-stained nuisance to the Established Church, might have been removed at an early period;—general composition might have been entered into;—the absent clergy might have been called home, and a strong argument educed from their residence, that the tithe was spent where it was raised; whereas, if paid as rent to the landlord. which it would be necessarily, if the clergy were deprived of it, the likelihood was small of its remaining in the country. The clergyman who received the revenues, residing amidst his parishioners, would have had many opportunities of being kind and useful to all classes and persuasions in the parish, and thus smoothing away asperities which, from small beginnings, have risen to their present intolerable height. But the time for all this has passed away for ever. No appeal to mere abstract justice will be now heard as it might have been some few years ago. No religious

feeling—no kindly affection—no sympathetic association—is moved by the most vehement, the most deploring cry with which tithe is connected. Blood—human blood—has desecrated the sources of that revenue. “In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachael weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.”

The contemplation of such a cause and such a catastrophe shocks the heart, affrights the mind, and sends a shuddering chill through the frame which money cannot still, though ‘filthy lucre’ has produced!—“The offence is rank—it smells to Heaven;” and though “in the corrupted currents of this world, offence’s gilded hand may shove by justice,” yet “where the offence is, let the great axe fall.”

It is really useless, worse than useless, to debate this matter of tithe at all. The question for all wise and enlarged minds is, not what might be done if the world was now what it was fifty years ago, but, what can be done under the unprecedented circumstances of the existing period. It is silly to let this property be all lost because it cannot be all gained. It is silly to look to any possible concurrence of circumstances which would enable the clergy to silence the clamour against their claims, because such a concurrence cannot reasonably be expected. Supposing those pure and disinterested “friends of the church,” the so-called conservatives, were to force themselves again on the nation, and by means not

within 'their present resources were to consolidate their assumed power, could they do more than has been done during Lord Stanley's administration of Irish affairs? Could they do so much? Would they not have to stem the unquenchable hate of a powerful and united people? Could they empty the national coffers annually of £1,000,000 to recover £500,000 of tithe even for their allies, the Conservative clergy? They could not—the act would be madness; and the strongest administration ever formed, would be crushed under the popular indignation, and be scattered like smoke to the winds.

The time, then, has arrived which imperatively calls for a settlement of the tithe question. Whatever may be the views or feelings of those ecclesiastical persons who may be entitled to receive tithe, the abstract or fancied interests of less than 1,000 incumbents must give way to the interests, not alone of the 8,000,000 Irish, but of the still larger population of England, Wales and Scotland. The people of these united kingdoms cannot now be brought to see this ecclesiastical revenue as they might have been induced to regard it fifty years ago. They can no longer acquiesce in the doctrine of a divine right to tithes, and the absolute impossibility of maintaining a body of ministers in any other manner, or by any other kind of revenue. Knowledge is abroad—inquiry is awake—the tithe question has been agitated

—and no longer is it possible to prevail on the people of Great Britain to overlook the fact, that with all the powers of the state, and all the resources of ingenuity, tithe cannot be collected; equally impossible is it to conceal the awful consequences which invariably follow the attempt; and an enlightened and reflecting people cannot be rendered insensible to the danger to which the empire is subjected by the smouldering state of civil war, in which so large a part of the united kingdom is kept; as well as the heavy pressure of taxes on every individual in consequence of the necessity of maintaining so disproportioned a military force in Ireland.

Had the Tories, who arrogate exclusively the title of “friends of the church,” had no opportunity of manifesting their intentions regarding this question since the unreasonable rejection of Lord Hatherton’s Bill, the factious opposition made to the projected settlement of it, might still wear a plausible appearance. But the Tories, during their transitory accession of power, not only recognized the necessity of a settlement, but with all their anxiety for clap-trap measures exhibited in a clap-trap manner, friends of the church as they style themselves, they did not attempt to introduce a Bill so beneficial for their infatuated allies, the incumbents, as the decried, and calumniated and rejected Bill of Lord Melbourne’s former administration.

Surely it is now time for the incumbents, after such experience of their political allies, and of the

utter impossibility to compel a whole people to act against an imperturbable determination, to awake from their dream of prospective power, the protracted delusion of groundless hope, and to break the spell of syren allurements by which they have been charmed into the very jaws of the whirlpool—within hearing of the foaming breakers. Contemplating the singular scene of some five hundred men, for that number the opposition clergy cannot exceed, men who have had all the opportunities of education which the period offers, obstinately closing their eyes against the light essential to their existence, and blindly submitting to be led by blind leaders, who are themselves led by leaders broad awake to their own interests, and these interests almost directly opposed to the true interests of the church; contemplating such a scene, so calculated to awaken mourning feelings in the breast of the spectator, the inquiring mind naturally attempts an investigation into the probable causes of such extraordinary phenomena in a highly civilized body existing in a highly civilized period of society.

Much must be attributed to that character which pervades the clergy as a body, which should be their proudest distinction, and which renders them the most unfit persons possible, according to the celebrated opinion of their friend Lord Clarendon, either to engage in, or give an opinion upon, civil business. Sir Walter Scott, no disputable authority on such points, delineating in one of his wondrous yctions,

the character of a retired minister, the Rev. Josias Cargill, remarks the tendency of clerical occupation to unfit the mind for the ordinary purposes of life. Clergymen, generally speaking, are, in situation, isolated, and by their pursuits removed from, and raised above, the busy hum of men. The homestead of the true pastor's mind is

“ Where those immortal shapes
Of bright ærial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call earth.”

Much, likewise, must be attributed to the undue influence attained amongst the clergy, by those who are more accustomed to deal with definite masses of abstract thought than to balance the probabilities and almost countless contingencies and circumstances which surround every practical question in politics. These men may be very learned ; walking Polyglots ; accessible references for the obsolete nonsense of the *helluones librorum* of a younger and less experienced æra ; they *may* shine in the phosphoric light of decayed erudition, causing fools to wonder and gape, astonished that “ one small head can carry all they know ;” but beneath the green mantle of their stagnant learning no living thought can exist, and accordingly they make the very worst advisers on topics connected with actual life. Prompted by vanity beyond the narrow limits of their intellects, they may, too frequently, be seen to lie

close to the episcopal ear, raising, as best they may,

“ At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride.”

Hence the phenomenon of a body of men, who should occupy the vanguard of progressive civilization and enlightenment, carried onwards, involuntarily, by the irresistible urgency of the popular will. Such councillors as these, having just sense enough to perceive the sources of their influence, have neither taste nor inclination for the more manly pursuits of a stronger ratiocination. They love the look of the black-letter ; are delighted with the wooden click of the rude boards of an antique folio ; enraptured with the Hebrew character scribbled before the impertinent intrusion of the Masoretic points ; their intellects nearly endangered by the unrolling of a musty Chaldaic scroll ; and the very thought of a Samaritan MS., with its rude Phœnician characters, causes an ecstasy at which even Joseph Scalliger might blush.

Is it to be supposed that such men could tolerate any of the modern heresies regarding the divine right of the clergy to tithes ? Do they not know that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec about 3750 years ago, some 400 years before Moses promulgated a law upon the subject ? and can a transitory thought of the difference between a Theocracy and a State Church dim, with even momentary doubt, the brightness of their learned vision ? These men do not think ; they

are too busy amassing the thoughts of others. Have they not read Aristophanes with his learned Scholiasts, and are they not convinced that the clergy have as much right to the tenth of all property as the magistracy of the Republic of Athens? Do they not receive all that Seldan, *par excellence* the learned, has so weakly said upon the subject in one of his least valuable tracts? And is not Dugdale's "Monasticon Anglicanum" as well known to them as their Bibles, and the recondite lore of Newcourt's Repertorium absolutely oozing out at the ends of their learned fingers? Who can dispute against so many mighty folios? If a doubt still linger, Hooker is at hand to crush the contumacy. Is it not written upon the broad page of the "judicious Hooker," whose eloquence and grandeur of thought is sometimes, however, thrown away in defence of untenable ecclesiastical positions—is it not written "that Painims, being herein followers of their (the Jews) steps, paid tithes likewise? Imagine we that this was for no cause done, or that there was not some special inducements to judge the tenth of our worldly profits the most convenient for God's portion?" He proceeds with his proof, and Hooker is an authority against whose dicta no high churchman would dare to raise a finger. "Are not all things," says Hooker, "by Him created, in such sort, that the forms which give them their distinction are number, their operations measure, and their matter weight? *Three* being the mystical number of God's unsearch-

able perfection within himself; *Seven* the number whereby our own perfections, through grace, are most ordered; and *Ten* the number of nature's perfections, (for the beauty of nature is order; and the foundation of order, number; and of number, *Ten* the highest we can rise unto without iteration of numbers under it;) could nature better acknowledge the power of the God of Nature, than by assigning unto him that quantity which is the continent of all she possesseth." He then speaks of Philo, the Jew, and adds, "because over-nice and curious speculations become not the earnestness of holy things, I omit what might be farther observed," and so forth. On such a foundation what structure could reasonably be raised? Yet on such a basis the divine right to tithes rests, and is perfectly satisfactory to those who prefer the chaff of an antique folio to the more correct good sense of the present period. Hooker sat down determinedly to defend every current opinion and practice of the Established Church in his day, and the passage quoted shews that like a bold warrior he did not abandon a position because of its untenability. But such high opinions answered no good end. In defence of a Reformed Church, which could not show even a temporal prescriptive right to such a revenue, but whose title was solely derivable from an act of the legislature, such high-flown arguments were but Quixotic attempts on windmills. But still it is Hooker—and Hooker wrote a folio, and

that folio is old enough to be above the contempt of one who cannot think for himself. Hooker, is, however, far above that range of intellectual vision which can only see in the Roman Catholic population of Ireland the Nethinim of the temple—the conquered Gibeonites—permitted to live to cut wood and carry water. What hope can there be for ecclesiastical affairs when such minds have influence amongst a body of men which yet contains so many of unpretending good sense and strength of judgment? Men who do not deem a folio authority the best for this age of duodecimos; and whose intellects are but little obscured by nonsense, clad even in the Roman toga; or the Greek *φαρος* though worn by an *αυτοχθονος* decorated with the *τεττιγας*;—men who can sift the folly of a Hebrew Rabbi, undaunted by the splendour of his *vestes aureæ*, his hyacinthine robe—menghil—sparkling with jewels, and sonorous with its two-and-seventy golden bells; nay, can look undazzled on nonsense clothed in the bewildering garment of an Arabic, Persian, Sanscrit, or Hindostanee quotation; and would not bow to absurdity, authorised even by the institutes of Menu; nor receive an error though conveyed through the mists of time by an Egyptian hieroglyph, or passing current from the writings of Confucius himself, in the universality of the Chinese character, amongst a thousand dissimilar tribes. When will pedantry with its paltry jargon cease to gull folly?

There are those who shroud themselves in darkness, and wrap themselves in slumber, and mark not the flight of the hours, or the roll of the years, and when shaken from their lethargy know not that the earth has made a mighty revolution—the seasons have come and gone again, and nothing is as it was before they slept. Such would appear from their sentiments and acts to be the situation of many who oppose themselves to the onward flow of enlightened civilization. They have eyes but see not, ears and hear not, nor can they understand. Such political sluggards “are wiser in their own conceit than seven wise men who can render a reason.” These are they who dream they can check the progress of all improvement by a cry of “infidelity!” “revolution!” “anarchy!” the monarchy topples!” “the aristocracy rolls down headlong!” “property will be ruined in the crash!” Political empirics! Interested dreamers! They cannot fathom the depths of that science which deals with the principles of our noble institutions; they cannot cleanse the Augæan stable, for their mental grasp is not Herculean; and when they see the flood of amelioration rushing onwards with resistless force, their affrighted fancy pictures the solid foundations removed, and the rock-built building a heap of ruins! These are they who would check the roll of the insolent ocean of popular power—wise men, to whom Canute was a fool! They see the rush of the mighty Danube, the rolling Missisippi, the sea-like Oronoco, and

they fondly imagine to drive them back to their Alpine fountains by the talismanic power of interested phrases. Oh! most potent sorcerers, when will you cease to practice such deceit upon yourselves? When will ye cease to dream that any earthly power can enable half a million of Protestants to manacle again the hands of six millions of emancipated Catholics—again to rivet the clanking chains of slavery on the freedmen of Africa, and to lay the broad blot of eternal extinction upon the glories of the Reform Bill? Yet such men dream of such things! To these Solon was a donkey; but without their delectable music. To the contorted vision of such men Epaminondas is a scavenger—no more! But Alexander blazes brightly across the depths of time, and Cæsar's glory pales the ineffectual fire of every lustrous star!

Enlightened statesmen require an eagle pinion to soar above the babble of party, and an eagle glance which quails not beneath the brightest blaze of light. Such alone can track the flight of time and follow boldly on; and such seem those who now point the course which the vessel of the state must take to avoid the whirlpool and the rock. They have little time for dreaming, or attending to the dreams of others. They are not concerned with what might be, but what can be. Not what would be practicable under other circumstances, but what is feasible under the present. They cannot be constantly going back upon first principles, and legislating for Uto-

pian states. There are political dogmas gathered from past experience and present existence, which must be assumed as the basis of their statecraft. Now, one of these political dogmas is that tithe is expiring, and in part dead. They have no power to resuscitate its energies—the medicaments of the state are not powerful for such purposes. They cannot listen to the brawling of every would-be orator, who shouts as if his head were in an empty barrel ; and takes the rebound of his voice for eloquence, statesmanlike wisdom, and popular applause ! They cannot act according to the advice of unfledged Conservative speech-makers, and with the assistance of as many of the half million as could be induced to act upon the execrable proposal, turn the helpless peasant with his family from his cabin to roam the world in wretchedness. No statesman can now adventure to break a lance against the six millions who regard an insult or an injury to the meanest peasant on account of his religious belief as affecting the whole body.

Tolerance, thanks to the Whigs, is beginning to be acted upon, and it is to be hoped the time is fast approaching when religious differences shall cease to be political differences, and men, differing on the most important subject which can occupy or agitate the mind, may be permitted, without political persecution, to pursue that path to heaven which, to their unbiassed judgments, seems to be true.

In the meanwhile how is the tithe property to be

saved? A tithe crusade is not to be thought of. The sword must be changed into the pruning hook; and part must be lopped to save the remainder. The few hundreds of clergy whose necessities compel them to make every exertion to recover their means of existence, have no doubt become wiser in their generation within the last few years. The least considerate of them began the work of abolition by unwise conduct; and Lord Stanley was compelled by the untoward circumstances in which he was placed during his administration, to make an end of the matter by his celebrated declaration. The clergy may recollect that "no man can enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods except he will first bind the strong man;" and he with whom they have to do is Legion, for he is as many as six millions, and they are not quite one thousand. Let them, therefore, answer satisfactorily the question, "What king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is a great way off he sendeth an ambassage and desireth conditions of peace?" Now, conditions of peace on the most favourable terms were offered to them last year by the prevailing party—again offered this year, and, considering all things, on terms equally favourable by the same party. It is to be hoped these conditions were not rejected with their concurrence; but that the spirit of wisdom which

pervades the questions quoted from the words of One who spake as never man spake, would have directed their conduct had they had a fair opportunity of expressing their unbiassed opinions.

“True it is,” as Hooker says, “the Kingdom of God must be the first thing in our purposes and desires. But inasmuch as a righteous life presupposeth life, inasmuch as to live virtuously it is impossible except we live ; therefore the first impediment which naturally we endeavour to remove is penury and want of things, without which we cannot live.” E. P. 1. 10. And really amongst the irrefragible conclusions of this judicious divine, not one is less likely to meet with reasonable opposition than this. Yet, generally received as is the truth that “they who live to eat must eat to live,” the Tory would exclude the clergyman as an exception to so general a rule. Be it so. The Whig thinks differently. He acknowledges the unexceptionable universality of the truth and acts accordingly. If he desires to see every clergyman doing his duty, he is equally as anxious to feed him well. The workman is worthy of his meat ; and the labourer of his hire. It is no dogma of Whig policy to force on measures by starving the clergy. He trusts to the strength of truth—to straightforward manliness of action—to integrity—justice and political ability, to carry his purposes ; and is content to abandon power when only to be retained by crooked policy and servile subserviency to a short-sighted expediency.

The Whig does not require the authority of Hooker to convince him of the fact, although the judicious Hooker is an exceedingly strong Whig authority on many important points, and accordingly he has satisfied himself, notwithstanding the practical contradiction of the "friends of the Church," that a provision ought to be made for the clergy of the establishment. The Whig administration made an effort to effect this purpose by the introduction of Lord Hatherton's bill in 1834. A cabal was formed—Apsley-house was thronged with dignitaries of the English Church. Who was the cat's paw to rake the half-roasted chesnut out of the fire? It was done, however, for the monkeys grinned applause, and the Lords threw out the bill. All very right, no doubt. It is clear that he who enacted the cat's paw on the occasion was a strong-minded man, and not easily led into error; equally clear that the assembled dignitaries only thought of the interests of their Irish brethren, and never permitted the purity of their disinterestedness for a moment to be soiled by a feeling of selfish fear for their own superincumbencies; equally clear that the Lords could not imagine that, by the rejection of this Bill, they weakened the administration of Lord Melbourne, and prepared the way for the readmission into power of the "Cotton Lords" and their leaders. The parliamentary session closed. An extraordinary *accident* fired the Houses of Parliament. The fire warmed the atmos-

phere of St. James's. Its reflection from the o'er-hanging firmament threw a glow over the "West End," and enlightened the penetralia even of May Fair. A sensation was caused. Lord Melbourne was ousted from office; the country was convulsed; men's minds agape for wonderment; "the great Duke" assumed office upon office, most humbly waiting upon the son of the great cotton spinner. At length arrived the magniloquent Premier—an English Aaron for the Irish Moses—called together his group of leaders, all motley with purple and orange—peeped into the treasury, and found there £3,000,000, saved by the Whigs; agreed on a dissolution of the Commons; strained every nerve to obtain a majority in the ensuing House—money, influence, bought-up popular journals, all put in requisition. The Parliament assembled. The Tories, flushed with success, and buoyed with hope, were beaten by the popular party on the speakership—on the address—on Lord Londonderry's mission—on the appropriation clause, sustaining a punishment more severe than ever political party in power sustained before. With all the resources of political influence, with all the experience, skill, and strategy of practised generalship, they fled before the manly onset of their popular opponents; and when no longer able to maintain even the most tenable position, reluctantly and ungraciously acknowledged their total defeat.

Amongst the many good results which have ensued

from this obtrusion of the Tories into power, not the least remarkable was that which must, sooner or later, manifest itself in the final settlement of this most harrassing question. The Tories introduced a tithe bill less favourable to the Irish incumbent than the bill they threw out the preceding session, which had been introduced by the Whigs, and, under their auspices, past through the House of Commons. Lord Hatherton's Bill would have secured them a clear revenue of £77 10s. per cent. on their nominal incomes. Sir Henry Hardinge's Bill, with true Tory expediency and recklessness of any other than party considerations, would have reduced this sum to £75. This hastily formed and badly compacted ministry was shattered upon the Irish church question—that rock upon which so many political wrecks have been. Then Lord Melbourne resumed office with the present administration. In the meanwhile, however, the country had suffered a change by such violent and sudden political movements. The pretended friends of the church were seen "*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*." The storm still raged, and the waves roared responsive. The real friends of the church—friends to the true interests, as well of the clergy as the laity, were, happily, on board, and the gallant vessel of the state, adequately and ably manned,

"Walked the waters like a thing of life,"

No longer rocking at her Tory moorings, or drifting lazily upon the sluggish inshore current of the

political ocean, she was pressed onwards to some secure and quiet harbourage by the brave and skilful men who managed her. Presently was heard the voice of the opposition leader, who,

“ On the beach

“ Of that inflated sea stood and called

“ His legions”—“ who lay entranced,

“ Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks

“ In Vallombrosa ;”—“ so thick bestrewn,

“ Abject and lost lay these covering the flood,

“ Under amazement of their hideous change.”

Not to carry on the figure so far as to make the floor of the “Honorable House” the Pandemoniacal arena for these discomfited opponents, it shall suffice to say in plain language that the Tories, though worsted, were still powerful and skilfully led under a practised tactician. During their gleam of power they gave the most indubitable evidence that the interests of the Irish clergy were only second to the political interests of party ; and, accordingly, it was hopeless to expect their concurrence in aiding the anxious endeavours of the Whigs to place the clergy of the Establishment beyond famine, in comfort and independence. Added, therefore, to the popular feeling out of doors against the abuses of the Irish Church, and with the clamour for ecclesiastical reform in their ears, and, likewise, recollecting the many diocesan resolutions at the time of the passing of Lord Stanley’s Act all declaratory of the necessity of some reform, the Whigs, in their desire for clerical and ecclesiastical amelioration, had to combat a powerful

party ably led, and backed by the very persons they were thus doing so much to serve. Astonishment might be expressed at such blindness were not the undeviating lot of every friend to the real interests of humanity—from HIM, the Lofty One, down through all time—to be misunderstood and misrepresented. Disinterested benevolence must bear to be buffeted and spit upon, and, whenever opportunity serves, to be crucified, in the furtherance of its imperishable objects.

It became, consequently, impossible to pass through a popular House of Commons a measure, for the direct benefit of 889 incumbents, in opposition to the interests of eight millions of people. With every desire on the part of the Whigs to overlook the petty annoyances, the vexatious opposition, they had received from the clergy and their pseudo-friends, with every wish—and magnanimous was the feeling—to benefit these self-harassing men, they were obliged, in order to attempt their preservation from the impending ruin brought upon them by “the friends of the Church,” not only to lessen the per centage to £73 10s., but to add a clause appropriating any surplus existing after their comfortable provision, to effectuate one of the original purposes for which the church revenue was allocated by the State, namely, the education of the people.

Let, then, the clergy impartially examine the provisions of Lord Morpeth’s Bill respecting tithe, at the same time taking a comprehensive view of the

existing state of the country. Let them recollect that a statesman cannot believe in the attainment of objects because they are impossible, acting as he must, not by faith but sight, having to do with this present evil world, and dealing with masses of mankind found circumscribed within certain earthly limits yet entertaining very conflicting opinions and principles of action; and perhaps such expansive views may tend much to their future respectability, comfort and independence, by inducing them not only to withdraw all opposition, but actively to co-operate with their real friends in their endeavours to place their church out of the reach of danger, imminent and otherwise inevitable. Let them discard from their minds, that because Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec that they, as the appointed priests of the gospel of the spiritual Melchisedec have an inalienable right to a similar revenue. Let them not fancy themselves the successors of the high priests and Levites, and that it is now possible to collect the Magnasher rischon, or even the Magnasher min hammagnasher—or, that the Jewish proverb: Thegnasher; bische bilche thegnasher, ever can become an Irish one. An opposite one is much more likely to receive currency amongst the sturdy peasantry of this reviving land: that the less tithe they pay the richer they are likely to become. With the declaration of Lord Stanley, and the decision of successive Houses of Commons, full in their recollection, is it within human probability that tithe can continue to

be collected as it was fifty years ago ? It is altogether impossible. It never can be. A tithe proctor is likely soon to become amongst Irishmen what the Ichthyosaurus of an extinct mode of existence is amongst our known animal tribes ; the fossilized testimonial of a geological æra when such compound sharks gorged upon their fellows. And tithe itself—to what shall it be likened ? To those metals—manganese for instance, which, in the primitive geological æra, some incalculable number of ages before man was formed of the dust of the earth might have been pure, but which the chemist alone can deoxygenate, and show in their metallic form. In the political atmosphere as at present constituted, tithe, unquestionably, never can exist in its former shape, and to save it for any purpose whatever it must be so interfused with rent as to be imperceptible. The question, therefore, for the statesman and the clergyman to consider is, not whether such would be the very best shape it could assume, but whether, after the Tory manœuvring and, consequent, popular disgust, even such a mode of saving it be practicable.

Amongst the many absurd and the many malicious pretences for the clamour raised against this Bill, perhaps not one is more absurd, and yet not one more eagerly caught up and re-echoed, than the charge of infidelity, irreligion, or under whatever other name the gross and interested falsehood

shrouds itself. But how completely does the fabrication recoil and overwhelm the fabricators!—Lord Morpeth's bill was introduced under the auspices of the present administration for the purpose of placing the clerical income, hitherto derived from tithe, but which can no longer be so derived, on some surer, more profitable, and, to every feeling clergyman, more agreeable basis. This, however, was not all, nor, under the circumstances of the country, could it be all. In addition, the bill provides that whenever existing interests in benefices shall cease, these benefices are to be subject to revision, in order to make the church more efficient as an instrument of spiritual amelioration; and to remove those causes of temporal injury and wrong, which pluralities and unions, and sinecure incumbencies, and absentee incumbents, are calculated to produce. In fact to effectuate the purposes contemplated at the Reformation, by regulating the revenues of the church according to their original allocation. This was a second Reformation—almost as necessary as the first. The Established Church in Ireland has not hitherto had fair play. She has been loaded with public opprobrium in consequence of the unequal distribution of the ecclesiastical funds and the ecclesiastical duties—the one being in an inverse ratio to the other. Lord Morpeth's intention appears evidently to be to remove this weight which oppresses and disables her for the race;—to gain for her the affections of the people;—to place her clergy beyond

the necessity of collision with the parishioners ; and to raise that laborious and resident class of her ministers, the curates, above the necessity of receiving eleemosynary offerings from the pauper Catholic peasants of their neighbourhood. The cause of the outcry, thus senselessly raised, evidently resolves itself into an apprehension on the part of those who habitually regard the revenues of the Established Church in Ireland as a complement of their hereditary property—as an easy mode of providing for a younger son who has been “ got through college,” but who, deficient in character, or conduct, or abilities, or attainments, would be unable to stand upon his merits, and upon “ a fair field and no favor,” preserve unimpaired his hereditary station in society. Now, here is a very strange and, indeed, very suspicious confusion of what are in themselves essentially distinct : church revenues and religion. Those who have originated, or who have mingled in this cry, are either sorry logicians not to perceive the perpetration of an *ignorantia elenchi*, or, if so much acuteness be awarded them, they incur thereby the still more degrading charge of conscious falsehood.

This charge of infidelity and irreligion, so unblushingly made against the Whigs, aggregately and individually, requires a momentary consideration. The gentlest of readers, who has gone thus far, assuredly will not turn away when so deeply interesting a theme is touched upon.

The glories of God were once veiled in a fleshy

tabernacle. Eternal truths were heard from human lips; truths older than this visible creation, clothed in words which shall not pass away, though the heavens be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat. Test the Whigs, individually or as a party, by these unerring words: "by their fruits ye shall know them." Enter the domestic privacy of the Whig and the Tory. Take the well known leaders: those who as cities set upon a hill cannot be hid, whose most retired actions become topics of society. Compare them impartially. Regard them by the test of scripture. Do the Tory leaders appear when thus closely examined, enlightened in the doctrines of the Gospel of our blessed Lord; and do the Whig leaders show a marked ignorance of the saving truths of the Christian religion? Do the Tory leaders observe the Sabbath with becoming sanctity; and do the Whigs condemn its ordinances? Are the leading Tories the foremost in every glorious attempt to further the progress of the everlasting Gospel; and are the leading Whigs never seen to partake in the goodly work? Is the domestic conduct of the Tory remarkable for the pervasion of the pure, self-denying principles of our Lord; and is the domestic conduct of the Whig marked by sin and crime too flagitious to be plainly written:—μοιχεία, πορνεία, ακαθαρσία, ασελγεία, διχοστασίαι, φονοί, μέθαι, κωμαί και τα ομοία τούτοις?

Let the heart of the observer answer these and

numberless correlative questions, and then pronounce upon the truth of the allegation that the Whigs, individually, are infidels and scoffers in religion. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees ! hypocrites ! ye fools and blind ! for whether is greater the gold or the temple that sanctifieth the gold ?"

This Bill of Lord Morpeth is sufficient and most conclusive evidence that the Whigs, aggregately, are not the infidels the Scribes and Pharisees say they are. Were they so, they would, in the spirit of infidelity, compass sea and land to make a proselyte ; and, consequently, they would have attempted, through the instrumentality of this Bill, to remove from the church some of those bulwarks of Gospel doctrine, against which the whole Satanic band of infidels have so long fretted themselves to foam ; and still these bulwarks stand in their strength, unmoved as the rock of ages. What could present a less protected side for attack than the Athanasian Creed, for instance ? A creed frequently impugned by very leading Tories, and very high churchmen ; and yet, one which may be pronounced to be the most exquisite, the most unrivalled, the most consummate exposition of the pure and lofty doctrines of the Gospel, as well as the most comprehensive refutation of all those heresies, called after sundry heresiarchs, though really indigenous as weeds to the human heart, which is at this moment extant. For the former part of this assertion, compare it with the more simple form,

called the Apostles' Creed, whose excellence has not been impugned by any one desirous of continuing in communion with the Established Church. The latter part of the assertion requires, perhaps, to be dwelt upon for a moment. The creed, properly speaking, is not the composition of Athanasius. It is almost 1400 years old; and was received into our church at the Reformation from the Roman Catholic church, in which it had been a recognised formula of faith for 900 years. It teaches that there is no confusion of the persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, as Sabellius asserted; or divisions of substance, as Arius and Eunomius taught. It asserts the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost against the tenets of Arius and Macedonius; and that Christ is God of the substance of his Father, against Samosatenus and Photinus; and man of the substance of his Mother, against Apollinaris. Against the dream of Nestorius, who asserted there were two Christs, it declares Christ's individuality; and against the metaphysical fancy of Eutychus, that Christ was one by confusion of substance, it establishes his individuality by unity of person as an article of Catholic faith.

Now, were the Whigs those destroyers of the Christian faith they are so unblushingly accused of being, by the frantic partisans of a despairing party, they had only to remove this formula from the church as a beginning, and this they might have done to the secret satisfaction of many high church Tories. It would have been a deadly thrust at the vitality of all

Christian doctrine in the Established Church, for its doctrines are consentaneous with the articles, the litany, the collects, the Nicene and Apostles' creeds, the doxology, and the form of baptism. It would have at once erased the lines of Christian doctrine from the bibles of the Establishment, and thrown wide the doors of the church to every one not a professed Atheist; at the same time would be seen to issue from these doors every one who understood and believed the Gospel of our Lord. An archdeacon, of very deserved popularity for many of his writings, would have countenanced the deadly blow. Dr. Paley, who is constantly cited as an authority even from the episcopal bench, although a worse could not be produced either as to doctrine or as to the nature and principles of politics ecclesiastical, would have thus enlarged the boundaries of the Established Church until the Mahometan, without departing from a single dogma of his faith, might become a member of its communion. Were such a Satanic scheme perceptible in this Bill, or were deducible from any part of it, the execration which has been so unsparingly, so ignorantly, and so loudly vented against it, would be merited. Were such a scheme of Christian subversion even in course of concoction by the Whigs, no one acquainted with his own nature and that glorious revelation of a beneficent God to fallen man, could do otherwise than break off so contaminating a connection, and execrate and, to the death, oppose

a party polluted with so soul-destroying a blasphemy against the blessed Trinity. Better that every believer in doctrines so salutary and so consoling should pass into the howling wildernesses of Western America, than remain beneath the sway of political heresiarchs promulgating tenets sure to call down the wrath of GOD upon the desecrated land. The writer of these passing remarks would not, could not, under such circumstances, remain to aid by his presence the ruin of his country. Feeling assured, however, that no such iniquitous attempt to meddle with the spiritualities of the church of CHRIST has ever been contemplated on the part of the Whigs, he purposes, with GOD's blessing, to continue a denizen of these favoured realms, and in quietness, amongst those old institutions which he reveres, mark the progress of their renovation, and the general amelioration of his countrymen under the fostering care of these "infidel and revolutionary Whigs."

Un Prince, says Montesquieu, qui aime la Religion et qui la craint, est un lion qui cede à la main qui le flate ou à la voix qui l'appaise : celui qui craint la Religion et qui la hait, est comme les betes sauvages qui mordent la chaine qui les empeche de se jeter sur ceux qui passent ; celui qui n'a point du tout de Religion, est cet animal terrible qui ne sent sa liberte que lorsqu'il dechire et qu'il devore. L'Esprit des Loix 24, 2.

Lord Bacon, in one of his inimitable essays, says, "There is in human nature generally more of the fool than the wise." The remark may appear strained to those who are little conversant with the philosophy of the human mind; amongst whom must be classed such as are ignorant of the Scripture delineations of the shattered state of the human intellect by the Fall. Applied to those conglomerated masses of individuals whose vacant heads reverberate the interested loquacity of nonsensical partizans, it is, however, not only generally but absolutely true. Rivalling Paddy Blake's echo in absurdity, "the friends of the Church" exceed it in stupidity and levity. Mention Lord Morpeth's Bill, and the empty-headed echo is, "Popery! Infidelity! Revolution!" If Paddy's echo had little knowledge and reflection, its courtesy, at least, has been renowned. The fact is, Paddy Blake's echo is an unsophisticated, kindly, Irish echo. Its affections are truly Hibernian—it could not forget, much less desire, to annihilate its country, however its condition might be bettered thereby. So that Paddy Blake's patriotism is as "Hesperus amongst the lesser lights" of these "friends of the Church." Their response is neither Irish, nor kindly, nor wise. They suspect not, silly ones! that they are the despised dupes of vain, or factious, or forward men. The political mountebankism—the self-interested impudence by which they are duped, has been well called by Lord Bacon, "the child of ignorance and baseness"—"far inferior

to other qualities ; but nevertheless it doth fascinate, and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part ; and he adds, “ yea, and prevailed with wise men at weak times,” which may account for the strange circumstance of a few wise men, occasionally weak it may be presumed, who shine like fire-flies amidst the gloom of Toryism.

But what shall be said of the brawlers who declaim by the bulk against every scheme of popular amelioration ? Simply that it is their vocation—their existence. Motes are they in the sunbeam, marring its brilliancy ; their visible horizon a span, in which they revel, as more enlarged minds do amidst the illimitable regions of ethereal space, where “ countless worlds roll round countless suns !” Enough ! let them enjoy their insect world, and their insect occupation, without hurt even to a reticulation of their tiny wings. But the clerical factionist—the disgowned haranguer of an inflammatory mob—the contemner of the precepts of his Master—the political preacher of sedition against the government of his country—the sceptical calculator who barter his priestly character for a prospective mess of pottage—the nauseous hypocrite who talks of the precious Gospel of his Lord when it serves his purpose, who speaks of peace and charity, and, in the same breath, counsels the destruction of his fellow-creatures—the uprooting of their domestic affections—the defacing of God’s image in the heart of man ; of such a

wretch, who only wants the power to rival, on a more extended scale, the black atrocities of the fiendish Burke, how speak in measured terms? Does not the violated dignity of human nature burst its conventional bonds to execrate the heartless desecrator of his holy orders—the practical blasphemer of God's Holy Word—the hardened concoctor of a diabolical conspiracy against all the charities of human life? And what can be said of a party that admits for a moment, even passively, the pollution of sentiments which only could find utterance from a heart indurated against every kindly feeling of humanity, and which tend to blight every affection that adorns the life of man? Can it surprise that a party, tamely submitting to the violation of all the decencies of society, should not loathe the garbage gorged only by the wallowers in the mire without examination? Can it surprise that vapid declamation, inconclusive rhapsodies, narrow views, and illogical arguments, shrouded in language worse than common-place, should be mistaken, in the plenitude of their folly, for profound political wisdom—for statesmanlike comprehensiveness of mind? However ridiculous in the eye of good sense, such owl-like demagogues may appear, they have all the wisdom which can associate with craft amongst the compeers of their party. Perhaps unconscious of its embodied existence in a time-worn folio, they yet practically appreciate the value of the saying :—*Serpens nisi serpentem comederit, non sit draco*. They count their individual

hearers as a Russian noble numbers the serfs on his estates, worth, like oxen, so many rubles to the owner. From such leaders what patriotic good can be expected ?

Accordingly, as soon as this measure, embodied in Lord Morpeth's Bill, was contemplated by the present administration, it at once received the most valued imprimatur, in the opposition of the pseudo-friends of the church, whose anxiety, whatever they may pretend, has been demonstrated, not to be for the spread of the pure and everlasting Gospel, nor for the interests, the peace, the happiness, the welfare and the usefulness of the ministers of the Established Church ; but simply and solely for the individual interests of these same pseudo-friends.

What careth Gallio for the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth ? He is earthly, and mindeth only the things of earth. He is the servant of Cæsar, and regardeth not the things of God. How many Gallios in heart and Peters in tongue, bluster and talk loudly of their devotedness to pure religion, of their readiness to starve or die in defence of the Protestant faith, and, with the words still ringing in the ears of their deluded hearers, descend from the platform of their hypocrisy and plunge directly into acts not only inconsistent with, but subversive of, every religious interest, private or public ! Such as these have raised the cry of infidelity, of Popery, of idolatry against the Whigs. Almost realizing the observation of Montesquieu : *Pour diminuer l'horreur de l'Atheisme, on charge trop l'Idolatrie.*

Enough has been said already of Whig infidelity. Perhaps it may be permitted to examine how far this Bill countenances the charge of being calculated to weaken the efficacy of the Established Church for its all important purposes ; of being discordant with its spirit or destructive of its principles.

The constitution of the Established Church is essentially episcopal. It is composed of three spiritual orders : deacons, priests and bishops. The first scarcely more than a name. These are, properly speaking, the spiritualities of the polity. They are held to be of divine recognition ; derivable from the express authority of Christ. As such they have been transmitted to the reformed Church of England, through the Church of Rome, in uninterrupted succession from the Apostles. This, however, is denied by the Presbyterian Church, which excludes episcopacy ; advancing great biblical knowledge with acute reasoning in refutation of the apostolicity of that order. Now, with the descendants of those who, led by Knox, fired the cathedrals, drove the bishops excathedra, broke their pastoral staves, and crushed their mitres in the dust, ready to aid any attempt to purify the Established Church from the prelacy, which to them appears the very "abomination of desolation standing in the holy place," does this Bill of Lord Morpeth's cater to their prejudices or countenance their views—held also by such a countless host of dissenters—by touching even with a letter, these spiritualities of the polity

of the Established Church? It does not—not an iota is advanced upon the subject.

The spiritual orders, then, are left untouched; and so far the clamour against the Bill is perceived to be groundless. Aye! but these brazen lungs—*ασιγητος λεβης*—still shout, “The Bill is destructive of the Church!” A bold assertion certainly; the offspring of prejudiced ignorance; and, in pertinacity, rivaling the *Χαλκειον Δωδωναιον*. A proverb which is at their service amongst the fragments of Menander.

Now there are some latent principles which may be brought out to try this matter. In every other church, save the Established Church of England and Ireland, either the people have power over the minister by reason of his mode of remuneration; or the minister has power over the people by reason of his unlimited control over every part of the church service. Either the minister is dependant on the people for temporal maintenance, or the people are dependant on the minister for spiritual sustenance. In the Established Church, however, neither are the people dependant on the minister for spiritual food, nor is he dependant on them for bodily food. On this ground alone can the superiority of the Episcopal Established Church be asserted; and any administration, formed of members as learned, enlightened, and able as the present, would directly or obliquely attack this strong hold, were its object the subversion of that church. But have the present administration, in this most important Bill, trenched

on these principles? Not in the least. The Bill does not touch upon the established formula of public prayer—it leaves the prescribed Liturgy as strong a bulwark as ever against the clerical inroads of unsound doctrine upon a susceptible people. On the contrary, it tends to strengthen its instrumentality for the promulgation of the religion of the Gospel—so little favoured by the natural unregenerate affections of the human heart—by raising the ministers of that Gospel to a higher and steadier independence above the caprices of the people of their charge. So on this ground likewise the clamour is without foundation. On what other ground can the calumny rest? Let these clamourers specify it if they can.

Really, to dissipate these baseless fabrics of Tory visions, contemptible as they are in themselves, however easy to do, is yet a work “never ending still beginning.” In variety they rival the nebulous phantasms of Antony’s description :

Sometimes we see a cloud that’s dragonish ;
 A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
 A towered citadel, a pendant rock,
 A forked mountain, a blue promontory
 With trees upon it, that nod unto the world
 And mock our eyes with air.

Protean-like, they are scarcely caught in one shape when they assume another, requiring the language of the poet to depict their fleeting forms. “mocking the expectation of the world” with a false show of strength :

Multaque præterea variarum monsta ferarum,
 Centauri, Scyllæque biformæ
 Et centumgeminus Briareus et bellua Lernæ
 Horrendum stridens, flammisque armata Chimæra ;
 Gorgones, Harpyiæque et forma tricorporis umbræ.

But where is the Herculean grasp to crush this
 Antæan brood, that never ceasing bark for their ac-
 customed feast upon the vitals of their country

“ With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and ring
 “ A hideous peal ?”

Where is the guardian Sybil “ *horrere videns jam
 colla colubris*” to still the many-mouthed monster
 with the

“ Mille soporatum et medicatis frugibus offam ?”

Time, and the imperturable determination of a just
 and united people, will quell this boisterous barking
 and howling. They may kennel in their earth-born
 womb, and there bark and howl within unseen. But
 the quietness of the time can no longer be disturbed.
 Neglected and despised they will shrink into their
 natural dimensions. The mists of party prejudice
 cannot always deform the land. Men will awake,
 and rubbing their eyes as after a feverish dream,
 ask “ Can these political dwarfs have been the giants
 of our seething fancies ?”

“ The charm dissolves apace ;

“ And as the morning steals upon the night,

“ Melting the darkness, so shall their rising senses

“ Begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantle

“ Their clearer reason.”

Every person in Ireland is either mediately or immediately, either directly or indirectly, affected by this Bill of Lord Morpeth's ; and not only so, but the consequences of such a Bill will be felt throughout many and many successive generations ; farther than the most anxious stickler for the interests of posterity can pretend to transmit his affections. This were a great deal ; quite enough to interest and rivet the attention of every man in the Irish community. This, however, is not all ; every person in the empire who is affected in the least degree—and who is exempt ?—by the operation of the taxes, is likewise affected by such a Bill as this. Neither is this all. The Irish Church has been the rock upon which every successive government for years has been wrecked, and, until some settlement of this great political question be made, the country must remain in its present state of feverish political excitement. It is altogether vain for the clergy of the Established Church—uniting all the influence of the English with the Irish branch—to attempt to delay the passing of this great and vital measure much longer. Hitherto they have been the instruments of certain political leaders to stop the progress of that legislation which, good for the country, was destructive of these leaders' hopes of attaining power. These manœuvres might be successful to a certain extent, and for a limited time, had not the Reform Bill broken up that concentration of political power in certain richly endowed families—a concentration most injurious to

the prosperity of the country and the freedom of the people—and divided it amongst every individual possessing a definite interest in the welfare of the state. The political power of the empire is not now attached to concentrated property, but to persons. It is numerical. Consequently, such manœuvres must fail to effect the purpose of those who use the clergy, prelates, and inferiors, as their instruments. Such purpose cannot be effected; and in the vain attempt the interests of the clergy are jeopardized.

The prelates who come immediately in contact with the political leaders in the state, and who govern and direct the whole machine which the inferior clergy work, are little affected by the destruction of tithe property which supports the beneficed clergy, as they derive their incomes from rents, and consequently cannot be thought favourable to a measure which tends to take away some of their patronage and power; to deprive them for ever of the prospect of providing their relations and friends with rich sinecure benefices, and which gives to the poor working men of the church—the curates, too frequently despised by their lordly superiors—advantages more than equal in degree to the power and influence taken from the prelates. Did these leaders of the clergy reflect on their own position, and the possibility of maintaining the real interests of their less exalted brethren, they might perceive strong reasons for an alteration of a system which has, even now, brought their dignities and their

wealth, and the property of the church, into imminent peril. The Irish hierarchy stand at this moment on the edge of a precipice to which they have blindly advanced. They perceive not that the ground they stand upon is not the same as it was when they were younger men; they hear not the voice of the people, which is loud and impetuous as the irresistible roar of the ocean, rolling in thunder towards the shore. They will not believe that they are not "the sand placed as a bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it;"—they fancy that "the waves may toss themselves, yet can they not prevail—they may roar, yet can they not pass over" them. They mistake for the voice of political triumph the death-shriek of an expiring faction. Vain fancy! Destructive delusion! Let them remember, before it be too late, that the power of the state resides at this moment in the people—that the people of these countries are not all, or nearly all, members of the Established Church. Let them reflect that the members themselves of the Established Church are not so attached to the hierarchy of their church as to support them against their own interests. Let them consider how little the mass of the members of the Established Church would be affected by the abolition of the episcopal government of their church; how little their interests would be affected by a Presbyterian form being substituted in its stead. Let them recal one moment to their minds how little

sympathy even the members of their own church have ever shown for those pomps and vanities of this present world, which so distinguish them from the officiating clergy; and let them take note of the marked indignation of other religionists against their lordships, and their palaces, and their luxuries, and their powers. Let them consider that the distinguishing mark of the Anglican Church, in the eyes of the great majority, is not the episcopal government, of which so little is known by the mass of the people, but the established liturgy; and that the people can perceive the value of a clergyman only as a simple officiating priest—whether that priest be curate, incumbent, bishop, or archbishop.—Let the Irish hierarchy pause over these suggestions, and check the desperate madness of their career in running a course right against the spirit of the time, against the opinion of the people, who are to them what the sand, contemptible as it may be in single grains, is to the sea—it is the bound against which they may toss themselves to foam, but cannot prevail. So far they should consider the *vox populi* as the *vox Dei*.

Let the prelates unrol the records of the past, open the page of authentic history, and fix their attention on that most extraordinary æra, the Reformation—a glorious time! Then were the bonds of spiritual slavery burst for ever. Man, emancipated from the shackles of religious helotry, awoke from the slothful dream of ages, and roused himself to run with energy the race of freedom! From that histo-

rical æra what peculiar instruction can the prelates derive? Much, directly applicable to themselves.

Where are the numerous orders of monks, and canons, and friars, and nuns, and canonesses? Whose are their magnificent houses—their broad lands—their accumulated wealth? Absorbed by the state. Various as were their orders, boundless their wealth, overwhelming their political power, they have passed away, and suddenly, almost whilst men slept. But their numbers are scarcely to be apprehended without entering somewhat into particulars. The following enumeration may startle and instruct.

All the cathedral priories, except Carlisle, and the greater part of the richest abbeys in England, belonged to the monks of the order of St. Benedict.

The Cluniac order had twenty-seven priories and cells.

That of Grandmont had two houses; and the Carthusians nine, the latter by corruption called charter-houses.

The Sistertians and Savignians had eighty-five; and the Culdees and Feonenses one each.

The Augustine canons, including the orders of St. Nicholas, St. Victor, and St. Mary of Merton, had 175 houses; the Præmonstratenses, 35; the Gilbertines, 25; and the order of the Holy Sepulchre, or Holy Cross, 2.

Besides the Benedictine, Gilbertine, Cluniac, Cistercian, Carthusian, Austin, and Præmonstratensian Nuns, there were those of Fontevrault, with three

houses ; of St. Clair, with four ; and of the Brigatines, or Nuns of our Holy Saviour, with one.

Then in the splendid procession, with all the pomp and circumstance of which these holy men full well understood the value in dazzling an ignorant multitude, march across the historic page the Black Friars of the order of St. Dominick : they possessed forty-three houses. Then troop along, " with all their trumpery," the Grey Friars of St. Francis, rich with fifty-five houses. Close following appear the Trinitarians, Maturines, or Friars of the Holy Sepulchre, having twelve houses. Forty houses of Carmelites, brilliant in their long white habits ; seven houses of Crouched Friars, with the red cross upon their breasts or backs ; thirty-two of Eremites, the Solitaries of the order of St. Austin ; one of Bethlemites, remarkable for the red, five-rayed star upon their black gowns ; and two of the order of St. Anthony of Vienna ; add variety to the phantasmagoric assemblage. Then appear two houses of jolly ecclesiastics, as their name (Bonhommes) implies. Presently martial music, intermingled with the prolonged tones of sacred harmony, is heard, and the eye is scared, and the mind confused, by the measured tread and military bearing of the Monks of St. John Baptist, or Knights Hospitallers, sweeping by in sable robes, with white crosses ; followed by a few houses of military physicians, the Monks of the order of St. Lazarus. Then a deep-toned wail bursts from above, and the boding voice of the White Knights of the Temple breaks on the startled ear,

and the blood-red cross waves as a meteor over the multitude: powerful as they were, their infamy sunk them, and two centuries had passed away since their requiem.

But the light of fancy departs!—the grandeur of the pageant fades!—the historic dream has ended!—and the record of the past speaks with prophetic voice!

Here is a lengthened list—though few, comparatively, to the three thousand and upwards suppressed—of religious communities possessing a marvellous power over the ignorant people of the period; extensively connected throughout Christendom, and of wealth so enormous, that the riches of the Irish Church are but a ray in comparison; possessing most of the learning of the time, and such vast political power, as to have a majority in the House of Lords by their mitred abbots and prelatie priors. Yet, what was their fate? Despite their political power, despite their wealth, their connexions, their learning, and the superstitious reverence in which they were held, despite the peculiar sacredness of freehold property, they were swept from the face of England—they vanished as an exhalation! Popular indignation was roused, the regular clergy were intimidated, Henry, backed by the people, laid his mighty grasp upon their prescriptive baronial tenures; and estates, which the law had rendered inalienable, were subjected to maxims of escheat and forfeiture that had ever been held inapplicable to their nature.

Is not this a mighty portent depicted in dazzling tints upon the ecclesiastical hemisphere? A precedent better left at rest amongst forgotten things, than thus forced upon the mind by a factious and unreasonable opposition? A 'larum ringing loud and far, its warning not to be unheeded with impunity? A dread voice speaking from the olden times from out the tombs of magnificently endowed, but now almost forgotten, abbots? Ecclesiastical princes, with mitre, and crosier, and golden garments, before whom the nobles of the land bowed low and reverently, as they scattered their valued blessings around!

A change has come o'er the spirit of the dream! "There is a noise in the mountains like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together." A resistless power breathes over the land; and, as chaff before the gale, the obstructions to the onward progress of the popular will, when justly founded, and well directed, shall be swept from the path of improvement. Some sedative measures must be passed. Happy for the country, could the words of the poet be applied to this admirable Bill of Lord Morpeth's:—

. . . "Quorum simul alba nautis
Stella refulsit,
Defluit saxis agitatus humor;
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes;
Et minax, nam sic voluere, ponto
Unda recumbit."

THE APPROPRIATION CLAUSE.

THE right to appropriate the property of the church is precisely as strong as the right of the church to that property. The right of the church rests on the omnipotence of Parliament. At the reformation, the legislature took possession of all the ecclesiastical property of the nation. The right then assumed and acted upon has never been disputed by the Protestant party. The prescriptive title to this property was annihilated, and absolute controul assumed over it by the state. Its disposition was directly altered. It became essentially national, and was dispensed for state purposes. Part was, in consequence, appropriated to reward the civil services of eminent laymen, and part was allocated to the church, which, at the reformation, became an essential, subordinate portion of the constitution. This latter part was committed to the reformed clergy, in trust for specific uses, namely, to form a fund for building and repairing ecclesiastical edifices :—the churches and parsonage houses of the Establishment ; to enable the clergy to maintain schools for the education of the youth of the kingdom ; and to maintain a body of educated divines, separated from worldly occupations, raised

above earth-born interests, and set apart by a solemn self-dedication, to administer the Gospel. Specific duties accompanied the allocation of this third portion of the property committed in trust to the clergy. Duties strictly personal on him who received the parochial revenues, and incapable by their very nature of delegation.

The legislature, which had so appropriated this portion of ecclesiastical property, interfered at various times with legislative enactments to regulate its dispositions. Thus, were it necessary, establishing precedents for any future interference. But the great precedent, which rendered all others superfluous, was the absolute power exercised by the state over this property at the reformation, giving part of it in trust to the clergy for specific ecclesiastical uses, and alienating by far the greater part unconditionally to laymen.

It being then impossible to deny that the property at present in possession of the Established Church is a property in trust for definite uses, it is silly to attempt to place it on the same basis as private property. A direct privilege assumed by the legislature of interfering with the disposition or application of private property, in a manner similar to such frequent interferences with ecclesiastical property, would be, to all intents and purposes, a revolution—a subversion of the basis of society.

Private property may be allowed to have been the creation of the public will, but if so, it must be

acknowledged to have been so created by one of those fundamental acts which constitute society itself, being essential to its very existence, and resting in a principle coeval with the social state.

The smallest and rudest society could not exist one hour without the recognition of the inviolability of private property. If what was possessed could be arbitrarily appropriated by any other member of the community to his own use, or could be seized upon and devoted to general uses at the will of the state, it is clear that every individual forming such a community, would betake himself to an independent course of life, would become isolated, suffering all the evils of such an existence rather than submit to the still more intolerable evils consequent on society, where the right of private property was not protected by the strongest sanction.

The fact, however, is, no society exists without the acknowledgment of this right. The Nomadic tribes of the Desert—the cannibals of New Zealand—the banded families of Van Dieman's Land—the wretched Indians, who perch their wig wams in the marsh forest trees of South America, and are themselves scarcely distinguishable from the apes around, save by a deformity more hideous and a bestial ignorance almost equal—acknowledge this right in common with civilized nations. The most warlike people, as ready to defend their own property as to overcome by force the resistance offered by other nations to the infraction of this fundamental princi-

ple of society, do not acknowledge this right more fully than the peaceful islanders of the Eastern Seas, where, as at Loo Choo for instance, although they have no wars, nor weapons of war, no monetal medium of exchange for the commodities they require to possess or dispose of, reverence most scrupulously the right of private property. It is, then, an essential part of the social system, that without which no social system could exist.

Now, this is a basis altogether different from that upon which corporate property rests. That property is clearly not essential to the social system, is not coeval with it, many tribes and nations being wholly destitute of it. A corporation, whether sole or aggregate, is a fiction of the law, a fabrication of the legislature, arising from the necessities of an advanced stage of civilization, is subsequent to the original formation of society, and subordinate to the principles upon which society rests, is the creation of society, controlled, regulated, and may be annihilated, by society ; is endowed with property to enable it to carry into effect the objects for which it was created, and that property is committed to it on trust to fulfil certain conditions.

Is not here, then, a difference so discrepant between private and corporate property in their nature, their basis, their principles, their rights, and their objects, that only the rankest dishonesty could wilfully confound them, and only ignorance and stupidity the most deplorable permit for one moment, a

confusion by which private property is almost certain to be jeopardized? Let not, then, private property be endangered by intermingling interests essentially distinct, but maintaining its own high ground, assert its individual existence wholly independent of the inferior rights by which corporate property is held.

Corporate property is the endowment, by the state, of a body fabricated by the legislature for a specific purpose. That body is capable of annihilation, and the property which endowed it of dispersion at the pleasure of the state. So long as such a body is found to fulfil the conditions upon which it received its trust as corporate property, and so long as such fulfilment is beneficial to the state, so long should it be preserved and its property continued. But it is possible, as in the case of the Established Church, that these conditions may not be fulfilled according to the intention of the legislature, and yet, to the wisdom of the legislature, the continuance of such a corporation, endowed with property sufficient to answer the ends proposed, may seem useful and necessary. In such a case, which is the case of the Established Church, it becomes the bounden duty of the legislature to enforce the fulfilment of the original conditions upon which its property was granted. Now, this is precisely the object of this far-famed clause. The conditions were found not to have been fulfilled on the part of the church.

The fund for erecting and preserving ecclesiastical

edifices, instead of being supplied from the corporate property of the church, as originally stipulated, was almost wholly supplied by the state, parliamentary grants of money to build churches and glebe houses having been made since the union to the amount of upwards of £930,000, besides loans, in many instances not repaid, amounting to nearly £325,000.

The portion allocated for the purpose of parochial education was so scanty, so altogether insufficient, in consequence of the adherence of the clergy to the letter and not to the spirit of the trust, that parliamentary grants since the union, to the amount of nearly £1,500,000, were found, or supposed, to be necessary up to the year 1823. An enormous sum of the public money, which never should have been called for had the clergy given their active personal superintendence to the spiritual duties of their parishes, and honestly acted up to the spirit of the conditions upon which they received their revenues. Had they done so, this clause never would have been heard of—it would have been wholly unnecessary. But it is a fact, blazoned in inextinguishable light, that the clergy of the Establishment not only failed in the fulfilment of the conditions regarding edifices and education, but failed even more lamentably in the far more important conditions, which required the personal discharge of the specific duties of the parish by the incumbent, who received the revenues allocated for

the sustentation and remuneration of an active, resident, parochial minister.

The legislature, then, possesses the right to enforce the conditions connected with ecclesiastical property; and these conditions not having been fulfilled, this clause became necessary. It is, consequently, one, not of alienation but, of restoration.

This will be easier perceived by keeping in mind that the clergy do not constitute the church; they are but its ministers or servants. The church is a congregation of faithful men, mostly laity, comparatively few clergy. In the original allocation of the ecclesiastical funds, the whole church, laity and clergy, were considered. That portion of the ecclesiastical property given for the erection and sustentation of churches had reference solely to the spiritual necessities and comfort of the laity; and hence, in time, arose the exaction on the laity for the repairs of the sacred edifice. This afterwards was recognized and regulated by law. Likewise the condition annexed to the grant of the parochial revenues to the incumbent, that he should provide for the education of the youth of the parish, had reference strictly to the laity. Again, that portion of the property which is more immediately under the controul of the clergyman, and may, in general language, be said to belong to him, was yet not bestowed upon him unconditionally; it was bestowed upon him for the good of the people committed to

his spiritual charge, by maintaining amongst them a minister or spiritual servant.

This clause, then, as well as the whole Bill, only tends to restore to the people the benefit of that property which was appropriated at the reformation to their use. Having provided decently and comfortably for the officiating ministers, the surplus, if any, is to be applied to the purpose of educating the people—one of the objects contemplated in the original disposition of this property. If to obtain this surplusage, parishes are sequestered, this is only to be in cases where the people derive no advantage from the revenues allocated to them;—the people gaining by the sequestration the accession of a clergyman resident in their neighbourhood, and the means of obtaining education. The direct effect of this clause on the clergy will be to diminish the number of idle parsons, and remove so foul a stain from the whole body. This will be effected not only by the sequestration of parishes, but by the reduction of their disproportionate income, which will disable the incumbent from the dishonest practice of employing a miserable curate to do that duty, to do which in person he has been hitherto so redundantly paid. Had the Bill, with this appropriation clause, become law, it would have removed that shameful blot which defiles the fair face of so wealthy a church, in the existence of a class of ministers, priestly in order, zealous in their calling,

upon whom has hitherto rested the whole weight of the active duties of the church, and yet who are left in poverty so dreadful, as to be constantly on the verge of absolute destitution.

SUMMARY.

AN attempt has thus been made to draw public attention to this Bill of Church Reform, which passed the House of Commons under the auspices of Lord Melbourne's administration. It is to be regretted that some more able expositor has not made a similar attempt. Embodied in these notices is to be found much rather correlative to the question of Church Reform, than strictly elucidatory of the Bill itself—much which is of general interest to every one who loves Ireland, to every one who desires the establishment of peace, the cultivation of the Christian affections amongst the religious parties, who occupy and *cannot be ejected* from the country, to every one who aspires to further, what should be the grand design of every Irishman—the union of all for the benefit of a country rich in all the resources and all the elements of a great nation.

The necessity for Church Reform was apparent to the clear-sighted and far-seeing mind of Lord Bacon more than two centuries ago. Since then there has been no material—certainly, no beneficial reform.

All parties in the state agree generally in the absolute necessity of an ecclesiastical reform. All parties but one—namely, the High Church Ultra-Tory Party, desire an immediate and effective reform. Of the sole opposing party, it may be asserted, with little fear of refutation, that the private conscientious opinion of every individual, even of that party, is favorable to church reform, but the interests of their party require the eventually destructive assistance of ecclesiastical, as well as civil, abuses.

This Bill, with which Lord Morpeth's name is inseparably connected, as having been introduced by him to the House of Commons, and having received not only the sanction of his judgment, but the aid of his talents, character, station, and popularity—this Bill has been brought forward by the present administration to meet the wishes of so very large a portion of the nation. The factious opposition made to the passing of Lord Hatherton's Bill for the settlement of the tithe question; the introduction of Sir Henry Hardinge's Bill, during the transitory irruption of the Tories into the government, offering a less per centage on tithe income than the Bill the Lords previously threw out at the instigation of certain Tory church leaders; this rejection of Lord Hatherton's, and introduction of Sir Henry Hardinge's Bill, rendered it imperative on Lord Melbourne's administration, on their re-accession to the government, to bring forward a more comprehensive measure of ecclesiastical reform than had been con-

templated during their former tenure of office. The transitory occupation of power by the Tories did the work of years on the public mind. The wisdom of the nation, concentrated in the House of Commons, required an appropriation clause to be appended to the former Bill. This clause, decried as alienating church property to lay uses, in fact only regulated its distribution according to the intention of the state, which allocated, at the time of the Reformation, the funds derived from the sequestration of the property possessed by the Roman Catholic Church in these countries. This clause would not have operated against any existing interests, and when in operation would have effectuated a most desirable object by bringing back these funds from being spent by absentee incumbents to the uses originally intended. The principle of severe justice, strained perhaps in favor of the present practisers of ecclesiastical abuses, which pervades the Bill, secured all existing church interests, however abused, from disturbance. A similar severity of principle withheld a most desirable act of retributive justice, by providing a more decent maintenance for the curates from the parochial property in possession of present incumbents. The Bill, however, is calculated to better the condition of the working classes of the clergy, not only in their maintenance, but in their usefulness. The benefices would have been increased in number, positive duties enforcing the personal presence of the incumbent would have been imposed, and a more

equal distribution of the parochial property would have provided a parish for every working clergyman freed from the clog of a supercilious, careless, and yet troublesome superintendant in the person of an indolent pluralist, or absentee incumbent.

The basis of the Bill is, *that no part of Ireland should be extra-ecclesiastical*, BUT THAT EVERY PART SHOULD HAVE THE SPIRITUAL SUPERINTENDENCE OF A MINISTER OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH, *either resident within the parish or at a convenient distance*. It recognizes the principle of NO WORK NO PAY, except so far as the fundamental principle of the Bill requires a slight departure from it in the case of such of the 860 sequestrated parishes as contain not a single episcopalian Protestant. In such cases, £5 would be allocated to the neighbouring clergyman to take charge of the district.

The Bill likewise recognizes the principle, *of equalising the parochial revenues to the labour required*. In working out this principle the parochial incomes, exceeding £300, were to be reduced to that amount when the duties are light, but capable of increase with the increase of duty. Such reduction to be made as the ecclesiastical commissioners think fit to recommend to the Lord Lieutenant to be approved of by his Excellency in council.

The most remarkable feature of the Bill is the sequestration of the revenues of 860 parishes. The census of the ecclesiastical commissioners laid on

the table of the House of Commons, exhibits these 860 parishes as in no instance containing fifty individuals being episcopalian Protestants, nor in any instance having a church and a resident clergyman. Such of these sequestered parishes as contained such a number of members of the Established Church as to justify the appointment of a clergyman, were to have been placed under the superintendence of a "separate curate," paid at the least £75 a year, but whose stipend might amount to £150. To such a parish a sum sufficient to build or rent a place of worship was to be allocated. This is clearly a most desirable part of the measure. None of these parishes which would be so provided for, have at present either place of worship or resident clergyman of the Established Church. Contrasted with the fact that there are, under the present management of the church, no fewer than 1,500 parishes abandoned by the incumbents—and that it is possible each of these 1,500 parishes *may* have more than 50 members of the Established Church, but that 640 of them *must* have more, it is evident that the change contemplated by the Bill would have substantially benefitted the Protestants of the country, and tended to remove the worst abuses of a church which can only maintain its existence by its positive merits and appreciated usefulness.

How impossible now to calculate the injury sustained in consequence of the opposition—is it not properly designated as factious?—made to a measure,

the very best for the real interests of the Established Church, which the circumstances of the time and country permit its disinterested friends to hope for. It is vain to indulge wishes or fancies—vain now to think of checking the progress of church reform. It must be, whoever may be in power; impossible it can be more favorable to the clerical interests of the church than under the auspices of Lord Melbourne; and well for the clergy if the benevolent intentions of the present Administration towards them can be effectuated with a just regard for the general interest of the country, under its present unprecedented circumstances.

THE END.

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 2 Venerable
 2 Temp.
 2 Spent
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 4-8
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