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CUI BONO?

THE ENDOWMENT SCHEME.

"To buy *their* favour, *we* extend this friendship."

Merchant of Venice.

"The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing."

Midsummer Night's Dream.

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CUI BONO?

THE ENDOWMENT

OF THE

ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY IN IRELAND

FORMS now one of the leading political questions of the day; yet, in the discussions it has undergone, so many points appear to have been overlooked, so many of the difficulties in the way of the measure left unnoticed, that a farther consideration of the subject can hardly be deemed unnecessary.

Let us take up, first of all, a pamphlet—in many respects a very able one—from the pen of the Marquis of Sligo (himself a strong advocate of the endowment scheme), which appeared about a year since, but did not meet with the attention its merits demanded. The first twenty pages are devoted to the difficult questions of the relation of landlord and tenant, tenant right, &c.; the last twenty to the still more perplexing one of the Church Establishment (alleged to be a grievance); and the policy as well as justice of paying the Romish priests. “We now turn,” says the noble Marquis, “to the English

“ Church Establishment,—the bitterest wrong and
 “ heaviest injury ever inflicted on any land.”—Bitter
 enough this, from one, himself a member of the Church
 he so abuses. When or where, we should like to know,
 is to be found the Roman Catholic, the Unitarian,
 or the Presbyterian, who would thus speak of their
 respective Churches ?

But to pass on. “ The annual revenues of the bi-
 “ shops of this alien Church amount alone to upwards
 “ of £70,000; and those of the English Church in Ire-
 “ land, altogether, above £700,000. This immense
 “ wealth has been devoted to maintain, in comparative
 “ idleness, the Church of the few, contrary to every
 “ wish, feeling, and interest of the population, who
 “ have been forced to pay richly the Establishment
 “ they hate, and poorly, but according to their best
 “ ability, the Church they love. In 1834 there were
 “ in Ireland 852,000 members of the Church of Eng-
 “ land, 624,000 Presbyterians, and 6,427,000 Roman
 “ Catholics.”

We own ourselves somewhat surprised to find Lord
 Sligo stating at £700,000 the income of the Esta-
 blished Church in Ireland, which in reality amounts
 to only £401,114; nor can we wonder that the Ro-
 man Catholics should over-estimate the funds of that
 Church, when one of its own members nearly doubles
 their real amount. But passing from this “ monster
 grievance” to the means of remedying it, Lord Sligo
 strongly urges, both on principle and policy, the pro-
 priety of paying the Romish priests. “ Give to them,”

says he, "a station, by rendering them independent,
 " and, above all, an interest in the prosperity of the
 " country; give them a fixed salary, chargeable with
 " poor rates in their respective parishes; and you ob-
 " tain their co-operation in the great work of improv-
 " ing the country. If we do so, it must be in a gene-
 " rous and comprehensive manner, not seeking for an
 " undue control, contrary to the very spirit of the
 " Roman Church."

The first grave and serious objection, in the minds of many opposed to the endowment scheme, is founded on religious principle, which forbids them, as they think, to endow a religion that they hold to be false. Now it is no purpose of our's either to sustain or to combat this view. It is a matter of conscience with those who hold it, and to their consciences we leave it; whilst we are not ignorant of the argument usually adduced by the supporters of the endowment scheme, drawn from the practice in other countries subject to the imperial sway. "In all our colonies and possessions," say they, "that justice is done to the clergy
 " of the majority which we urge for a similar body in
 " Ireland. We, a Protestant Legislature and a Pro-
 " testant people, do not raise an outcry because in Ca-
 " nada or Malta a Roman Catholic priesthood is sup-
 " ported; in India, a Mohammedan or a Brahmin; or,
 " in China, a Buddhist, all which religions you equally
 " believe to be false. In every other portion of the Bri-
 " tish empire the religion of the majority is not merely
 " *an* endowed religion, but it is *the* established religion.

“ Take, as examples, England herself, Scotland, &c.,
 “ where, in each case, the established religion, recog-
 “ nised and supported by law, is that of the majority ;
 “ in the former, the creed of the Church of England,”
 in the latter, the Presbyterian form, being observed.
 This is the usual style of argument of all those fa-
 vourable to the endowment of the Roman Catholic
 body in Ireland ; such are the reasons advanced by
 most of the able and brilliant writers in the Edinburgh
 Review,—Mr. Macauley, Sydney Smith, and others ;
 as well as by Lord Sligo, Mr. Bernal Osborne, the
 late Lord George Bentinck, and other members of
 both houses.

Now, in the following pages, our purpose, as re-
 gards the opinions of such persons as may be favour-
 able to the measure under our consideration, is to
 show the difficulties lying in the way of the plan, not
 to attack those who are advocates of it. Without
 further preface then, let us examine fairly and dis-
 passionately the arguments, *pro* and *con*, upon this
 question. Some of the *pros* we have already ad-
 verted to ; and after all that has been stated in many
 able articles in support of the endowment scheme,
 from the pens of some of the first men of the day,
 the entire resolves itself into this :—There are two
 religions in Ireland, the Protestant and the Roman
 Catholic ; the latter numbers about six times as
 many followers as the former ; the former is the
 one you pay, this is a grievance ; the latter you do
 not pay, this is another grievance ; reverse their re-

spective positions, and it will be all right. Now, we ask, is not this substantially THE argument,—the great argument, so often repeated for years past, by all the champions of the endowment scheme? Let them clothe it in what specious terms they may,—let them add what secondary arguments to it they will,—the foregoing is the substance of the whole,—the one bare fact upon which they are to pull down the Church they believe to be true, and to set up one they believe to be false. Such, too, we know, from his published correspondence, was the view taken of this important subject by one, himself a minister of the Church of England, and one of the brightest ornaments of our age, the late Dr. Arnold.

Each of the eminent writers and speakers we have mentioned, let us observe, has argued this question principally on the ground of *expediency*, and on the advantage and disadvantage to accrue to the State from the endowment of the priesthood; putting aside usually the question of religious principle altogether, and how far it can or ought to commend itself to the conscientious professors of a Protestant creed. Now it is upon this, their own ground, that we are desirous to meet them; and are prepared to show that, on *the mere ground of expediency*, as a measure of state policy only, the endowment scheme must fail in practice, however plausible it may sometimes sound in theory.

The object of the whole is, we are told, to obtain a control over the Romish priesthood, to attach them to

the English Government and British connexion, and to weaken their influence with their flocks. Now, besides that we have no great faith in the efficacy of this subsidizing system as a means of control (since, to judge by our past experience in that way, the subsidized only act the more independently of us because we pay them), and that the Irish priests have already stated they will not be bought over by such means, we do think the conclusion of the argument the strangest substitution of cause for effect, of reasons for results, that ever came under our notice. The state of the priests with their flocks is this:—the *cause* of the priest's being paid is his influence, and is the very proof of its great extent; the *effect* of that influence is the income he derives from his starving flocks. Yet this simple proposition is not only kept out of sight by the advocates of the scheme, but is actually reversed by them; they deal with that as *an effect*, which is in reality *a cause*; and they treat that as *a cause*, which is demonstrably *a consequence*.

Now, assuming (as all do) the influence of the priests over their flocks to be great, is it not manifestly taxing that influence to the utmost, to exercise it, perhaps, on a wretched cottier living on a bare mountain's side, with a dozen of half-starved children, and a whole-starved wife, barely able as they are to keep soul and body together, contending from day to day, and from year to year, with the extremes of cold, famine, and disease; to induce that man, not merely to part with his last shilling, his last penny, but to pledge, perhaps,

his tattered coat, or to sell the pig which he had reserved for his landlord's rent, in order to pay the dues of his clergy? Why, what further proof of influence could be given, of influence, too, the greatest, the most unbounded? How great must that influence be, which enables those who exercise it to draw from a starving population the means of subsistence, often to a far greater amount than is paid by the wealthy of the land to their Protestant clergyman? Is it not self-evident that the effect of this constant strain on the power of the priests, this frequent use of their spiritual authority for the purposes of mere lucre, their habitual appearance to their flocks in the character of importunate creditors, rather than of ministers of comfort,—that all this must have the effect of diminishing their asserted influence?

Thus, whilst it is the strongest possible proof of its existence, it is also an evidence hardly less strong, that anything which shall render unnecessary the ungracious exercise of it, must tend materially to *strengthen*, not, as the endowment party would have us believe, to *weaken* it. But, although we are at one time told that the object of the measure is to give us a control over the Roman Catholic clergy, and that it will be one of the great benefits to accrue from this master-stroke of policy, yet, at another time, does one of its strongest advocates (Lord Sligo) tell us, that the State endowment must not only be made “in a generous and comprehensive manner,” but that it must be done, “not seeking for an undue control, contrary to the very

“spirit of the Roman Church.” We are perfectly aware that it is quite contrary to the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church ; and for this very reason we assert that this measure will give you no control whatever over the Romish clergy. At the same time, we must say, this language from a supporter of the endowment scheme looks very like blowing hot and cold with the same mouth.

We think we have now sufficiently shown the fallacy of this portion of the argument of the endowment advocates. We would next ask, is it either honourable or politic ? What do you propose ? This ;—By means of payment to attach the Roman Catholic clergy to the British Government ; in other words, to purchase their loyalty ; in plainer words still, to *bribe* them to allegiance ! Is this honourable ? Do you expect an honourable return obtained by dishonourable means ? We are strangely mistaken in the character of the Romish Church, in our estimate of human nature itself, if you do not find that you have paid for that which you never will receive ; that the best and noblest feelings of mankind are not to be bought by a Treasury draft ; that loyalty, gratitude, and attachment, are not to be had for pounds, shillings, and pence ; and that the latter, given as you propose, will assuredly never obtain for you the former.

Let us remember, too, how the Roman Catholic clergy will look upon this act : not, as one of *favour* assuredly ; for you show no great favour to a man in offering him a bribe : not as one of *grace* ; for no act could be

done more ungraciously : not as one of *liberality* ; for you cannot pay on a scale that the priests would consider liberal. But they *will* look upon it *thus*,—as as an act of tardy justice, not proceeding from your wishes, but extorted from your fears ; as a small instalment of a vast debt you have long owed them ; as but a partial restitution to its former owners of property, to which, say they, you had no right : and, as such, they are expected to be grateful for what you are pleased to call a boon ! Let us recollect how it has been spoken of by the Romish Hierarchy in Ireland ? “ We scorn,” say they, “ your proffered bribe ; “ we want none of your hush-money ; you shall not “ purchase our loyalty with your ill-gotten pelf. It is “ *our’s* by right, it is *your’s* by force ; we throw it back “ in your teeth.” Such has been the spirit of the language, if not the very words, of some of the Irish priests ; amongst others, of no less a person than Dr. Mac Hale, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.

It is, moreover, curious to remark, that in all the various arguments brought forward by the endowment party, the justice of the measure has been grounded, not so much upon the claims of 6,000,000 of Her Majesty’s Roman Catholic subjects to have their religion supported by the State, as upon those of the priests themselves to that support ; that in fact the endowment is proposed as an act of justice to the 2000 clergy who are to *receive*, without any mention as to the 6,000,000 of laity who are to *pay*. In short, that you propose to pay those who say they would pre-

fer not being paid, and to relieve a people already overburdened with taxes by laying on more. What says Mr. Bernal Osborne? "Give the priests an independent station in the country, and you will soon have little cause to complain of Ireland's not being happy and peaceable." Sydney Smith, too, used to say: "In the long run, depend upon it, a comfortable house, a buggy and horse, with a few acres of land, will do more to make men good subjects of Her Majesty, than all your schools and colleges."

Not a word about the people here, and for a very good reason. The consideration of this part of the question opens up a new difficulty, which is little adverted to. Granting for a moment that it were right in point of principle, and expedient in that of policy, to endow the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, the following great difficulties next present themselves to our view.

The first that will naturally occur is,—From what fund is the proposed endowment to be made?

The next; presuming for a moment such a fund to exist (which is not the case),—In what ratio are the Roman Catholic clergy to be paid with reference to the Protestant?

Lastly,—What would be the inevitable consequence of their endowment?

With regard to the *first*, then, permit us to ask, is it to be made from the Consolidated Fund? and if so, by what means are the 15,000,000 of English and Scotch Protestants to be induced to consent to such an appro-

priation of their money? Is it likely they will do so? We rather think not. Is it from the funds of the Established Church now existing in Ireland? They barely support *one* Church as it is, how then are they to support *two*? The income of the Church in Ireland at present, is estimated at £401,114. This £401,114 is the "total amount of tithe rent-charge payable to ecclesiastical persons, whether bishops, deans, chapters, or incumbents of benefices;" and, moreover, includes also the sum paid to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Now, the rental of Ireland annually is estimated by the Poor Law Commissioners at £13,738,967. This rental is about one-third of the value of the annual produce of the land. The total amount of tithe rent-charge, therefore, received by ecclesiastical persons, is *less than the one-hundredth part* of the annual produce of the soil in Ireland(*a*). This is not a very monstrous sum, in our opinion, for the support of an entire Church Establishment; and considering that, since the passing of the Church Temporalities Act in the year 1834, no tithes of any description have been levied on the Roman Catholic population by the clergy, we do not see that the grievance is at all such as the enemies of the Church would have us believe.

The number of the Roman Catholic landed proprietors—owing to the spirit of tyranny and intolerance which reigned here formerly—is very small as

(*a*) See Statistics of Ireland, 1849. Dublin: A. Thom and Co., Printers to Her Majesty's Public Departments.

compared with the Protestants; the total number of Roman Catholic nobility in the peerage of Ireland is but six, we believe; and the baronets are not numerous.

Now, under the Act already alluded to, the income of the clergyman is invariably paid by the landlord; and a deduction, varying from two and a half, to five and a quarter per cent., is made on the income accordingly. Thus, there is no longer any direct application to the Roman Catholic population for tithes; they are paid as part and parcel of the rent due to the landlord.

By what means, then, we ask, is it proposed to pay the Romish priesthood? That a State provision for them is approved of by a large number of both parties in the House of Commons, we are quite aware. We have heard the speech of Lord John Russell on the 28th of July last, as the spokesman of the Government; and that of Mr. B. Osborne, who fills the same post amongst the ultra Whigs. Lord G. Bentinck declared his opinions to be (in accordance with those of several of his party) in favour of the endowment measure: and lastly, we have in Lord Lincoln's address to the people of Manchester, the following insight into the opinions, and, most probably, the future policy of Sir R. Peel's party.

"Believe me," says Lord Lincoln, "if it were in
 "my power to extend to the poor of Ireland, who profess the Roman Catholic religion, the blessings of the
 "Protestant faith,—believe me, I should rejoice in
 "such an opportunity; but I know that it is impossible,

"and that we cannot instruct them in that faith ; and
 "I would wish to place them in a different position,
 "by removing from them the temptations which we
 "all know human nature must fall under. It is de-
 "sirable that the ministers of religion, labouring
 "amongst such men, should lead them in the path of
 "fear, sobriety, and attachment to the laws ; and, be-
 "lieve me, I think it would be important to place
 "for this purpose in an independent position the
 "Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland."

In the first part of Lord Lincoln's speech we en-
 tirely concur. It is impossible to convert the entire
 nation. You cannot expect to induce six millions
 of people to give up their creed, and adopt your's,
 however much you may desire it. You may, indeed,
 destroy the one form of religion in their minds, but
 are you sure that you plant another in its stead?
 You may take away the one, and yet not leave the
 other. You may make them sceptics as to the one ;
 they may not be believers in the other. With Lord
 Lincoln's opinion on this point, therefore, as we
 have said, we altogether agree. But in the latter
 part of his Lordship's speech we do not concur, and
 for this simple reason ; that, assuming the priestly in-
 fluence to be such as it is usually believed to be, it by
 no means follows that the priests would use that influ-
 ence for the purpose that Lord Lincoln supposes,
 namely, to "lead the people in the path of fear and at-
 "tachment to the laws." Why should they do so *then*
 more than *now* ? Paying them gives you no additional

power or control over their words or actions; you cannot remove one of them: nay more; let a priest talk as he will, let him act the part of a firebrand if he choose, you cannot avoid paying him; and if you thereby weaken or nearly destroy his influence over the people,—a favourite argument of *some* of the promoters of this scheme,—what then becomes of the cherished theory of *others*, that he will lead that people, *over whom he no longer has any influence*, in “fear and attachment to the laws?”

In short; you will, at an enormous expense, *almost* annihilate his influence, trusting to his sense of gratitude, that whatever little of it may yet remain, in spite of this great stroke of policy, he will exert in a way which will effectually destroy it *altogether*; the way most distasteful to the people, most injurious to himself, and in direct opposition to that, in which, for his whole previous life, he had employed it. If, indeed, this should all come to pass, we frankly own we know nothing of Ireland, or human nature; and, far from looking on Utopia as a fanciful creation of the mind, we shall confidently expect, ere long, to see it realized in this country.

But, to the practical part of the question; what is Lord Lincoln’s reply? Questioned as to the funds from which the independent provision for the Roman Catholic clergy must come,—Lord Lincoln replies as follows. We give the question and the answer.

An Elector.—“Ireland presents a spectacle which
“no other country presented. It had a Church with-

“out a people. Will Lord Lincoln, if he supports the
 “payment of the Roman Catholic priests by the State,
 “take the funds for that purpose from the Established
 “Church, which is of no use?”

Lord Lincoln said, “He believed he would best
 “answer that question in the language of the Prime
 “Minister, when he took office in July last: ‘That
 “‘the destruction of the Protestant Church in Ireland
 “‘would be the source of many heart-burnings and
 “‘bickerings in that country.’ Believing, with Lord
 “John Russell, that such would be the result, he was
 “not prepared to the sacrifice indicated by the ques-
 “tion.”

We cannot but regret that both the noble Lords,
 in speaking on this question, should have treated it as
 one from which no worse consequences than a few
 “heart-burnings and bickerings” were likely to arise.
 It was not an every-day question; it was one involving
 the destruction of a Church; perhaps, too, of a reli-
 gion: but, although disapproving of the scheme, we
 are not amongst the number of those who term it, or
 its supporters, “infamous,” “monstrous,” “idolaters,”
 or “heathens.”

As Lord Lincoln does not give a reply in the
 negative to the question regarding the revenues
 of the Established Church, we may assume that he
 does mean *them* as the fund whence the proposed en-
 dowment is to be made. Now, inasmuch as it is con-
 ceded by all parties that both Churches cannot be
 supported, the present one remaining as it is, and

that, moreover, additional land taxes cannot be levied upon landlords,—already nearly reduced to beggary and starvation by the loss of rents, and the pressure of poor rates throughout the country,—we may also assume it as highly improbable that, in these times of financial difficulty, when economy and retrenchment are the order of the day, the English and Scotch Protestants will consent to be taxed for the support of the Irish Roman Catholic Church. Will not the powerful Free Church body in Scotland, and the immense mass of Dissenters in England, to whose principles and tenets all State endowments for religious purposes are contrary, be still more hostile to such an imposition? On this hypothesis, then, which we hardly think will be contended to be unfounded, we must suppose *the present Church revenues* the source whence the two Churches are to be supported.

They amount, as we have already shown, to £401,114 per annum. This sum is found to be inadequate to the support of the Established Church in its present state. To reduce it considerably is of course proposed by the advocates of the endowment scheme; but, however it may be diminished, the sum so withdrawn from the Church revenues will be insufficient for the payment of the Roman Catholic clergy; for we shall presently show that, were even the entire £401,114 devoted to this purpose alone (which no one proposes), it would still be far short of what there is every reason to conclude the members of that body would expect to receive.

This brings us to our second question,—at what rate are the Roman Catholic clergy to be paid?—with reference to which an important document has appeared in the *Memoirs* (recently published) of the late Viscount Castlereagh. In the appendix to the fourth volume we find the draft of a bill prepared by that statesman, for the very purpose of endowing the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, nearly fifty years ago. The title and preamble are as follow :

“ A Bill to make a competent and independent Provision for the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland, under certain Regulations.

“ Whereas the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland, and the doctrine, discipline, government, and possessions thereof, are established and secured permanently and inviolably, and cannot be affected, or in any way prejudiced, by providing a competent maintenance for the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland ;

“ And whereas the spiritual duties and functions discharged by the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland are extensive and laborious, and the remuneration received by them is precarious, and in a great degree derived from the poorer classes of the Roman Catholic people ; and such remuneration being oppressive to the contributor, and unsuitable to the receiver, it is just and expedient that a competent and independent provision be made for the Roman Catholic

clergy of Ireland, under the regulations hereafter mentioned."

The first question that will naturally occur is,—What did Lord Castlereagh mean by a "competent and independent provision for the Roman Catholic clergy"?—What were *his* ideas of a competent maintenance for them? We know both; his estimates are before us, by which it appears that the following were the sums total necessary, in Lord Castlereagh's estimation, fifty years ago, for providing a suitable provision for the Irish Roman Catholic clergy :

	£	s.	d.
For the archbishops and bishops, per annum,	24,000	0	0
For the deans,	11,200	0	0
500 parish priests of the first class, at £120 each,	60,000	0	0
500 do. do. second class, at £100 each,	50,000	0	0
500 do. do. third class, at £80 each,	40,000	0	0
1000 curates, at £50 each, per annum, . .	50,000	0	0
Total yearly expense,	235,200	0	0

(*Excluding all expenses for churches, chapels, glebes, and rectories.*)

Now we are strongly disposed to think Lord Castlereagh knew at least as much of Ireland, the Irish priests, and the Irish people, as any one, either of his own day or our's; and yet, by his estimate, not less than *two hundred and thirty-five thousand, two hundred pounds*,—that is to say, nearly a quarter of a

million,—annually, would have been the sum necessary for the purpose of endowment. This, be it observed, was almost fifty years ago, at which time the Roman Catholic population of Ireland was about three millions. It is now six millions and a half. The resources of that Church, therefore, derived, as they are, principally from fees at the births, marriages, and deaths of the inhabitants, must have increased in a similar ratio. It is to be remembered, besides, in how much better condition, so far as regards means of paying, most of the priest's parishioners now are,—how elevated in the social, and therefore also in the monetary scale of society in this country; what incomes, fifty years ago undreamt of by Roman Catholics, they now enjoy. We need not advert to the highest and most lucrative offices in the State held by them,—the large fortunes made by Roman Catholic barristers and others;—all circumstances that to us are sources of pleasure, we must own: it is only necessary to remind the reader that such is the case; and that landed property is now held by Roman Catholic farmers and other men of substance, to an extent that fifty years ago was utterly unthought of.

The Act of 1829 was justly called one of emancipation; it did emancipate millions of our countrymen, whom penal laws had previously precluded from the due rewards of their talents and labours. Within the last half century, then, we repeat, the condition, social and monetary, of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland, has been raised to an un-

thought-of condition. If, therefore, fifty years ago, Lord Castlereagh (doubtless, after having obtained information from the best sources, and given the subject due attention), formed an estimate, and framed a bill, by which it appears he considered £235,200 a year as *then* not more than sufficient for the endowment of the Roman Catholic Church,—what, adverting to the altered circumstances of the Roman Catholic population, lay and clerical, since that period, might be considered the minimum *now*? What, if Lord Castlereagh could see the changes, social and religious, political and monetary, which have taken place amongst the Roman Catholics of Ireland, since his former estimate was formed, would he be likely to consider “sufficient for a competent maintenance” in the present day? Certainly, not what he thought sufficient fifty years ago; certainly, not even double that (for the reasons already given) ought to be sufficient: on the contrary, taking into consideration the difference of population and position, it is evident that the income for which £235,200 was an equivalent then, £500,000 would scarcely be a compensation for now.

That even this last mentioned sum would be considered by the Roman Catholic clergy an insufficient provision, seems probable from an estimate that has lately appeared in the public papers, stated to have been drawn up by “a gentleman engaged in preparing statistics in support of the intended motion of “Mr. Keogh, the member for Athlone, for the endowment of the Roman Catholic Clergy.”

This estimate is as follows :

	£	s.	d.
3000 curates, at £100 per annum, each, .	300,000	0	0
1000 parish priests or rectors, at £150 each,	150,000	0	0
750 town rectors, at £300 each,	225,000	0	0
250 dignified and metropolitan clergy, at £500 each,	100,000	0	0
25 deans, at £1000 each,	25,000	0	0
25 bishops, at £3000 each,	75,000	0	0
Total yearly expense,	£875,000	0	0

(*Excluding all expenses for churches, chapels, glebes, and rectories.*)

The cost, therefore, of endowing the Roman Catholic clergy alone (not counting the outlay for such necessary adjuncts as churches and glebes), would, according to this estimate, amount *to more than double the total income of the present Church establishment*, whose resources, we are told, are so enormous as to be able to support both.

In answer to this, we are quite aware we shall be met with ; “ Oh ! that is an extravagant estimate ; “ there is no use in thinking of paying the Roman Catholic clergy at that rate ; the thing is impossible.” We think so too ; nevertheless, if you mean to pay them at all, why should they be satisfied with less ? For we certainly presume that the framer of this estimate had as good means as any one of arriving at an accurate knowledge of what the Roman Catholic clergy *do* receive *at present* ; and upon that knowledge based his calculations of what,—in order that they might

not be losers by the change,—they *ought* to receive *in future*.

Come, then, to the practical consideration of the relative proportions in which you are to pay the Protestant and the Roman Catholic clergy ; and arrange, if you can, a scale of income which shall satisfy,—we do not say *both*, but even *one*. Are you to pay the Roman Catholic clergy at the same rate as the Protestant ? “ Obviously unjust,” will be their reply, “ for “ our flocks are in some places six or eight, and in others “ as many as ten times as numerous, as those of the “ Protestant clergy ; pay us, therefore, according to “ *our wants*, that is, to the duties we have to perform.” This argument seems but just ; for why should the Roman Catholic clergyman in Galway, with 2000 parishioners of his creed, be paid only at the same rate with the Protestant minister of the same parish, with but 200 of *his* ?

But, in fact, take up this portion of the subject as you will, you are instantly involved in a maze of difficulties ; for if, on the one hand, it be unjust not to pay the Roman Catholic clergyman or bishop according to *his* wants, it is manifestly equally so, on the other, not to pay the Protestant clergyman or bishop according to *his* : and if “ *the wants*” of the former are to be construed as meaning an amount of parish labour, in certain cases five or six-fold those of his brother clergyman (which we grant), as fairly may those of the latter be construed as meaning a necessity for which the other *cannot* require funds, viz., the support of his wife

and family. For this latter necessity the Roman Catholic clergyman can never have to provide; the Protestant almost always has. If the one has five times as many individuals as the other to help and assist, *more or less, abroad*, the other has ten times as many to support, *wholly and entirely, at home*; with this difference, that the necessity for the first may, and often does exist in *both* cases; whereas that for the latter can exist only in *one*. "*The wants*," or, as we should rather say, the *just claims* of the Protestant clergyman (taking these expressions in their *limited* sense, as applying only to the duties of charity and relief belonging to every clergyman), may, in some cases, *for these purposes alone*, be equal to those of the Roman Catholic; but in *no* case can any exist, on the part of the latter, for that purpose which most presses on the former, viz., the *maintenance of his family*. This being a consideration, also usually set aside by the promoters of the scheme before us, we leave it, with the other points we have before adverted to, to be adjusted by them as best they can.

It seems strange that, constantly as is the abstract question put, both verbally and in writing, "Shall the Roman Catholic priests be paid?" the main point,—"How much are we to pay them?"—is never adverted to. We have read many of the arguments of those in favour of this measure, and heard many more; and yet, though differing in some of the minor details, do they, one and all, as if by mutual agreement, evade the most important part of the

whole, viz., the sum you are to pay the priesthood. It is no use to say, "pay them," if you do not say how much; and it is little use to talk of "so much," if you have not previously considered what will be its effect. The grand object of the whole measure, we are told, is to attach the Roman Catholic clergy to the Government and to the State, to make them entertain a sense of gratitude and a feeling of attachment towards their rulers. This is to be done by paying them. No doubt the object will be attained if you pay them "enough," but what sum will constitute "enough?" It is not what *you*, but what *they* will consider "enough," is the point; for it is *their* feelings, not *your's*, that are to be worked upon. Where is the precise line at which their present discontent will terminate, and their future gratitude commence?

Now we know not, as we have said, what their notions of "enough" may be, but we think we are justified in assuming the estimate stated to have been made for Mr. Keogh, as the measure of their expectations; and as a sum equal to one-half of it is more than it is at all probable the nation would consent to giving, it seems to follow as a necessary consequence, that discontent, not satisfaction or gratitude, must be the result of this "proffered boon." Give them what they ask, and you *may* have gratitude; deny it to them, and you *certainly will not*. Even in the first case we should rather doubt that gratitude would exist; not from any feeling of prejudice

against the Roman Catholic clergy, but simply because we consider them men; and, as men, why should they be thankful for receiving that of which they consider they were unjustly robbed *before*, and may but claim as their due *now*? Is gratitude to be expected from a man to whom you *restore, and but in part*, property of which you formerly deprived him, as he considers, unjustly? We cannot expect human nature should be different in the Roman Catholic clergy from what it is in other individuals. We but suppose them to feel as we certainly should feel ourselves in a similar position. But assuming for a moment that their gratitude were thus purchaseable, it is very evident the price to be paid for it is one which the nation never would consent to.

There is another course by which also you might possibly attain the desired end (though, for the reasons already given, we rather doubt it too), viz., to pay the priests by a state endowment, *in addition* to what they already have. That will be a clear gain to them certainly; for *that*, however unjust it might be to the people, they may be grateful. But no one proposes this. On the contrary, every advocate of the endowment scheme recommends the most stringent measures should be taken to prevent the priests receiving (*in addition* to the state provision) any contributions from their flocks. If this be done, then, and you do not, at the same time, pay them an annual sum equal to that which they at present receive, it is manifest they will but consider it as

an imperial spoliation and a state robbery, under the mask of open-handed generosity and "comprehensive" munificence. Is it not evident your endowment will be "*a losing concern*" to them; and how then can you expect them to be grateful for an act which takes from them the greater, to substitute the lesser benefit. What say you? "You have so much
 "a year already, we certainly can't give you anything
 "like that, but then it shall be called a state endow-
 "ment, which sounds very well indeed. You must not
 "take one penny more than we give you from any-
 "body under pain of punishment; but, of course,
 "you'll nevertheless be very thankful." They will be good Christians, and grateful for small mercies, indeed, if they are thankful for this.

We come now to the third and last consideration, viz., What will be the consequence of the proposed endowment. We have already referred to the language of some of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, as showing the way in which this act is likely to be received by them. As a farther corroboration we may refer to a pamphlet that has lately appeared (on the subject of State Endowment) from the pen of a Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Mr. Burke, in which he thus speaks of those who advocate this measure; not the members of the British Government, or the liberal Protestants of the House of Commons, but the Roman Catholic gentlemen who have expressed themselves favourable to it: "They are merely Catholics in name," says the reverend gentleman, "about whom there is generally observable a

“great liberalism on matters of their religion; they were
 “Catholics of this stamp who formerly advocated the
 “Veto; and they are modern gentlemen of the same
 “sample, and some of them, perhaps, the descendants
 “of these very Vetoists, who are now not opposed to,
 “but rather anxious for a state endowment for the
 “Irish priesthood, perhaps with the hope,—yes, and
 “with the view of having their (the priests’) politi-
 “cal influence, which they sometimes find somewhat
 “inconvenient, thereby destroyed or diminished.”

Now what other proof is required, to show in what way this grant is likely to be looked upon, or accepted, by the Roman Catholic priesthood? Even those members of their own Church who advocate the measure, are, as we have seen, spoken of in terms little short of abusive.

Further; let us consider in what way the proposed restrictions are to be enforced by the British Government; what would be the consequence of their first attempt to punish a Roman Catholic priest for an infringement of them? Why, that an outcry would be raised from one corner of the isle to the other, and echoed far and wide throughout Europe; and the English Government stigmatised as “tyrants, persecutors, and oppressors,” who were now, in the nineteenth century, endeavouring to revive the barbarities of the thirteenth.

But, perhaps, we shall be told, “these are all unfounded predictions of your’s, which never will be realized.” That they are but too likely to be fulfilled,

will probably be felt by all who recollect the manner in which not merely the Protestant members of both houses, but also the first Roman Catholic noblemen in the land, were spoken of as vilifiers and slanderers, when, two years since, they ventured to remonstrate with the Romish clergy upon the impropriety of their altar denunciations.

Now it was not, we believe, from any actual desire to abet such practices, that the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland thus treated the remonstrances of Lords Shrewsbury and Beaumont; it was not so much that Dr. Mac Hale and others approved of the denunciatory system, as that they would not suffer the interference of laymen in any act which the clergy thought proper to perform. This excessive jealousy of lay interference has ever been the strongest characteristic of the Church of Rome in all ages and all countries. Her clergy desire to have everything *per se* and *inter se*. Guarding, as they do, with a scrupulous care, everything concerning their own religion, forms, ceremonies, and tenets, they are equally tenacious of all that belongs to their orders, ranks, and degrees; their monastic and conventual establishments, *all of which are to be free from lay interference*. In addition, they have a language almost their own; authorities and traditions of their own; and, to sum up all, a sovereign of their own, to whom alone they bow in allegiance.

We have often heard it regretted that the opportunity for carrying the Veto question in 1825 was lost.

We confess ourselves unable to join in these regrets. Anything that would give to our Government a real *bonâ fide* control over the Roman Catholic clergy, we should approve of as cordially as could the most determined opponents of Emancipation ; but this we are firmly convinced would not be attained by the mere fact of the Crown possessing a veto on the appointment of bishops. You might make it a right, indeed, but it would be a useless one; because, it could only be exercised upon evidence impossible to be obtained: the power would practically be null and void, the Act giving it a dead letter. For precisely similar reasons, then, do we say, that this endowment measure will never give you the smallest iota of control over one single Roman Catholic ecclesiastic in Ireland.

There is one thing the priests *are* to do ; another which they are *not* : and as surely as Parliament passes the proposed bill, results contrary to those anticipated by its promoters will follow. The first is, the priests *are* to express themselves deeply grateful for receiving a small endowment from the State, in place of a large one from the people ; and a strong attachment to the Government which makes this equitable substitution. The second is, they are *not* to receive money in any form whatever, presents or otherwise, from their flocks, on pain of punishment. Besides these two conditions, there is a third, if possible, still more unlikely to be fulfilled, viz. : They are *not*, as hitherto, to be subject to the authority of their own ecclesiastical superiors merely, but are to permit a constant sur-

veillance by, and interference of the English Protestant Government in all their affairs. To those who look for a realization of such conditions as these we can only say, they are at once the most sanguine and credulous of mortals; have learned less from the past, and hope more from the future, than we could have supposed possible.

Many, perhaps, of the widely differing opinions on this subject, may be formed from erroneous ideas concerning the Roman Catholic Church;—forgetting how scrupulously she has ever repudiated and repelled all lay interference in her concerns;—how zealously she has guarded every privilege, real or traditional, which had ever been her's;—how completely she has existed within herself, as little as possible exposed to those vast changes and vicissitudes to which less well built fabrics of human greatness have fallen a prey;—how she has ever avoided pledging herself to, or considering herself bound by, the acts of any individual member of her body;—whilst, if his system and his acts seemed likely to be useful to her interest, she was ready to avail herself of them, she was at the same time uncompromised by them should they prove otherwise. Hence the great value of the authority of Councils, upon whose decisions the faith of the true sons of the Church was to be built, not upon the words or acts of any individual member of that Church. The wild fanatic and the lukewarm Catholic are alike useful to her; but with neither does she identify herself. She is ever ready to make use

of all, but ever careful to bind herself by none. Can it really be contended, then, that in a Church thus jealous to the last degree of its privileges and rights, great and small, the clergy would submit not only to the surveillance, but to the conditions, restrictions, and penalties, which, as they would say, a heretic government sought to impose upon them? Why, to any one who knows—we will not say the history of the Roman Church, but the history of England, during the last fifty years, it is palpably evident that the idea is absurd.

We do not mean here to charge any person with holding opinions which he may repudiate; we do not mean to assert that every member of the Roman Catholic Church does, in point of fact, hold all the opinions and the tenets of that Church, as well those that are vicious as those that are good; but we say that, failing to do so, *he is not a consistent Roman Catholic*. The Church is the “keeper of his conscience.” The Church decrees a certain thing, and it is his bounden duty to believe in that, whatever it may be. The Church, for example, declares a certain reading of a passage to be the true one; a view of the matter, possibly very different from that taken by him and other members of the Church. It is yet manifest that, consonant or not with their views, *that* interpretation, and that alone, is the one they are to believe in. If the Church says nothing, it remains an open question for each to exercise his or her judgment upon; but

let the Church once declare its views of the case, and all discussion is ended, the matter is settled.

It is as with a barrister,—So long as a certain clause in an Act of Parliament has remained without any judicial decision having been made as to its meaning, he and others may exercise their skill and judgment upon forming an opinion; but, once let its meaning be decided upon by one of the superior Courts, and all uncertainty is removed; it is no longer a question of doubt to the advocate, or one upon which to exercise his judgment. Be the interpretation we have supposed in accordance or at variance with his own view of the matter, it signifies not; it is that of a superior tribunal, and to its decision in the matter he must bow.

Mr. Pitt seems not to have been aware of this peculiarity in the constitution of the Roman Catholic Church, when he sent circulars, containing queries upon various points connected with its tenets, to several of the principal universities of Europe. The answers were in many cases at variance with the known and published dogmas of the Church; but these were represented to have been changed, which, if the Church be infallible, is evidently impossible. Those who wrote these replies may not themselves have held such doctrines wholly; but, ceasing to do so, they *ceased to be true Roman Catholics*.

Thus it is with the discipline of that Church; it is contrary to her tenets to permit lay interference in

her concerns ; and although individual Roman Catholics there may be, who will tell you that *they* do not themselves object to it, yet, that it is at variance with the principles of the Church is certain ; and if, acting upon the faith of what you are thus told, you make certain laws, with the expectation of obtaining such a control as alluded to, you are but allowing your credulity to be practised on, and running the risk of making yourselves, in the end, a laughing-stock to the world at large.

Possibly this may be considered misrepresentation, or the result of prejudice. It is neither. The Roman Catholic clergy, in thus resisting the interference of the British Government, would act but as, if zealous Roman Catholics, they ought to act,—as in their place we feel we should act ourselves. Lay interference is, as we have shown, contrary to the very spirit of the Roman Church ; the resistance to it is essentially a part of any system which denies to men the right of private judgment. Such, in fact, are the very words of Lord Sligo, who is, nevertheless, one of the most strenuous advocates of the endowment scheme(*a*).

Another difficulty, usually unnoticed, yet remains to be considered. Suppose it for one moment possible—what in our opinion it is not—that those obstacles and objections, to which in the earlier part of this Essay we have adverted, were removed, and that funds, rateable endowment, &c., were established ; how is

(*a*) See Note at end.

the present system of Easter and Christmas dues, of baptismal and marriage fees, &c., to be put a stop to? How are the people to be protected from having to pay their clergy *twice over*?

The answer is, the system is *not* to be put down; the people are *not* to be protected. And why so? For the best of all possible reasons, that you cannot do either the one or the other. Pass what Acts of Parliament you will, make the laws as stringent as you may, the priest, on any occasion, has but to say: "I am forced by the Saxon law to administer this sacrament, or perform this ceremony of marriage, or baptism, as you desire it; but I give you notice that there is no virtue in it; it will be a miserable union for you both, made by the English law, not with the sanction of your Church; your children will be lost; and whom will you have to blame for it but yourselves, who, from your stinginess and obstinacy, denied your clergy their dues?"

And here again, it must be remembered how far the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church would bear out the priest in such an assertion as we have supposed. One of these is, that the non-intention of the priest in performing certain acts nullifies the effect of those acts; that should he, at the time of administering a sacrament, not, in his own mind, *will* that it should have a particular effect, that act of administration is null and void. It requires, therefore, but a slight knowledge of Ireland, the Irish people, and the Roman Catholic Church, to be assured that not one

such appeal as the above in a thousand would fail of having the desired effect.

Next; suppose it were made by law a penal offence for a Roman Catholic priest to receive dues, fees, or money, in any shape otherwise than as paid by the State; and that any priest found doing so might be tried by the ordinary tribunals of the country, and, if convicted, should be liable to imprisonment. This would be assuming a good deal, considering that the Romish clergy have never been held amenable to the criminal jurisdiction of any country, *where the offence was purely of an ecclesiastical character*. But, to procure a conviction, there must be witnesses; where are *they* to be found? The witnesses, recollect, must not merely be persons who have heard or known of the offence having been committed,—they must have seen it; nay more, they must have been actors in it themselves; *they must have been the very persons who so paid the priest*. Is there any man in his senses who can suppose it possible that one single such witness could be procured between Malin Head and Cape Clear?

Let us remind the reader of what is somewhat akin to this. A year since, the indignation of all classes of the community in England was strongly excited against certain members of the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland, on account of their denunciations of the Irish landlords,—denunciations usually followed by the murder of the individual named;—Lord Arundel, in the House of Commons,

Lord Shrewsbury, in the Lords, and even the Pope himself, reproving their wicked conduct. Yet it was felt that to have brought to trial Father Kenyon or Archdeacon Laffan would have been worse than a mockery, *it being impossible to procure persons to give evidence against them*. But what was the case then ? The minds of all right-thinking persons were strongly excited against the denunciating priests ; they were shocked at the conduct of those men ; the prosecution of them would have been almost popular. The denunciations had been made in the open chapel, and had been noticed in the public papers. There was not the slightest doubt existing in the mind of any human being that they had been uttered. Common justice seemed to demand the punishment of those men, for following whose counsels and precepts others were daily sentenced to death and executed. Yet, so strongly was felt the utter hopelessness of attempting to institute a prosecution against a priest, for a crime known to and condemned, indeed, by all the world, but the evidence in support of which must come *from his own people alone*, that the idea, though often talked of, was eventually abandoned, *for these very reasons*. Who, in the other case, would take so great an interest in the circumstance (supposing it were known, which is not likely) of a priest's having received from one of his flock a few pounds that he was not by law entitled to ? No one ! Put aside the hardship of preventing him from *receiving a present*,—for you must do that, or the restriction will be liable to being

constantly evaded,—it is just as evident that the law, so far as it applied to this matter, would be a dead letter, as that the sun shines in the sky, or that the earth revolves on its axis.

Remember, too, the priests are the clergy of the people and the Pope, not of the State, and that nothing you can do will alter their position in this respect: you cannot remove one of them; you have no more voice in their appointment than in that of the priests of Buddha. They are spiritually independent of all sovereigns but their own; and this circumstance it is which has so long enabled the Romish Church to hold its ground in spite of imperial mandates and republican decrees; so that, whilst other human fabrics have “waxed and waned,” and fallen to decay, this masterpiece of human wisdom has withstood, unmoved, those rude shocks which shivered *them* to atoms. “We defy “you to touch us,” said the late Dr. Doyle, Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare; “your King and your “Parliament may make what laws, and appoint or remove what bishops in their own heretic Church, “they please; but they cannot touch *one of us*; we “belong to a higher power, over whom neither you “nor they have any control!”

A last consideration remains, and with that we close this part of our subject. And here again we must begin with a supposition little in accordance with the probabilities of the case. It is, that the *secular* clergy, if paid by the State, would no longer levy their dues from the people. What then is to prevent the *regular* clergy taking their place and doing so? The secular priest,

no longer dependent for his subsistence on his influence with his people,—on the services of religion which formerly brought him wealth, will then take his ease, and leave to the monk the performance of those duties to which the latter must, in *his* turn, look for the means of existence. What is the Rev. Mr. Burke's language? "I have heard hundreds," says he (p. 12), "publicly and solemnly declare, that, in the event of the Irish priests consenting to be bound to the English Government by the suspicious tie of a Treasury pension, they would cease to entertain all respect for them; and that to the clergyman *so tied down* they would never apply for the purpose of performing their religious duties." Now, as they must apply to somebody, and they will not apply to any of the clergy bound by this "suspicious tie" (an expression which, if this measure passes, will include the entire body of the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland at present), it is quite clear there must be *some other body* of clergy in contemplation as an alternative; and who *they* are to be it is not very difficult to guess.

Do then what you will,—the State will pay,—the people will pay,—that is to say, the latter will be DOUBLY TAXED: and, in place of giving satisfaction even to the very body you propose to benefit, you will infuse more discontent than at present exists amongst them and other classes in Ireland;—far from gaining influence, you will lose what little you now possess;—you will pauperize those already poor, and pamper those already rich enough;—and, finally,—let it not

be your least consideration,—that, having done your best to exalt a religion you believe to be *false*, you will to your utmost crush one you believe to be *true*.

A point, fully as important as the last, yet remains to be considered ; and as it is one usually passed over by the advocates of this measure, we shall go the more fully into it. It is this. All your calculations have been for the purpose of endowing the *clergy* ; you have never thought of endowing the *Church*. You do not recollect that chapels, parish churches, and cathedrals, cannot be constructed for nothing ; that manse, glebe, and rectories, are not very likely to be built gratuitously ; and that, like most other edifices, they will need frequent repairs. Who is to pay for all this ? You, of course ; that is to say, the Empire at large. “ Oh, no ! ” say you, “ that would not be fair ; we don’t pay for building or repairing any of “ their churches or glebes *now*. ” Quite true ; but at present the Roman Catholic Church is no way connected with the State ; you have nothing to do with it, and know nothing about either its churches or glebes. But, once come to supporting it *at all*, and you must support it *in toto*. How and why should you stop short at a mere provision for the clergy, without any for houses for them to live in, or churches to preach in ? Leave matters as they are, and you have nothing to do with either. How their churches or glebes are built, you may neither know nor care ; but once provide the clergy with State incomes, and

you must provide them with State glebes and State churches too.

It were unjust, both toward them and toward the people, to act otherwise. What would the former say? —“ By this plan of your’s you have taken from us all means of building any churches ; we can get no contributions from our flocks for that purpose, as formerly ; and you have made it a penal offence to receive a penny from them. Our glebes are going to ruin, our churches are falling down, and we have no means of repairing either, owing to this law of your’s. You must do it for us now, or else remove the penalty, and let our flocks be taxed for it as formerly.”

What would the latter say?—“ Why, this law of your’s is no relief or good to us. You pay the clergy to be sure, but you do nothing for us ; you do not give *us* even a decent church to pray in, nor *them* a house to live in. We are continually reminded of this, and if we try to remedy it our priest is liable to be punished ; and if you change the law in that respect, we shall then be doubly taxed for everything. We were far better off before, and wish you had let us both alone ; but, since you would not do so, it is quite clear that the building and repairing devolve on you with all the rest.”

Most unquestionably it does, or rather it will, if you pass this measure. Depend upon it, you are deceiving yourselves, if you fancy that in paying the clergy,—no matter what sum,—you do more than

half what they will expect from you. The two things are quite distinct, but they are involved in the same principle. The two things are,—paying the clergy, and providing them with proper churches and glebes, The principle which involves both is,—*supporting the Roman Catholic Church* at all. If you do the one, you must also do the other.

“What sum would be required for this last purpose?” is next asked. We profess ourselves unable to reply to it with any degree of certainty. We know that vast and splendid churches are constantly erected at the present by the Roman Catholics in Ireland; as, for example,—besides several in Dublin,—those at Newry, Drogheda, and Killarney (which last certainly casts the shabby Protestant church there into the shade), with many others; the means for building which are obtained we know not how, but somehow and somewhere they *are* obtained, and these splendid edifices are erected at a lavish expense. In many cases, the priest, from his large income, probably contributes towards the work; but this must cease under the new system, for he will have no very large income to contribute from, in the first place, nor, if he had, would he be very likely to pay for what he considers you should defray, in the second.

One of four things must happen. The people must support the churches and glebes, which is impossible, according to the proposed law; and would be unjust if it were possible;—the priest must support them, which is nearly impossible too, and, possible or not,

will certainly not be done ;—the buildings must fall down, the most probable course of any, but certainly not a very happy result from a great State measure which is to cost us half a million a year. The remaining alternative is that which in the end the Government will be driven to adopt—By a regular State endowment to erect and keep in repair all such buildings as those alluded to. If the churches, then, be very gorgeous and showy, as most Roman Catholic churches are, they will require much expense to keep them so ; if they be poor and shabby, they will need the more money to make them what they ought to be. It is tolerably evident that, even supposing we never had to build a new one to the end of time, a handsome edifice will not be kept in repair for nothing ; and it is nearly as evident that a shabby one will not be put in repair for the same.

The number of Roman Catholic chapels in Ireland is considerably greater than that of the Protestant churches ; and the revenue allowed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for building and repairing the latter, and providing what is necessary for the proper celebration of divine service,—upwards of £118,000 a year,—is found to be so very insufficient for the purpose, as in many cases to cause the expenses to be partially, and in some wholly, borne by the congregations of those several churches ; and yet those churches are in general, after all, but poor and bare-looking. Besides, it is to be remembered that we are constantly told that at present the accommodation for Roman

Catholic worship is very insufficient ; that many more chapels are required ;—therefore more clergy, —therefore more glebe-houses must be provided. Whose duty will it be to do this, if once the Roman Catholic Church is taken under the protection of the State ? The duty of that State most undubitably. If you think that by paying the clergy (supposing you could pay them in such proportion as to satisfy them, which is barely possible) you perform all, or one-half that which will be expected from you,—that which you will ultimately have to perform,—you are grossly mistaken. If you think this half measure will succeed,—if you expect not to be taunted with such language as “a mean provision,” “a paltry compensation,” “a proffered bribe, under colour of generosity,” persecuting and half-starving the clergy, “and giving them neither houses nor churches,”—you are deceiving yourselves. You see but half the depth of the gulf before you, and, whilst pressing on the Legislature with one hand those features of the scheme which are plausible, you keep back with the other those difficulties which are real.

We have said that, adverting to Lord Castlereagh’s estimate, formed fifty years ago—the state of things *then*, and the state of things *now*—£500,000 per annum would appear the smallest sum by which any recompense could be made to the Roman Catholic clergy, which would not involve a great sacrifice of income on their parts ; and even this sum, large as it is, might very possibly be a bare equivalent. The

income of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, we have said, is £118,000 annually, and is found to be utterly insufficient for the purposes required. We do not think the supposition extravagant, that a much larger sum, perhaps double or even treble this, would be required for similar purposes in the Roman Catholic Church; but, taking it at the lowest item,—manifestly far too low,—no one will contend that it should be less than is allowed for the Protestant Church, viz., £118,000 a year. This, with the £500,000 already estimated, would make £618,000 the *minimum* annual expense to the State, of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland; and even this is far short of the estimate referred to in page 21.

The Rev. Mr. Burke, before alluded to, speaking of England, says: “Numerous churches and chapels “have sprung up, some of them rivalling in capacity and splendour many of the ancient cathedrals built by their Catholic forefathers; in these “the holy sacrifice of the Mass is daily offered, and “Catholic worship celebrated in most of them on a “scale of great elegance, and in some of them in all “its ancient splendour.” And of Ireland, he says that, “noble temples, many very respectable chapels, numerous religious establishments, and capacious schools, “are constantly erected in Ireland, for the service of “the Roman Catholic religion.” Ought not the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland, then, to wish *their* religious ceremonies to be performed with a fitting degree of elegance and splendour? Why should they

be inferior to those in England? The Irish priests *must* wish,—they *ought* to wish,—that their religion should be as handsomely *kept up* (if we may use the expression) here, as it is in England. Nay, more, would they not have a right to expect that it should be “kept up” with still greater splendour here than in the sister country? For here the Roman Catholic religion would, by the proposed endowment of its clergy, be *an* established, if not *the* established religion of Ireland (as proposed by the late Dr. Arnold); whereas in England, it would but continue that of a tolerated sect.

It may be difficult to tell how far short of the expected sum the £618,000 a year might fall, nor can we pretend at this moment to be able to point out all the evil results which may follow from this measure; but there never was brought forward a plan from which failure seems so likely to follow. You are not merely warned by those opposed to it that such will be the case; you are told by the priests *themselves*—themselves the intended recipients of your bounty—that it will fail. Few have spoken, and fewer still have written on this subject; but by speaking or writing they tell you, one and all, “your measure will fail;” “you deceive yourselves, but you do not deceive us;” “you may pay, but you shall not buy.” Referring to the language of the reverend gentleman already quoted, we find (p. 14): “Should Government undertake to propose a State pension for the “Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland, it will find “itself much deceived; it will meet as decisive and

“ humiliating a defeat on this subject, as it did on that
 “ of the ‘ Godless Colleges.’ In proposing it they must
 “ have in contemplation,—to make the Irish priests
 “ better ministers of religion, and, therefore, more effi-
 “ cient than they are under the present system, in ad-
 “ vancing the interests of Catholicity in Ireland : or,
 “ they must have for object to relieve their poor flocks
 “ from the burden of their support, by transferring it
 “ from their already broken backs to that of the em-
 “ pire at large ; or, to attach them more to the institu-
 “ tions of the State, by giving them pecuniary inte-
 “ rest in their support : or, finally, to make them
 “ stipendiaries of the Government.”

We have already intimated that the Roman Ca-
 tholic clergy would see clearly enough your motives in
 this act, however well you might fancy you disguised
 them, and here we have the proof accordingly.

Mr. Burke rejects, as well he may, the nonsense
 contained in the first supposition. To that contained
 in the second (relief of their flocks) he says : “ If
 “ they had this for their object, it would surely be
 “ time enough to step in with their pension when the
 “ people complained of the burden of paying their
 “ clergy. Have they manifested any symptom of dis-
 “ satisfaction at being called upon to do so ? Have
 “ they collectively, or even individually, remonstrated
 “ against contributing to the support of their pastors,
 “ and have they shown the least indication that they
 “ considered it a grievance to do so ?” *He* answers
 in the negative.

With reference to the third motive (attachment to the State), he asserts the loyalty of the priesthood, and lauds their conduct during the late rebellion, concluding with : “ Statesmen who offer it with this view, “ only prove that they cannot understand or appreciate the motives of a Catholic priest in the discharge “ of his duties, even as a citizen, and for him to accept “ of it would be only lowering himself to the grade of “ a mere mercenary,” &c., &c. “ And should any “ individual of that venerable body (the Irish priesthood), in his love for ‘ filthy lucre,’ stoop from his “ high position to take it, he should not be henceforward regarded in any other light than as a Government hack, or as a State stipendiary.”

The last and real motive is treated by Mr. Burke with undisguised contempt and indignation, whilst he states his persuasion of its being the true one. After quoting the language of the three most eminent Premiers of late days, Mr. Pitt, Lord Grenville, and Sir Robert Peel, he proceeds in the following mild and courteous strain : “ The Irish priests will not permit “ themselves to be made the tools of profligate and “ designing statesmen ; they will not barter their independence for the bribe of a paltry pension ; they “ will not exchange the love and attachment of their “ devoted flocks for the treacherous gold of the Minister, or for the sweet and seductive smiles of his “ minions ; nor will they disfigure the beautiful, “ though old-fashioned cassock, by wearing it over

“ the tawdry and servile livery of state corruption. “ For myself, I am totally opposed to, I cordially “ execrate the pension.” Having termed it “ an odious State pension,” and “ a mercenary and degrading State pension,” he says : “ The priests will “ not, by consenting to become Government stipendiaries, weaken or destroy the confidence which “ connects them with the people,” &c., &c. “ They “ will, one and all, repudiate this treacherous gift,” &c., &c. “ It would be highly discreditable, and, I “ will add, *utterly disgraceful*, for us to enter into a “ covenant with the enemies of our nation and religion, and, as a part of the bargain, to give them a “ certain degree of control over the liberties of our “ Church, and the independence of her priesthood. “ We, the priests of Ireland, will not do this thing.”

Why, is not this the very thing you want them to do ? Mark his words,—“ control over the liberties “ of our Church, and the independence of her priesthood.” Is it not plain that the thin covering in which you enveloped your scheme has been seen through long since ? And by whom ? By those very men whom, as *you* say, you propose to benefit ; whom, as *they* say, you seek to bribe ! Now, surely if ever there was a case in which success was denied and failure was insured, it is this. You are assured by every one it cannot succeed. You persist in saying it will ; and, to try the truth of your theory, you convulse the country, tax the nation, and take a step which

you know to be irretrievable. Do so, and you will find, *when too late*, that they and we were right, and you were wrong.

And here we would willingly part company on good terms with Mr. Burke; we cannot, however, forbear saying that he has used language, as applied to the Established Church, both unbecoming and unjust: and we feel some curiosity as to the authority whence his information regarding it is derived. Not to remark upon an under statement of the number of its members, we find the income of that Church stated at the “enormous sum of £806,633 12s. 4d.!” Who the author of this minute calculation is, we are not aware; but, where the *real* amount is known to be £401,114,—or less than *half* of what is stated by Mr. Burke,—we think no one will feel inclined to place much dependence upon such an authority.

With reference to one other point in Mr. Burke's essay,—mention is made by him of “enormous sums “which have been given, in the shape of Parliamentary “grants, to the Established Church, from time to time, “during the last fifty years” (p. 18). We really know not what the “enormous sums” are, to which the reverend gentleman alludes. We presume, however, his information on this point is derived from the same satisfactory and authentic source which supplied him with that relative to the income of the Established Church. We *do* know, however, of enormous sums (of which no mention is made by Mr. Burke) being granted every year during the last fifty years, amount-

ing annually, at first to £8928, and, since 1845, to £27,000 per annum, for the sole and entire benefit of the Roman Catholic Church. We complain not of this in the slightest degree; it may be very right that large sums should be given for the education of the Roman Catholic clergy; and, the principle once conceded (as it was fifty years ago), it is of little consequence whether the sum you give is one of pence or of pounds. But when we are told of "enormous grants" to the Established Church, of which, we believe, nobody but Mr. Burke is aware, it might not be amiss to allude to those to the Roman Catholic, which are known to all the world.

It was so little our wish to enter into an argument upon these points, that, but for the manner in which this grievance was brought forward by the reverend gentleman, we should have passed by it altogether. Neither do we desire to dwell upon much of the language of this pamphlet, relating to the Protestant clergy; "the Cræsus-like corporation," who, we are told, "lounge in the lap of opulence," are "rendered lethargic by the profuse and placid enjoyment of the comforts and luxuries of this world;" and whose "parsimony is notorious," &c. We believe we need but appeal to those who know the Protestant clergy of Ireland, as to whether the very reverse of the above statement is not notoriously the fact; whether they have not, in many cases, been, and are not in some at this moment, reduced to a state little short of starvation, and indebted to strangers not for pecuniary assistance

merely, but for food, and, we regret to say it, for clothing—cast-off clothing—also ! We appeal to them, whether the Protestant clergyman is not in general the object of attachment, as well of the Roman Catholic poor about him as of his own immediate flock ; whether he is not ever ready to comfort and assist them both ; —their friend in sickness and in health ; and whether, when death removes him from the scene of his labours, his loss is not often as much felt and mourned by those who frequented the chapel, as by the congregation that listened to him in the church. With this remark, therefore, the truth of which, we verily believe, few of our countrymen, Protestant or Roman Catholic, will dispute, we dismiss the subject.

It would be a material point for the consideration of those who are advocates of this measure, in what position—as respects each other and the State—will the Protestant and Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops thereby be placed ? There will be two Archbishops of Armagh, *both Lord Primates* ; two of Dublin ; Roman Catholic Archbishops and Protestant Bishops of Cashel and Tuam ; and rival Bishops of every other see. How is their precedence to be settled ? It will be no easy matter ; especially in the cases of Cashel and Tuam already referred to. By paying the two Churches, it must be remembered you make each of them Established Churches. You put them on an equality. But the equality cannot last. The Churches will be both State Churches,—Established Churches,—and the dignitaries of each will be

recognised and respected by law. How, then, is their relative position to be settled? One must have precedence. "An two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind," says Dogberry. We should like to know *who* is to ride behind here?

This difficulty can arise in no case but that under consideration, and in no country but Ireland. The Dissenters are paid in Scotland, and in the north of Ireland; but no difficulty arises in *their* case, for *they* declaim against *all* establishments, dignitaries, and every species of Church government. The Roman Catholic Church exists in England; but no difficulty arises in *that* case, for its dignitaries there do not take the titles of bishops at all. They are styled simply Vicars Apostolic of the Midland, Western, or Southern District, as the case may be. They are so designated, even in the Ecclesiastical Directory published at Rome under the Papal authority, in which a list is given of the Roman Catholic prelates in every part of the globe, in the alphabetical order of their Sees, including those of Ireland. Thus, for example, the name of the Archbishop of Tuam immediately follows that of the Archbishop of Toledo; the name of the Bishop of Ossory that of the Bishop of Orvieto, &c.; whereas the heads of the Roman Catholic Church in England are designated, in a separate column, simply "Vicars Apostolic."

If, then, in Ireland, the Roman Catholic hierarchy take, as we know, in *every* case, the title of bishops, just as much as the Protestant prelates (and that they do not

sign as such is only prevented by a clause of the Act of 1829(a)), how will it be when those dignitaries are not only recognised and supported by the State, but are paid because they are so recognised? Why should they be, then, deemed inferior in any point to the Protestant dignitaries? Why should they be debarred the right of signing by the titles of their respective sees? Why should not Dr. Murray be a Privy Councillor, and one of the Lords Justices of Ireland, as Dr. Whately now is? Lastly, and above all; Why should not the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops possess seats in the House of Lords, as well as those of the Protestant Church?

Long since was the question asked. It was said: "You have now (since 1829) Roman Catholic Peers in the House of Lords, and Roman Catholic Members in the House of Commons; why exclude the Roman Catholic bishops from seats in the former, whilst you admit the laity to seats in both?" The answer was a very plain one. The Roman Catholic religion is unconnected with the State, and therefore its prelates can have no claim to legislate for it, in a capacity which that State does not recognise them as possessing. But this argument, then, and even now, good and valid, will no longer hold when those dignitaries are recognised, and their religion endowed

(a) How far the signature, so well known to all newspaper readers, "John, Archbishop of Tuam," may be a violation of the spirit, if not of the letter of this clause, we leave to the determination of those "learned in the law"

by the State. Will not the Romish prelates then have a just claim to all the rank, titles, and privileges of the Protestant prelates? We do not see how you can deny them one. You may fancy this endowment of yours will be all; but, believe us, you will find it to be but an instalment of what you are ultimately to concede. It will be regarded but as an earnest of what is sooner or later to be done. You step over the threshold when you pass this measure; but you pledge yourself to the care of all that lies beyond it.

We would call on the House of Commons to pause before it thus binds itself to the adoption of measures, the extent of which it is not yet aware of; measures of which the good can be at best but doubtful, and the evil results may be discovered only when too late! The State herein pledges itself to a principle which involves not one measure, but many; not one step, but a whole leap. Other measures involved one great question; but, that one question settled, all was settled. A new principle was adopted indeed; but simultaneously with its adoption was decided the only question it involved. Such is not *this* case. You either pledge yourself, by carrying out your principle, to the adjustment of questions beset with endless difficulties, or, by not doing so, to the adoption of a mass of inconsistencies. We know not which might be the worst; but before thus binding itself to either of these vicious courses, we would call on the Legislature to pause. See what is before you? Let the

nation judge whether they are prepared to go to the full length or not ; *for short of it you cannot stop*. What the precise limits of *the full length* may be we do not profess to say ; but of one thing we are satisfied,—that it is a long distance beyond what you yourselves contemplate, or would have us believe. This measure is the point of the wedge ; insert it and you must drive the instrument home, or rather it will be driven home in spite of you.

We presume those statesmen who are in favour of this measure, although they must be aware of many of the difficulties and objections to it, do not consider them so weighty as we do ; else, no doubt, they would not urge its adoption ; but whatever they may *think*, that one view alone has been *put forward* by them is certain ; and we do hope that, when this measure comes to be discussed by the House, due weight may be given to the objections to it, taken upon what some will, doubtless, consider the *low* ground of policy ; but in our mind, considering the present state of the British empire, as to its colonial relations, perhaps the *strong* ground of opposition. We respect those who may oppose it from high religious motives ; but, whilst differing from them, as to the connexion of those motives with the present case, we would remind them, that, to be consistent, they should carry out their principles through our colonial empire ; else they are exposing themselves to the charge of inconsistency ; of sanctioning that at a distance which they

cannot tolerate near home ; and of laying down, as matter of conscience, geographical limits to religious freedom.

To sum up the objections to this measure, they are,—that as one for attaching the Roman Catholic clergy to the State by the ties of gratitude, it must fail, because you give them nothing to be grateful for :—as a means of improving their income, it will prove exactly the contrary, if the proposed penal clauses be enforced, which will be almost impossible, and be termed persecution if possible ; and if those clauses be not enforced, the effect will be to doubly tax the people :—that for the same reasons it must fail as a means of benefiting the people :—that any sum you can grant must fall far short of what the priests would consider equitable, or what would be an adequate compensation for the loss of their present incomes :—that the revenues of the Established Church are already insufficient for the support of one Church ; therefore, manifestly inadequate to the support of two :—that the source whence the endowment is to be made must, therefore, be the Consolidated Fund, and it alone :—that this fund being then raised by taxation upon the empire at large, England and Scotland especially, must necessarily be mainly supplied from the contributions of the Protestants, who will not, therefore be likely to consent to such an appropriation of their money :—that by recognising the title and rank of the Roman Catholic dignitaries, and paying

them as such, you involve yourself in endless difficulties, as to their relative position with the Protestant dignitaries, their privileges and rights to seats in the Legislature, &c.:—that the immediate consequence of the endowment of the present priesthood of Ireland will be the influx of the *regular* clergy and mendicant friars, who will take the place at present occupied by the *secular*; whilst no effort of your's can prevent this, nor give you the slightest possible control over either of these classes:—that in paying the clergy you must also provide them with churches and glebes:—that the latter forms part and parcel of the principle of endowment; is in every respect closely connected with that system; and must, therefore, be adopted contemporaneously and co-equally with it: for which purpose, therefore, ample provision, by an increased grant, must be made.

And finally, not to pursue this summary further, you are likely, by this measure, for which justice does *not* call, and which policy forbids, to forfeit old friends without acquiring new; to crush and to impoverish those who have best served their country, their religion, their Sovereign, and their fellow-subjects, in prosperity and in adversity; and to find, when too late, the utter failure of that plan you are now warned against.

Many there are who take a different view of this measure; some from principle supporting, others from religious motives opposing it. Whilst respecting the

opinions of each, we differ in some degree from both, —widely from the one, partially from the other. If the measure be considered in its full length and breadth, and examined in all its details,—it will, probably, lose the advocacy of many, who now, from a partial and superficial view, are its supporters.

We fear it will be found to be, for the purposes proposed, plausible in theory, unavailable in practice ; a structure grand at a distance, but proving on examination faulty in every part. As a machine to work on the minds of others, it will be like one constructed by theoretical mechanists at vast expense, designed and expected to perform wonders, yet, when in motion, found so defective in its minutiae, so wanting in combination, and in those points most necessary to its true working, as to fail in all that it was expected to perform, and remain a lasting evidence of wasted time, labour, and money.

Whatever be the result of the consideration of this important question, that it may be favourable to our country and to our fellow-subjects, clergy or laity, Roman Catholics or Protestants, is our earnest hope,—our anxious desire ; and did our representatives, regardless of the minor distinctions of party and sect, join earnestly in the support of the measures beneficial to our country, unmindful of the particular Ministry by whom they may be proposed (the endeavour of every government of the present day being obviously to benefit Ireland to the utmost of

their power), we might hope, ere long, to see prosperity, security, and peace, take the place of misery, insecurity, and barbarism. As in

“ The brave days of old,—
“ When none were for a party,
“ When all were for the State;
“ When the great man help’d the poor,
“ And the poor man lov’d the great.”

—*Macauley's Lays of Rome.*

Houses of the Oireachtas

NOTE,

(Referred to in page 33.)

SINCE writing the foregoing pages, and whilst these sheets were passing through the press, we happened accidentally to meet with the following passage in an unfinished essay, by the late Rev. Robert Hall, which was not published until after his death, and now appears in the fourth volume of his collected works. We are glad to be able to adduce, in support of the positions advanced in pages 31, 32, and 33, the opinion of this great writer, conveyed in language distinguished by his usual unrivalled felicity of expression.

“The supposed infallibility of the Church is the cornerstone of the whole system; the centre of union amidst all the animosities and disputes which may subsist on minor subjects; and the proper definition of a Catholic is *one who professes to maintain the absolute infallibility of a certain community styling itself the Church*. For a person to dissent from a single decision of the Church, is to confess himself *not a Catholic*; because it is to affirm, not only that the Church *may* err, but that *it actually has erred*, and is therefore *not infallible*. An infallibility extending to *some* points of religious belief, and not to *others*, is a ridiculous chimera, which, could it be reduced to an object of conception, would subvert every rational ground of confidence; for what assurance can we have, that a community which has erred *once* will not fall into the same predicament *again*?

“*Positive* qualities may be conceived to subsist under all possible degrees of magnitude; they are susceptible to an unlimited extent, of *more or less*; but infallibility is a *negative*

"idea, *which admits of no degrees*. Detect the smallest error
 "in the individual or the community, which makes *this* preten-
 "sion, and you as effectually destroy it as by the discovery of a
 "million. If a Catholic, then, professes to have changed his opi-
 "nions upon any subject on which the authority of the Church
 "has been interposed, so as to dissent from *its* decisions, *he has*
 "*relinquished Catholicism*, and renounced the *only* principle
 "which distinguished him."

THE END.