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EXCLUSION



OF

ROMAN CATHOLICS

FROM THE

HIGHER OFFICES OF STATE

DUBLIN

M. H. GILL & SON, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE STREET

1883

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Houses of the Oneachies

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SPECIAL STIPENDIARIES.

AN INNER GLIMPSE AT COERCION.

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STABULARY AND METROPOLITAN
POLICE.

INSPECTORS-GENERAL.

A PLEA FOR THE PEOPLE.

GRAND JURIES, AND JOBBERY.

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EXCLUSION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS FROM THE HIGHER OFFICES OF STATE.

EVEN to a superficial observer it must be apparent that there are very substantial grounds for the belief, which so widely prevails, that the Irish Executive, with, it is presumed, the full concurrence of the Government, are adopting a deliberate and contemptuous policy of exclusion and repression towards the Roman Catholics of this country. Anyone who calmly reflects upon the facts, briefly referred to in the following pages, must irresistibly be forced to the conclusion that, at no period of our history was sectarianism more active and successful in its operations than at the present moment. Glancing at the three great departments—the Lord Lieutenant's, the Chief Secretary's, and the Constabulary, embracing, as they do, nearly all the Governmental elements, we are struck by the conspicuous absence of Roman Catholics from administrative posts of importance.

We are all, of course, aware that the Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Chancellor, the Attorney-General, the Chief and Under Secretary, and both the Assistant Under Secretaries, belong to the favoured, and fashionable faith. In the Lord Lieutenant's household, composed as it is of Private Secretaries, Comptroller, Gentlemen-in-Waiting, Aides-de-camp, Physician-in-Ordinary, *et hoc genus omne*, we observe that the same religious sameness almost universally prevails. Stay! *mirabile dictu*, one notable exception relieves the monotonous uniformity of creed, with a species of grim, and ludicrous liberality. His Excellency has been pleased to permit that the State Dentist may be of the Church of Rome; and, accordingly, we find the holder of this office, whose executive functions occasionally have the effect of making even high officials stare with very open-mouthed astonishment, a genuine Papist.

This systematic exclusion of Catholics from the higher offices of state, and this persistent and ill-concealed determination to keep them in inferior positions, in reality exhibit, on the part of those by whom practised, as much of meanness, dishonesty, and criminality, as brands the conduct of the fraudulent trader who obtains goods or money under false pretences.

From plausible pronouncements in Parliament, and elsewhere, young men about to embark on the sea of life are beguiled into the belief that industry, integrity, perseverance, and ability, are the sole passports to success and

preferment in the service of the State. They never imagine that there is such a thing as religious bigotry. Their fathers before them were Catholics, and in the old Faith they themselves are content to live and die: not so much because they claim for it any peculiar excellence over other creeds—they are incapable of drawing correct comparisons;—matters theological don't trouble them—as from an innate feeling that, if they abandoned it, they would be exposing themselves to the suspicion of having yielded not to conviction, but to mercenary considerations. Ardent, generous, and unsuspecting, and with the most easy notions on a subject which is constantly setting people at logger-heads, they enter the public service, only to find that they are not trusted, that they are merely tolerated, and nothing more. Sly sneers, clumsy sarcasms, open insults—if they can with impunity be indulged in—are all in turn tried, until at length the maddened victims, if of a nervous temperament, are soon driven into excesses which quickly have the desired effect of severing their connection with official employment. If of a passive or phlegmatic disposition, they may be permitted to plod along wearily for years in some subordinate grade, the gloom of their existence being occasionally brightened by the distant ray of promotion. Ultimately they realise the hopelessness of their position, when some decayed, and superannuated Lieutenant-Colonel, is placed over their heads.

THE RESIDENT MAGISTRACY, AND THE SPECIAL STIPENDIARIES.

In this unfortunate country we are “coloneled, majored, and captained, *usque ad nauseam* ;” the holder of every second appointment in it is some retired warrior, about whose martial deeds existing chroniclers are unaccountably silent, but who persists in styling himself Major, or Captain, and insists upon others addressing him as such, even, although at best, the title is but an honorary thing, acquired by service in the Volunteers, or Militia.

The sons of Mars particularly abound in the Resident Magistrate class, although there would not appear to be any affinity between slaughtering the enemies of one's country and dispensing petty sessions law, in a mud-wall temple of justice. It is difficult to conceive what special aptitude a mind which had been previously exercised with destructive elements, and whose speculations ran on the best and safest mode of annihilating an enemy, can have for meting out summary jurisdiction between contending litigants, more particularly in peaceable districts, where the cases to be disposed of are almost invariably relative to the

amount of damage done to a neighbour's farm by a flock of trespassing geese, or wandering pigs. In the discharge of my duties, I am constantly brought in contact with these military magistrates, who play such an important part in the government of this country, and I have been always puzzled to find out why, if they were really capable men, they did not remain in the army, or, having left it, upon what principles they were selected, armed with the commission of the peace, and scattered broadcast throughout the country, to distribute justice among a highly sensitive people, with whom they have no sympathy, and no ideas in common.

Experience acquired in the orderly-room cannot be of a very superior or diversified character. "Tommy Atkins" has had decidedly too much beer, and supplements his inebriety by some gross act of insubordination. The necessity of keeping Tommy in subjection is sufficiently apparent, and punishment, sharp and decisive, follows quickly upon his transgression; but the peculiar frame of mind, which practice of this kind is likely to produce can scarcely be regarded as a qualification for dealing with the general public. In the loud and dictatorial voice, in the evident desire to govern through the fears rather than through the good sense and better feelings of the community, the people only see the heartless martinet, whose sole aim is to curb and restrain them; and when they reflect that he worships at a different altar, their aversion is complete, and extends from himself to the Government which he represents.

Mr. Forster, during his brief but disastrous *régime*—disastrous to his reputation as a statesman, and still more disastrous to the inhabitants of a considerable portion of this country, who were so completely demoralised by his mode of procedure as to become, if not actual murderers, at least secret approvers of assassination—be it known, was the virtual head of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland. To them he principally looked for information as to the state of the country; by their suggestions was he mainly guided; and from them his policy received its aggressive and truculent complexion.

That anonymous and not very scrupulous writer, whose first experience of public life began in the packing department of a Dublin commercial house, afterwards underwent a sort of refining process in the Bank of Ireland, and was somewhat enlarged in the Constabulary, finally, to blow into full maturity on the Bench, was his trusted counsellor. The government of Ireland was practically delivered into the hands of the superficial and scurrilous author of "Terence

M'Grath," Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and other magistrates of an equally pronounced type, who had no sympathy with the vast bulk of the people.

About three-fourths of the whole of Ireland was apportioned among them. Those special stipendiaries were to have control over all police and military arrangements for the preservation of the peace. Whenever outrages were committed, the constable would be regarded as very inefficient, indeed, who was unable to get up a case of reasonable suspicion against someone. In fact, it was now his imperative duty to do so, in obedience to an order addressed to all Sub-Inspectors serving in disturbed counties. They were expressly cautioned to state, in all their outrage reports, whether there were reasonable grounds for suspecting anyone. Upon receipt of this report, if a person were named, the District Sub-Inspector, and Resident Magistrate, were immediately directed to present themselves in the Council Chamber of Dublin Castle.

AN INNER GLANCE AT COERCION.

What a mean and commonplace apartment it is! There is a sort of dreary, deserted look about it, forcibly reminding one of the peculiar appearance which a billiard-room presents on a Sunday. A long mahogany table, with writing materials, and about a dozen dismal chairs, upholstered in black hair-cloth, are the only articles of furniture visible. Yet here, have I seen assembled the great ones of the Irish Executive. The Lord Lieutenant himself, the Chief and Under Secretary, the Attorney and Solicitor-General, the Law Adviser, and a rather plain-looking man, foxy as to his beard and face, whom I had little difficulty in recognising as a Castle Attorney. Somehow, I thought that the majority of them were not much at ease, and did not take kindly to the Star-Chamber business: and notably, the present Lord Chancellor held back, and seemed to isolate himself from the performers as much as the circumstances of the room would permit.

Mr. Forster was the leading spirit, and with his reddish-gray, neglected beard, vain, sinister, domineering expression of eye, and coarse, burly figure, looked the gaoler to perfection. The absence of the leathern belt, with its jingling pendant, in the shape of a big bunch of keys, more than any refinement discoverable in his manner or person, convinced you that he was not one. The proceedings were of a very brief and simple character. No oath was administered. The Sub-Inspector told his story, which went to show that A. B. was suspected to be the perpetrator of some outrage; the Resident Magistrate was

then asked his opinion, and, if he concurred, Mr. Forster simply pronounced the words, "Let a warrant issue," and next day the gates of Kilmainham closed upon another suspect. Such was government, as practised by Forster and Co.; such was their coercion. "*Facilis est decensus Averni.*" The mischievous youth, who delights in torturing cats, dogs, &c., will, as he acquires strength, be impelled by his destructive instincts to gloat with satisfaction over the agonies of larger, and nobler animals. So it was with Mr. Forster: the village ruffians were disregarded as worthless prey;—he struck at higher game;—and soon, neither the sanctity of the altar, nor the ancient and boasted privileges of the House of Commons, afforded immunity from arrest. When he had filled the gaols with the trusted leaders of the Irish people, when he had trampled upon all liberty of speech, when with his armed police and soldiers he had established a reign of terror so complete that even brave men had to speak with bated breath and whispering accents, yielding to a spirit of political mountebankism, he then took advantage of the melancholy situation to stump the country, and, like the brazen proverbial quack doctor, proclaimed aloud the efficacy of his nostrums from every market-cross.

MR. FORSTER'S TOUR IN THE DISTURBED DISTRICTS.

Surrounded by a troop of lynx-eyed detectives, one day he might be seen on a railway platform, seriously questioning some old crone as to the price of butter, fowl, and eggs; on another, addressing the people from some hotel window, and exercising the right of public speaking of which, in the most summary manner, he had deprived everyone else. And this was statesmanship! To me it seems villainous tomfoolery. Never again will there be such a signal and unfortunate failure as Mr. Forster. The five-and-twenty permanent clerks in his office, Dublin Castle, all of whom were Protestants, got at him with a vengeance.

MURDER OF THE CHIEF AND UNDER SECRETARY.

There was one episode in his singularly unhappy career, which in the ranks of the Royal Irish Constabulary, particularly among the senior men, gave rise to strange whisperings and much hostile criticism. As the Chief Secretary, he was acquainted with the state of the country: he knew the number of individuals that were under police protection, and the circumstances under which it was granted;—he himself was under personal police protection, and the most elaborate

precautions were taken to ensure his safety. Why, then, did he not intimate to Lord Cavendish the real state of affairs, and impress upon him the necessity of taking precautions? A friendly hint, conveyed privately or officially, would have averted a catastrophe which for centuries shall brand with disgrace the fair fame of this country.

For centuries past, two policies, equally futile and disappointing in their effects, have been tried in this country: the one of open, undisguised, and insulting exclusion of Catholics, not only from the highest, but from the intermediate, moderately respectable, and lowest offices of state; the other of distrust, covert tyranny, and repression, exercised as occasions offered towards those who were unfortunate enough to accept Government employment. Both systems have produced in abundance the results so naturally to be expected. The former has succeeded in completely alienating the sympathies of the masses of the people, in infusing into their minds a spirit of deep and bitter hostility towards their oppressors, and making them anxiously long for the period when, England involved in foreign wars, they may, with some hope of success, raise the bloody standard of revolt, spring from their present crouching and watchful position into open rebellion, and give unbridled scope to the fierce passions and deadly rancour which have been welling up in their hearts since childhood. The latter has converted what would otherwise have been zealous, devoted, and valuable public officials into soured, and brooding slaves, who yield a spiritless, mechanical obedience; who perform their allotted tasks after a dreary, routine fashion, clearly showing that the soul is not in the work, and that smouldering discontent might easily be fanned into a dangerous flame. Of this we have had a memorable example in the mutinous attitude so suddenly assumed by the men of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police.

Of the former corps, at least, I can speak with something like authority, intimately associated, as I have been with it, for a number of years. There is hardly a county in Ireland in which I have not had an opportunity of observing their admirable conduct and demeanour under divers circumstances. In the quiet and isolation of rural posts, where the duties were light, and the life a comparatively idle one, I have often been struck with the respectability and sobriety of their behaviour. Leisure did not exercise a demoralising effect, or betray them into excesses of a reprehensible character. They moved about in a quiet, yet watchful manner, having a cheery smile and a pleasant word for everyone. Occasionally the sergeant, as the

country people call him, might be seen engaged in deep political discussion with the curate, or perhaps the parish priest himself. The village schoolmaster, the shopkeepers, the farmers, even those who had attained the dignity of Poor Law Guardians, and who knew something of debating and argument, entertained a wholesome fear of his erudition, and, upon the interpretation of knotty legal points, unanimously admitted that they were no match for him. In contests calling for muscle and physical strength his men were generally more than a match for the neighbouring boys, and not unfrequently might they be seen engaged playing ball, wrestling, or at some other athletic sport.

But in different scenes, and under exciting circumstances, have I repeatedly admired their discipline, self-control, their cool determination, and firm resolve to preserve law and order, while exercising no unnecessary violence towards their aggressors. In the heat of contested elections, when the passions of rival mobs were strung to the point of frenzy, often have I seen individual policemen rush into the midst of an infuriated crowd and arrest a stone-thrower, or some fellow who had inflicted a dangerous wound, drag him from the midst of his companions, and lodge him in the barrack.

In the height of the Land war, as it was popularly called, I had daily, nay, hourly, opportunities of witnessing the good-humour and alacrity with which they responded to every call of duty. Long marches through wild and desolate tracts of country were cheerfully undertaken, their tedium being relieved only by some catching song with a screaming chorus. Wretched accommodation at night, and indifferent meals during the day, were submitted to without a murmur: nay, worse than all, they had to endure, and right well and patiently did they do it, the sneers, the scoffs, and taunts of their own brothers and sisters. For it must be borne in mind that this was a war waged, not against the criminal classes, not against burglars, cut-throats, or robbers, but, paradoxical as it may seem, against a poor, virtuous, and honest peasantry, who could scarcely force from an inhospitable soil the means of living, much less of paying rent—against a peasantry whose sons now appeared before them, no longer in the garb of peace-officers, but as the uniformed protectors of the sheriff, and his myrmidons and the armed enforcers of the landlords' rights.

Although, from time to time, a thrill of horror may have run through the entire kingdom at the intelligence of a murder, accompanied by circumstances of unusual atrocity and daring, still, strange to say, no dishonest act, as it is generally understood, no felonious appropriation of the

goods of another, could be laid to the charge of those in whose midst these crimes were perpetrated with impunity. Robberies, larcenies, and petty thefts were unknown.

Soon the breach which had been rapidly growing between the people and the police became a yawning gulf. About March, 1881, an order came down from the Government, bearing the signature of the late Under Secretary, Mr. Burke, directing the Constabulary not only to give every possible assistance to sheriffs, bailiffs, process-servers, &c., but in cases in which, from any cause, they were ignorant of the particular house upon which a writ or a process was to be served, a member of the Constabulary was to accompany the agent of the law, and point it out to him.

Anything like the wild outburst of hatred and detestation which succeeded the practical observance of this order I never before witnessed. I happened to be serving in a southern county at the time, and still do I painfully remember how the very appearance of a policeman on the street was the signal for an outbreak of shouting, yelling, groaning, and hooting, which was perfectly awful. Whistling of a peculiarly contemptuous character, followed by cries of "Harvey Duff! Harvey Duff!—sweet bad luck to you, Harvey Duff!" greeted him at every turn. The feeling of good-will and friendship which formerly existed towards the police was replaced by one of antipathy and hate. They became identified in the minds of the populace as the active supporters of every species of landlord wrong-doing. At church and chapel they were allowed to worship in severe isolation. The country people passed them on the road without deigning to notice them or return their salutations. The keepers of posting establishments refused to supply them with cars when going on a journey, and nothing but absolute fear induced the owners of licensed houses to give them refreshment. In fact, the words of the song, in the "Pirates of Penzance," were realised with a vengeance; for, when Constabulary duty was to be done the "policeman's lot was not a happy one." Objects of universal abhorrence to nine-tenths of the people, occasionally exposed to the bullet of the assassin, the bludgeon of the waylayer, and the stones and missiles so plentifully hurled against them by riotous mobs, they literally carried their lives in their hands, and without being concerned in the brilliant and stirring achievements of war, they endured its severest dangers and most galling hardships. If ever a body of men deserved well of their country it was the Royal Irish Constabulary. In the dark hour of trial and danger they never swerved from their loyalty and devotion to duty; still, they never

forgot that they were Irishmen, born of respectable Irish parents ; and when an attempt was made to amalgamate with them an inferior force, principally recruited from the street corners of English manufacturing towns, an indignant protest resounded through every barrack in Ireland.

One would have thought that a Government which brought so much odium upon them by wisely, or unwisely employing them in work which was quite alien to a policeman's duty, would have dealt liberally and generously with them ; but the two systems before referred to—of exclusion and repression—are in full swing in the administration of the force.

STRIKE OF THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY AND METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Although more than three-fourths of the fifteen thousand men comprising it are Roman Catholics, it is well known that they are the hewers of wood, and drawers of water. It is perfectly notorious that every appointment in it worth holding is in the hands of a Protestant. The Inspector-General, the two Assistant Inspectors-General, the Commandant, the Town Inspector of Belfast, the five County Inspectors recently appointed to special stations, twenty-five, out of the thirty remaining County Inspectors, and two hundred, out of the two hundred and twenty-five Sub-Inspectors, are all Protestants—all the good things are monopolised by them, whilst the vast Catholic majority are left to look happy, and be loyal, on salaries varying from fifty-two to ninety pounds per annum. Owing to repeated complaints as to the insufficiency of pay, in the beginning of the year 1882 a Commission was ordered to inquire into the allowance of the rank and file, mainly consisting of Roman Catholics. Never did the old Pagan adage, "*parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus*," receive a more striking illustration. After countless delays, many adjournments, and the ostentatious examination of many witnesses, the result of this solemn farce was announced, when it was discovered that the receipts of each individual policeman were increased fourpence per man per month, or four shillings per year. Can it be wondered at that those men, who were in the thick of the fight, and bore the brunt of the battle, whose fidelity was so ill-requited, should have been driven into a state of desperation at the contemplation of the shabby treatment to which they had been subjected, and that, in Cork and Limerick, the flame should have burst forth, which, in a few hours, with lightning celerity, flashed over the whole of Ireland? A strike of a truly formidable

character was impending. From north and south, east and west telegrams came pouring in, all announcing the firm resolve of the men to stand by one another, and to lay down their arms, unless Government reconsidered their case.

The Inspector-General was despatched with all haste to Limerick. This official, when he found that bullying would not do, tried the pathetic, and, as he addressed the men in sepulchral tones, imploring them not to resign, it is related how he shed tears. Naturalists affirm that the crocodile rejoices in the same peculiar facility. The Executive were brought not only to their senses, but their knees, and with as much grace as they could command, at once a guarantee was given that, if combination were abandoned, a second Commission would be appointed.

This promise had the desired effect. The men resumed duty, and matters had returned to their normal state of tranquillity, when suddenly, owing to the blundering and vindictive stupidity of the Castle ring, the spirit of strife once more threatened to burst forth with redoubled violence. Six Sub-Constables, of superior intelligence, had been selected in Limerick city to represent the views of their brother-constables to the Inspector-General. One day, soon afterwards, an order came down from the Castle, directing their transfer to other, and separate stations in the north of Ireland. This unwise, silly, and ungenerous proceeding was very properly looked upon by the men in the light of a punishment, as in reality it was. They refused to obey orders, and handed in their resignations. Once more was the Inspector-General despatched to the seat of war to try and smooth away the difficulties, and exorcise the spirit which the most glaring incapacity had evoked. He refused to accept their resignations, and they persisting in their determination of not proceeding, were dismissed. They left the Force, amid the ringing cheers and warmest demonstrations of respect and attachment on the part of their comrades, the entire episode affording a sad commentary upon, and forcible condemnation of the stolid policy of which they had been the victims.

No less a personage than the Lord Lieutenant himself then rushed into print, for the amiable purpose of shielding his subordinate, and of proving to the general public that they were transferred, not for their connection with the Police Agitation, but for some other offence, of which they were reasonably suspected. From an experience of sixteen years, I can safely say that in no service in the world have more unjust and tyrannical acts been committed than in the Royal Irish Constabulary.

INSPECTORS-GENERAL.

The Inspector-General in his sphere exercises a despotism which the Nihilists have rendered impossible in Russia. He can make or unmake, elevate or depress, at his mere discretion. Men have been dismissed, or fined, and disgraced for the most trivial causes. Officers have been ruined by reduction on the Seniority List, in direct violation of the Code, without ever having been called upon to plead to any offence against discipline.

One would have thought that this extraordinary and arbitrary power would have only been entrusted to an officer of tried and conspicuous ability, who had given indisputable proofs of administrative talent. In this luckless country everything goes by contraries, and instead of a man of admitted capacity, we had a personage who proved himself to be a notoriously expensive failure on the only important duty upon which he was ever engaged. Colonel Hillier was sent, some years ago, to the city of Londonderry, to preserve the peace; but he could not keep his bellicose instincts within proper bounds: he distinguished himself by arresting a number of people that he had no legal right to arrest; consequently, he added to his reputation by being convicted of sundry assaults, for which he had to pay, or rather the Government for him, heavy damages. Such was the man who, during an unexampled crisis, was in command of the Royal Irish Constabulary, upon whom the Government depend for the preservation of law and order. His eccentricity of dress was a subject of general comment. He was often mistaken for the agent of an itinerant circus, and sometimes even for the humble functionary who posted the bills. He might be seen sauntering over from the Kildare-street Club to his office in the Castle, one day wearing a broad-brimmed hat and sombre coat, which would do credit to a bishop; on another got up as a gentleman jock; and again arrayed in the loud and striking costume so much affected by theatrical celebrities. This affectation of dress was but a reflex of his little mind; vain, variable, conceited, and self-opinionated, he did not hesitate to act the *rôle* of the petty, vindictive tyrant, whenever he could do so with impunity, whilst in the presence of those of superior station he could toady, crawl, and cringe with abject submissiveness. He could not be regarded as a model Inspector-General; yet out of the taxes of this wretched country he received a salary of almost £2,000 per annum.

Associated with him in command was Colonel Bruce, as Deputy Inspector-General. He also had served in the army, although he could not have been a brilliant, though certainly

he may have been a painstaking and conscientious officer. As a warrior his prospects could have been neither bright nor tempting, for he abandoned the field of Mars for the humdrum and prosaic control of the Constabulary of some English county. Neither the Inspector-General, nor his Deputy, practically knew anything of the Force, with the command of which they found themselves entrusted. They were both men considerably over forty years of age when they were imported into the Royal Irish Constabulary, and consequently fell completely into the hands of dapper little clerks, who assume all the airs of veritable warriors from their connection with their office.

In any other pursuit or profession, whether it be the Bar, medical, or simple business, a person must have been employed in it for a number of years, so as to become familiar with its forms, before he attains eminence; but for the very highest post in the Royal Irish Constabulary the only qualifications required are an undistinguished military career, undiluted Protestantism, and the possession of political influence; thus a perfectly unknown man, who rejoices in the foregoing (the latter particularly), may at one bound spring into a position which is constantly calling for the exercise—and most frequently in vain—of rare powers of head and heart.

For a long time, the men of the Dublin Metropolitan Police remained aloof, silently but intelligently watching the course of events, and the struggle which was being carried on between their brothers-in-arms and the Irish Executive. They, too, were ruled by military men: the one, a Captain, the other, a Lieutenant-Colonel. Discipline was maintained by a system of fines, disratements, and dismissals. The slightest omission entailed an unfavourable record, and a consequent diminution of pension. The offences for which they could be punished were almost innumerable, the extent to which it could be imposed almost illimitable; but the matters calling for favourable recognition, or establishing a claim to reward, were few and far between. As in the Royal Irish Constabulary, those in authority had free latitude to rule, irrespective of the feelings and interests of the ruled. The knowledge of this, more, perhaps, than the severe and protracted nature of their duties, and insufficiency of pay, soon produced the inevitable results. At first faint murmurings were heard, then occasionally groups of men might be seen in earnest conversation. After some delay, and contentious opposition, a meeting for the purpose of discussing their grievances was arranged, and finally carried out, to the dismay and consternation of the Chief Commissioners.

Resolutions denouncing the system under which they groaned, and the punishments meted out under the most frivolous pretences; resolutions calling upon the Government to relax the iron rigour of the harsh rules in the name of which their feelings were outraged, their interests sacrificed, and life itself rendered almost a burden, were enthusiastically proposed, seconded, and passed. To give greater effect to their action, it was determined to hold a meeting on a particular night, to which all men not actually on duty were invited. The Commissioners prohibited the meeting, and a notice was issued warning, under pain of instant dismissal, all from attending it. Detectives were posted at the place of assembly, for the purpose of taking down names. Notwithstanding the prohibition, numbers did attend, and on the following morning the citizens of Dublin witnessed, with dismay, the painful and extraordinary spectacle of their civic force, which for years had been their pride and admiration, and which for high moral qualities and splendid physique, stood unrivalled in the world, reduced to a mere skeleton: for of that magnificent police, the very flower, consisting of some eight hundred of the most spirited, the most intelligent and talented, had either resigned, or had been dismissed!

When disciplined men, driven to a state of desperation by petty annoyances, neglect, and injustice, forgetful of their primary duty—obedience—band themselves together and assume a defiant and hostile attitude, the situation becomes very serious, and the unfitness of their chiefs further to command them strikingly apparent.

What are the lessons to be derived from the mutinous and insubordinate spirit exhibited by the men of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and Dublin Metropolitan Police? Obviously the first is, that the system by which the highest and most lucrative appointments are given to outsiders, stands condemned beyond possibility of defence. Military men, with their petty orderly-room experience, their imperious and snobbish airs, acquired by intercourse with the semi-savages of some foreign land, are utterly unfit to command an Irish police force, the men comprising which are selected with the greatest care, and who must have, in addition to a good education, an unblemished character.

The second and more important one is that bearing in mind the primary duties of a police force are the preservation of the public peace, and the detection, capture, and successful prosecution of offenders, their employment upon other duties, solely in the interests of a class, tends directly to their demoralisation. Day after day the men of

the Royal Irish Constabulary were engaged, not in hunting down criminals, but in escorting and protecting the sheriff, whilst his bailiffs ruthlessly demolished the once happy home of some poor tenant-farmer, or seized the miserable stock and scanty crop, which would have barely sufficed for the maintenance of himself and his family. Every drunken, unprincipled process-server was entitled to constabulary protection, and invariably insisted upon it, whilst discharging his unpopular functions. Every rent-warner, petty agent, and landlord was to be seen speeding on his unwelcome mission, followed by a force of the Royal Irish Constabulary, proportionate to the supposed dangers to be encountered.

The inevitable result soon came to pass. The police, so far from being looked upon as the friends and protectors of the people, were regarded as their bitterest enemies. They were considered to be the too officious servants of the landlord and agent class. The police themselves quickly began to realise the disagreeable position into which they were being forced; and occasionally I have heard murmurs to the effect: "We are now no better than bailiffs—we are at the nod and beck of every little agent in the country!"

If the people of Ireland had the same amount of control in the management of their police which the people of England and Scotland enjoy, their employment in the service of a particular class would be impossible; and, instead of enforcing the arbitrary and unjust proceedings of landlords, they would be attending to their legitimate duties, and as servants of the taxpayers of the country, they would not aid the strong to crush the weak; but would be ever ready to extend to all alike, irrespective of rank or station, their assistance and protection.

But, practically, the people have no voice whatever in the government of this country. Not only are they deprived of the exercise of the slightest right or power in the appointment of the police and the selection of the magistracy, but in everything connected with the public administration their feelings are carefully ignored. In Dublin Castle, the mere suspicion of possessing sympathies in common with the populace is an offence so grave that it operates as an effectual bar to further promotion. Hence, we find that all the officials there are carefully recruited from a class alien to us in feeling, and notoriously so in faith.

In this great centre of departments, whose ramifications extend throughout the whole of Ireland, there is scarcely a Roman Catholic holding an office of trust. That the Lord Lieutenant's household and staff are mainly composed of the members of one religious denomination is a fact so

patent that no one can attempt successfully to deny it; that the same sectarian exclusion prevails, both in the Chief Secretary's and Constabulary Departments can be easily ascertained.

In the former there are about twenty-eight officials, all of whom, with one or two exceptions, are Protestants; in the latter, there are about the same number, the proportion of Catholics being about the same; consequently, a Lord Lieutenant, or a Chief or Under Secretary, who assumes the reins of Government in Dublin Castle, at once falls into the hands of these permanent officials, whose birth, antecedents, instruction, and training, are all antagonistic to the people of Ireland.

All the information which they receive regarding the state of the country, and its inhabitants passes directly to them, through the hands or mouths of these prejudiced permanent officials, who look upon the people with distrust and suspicion, who have no aspirations in common with them, who do not understand their wants, and whose sole aim it is, *per fas, aut nefas*, to govern them and nothing more. Upon the members of one religious denomination—a denomination whose members bear a very small proportion to the population of the country—a denomination, too, which, with certain noble exceptions, has invariably shown itself illiberal, and persistently hostile to the people, do the Government in reality rely for the information which shapes their policy.

In every public department in Ireland, beginning at the Customs, Inland Revenue, and Post Office, which, next to those enumerated, are probably the most prominent; and running down through all the minor departments, and boards, we find that the heads and secretaries, and those who batten, so to speak, on the "meat" of office, are, by some strange coincidence, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, members of the Protestant Church, while the bones and refuse are considered sufficiently good for their Roman Catholic brethren.

Lord Bacon, more than three centuries ago, alleged that one of the principal causes and motives of seditions was the advancement of unworthy persons. Is not the converse of this proposition equally true, and ought not the exclusion and repression of worthy persons, whose only fault consists in the fact that they have been born within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church, and have not renounced its teaching, be a similarly prolific source of sedition, and discontent?

The Irish are essentially a Roman Catholic people. The love, respect, and veneration, which through all changes and troubles, they preserve for, and exhibit towards their

priesthood; the schools, seminaries, and colleges; the chapels, churches, and monasteries; the nunneries, convents, and other kindred institutions, which are to be found in every part of the country, and which, almost unaided, save by their self-denying generosity, they have called into existence, amply attest their fixed, and unalterable attachment to the old Faith.

A PLEA FOR THE PEOPLE.

Is it to be wondered at that a high-spirited, sensitive, and chivalrous race, who for centuries have been subjected to every species of galling disability should still chafe and resent the insolent stupidity which contemptuously excludes them from offices of trust and emolument, and coolly relegates them to the position which the oft-quoted phrase, "Hewers of wood, and drawers of water," so aptly describes? The imposts upon their labours and industries furnish the taxes, which eventually, in the shape of liberal salaries, find their way into the pockets of these heads, secretaries, and permanent officials who, in Dublin Castle, experiment, in the science of a Government, upon a people whom they distrust, and despise.

Yet, forsooth, complaints are made about the unsettled, dissatisfied, and turbulent spirit which pervades a powerful section of the Irish people. How can it be otherwise, governed as they are, like helots, by the members of a class who, instead of giving them fair play, granting reasonable, and just concessions, and admitting them to equal rights, are eternally brandishing a scourge over their heads? Discontent shall prevail until the Government of the country is brought into more complete harmony with the views and feelings of the vast majority of the people. As long as they are sedulously excluded from State employment, and unfairly repressed when admitted to it, so long will Ireland be the unhappy scene of turmoil, and trouble, and fierce, disastrous outbursts of ungovernable temper.

GRAND JURIES, AND JOBBERY.

Descending from Castle, to County Government, as at present practised through the medium of the several Grand Juries in Ireland, we find the same want of representation and power on the part of the people. They have nothing whatever to do with the appointment of the High Sheriff, or the selection of the several Grand Jurors; the High Sheriff nominates the latter. Until of late years they were generally large landed proprietors, but now these gentlemen find it more convenient to live abroad, and their places at

the Grand Jury table are taken by agents, and in some cases by practising doctors who happen to have a little property. As Grand Jurors, they possess the privilege of voting away the public moneys of the county, without in the slightest degree concerning themselves about the wishes, feelings, or inclinations of the cess-payers who have contributed it; they decide upon the necessity of all public county work, such as roads and bridges; they are responsible for the maintenance and preservation of the county buildings, court-houses, gaols, bridewells, lunatic asylums, fever hospitals, and infirmaries; they enter into large contracts, and appoint, pay, and superannuate numerous county officials; and all this they can do, perfectly irrespective and independent of the voice of the people who pay the cess which enables these multitudinous works and appointments to be carried out and made. Is not this a monstrously anomalous state of affairs?

So long as this nefarious system is permitted to last, so long must the vast body of rate-payers and cess-payers stand passively by and impotently look on, whilst irresponsible Grand Jurors allocate, as they think proper, the public money of the county, rejecting works of real, practical, or general utility, and passing those, perhaps, which are only beneficial to individuals.

I myself have been an eye-witness of the manner in which appointments are made by Grand Juries. In a certain county, in the west of Ireland, lived a noble lord, quite close to the assizes town. He had a son, who was compelled to leave the navy for misconduct. The youth was absolutely unfit for any serious occupation, and yet the Grand Jury appointed him as their Secretary, at a salary of £400 a year. He, in turn, appointed a deputy, at perhaps £60 per annum, and beyond pocketing the balance, and occasionally signing his name, he did nothing whatever. In a certain northern county there exists, at the present moment, an exactly similar case, except that the "honourable noodle" never enjoyed the distinction of being "chased" from any branch of her Majesty's service.

It is very well known that fully ninety per cent. of the officials appointed by the several Grand Juries do not command the confidence, respect, or sympathy of the people. As in Dublin Castle, religion is, in the majority of cases, a *sine qua non*. In many counties, although it is not openly announced, yet it is tacitly understood, that no Papist need apply; and thus, in pursuance of the example set them in higher quarters, they seem fully alive to the necessity of excluding Catholics from power in every shape and form.

I sincerely hope that the matters dealt with in the fore-

going pages, should they come under the eyes of those in authority, may afford food for reflection.

Earl Spencer has the reputation of being a wise, a good, and a conscientious statesman. He should remember the trials and persecutions to which Catholics have been subjected in the past; he should remember the difficulties they have surmounted; he should remember all they have done in the sacred cause of religion and education; he should contemplate the many magnificent works which, without State aid, their energy has raised for the promotion of every Christian virtue; and he should not suffer his mind to be warped, or his judgment biassed, by the petty, bumptious bigots, whose experience of Ireland, and its people is confined to the dingy offices of Dublin Castle. He should remember that, according to the last Parliamentary census, fully seventy-five per cent. of the inhabitants of this country are Roman Catholics, that only twelve per cent. are Protestants, and yet the members of the latter creed monopolise all the official appointments worth holding in Ireland. It is a delusion to suppose that Catholics are overlooked simply on account of personal or social unfitness. But, above all, he should remember that both Masonic and Orange Lodges in many cases exercise a powerful influence over the minds of those to whom he trusts for honest and truthful information.

VERITAS.
