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SOME REMARKS
ON
THE IRISH CHURCH BILL,

ETC.

BY

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REMARKS ON THE IRISH CHURCH BILL.

That the Irish Church Bill will be carried through the House of Commons no one can doubt. It may, possibly, be thrown out by the Lords.

Churchmen, both English and Irish, are now called on seriously to consider whether the rejection of Mr. Gladstone's bill by the Upper House is a desirable eventuality. There seems small likelihood that another general election would alter Mr. Gladstone's majority. Ireland and Scotland would undoubtedly return as many, if not more, members pledged to disestablishment and disendowment. In England the Establishment clergy, by turning their churches into electioneering hustings, might create a reaction in favor of Mr. Disraeli, but such a reaction would probably be more than counterbalanced by the cry of "*Commons versus Lords*" added to that of "*Justice to Ireland*." The Irish Church Bill which another parliament —elected under circumstances of unusual party bitterness—would propose, would not perhaps be quite as moderate as that now offered. It might, possibly, be a root and branch measure, one which would barely give life annuities to the clergy, and which would sweep away Glebe lands, houses and churches, leaving nothing to Irish church laymen save what they might buy in at public sales.

But the injury likely to result to religion from another year of angry protestation and ill-will, requires consideration. *Silent leges inter arma.* The precepts of the Gospel are little likely to prevail over congregations excited to political rancour by their religious teachers. Meekness, humility, and charity, virtues essential to real christianity, cannot be fostered by a selfish contest for temporal rank and wealth. The struggle for Irish church ascendancy is virtually a struggle to avoid the duty thrown by disestablishment and disendowment upon Irish churchmen, the duty, namely, of contributing towards a prospective provision for their church. The Reformed church in Ireland presents but an ignoble spectacle when she angrily clamours for the retention of the inglorious privilege of exemption from personal payment of the expenses of divine worship. It is both selfish and disgraceful that a minority—forming but eleven per cent. of the population, yet boasting almost a monopoly of the intellectual wealth and landed property of the country—should protest against and resist the alleged hardship of being left, after the present generation of incumbents and curates shall have passed away, to worship God at its own proper cost. How to pray cheaply—or rather how to pray, at the cost, as much as may be possible, of others, is a paltry object of ambition. It must appear to Irish churchmen both shameful and wicked that in the pursuit of such an object they should declare themselves willing to jeopardize the English church Establishment, to delay the pacification of Ireland, to imperil the Union between the two countries, and to embroil the two branches of the imperial legislature in a dangerous constitutional quarrel.

The intemperate and somewhat disloyal advice given by some of the speakers at recent church-defence and diocesan meetings, the advice, namely, to offer permanent resistance to the Government measure and appoint no representative body of the Church to receive the buildings,

lands, and other revenues to be handed over by the Commissioners is—except it proceeds from ignorance—insincere. If no representative body be incorporated, then the present bishops and clergy must remain fixed in their present posts, with no power to remove except on pain of forfeiting their life incomes, and with no power to fill up vacancies when they occur. The jurisdiction of the bishops and of the ecclesiastical courts will be at an end, and the clergy will be left to settle church matters with the Commissioners as best they may. The Commissioners will dispose of the churches and chapels either to the local squires, who may make them appendages to their demesnes, or to the congregations, who may fill the pulpits with Presbyterian or Methodist ministers, or with lay preachers from Merrion Hall. Although some prominent leaders of the Church Defence Association, who are Dissenters, might view such a state of affairs with unconcern, no one with any pretensions to churchmanship can contemplate without dismay the ecclesiastical anarchy which the want of a representative and governing body of the church would inevitably produce.

There are, however, some churchmen in Ireland—and their numbers are increasing—who desire to modify some details in Mr. Gladstone's bill, but who are chiefly anxious to terminate a contest which can scarcely be prolonged with advantage to religion, or with honour to the church. They perceive that the reconstruction of their church is an immediate duty, which it is dangerous to delay. According to the Disestablishing bill, all the existing bishops, clergymen, parish clerks, and sextons are to receive annuities equal to their present incomes, *with enjoyment, as long as it suits the incumbents, of all the houses and lands in their possession*, but with a proviso that they shall continue to perform their present duties. Thus the life services of the existing prelates, clergymen, clerks, and sextons are secured to the present generation of Anglican

laymen. These life services will last—taking the average of the clerical lives—for fourteen years to come.

The fabrics of the churches are given to Anglicans, and some of the cathedrals are to be permanently maintained as national monuments, without cost to Anglicans.

Glebe houses and episcopal residences (whether built or improved by public or private funds) when the life interest of present occupants shall have determined, are offered to Anglicans on very favourable terms. Where there is no building charge, the church may have the Ecclesiastical residence on payment of twelve times the yearly value of the site *estimated as land* and of the garden and curtilage. Where there is a building charge, then the church, at its option, may pay either the building charge or a sum equal to twelve times the annual tenement valuation of the house, garden, and curtilage. The purchase-money—although small in amount—may be paid in instalments spread over twenty-two years; for clause 51 (page 22, lines 35—40) of the bill enacts that “where the representative body of “the said church is liable to pay any capital sum to the “Commissioners, such capital sum may be paid by twenty-“two yearly instalments, with interest at the rate of three “and a-half per cent. on the amount of the purchase money “remaining unpaid, to be secured in such manner as the “Commissioners think expedient.” As considerable misconception prevails concerning the terms on which ecclesiastical residences may be retained by the Church, it may be well to show the practical working of this portion of the bill. In Armagh diocese are some seventy or eighty Glebe houses, but in only forty instances is their poor-law valuation given by the Church Commission Report. The poor-law value, upon an average, of each of these forty houses *with the gardens*, is £24, and the average price, at twelve times the yearly value, is £288, which may be paid in twenty-two yearly instalments, with interest at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the unpaid purchase money. The Glebe house of

Grange, valued to the poor-law at £32 yearly, may be retained by the Church for £12, the amount of the building charge! Clogherney Glebe house is highest in value, being rated at £60 yearly, and it may be retained for £720, less than half its building charge, which is £1,583. Fourteen Glebe houses, those namely of Ardee, Ardtrea, Ballyclog, Ballymore, Baronstown, Clogherny, Desertcreight, Desertlyn, Dromiskin, Kilcluny, Killeshil, Killyman, Termonfeekin and Tullaniskin, which are valued to the poor-law at £11,706, may be retained by the church for £4,764, the amount of twelve times the yearly tenement valuation. By giving the church the option of paying either the building charge or the amount of twelve years' tenement valuation, whichever may be the smaller sum, Mr. Gladstone has virtually handed over the Glebe houses and Episcopal residences for less than half the amount of their building charges. The church need not buy a single unmarketable house, but may gain a large sum towards her future endowment by taking the houses on the terms of the bill, and selling those which from size or situation are unsuitable for church work.

The Commutation Clauses of the bill afford valuable facilities not only for supplying some of the pressing wants of the church, but also for its permanent endowment. If all the clergy should refuse to commute, and should resolve to continue annuitants, they will be tied for life to their present posts, and little can be done either in the way of re-distributing church work and removing anomalies, or of filling up benefices which may be suddenly vacated. Annuitants, however, acting in concert with the governing body of the church, may exchange the annuities, which they are to receive from the Commissioners, for a capital sum sufficient, if invested in the usual way, to produce *an amount equal to the annuities*. By previous arrangement clergymen may make their incomes, when payable after commutation, as safe as when paid by the Commissioners;

for they can stipulate for the investment of the capital procured by commutation in Government securities or in land. Clergymen by thus commuting will indeed add nothing directly to the permanent endowment of the church, but will greatly benefit the church and themselves by facilitating the transfer of their own life services to localities where they can produce the greatest amount of good. For instance, an incumbent dissatisfied with his small pastoral duties in some benefice with ten or twenty Anglicans, may—the governing body of the church consenting—obtain by commutation his removal to any vacant post which may afford him a pleasanter sphere of labour. He carries with him his life income, and receives the amount of his building charge (if such exists), which—if he did not commute—would be paid after his death to his heirs. He may also stipulate—or rather the governing body of the church may stipulate for him—that the congregation to whom his services are transferred shall not only provide five or ten pounds to pay a neighbouring clergyman for the occasional duties of the benefice he leaves, but shall also undertake the repairs of the Glebe-house to which he removes, and otherwise, perhaps, add to his comforts.

There are, according to the Church Commission Report, 199 benefices in which the church population varies from 1 to 39 Anglicans each, and mainly consists of the families of the clergymen, clerks, and sextons. There are many other benefices whose church population is not much over forty. Perhaps 300 incumbents might be reckoned to whom commutation offers a change from comparative inaction to a moderate amount of church work, with, in many cases, an increase of income. By this kind of commutation the life services of the present clergymen may be made to supply the wants of the church created by death vacancies, and at the same time remove some glaring anomalies. The extension of the Commutation Clauses to the cases of

parish clerks and sextons, would enable those church officials also to migrate to places in which their life services might be employed to the best advantage for themselves and the church.

The Commutation Clauses enable in certain cases the change of life annuities into permanent endowments for the church. Congregations may subscribe a sufficient sum to compensate their pastor for the loss he may sustain by allowing the church to take his commutation money and vest it in a perpetual, instead of a life, annuity. Clergymen who wish to retire from duty, or to seek it elsewhere, may agree with the church to commute, on condition of receiving part of the capital sum for themselves, leaving the other part with the representative body to provide for the performance of the duty, and increase, it may be, the permanent revenue.

There is another way in which Commutation may produce permanent revenue. Each £100 of annuity capitalized at the average of fourteen years' purchase, will produce to the church body £1,400, which sum invested on mortgage at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., will return £63 per annum. The church body may obtain, on the security of this mortgage, a terminable annuity for fourteen years, amounting to £37 per annum, for about £770, to be paid at the end of fourteen years. The mortgage being then closed, there will remain, after paying £770 for the annuity, the sum of £630, which may be re-invested at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. so as to yield a permanent revenue of £28 9s. By this plan the income of the commuting clergyman is not diminished during his life, according to the scale of commutation offered by Government.

While it is evident that by harmonious concert between the laity and clergy, and judicious management of the powers of re-distribution of church work afforded by the bill, the church would be, during the continuance of the life services of the present clergy, in a better condition than

ever, yet it is equally evident that upon the termination of those life services resort must be had to the voluntary system. It is the fashion sometimes to decry that system as pernicious, but it seems popular in Ireland and to suit the genius of the people. The voluntary system maintained the Roman Catholic Church in unhappy as well as in prosperous times. It supports the most frequented of the Anglican churches in Limerick, Belfast, and Dublin. Voluntary churches have raised some of the most popular bishops to the bench, for they sent Dr. Gregg to Cork, Verschoyle to Kilmore, and Magee to Peterborough. Several ministers of voluntary churches in Dublin were selected in the Dublin diocese as clerical representatives for the present Church Conference. The Irish churchmen possess—they frequently boast—almost a monopoly of the wealth, rank, and intellect in Ireland. It is therefore idle to pretend that they are either unwilling through prejudice against the voluntary principle, or unable through poverty, to maintain their church.

The voluntary system is sometimes thought of as one which merely provides rich worshippers with comfortable chapels and eloquent preachers. It is forgotten that from voluntary donations sprang the grand endowments of lands and rents which once enriched the Catholic Church, and that even tithes were, at the outset, a voluntary payment. The task which Anglicans have now to accomplish in Ireland by means of voluntary contributions, is not, after all, a hard one. They must, from the 1st day of January, 1871, undertake the repairs of churches, and the supply of church requisites, and some other minor expenses. They are exempt for the next fourteen or fifteen years from the duty of paying bishops, clergymen, clerks, or sextons. That breathing time of fourteen or fifteen years may be employed in the collection of money to form a church endowment for use when those fourteen or fifteen years shall have elapsed. According to the census of 1861, there are

in Ireland over 130,000 Anglican families, not reckoning the inmates of public charitable institutions. Sixpence per week contributed by each of these families during the next fifteen years would produce—if duly invested at the rate of three per cent. per annum—a capital sum of more than three millions of pounds, yielding, from the year 1885, nearly £100,000 per annum. In this way a permanent endowment might be raised sufficient for the maintenance of twenty bishops, if need be, at £2,000 per annum each, and for the support of clergymen in poor districts. The same rate of voluntary assessment might be continued (after the fifteen years' collections had been funded for the use of the clergy in remote parts, and the episcopate) for the support of the general body of ministers; and its annual produce of nearly £200,000 would be swelled by donations and bequests. The landlords, who have already largely profited by the past legislation concerning church property, and who will gain further advantages by the extinction of tithe rentcharge, and by the transfer of church funds to the relief of a certain section of the poor, may be confidently reckoned on as liberal contributors. There are more than 300 Irish benefices, according to the late Church Commission Report, in lay patronage. The advowsons of more than one-half of them belong to fifty or sixty peers, of whom three are dukes, twelve are marquesses, and twenty are earls. The other patrons are chiefly land proprietors of position. The greater numbers of these patrons have not hitherto been in the habit of selling their turns of presentation, and they will, it may be expected, re-endow the church with the sums which they may receive as compensation for the loss of their advowsons.

Upon the whole, there are many encouraging circumstances which may well lead thoughtful men to believe that Disestablishment and Disendowment, as now presented in Mr. Gladstone's bill, will eventuate in good to the church. The Disestablishment is mitigated by the grant

of incorporation, a privilege confined to Anglicans, for it is denied to the other religious bodies in Ireland. Disendowment comes, in a very modified form, to a church which retains some three hundred endowed churches, twelve or fifteen hundred fabrics of churches—eight or nine hundred ecclesiastical residences—some of which it can sell at a profit—and the life services (which will last for fourteen or fifteen years) of some two thousand clergymen. The lords of the soil are favourable to the church, and can re-endow it, as Mr. Johnston of Ballykilbeg suggested, with sums equal to the rentcharges about to be extinguished. Anglicans belong, moreover, to the wealthier class. Ireland has three or four colleges offering a superior education, besides a dozen or two of Royal or Endowed schools, occupied almost exclusively by Anglicans. Churchmen in Canada or Australia had not only to build churches, pay clergymen, and maintain an episcopate, but also to found and maintain educational and other institutions in a new country, thinly settled by poor and, in some cases, badly instructed immigrants. Irish churchmen have therefore a much less difficult work before them than that performed by their colonial brethren.

The successful accomplishment of that work depends in a great measure upon the conduct of the rulers and guides of the church at this crisis. The bishops and clergy and their representatives may prefer religion to party and the church to Establishment. Wisdom, calmness, tolerance, and candour may prevail instead of folly, excitement, abuse, and exaggeration. Dr. Ball bravely confessed, in the speech which has given him a parliamentary reputation, that “the right of the Protestant Episcopal church to tithes and lands in Ireland dated from and was founded upon an Act of Parliament,” and of course what Parliament devoted to one public purpose it may transfer to another. The church champions—instead of breathing out threatenings and slaughter—may apply themselves to im-

prove, not to demolish, the bill, and to seek, for instance, to win more favourable terms for curates and those incumbents who are worse off than curates. Perhaps the better spirit will even yet prevail, and assistance, not resistance, be offered to the legislature. The sympathy of England may be gained by a courageous acceptance of a necessity which appears—if not to all churchmen—at least to a majority of the House of Commons, both just and inevitable.

On the other hand, the Church guides may pursue the tactics of those whom Lord Powerscourt lately described as “a set of political firebrands.” They may ingeniously exaggerate imaginary grievances and denounce the bill and its promoters as robbers, footpads, and garotters. The excitement produced by this “No Surrender” kind of language may, possibly, give the House of Peers an excuse for rejecting the bill. But the retention of the Establishment for a year or two will in that case have been gained by a vital injury to religion. The combatants may find, when they have finished their battle over the church, that they have been fighting over a corpse. Charity—if not life—will have departed.

VESTED RIGHTS OF THE LAITY.

It seems to have been assumed by some distinguished members of Parliament in recent debates that, in the event of disestablishment of the Irish branch of the Church, the Anglican laymen in Ireland would alone possess, after the vested interests of the clergy are satisfied, a vested right to the ecclesiastical revenues of Ireland. The Reformation statutes prevent, no doubt, the application of the Church revenues to other than Anglican uses, but yet do not seem to ignore altogether, but rather to hold in abeyance, the rights of Roman Catholics to their share of Church revenue. Tithes are that portion of the produce of the industry of the cultivators of the soil set apart for sacred uses and destined to be returned to the inhabitants of parishes in the shape

of religious services. The parishioners in common, not the landlords or tenants separately, are the parties intended to enjoy the benefit of tithes and possess vested rights in the Church revenues of their parish. The parishioners have vested rights in the tithes of their parish in the same way as they have vested interests in the taxes they pay for roads, police, and dispensaries. Were these latter taxes to be collected and spent out of the parishes which pay them, the grievance would be apparent. Now, there are 199 parishes in Ireland which do not contain a single member of the Established Church, and in which, with few exceptions, there has been no Anglican Divine service since the Reformation. Those parishes extend over 557,000 acres, and are inhabited by more than 98,000 Roman Catholics, who produce (besides rent to the landlord and taxes to the Crown) more than £13,000 yearly of ecclesiastical revenue. The whole of this Church revenue would be restored to the parishioners were they to become Anglicans, but at present is spent elsewhere. There is not a single Anglican layman in those parishes to claim those revenues. The ruins of Roman Catholic churches exist in many of them, and in very many of them are modern Roman Catholic churches. To whom, it may be fairly asked, will the ecclesiastical revenues of those 199 parishes belong, after the vested interests of the present Anglican incumbents are satisfied? Again, there are 107 benefices of the Established Church, inhabited by 1,452 Anglicans and 123,758 Roman Catholics. The Church revenues in those benefices exceed £20,000 a year, and are produced by the industry of Roman Catholics chiefly. In each of these benefices there are on an average 13 Anglicans and 1,156 Roman Catholics. Have the 13 Anglicans vested rights to the entire of the parochial revenues, and have the 1,156 Roman Catholics no vested interests whatever in the fruit of their own toil, destined originally for their spiritual benefit?

THE IRISH PARISHES WITHOUT ANGLICANS.

So much, and so persistently, has been lately said concerning the non-existence in Ireland of whole parishes without Anglicans, that it may be well to give a list of such parishes in detail. They were, in 1861, 199 in number, and in 1864 it was found that between 30 and 40 of them had been suspended, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for Ireland being in receipt of the revenues, but paying various sums for the spiritual oversight of the parishes to neighbouring incumbents. About 140 of the remainder then formed parts of Unions, and the rest, except a dozen or so which were wholly inappropriate, belonged to bishops' mensals, or to the chapter or economy funds of cathedrals.

The ecclesiastical description of these parishes, that is, their description as Rectory or Vicarage, is chiefly taken from the "Ecclesiastical Index" of Dr. Knox—now Bishop of Down and Connor—who gives as the sources of his information, the Reports of the Ecclesiastical Revenue and Patronage Commission of 1833-1837, the orthography being "assimilated to that of Mr. Erck's Register." In the following list the initial letters R. and V., with I. for inappropriate, indicate the denomination of rectory or vicarage. Some few of these parishes are curacies or chapelries:—

LIST OF PARISHES WITHOUT ANGLICANS.

Cappoge R.; Carrickbaggot R.; Kane R.; Mapastown V.; Mayne V.; Parsonstown V.; Port V.; Salterstown V.; Philipstown R.; and Mansfieldstown R.; being ten in Armagh diocese.

Ardeath V.; Balfeaghan R. V.; Clonalvey R.; Clonmacduff R.; Creeks-town R. V.; Culmullin V.; Dowth Curacy; Emlagh R.; Kilcloon R. V.; Killagh R.; Kilpatrick R.; Michelstown R.; Timoole V.; Cruicetown R. V.; Derrypatrick V.; Follistown I. R.; Grangegeeth I. R.; being seventeen in Meath diocese.

Mintiaghs, in Derry diocese.

Cloonecaff R. V.; Dysart V.; Kilcola R. V.; Kilteevan V.; Shancough V.; being five in Elphin diocese.

Aghamore R. V.; Donaghpatrick R. V.; Inisboffin V.; Inishmaan V.; Kilcoonaugh R. V.; Killinny R. V.; Liskeevey R. V.; Moorgagagh R. V.; Rosslea R. V.; Kiltvane R. V.; being ten in Tuam diocese.

Ballybought R. V.; Ballymadun V.; Castledillon R.; Confey R. V.; Dunmanoge V.; Grangerosnolvan V.; Killeek R.; Kilmahuddrick chapelry; St. Margaret's chapelry; Taghadoe R. V.; Usk R.; Westpals-town V.; being twelve in Dublin diocese.

Carragh R. V.; Haynestown V.; Kildangan R.; Ladystown V.; Lully-more R.; Sherlockstown R.; Walterstown R.; Kilmacredock; being eight in Kildare diocese.

Arderra; Ballyburr R. V.; Ballygurrim V.; Clonamery R. V.; Coolaghmore R. V.; Dunbell V.; Dunnamaggan R. V.; Famagh I. R. V.; Garranamana R. V.; Jerpoint Abbey V.; Kilkieran R. V.; Killahy R. V.; Killarney R.; Kilmademoge R. V.; Kilmadum V.; Lismateige; Portnas-cully V.; Rosinan R. V.; Shanbough V.; Tubbrid R.; Ullid V.; Woolen-grange R.; Aglishmartin R.; Kilbride V.; Kileoan V.; Mayne R.; Rathlogan; being twenty-seven in Ossory diocese.

Ballingly R. V.; Ballyvaloo V.; Clonmines imp. c.; Doonoony R. V.; Inch V.; Kerloge R.; Killesk R. V.; Killisk imp. c.; Rathroe imp. c.; Tellarought R.; Kilscanlan; being eleven in Ferns diocese.

Ballycrogue R.; Sleaty R.; Straboe R.; being three in Leighlin diocese.

Ballyclerahane R.; Barrettsgrange R. V.; Cloneen R. V.; Dangandargan R.; Dogstown R.; Kilbragh R. V.; Magoury R. V.; Modeshill R. V.; Railstown R.; Rathlynn R. V.; Shyane V.; Killeenasteena; Red City R.; Kilmicklin R.; being fourteen in Cashel diocese.

Ballinard V.; Ballinlough V.; Inch St. Laurence R. V.; Kilcornan R.; Rathjordan R. V.; Solloghodbeg R.; Toughcluggin V.; Aglishcormick; Clonpet V.; Corroge V.; Lattin R.; Templebredon V.; being twelve in Emly diocese.

Kilbride R.; Kilcaragh R.; Kilmacleague R. V.; Kill St. Laurence R.; Kilronan R.; Killure R.; Monamintra R. V.; Rosduff R.; being eight in Waterford diocese.

Clonea V.; Lickoran V.; Mortlestown R.; Neddans V.; Kiltegan R.; Grangemockler; being six in Lismore diocese.

Killaspigmullane R.; in Cork diocese.

Aghacross R.; Ballyspillane V.; Dromdowney V.; Kilbroney V.; Templemolaga R.; Aglishdrinagh R.; Ardskeagh R.; Bohillane R.; Carrigdownane R. V.; Kilcorney R. V.; Kilgulane R. V.; Killenemer R.; Kilcorcoran R.; Kilgrogan R.; Kilphelan R.; being fifteen in Cloyne diocese.

Kilsillagh R.; in Ross diocese.

Clonloghan R. V.; Feenagh V.; Inagh; Kilconry R. V.; Kilmihil V.; Moynoe R. V.; Kilcorney R.; Killeany R. V.; Noughaval R. V.; Killonehan R. V.; being ten in Killaloe and Kilfenora dioceses.

Killoran R. V.; in Clonfert diocese.

Bullane R. V.; Isertkelly R. V.; Killinny R. V.; Killeenavarra R. V.; Killeeneen R. V.; in Kilmacduagh diocese.

Clonagh R. V.; Cloneagh R. V.; Glenogra R. V.; Hackmys R.; Kilbreedy major R.; Donoghmore; Emygrennan R.; Kilcolman R.; Tankardstown R. V.; Tomdeely R. V.; Anhid R.; Cloncrew R.; Colmanswell R.; in Limerick diocese.

Ballinvoher R.; Galey V.; Kilcredane R.; Kiltomey V.; Knockanure V.; Lisselton V.; Marhin V.; Ballyduff; Kilcarragh R.; in the diocese of Ardfert and Aghadoe.

The total Roman Catholic population of these 199 parishes is 98,229. Their area extends over more than 557,000 acres. Their ecclesiastical revenues exceed £13,000 per annum. About 18 of them, being inappropriate, appear to possess no Church revenue. The smallest of these parishes in area is Killarney in Ossory, a rectory appropriate to the economy fund of St. Canice Cathedral, and covering 155 acres. This small parish does not appear in Knox's Index, but is mentioned in the recent Church Commission Report. The largest of these parishes is Aghamore, in Tuam, which extends over 22,510 acres. The average Roman Catholic population of these 199 parishes is 493, and the average area in acres is 2,799.

THE THREEFOLD CLASSIFICATION OF IRISH CHURCH PROPERTY.

The threefold classification of Irish Church property—namely, into property “bestowed” previously to the Reformation; property given subsequently to that event by way of Royal or parliamentary grants; and private endowments—ought not to be accepted by the public without examination, even though offered by Colonel Adair and the other Royal Commissioners.

No property, whether tithe or lands, was “bestowed” upon the Reformed Church “previous to the Reformation.” The “Irish Church was imported through conquest,” to use Colonel Adair’s words, and to it was granted by the Reformation Princes at—not previously to—the Reformation, part of the ancient ecclesiastical property of the Roman Catholic Church, the other portion being then confiscated

into lay hands. The Church property transferred to the Reformed Church by Elizabeth was as much "a Royal or parliamentary grant" as any given by subsequent princes; for the Act 2 of Elizabeth and other penal Acts were an endowment, of the Reformed and a disendowment of the Roman Catholic Church, through the will and pleasure of the Sovereign, who changed the state religion from Catholic to Protestant. There is, then, no difference, so far as regards the donors, between the first two classes of Church property, for the donors in both cases were Reformed and Protestant princes. The only difference is that the lands and tithes, under the Elizabethan Acts, passed directly from the Catholic to the Protestant clergy, whereas those tithes and glebes, given by James and Charles, had passed through an intermediate stage of occupation, or usurpation, by laymen, before they reached the hands of the Reformed clergy. If the Commissioners merely meant that property under their first classification could be traced to a pre-Reformation origin, they should have remembered that the inappropriate tithes granted by Charles, and enumerated under their second classification, have an equal antiquity. But the Commissioners have reckoned under their third division—that of "private" endowments—the Church property recovered by the exertions of Bramhall and other prelates! Did they not know that this property was mainly re-purchased for the Establishment—not by Bramhall's private moneys, but by grants from the King?

BRAMHALL'S PURCHASE OF IRISH TITHES.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in his sermon at Bramhall's funeral, said:—"Insomuch that *as I have heard* that at his going into England he gave account to the Archbishop of Canterbury of £30,000 a year, in the *recovery* of which he was greatly and principally instrumental." The manner in which Bramhall *recovered* this church property is related

by John Vesey, Bishop of Limerick, and afterwards Archbishop of Tuam, who wrote the life of Bramhall, prefixed to an edition of his works printed in 1676. From this "life," Harris, in his edition of Ware's Bishops, took much of his account of Bramhall, and thus describes the services of Bramhall when Bishop of Derry under Strafford's Government:—"The fee farms and impropriations stuck like ivy to the old walls, and it was hard to separate them. In all the numerous controversies arising from thence, he (Bramhall) was the moderator to state the rents and compromise the whole differences; generally by consent of parties, sometimes by order from the council-table, which then determined many matters, especially where forms and niceties had rendered the laws incompetent to that end" [Harris's Ware, p. 120]. At that period it must be remembered Irish estates were held under very precarious tenures. Jurors were fined for returning verdicts hostile to the Crown, and refractory culprits were mutilated and imprisoned by the Castle or Star Chamber Court. Bramhall was Strafford's favourite, and of course his influence as "moderator" was most powerful, especially as a Council order, if "consents" to his proposals were withheld, could cut short the "forms and niceties" of litigation, and interpose an arbitrary decision, where "the laws were incompetent."

Bramhall's exertions in behalf of "the inferior clergy," are related at some length by Harris, who enlarged greatly on the account given by Vesey. The Oxford edition of Bramhall's life [Anglo-Catholic Library, 1842, vol. 1, p. vii.], in shorter terms, thus describes the alleged purchases of Bramhall:—"Moreover, he himself purchased abundance of impropriations either with his own money, or by large remittances from England; by money given by his Majesty for pious uses; by borrowing large sums, and securing them out of the issues of the impropriations he bought; by voluntary contributions; and by a share of the goods of

persons dying intestate." The true nature of these "voluntary contributions" and "borrowing" transactions, is not explained very clearly by either Harris or the Oxford editor. Vesey, however, throws abundant light upon it. Bramhall—so Vesey wrote—"got some money also by voluntary subscriptions from many *whom he always represented with such advantage to the Lord Deputy that they repented not of their charity.*" And he "borrowed large sums" from the "richer clergy," who happened to labour under "*want of titles*" to their possessions, in consequence of which defect Bramhall—as Vesey relates—"had no small power over their purses, which he never made use of otherwise than to borrow, being ever very just in repaying," &c.

The "voluntary subscriptions"—it thus appears—were repaid by Bramhall with Government favour and patronage, and the loans were forced from men whose purses were at Bramhall's mercy. Transactions of this kind would not now be described as "voluntary subscriptions" and "borrowing" in the common acceptation of those terms.

It is improbable that Bramhall spent much—although he doubtless spent some—of his private means in the improvement of Irish temporalities. He sold his English estates for £6,000, to buy—not tithes for the Irish Church—but the manor of "the Omagh" for himself. That manor, with several others, he bequeathed to his family, as appears from his will, which is published in the Oxford edition of his works, vol. i. p. cvii. The same document informs us that Bramhall obtained other property in Ireland, which he devoted—not to the Church—but to his children.

CHURCH LANDS IN ULSTER.

A wide circulation has of late been given to an erroneous assertion that almost all the landed property of the Established Church in Ireland is derived from the liberality of Protestant Princes and never belonged to the Church before the Reformation. It is confidently said that "five-

sixths" of the "*glebe lands*" and of the "*bishops' lands in Ulster which were granted in 1609,*" have "*been acquired since the Reformation in the sixteenth century.*" It is true that James I. confirmed to the bishops and clergy certain possessions in Ulster, and that a large proportion of bishops' lands and glebe lands lie within that province. Out of a total of 132,000 acres of Irish glebes, there are 111,000 acres in the province of Armagh. And 87,000 profitable acres belong to the Armagh See, while the total of the Episcopal lands returned as profitable in 1833 was 485,532 acres.

But it is forgotten that James I. did not assume the character of a donor when he secured to the Establishment its possessions in Ulster. In his letter concerning the bishoprics of Derry, Raphoe, and Clogher, dated 2nd May, 1606, the King says that those sees "have not of long time been possessed by any English who had right, by law, to claim the duties of those places, whereby the lands and possessions belonging to them have been usurped by the temporal lords," and "by others, who, in their grants of abbey lands, termon lands, and other temporal lands, have included in their patents much land belonging to those several bishoprics." He then declares his intention to prevent the "*spoil of the church's patrimony,*" and directs a commission to be issued to "*indifferent*" persons "*to find out and set apart by their several names and limits all lands, houses, possessions, and rights, spiritual or temporal, which do belong, or have heretofore at any time belonged, to said bishoprics.*" These possessions the King directs to be restored unto the bishop, and orders the grants of "*termon, or abbey lands, within Ulster*" to be delayed in case such grants should include any lands belonging to bishops.

The wording of the royal instructions for the plantation of Longford and Leitrim (where "*the same course for restoring the bishoprics and endowing of churches and free schools,*" was directed, "*as was taken in Ulster,*") affords

decisive evidence that the King professed to "restore"—not to give—"to the bishoprics, deans, and chapters, and the dignitaries, all such lands, out of which, in former times, they have had their rents, refections, services, and other duties." Commissioners were to "inquire what lands belong to" the bishops, and then his Majesty "is graciously pleased to restore" such lands, and authorizes his officials "to make a grant or grants thereof in our name to the bishop," &c. The King orders "an express reservation of the church's rights, lands, and hereditaments" in all future letters patent, which are to be "void in tanto as they prejudge the church and no further." The returns of these commissions or inquisitions were enrolled in Chancery. They formed the basis of the so-called "grants," and they set out in detail the rights and possessions of the church. At the commencement of each of these inquisitions appears the statement that "the Archbishop of Armagh," or "the Bishop of Derry," or of some other see, "*is seized in fee in right of his see*" of certain property and rights. The several denominations of land in which the bishops and clergy had pecuniary interests, the termon and herenagh lands, and the monastery lands are then particularized. "Herenagh land," according to the Armagh inquisition, "was at first given by the temporal lords to the founders of the churches, who gave them to several septs for paying rents and duties to the bishops, and for maintaining the churches;" and "termon land had the same beginning as herenagh land."

Anyone comparing the inquisitions with the alleged "grants" that followed, will at once perceive that the grants were only restorations. The names of the denominations of the demesne lands of Armagh are the same in the grant as in the inquisition, and most of the lands in the inquisitions are identical with those in the grants. The tolls and markets of Armagh and the fishery of the Blackwater, given to the primate by the grant, belonged of old to the

primate and his clergy, according to the inquisitions. The "grants" themselves recite that the Ban fishery and that at Lough Foyle, confirmed to the bishopric of Derry, were "found by an inquisition," taken in 1609, to belong to that see. The "gorts of ancient glebe," and the "certain ancient glebes" so repeatedly mentioned in the "grants," are all of them specified in the previous inquisitions.

It might be rash to assert that all the possessions of the church detailed in the inquisitions were confirmed by the grants, and it is evident that some of these possessions were re-distributed, the property of cathedral dignitaries, and officers, and of the bishops being frequently assigned to rectors and vicars. The lands, &c., "anciently belonging to the late prior and vicars choral of Armagh" were allocated for schools and *for glebes*, &c. The lands out of which rents were anciently paid to the prelates, were often vested altogether in ecclesiastical persons. Thus the "sixteen townlands in Derrinouse precinct," for which the Sept of Clonawe, as the inquisition states, paid a rent to the archbishop, were transferred to the dean, and subsequently to the Archbishop of Armagh. But an impartial examination of the grants and inquisitions will prove that the vast bulk of the property said to have been granted by James I. and Charles I. to the church, consisted of either mensal, termon, herenagh, and glebe land, or else of forfeited monastery and abbey lands. These possessions —part of the ancient property of the Roman Catholic Church in Ulster—James I. transferred and confirmed to the Reformed Church in that province.

THE ALLEGED PARLIAMENT ROLL OF 1560.

With a view, perhaps, to revive the now exploded fiction concerning the alleged conversion of the Irish bishops, Mr. W. T. Charley, in the *Times* of the 24th of March,

mentions the Act 2nd Elizabeth, and professes to give from authentic records "*a list of the spiritual peers who assented in Parliament to that Act.*" No such list is now, nor was within the knowledge of archivists, known to exist. The list which Mr. Charley gives, altering the order of the names, *never assumed to be a list of prelates who assented to any act*, but for some time was regarded as a list of all the peers and commoners who were in the first Parliament of Elizabeth. Sir W. Betham called it a "Parliament pawn"—*i.e.*, a schedule of writs to be issued for the ensuing Parliament. Lynch in his *Feudal Dignities* argued that it must have been drawn up after the meeting of the Parliament of 1560. But of late years the spurious nature of this document (the original of which cannot now be found in the Irish Chancery records) has been fully proved. It contains the names of bishops who were not then in existence, and of bishops never recognised by the Queen, and of bishops not appointed by her for some time after the closing of that Parliament. In this curious list the Christian names of two temporal and seven spiritual peers are omitted, and *four barons take precedence of viscounts*, who are followed by other barons. Archdall, in his *Irish Peerage*, calls attention to the entry on this list of Richard Nugent, baron of Delvin, who died (as appears by a *post-mortem* inquisition) on the 10th of December, 1559, yet is said by this list to be present in a Parliament which began to sit on the 11th January, 1560—one month after his decease! The baron's son, who was named Christopher, was but fifteen years old in 1560, and, therefore, could not sit in that Parliament at all.

But granting for a moment the baron's resurrection, and the authenticity of the list, on what grounds can it be argued that all the peers present in the 1560 Parliament voted for the Reformation? Walsh and Leverous, the bishops who were deprived of their sees; Desmond and

Baltinglass, who suffered for the Roman Catholic cause, were named in that list. Did all the nobles vote for it? If so, why was that Parliament broken up? The Loftus MS. tells us that Parliament was “dissolved the 1st of February by reason of *aversion to the Protestant religion and their ecclesiastical government.*” Ware says that “*most of the nobility and commons* were divided in opinion about the ecclesiastical government, which caused the Earl of Sussex to dissolve them.” Yet *all* the nobles—according to Mr. Charley’s argument from this spurious list—“assented in Parliament” to the Reformation Acts!

It happens, moreover, that the quotation which Mr. Charley professes to make from vol. 2, p. 134, of the Irish Archæological Society’s publication is incorrect, so far as regards the spelling, the numbering, the arrangement of the names and the sentence added at the end, and the note appended. He must have copied his list from some other book.

IRISH GLEBE HOUSES.

That part of Mr. Gladstone’s Bill which relates to Irish ecclesiastical residences has been a favourite illustration of the alleged hardness and severity of the entire measure. Thus, the Bishop of Ossory, at his recent diocesan conference, quoted the case of the glebe-houses, in order to defend his denunciation of the bill, which he said was “conceived and carried out in a spirit of inveterate hostility to the Church,” and if “framed by the most inveterate enemy of the Church—an enemy on religious or political grounds—could not have been made out with more unmitigated severity.” His lordship then said :—

Those are hard expressions, and I cannot go over the bill in detail to justify them; but I will give one instance. When it was announced a

year ago that the glebe-houses were to be given to the Church, was there any man in England—I will not say in Ireland, for there may have been some in the secret in this country, for aught I know—but was there a man in England who understood the promise in the sense in which it has now been interpreted? Was there any Protestant in England, of any denomination, who thought the meaning of it was that the house should be transferred to the Church, provided it paid a charge, and that no garden or grounds—for the curtilage only included the offices—should accompany the transfer? This was to be a donation; but the house was not to carry with it the site upon which it stood; that was to be purchased.

The “unmitigated severity,” according to the bishop, of this enactment about glebe-houses, consists in the payment of the building charges; in the alleged fact that “no garden or ground” is to accompany the transfer; and in the stipulation that the site is to be purchased.

However, the bishop seems to forget that no alteration of existing arrangements concerning building charges is made by this bill. The building charges are due and payable to the incumbents or their families by those who shall succeed to the possession of those houses; and the charge of “unmitigated severity” is misapplied to a measure which secures these building charges to the incumbents or their representatives. Whatever “unmitigated severity” exists must be laid to the account of the bishops and churchmen who framed the laws by which these building charges were encouraged.

The bishop, when he so bitterly assails the bill for enacting that “no garden” is to “accompany the transfer” of the glebe-house, simply proves that he himself has not read—or else has forgotten—the language of the bill. Clause 27 (page 12 of the printed bill) flatly contradicts his lordship, for it mentions the “ecclesiastical residence, *with the garden* and curtilage thereto!”

The third grievance enumerated by the bishop is the purchase of the site on which the glebe-house stands. This

grievance is not a great one. If the site covered a mine, or was valuable as building ground, and was to be paid for accordingly, then the purchase money might amount to a large sum. But every farmer knows that the site whereon a building has been erected is worth little or nothing for agricultural purposes, and will not repay the labour of carting clay to cover the surface. The bill provides that the purchase money shall be calculated on “the annual value of the site of such ecclesiastical residence *estimated as land*;” and “*as land*” the few and barren perches constituting “the site” are almost worthless.

But if we examine the clause (No. 27) which relates to ecclesiastical residences, we shall perceive the utter absurdity of the aspersions sometimes thrown upon this portion of the Government measure. Mr. Disraeli said that the Church is “to retain the glebe-houses, provided it discharges the debt upon them which is so great as to make these houses unmarketable.” There are 978 glebe-houses; the debt amounts (so Dr. Ball says) to £198,704, or £203 a-piece; and at this price the houses do not seem to be “unmarketable.” The provisions of the bill, however, are not such as Mr. Disraeli described. There are many houses whereon there are “no building charges,” and in every such case the “*ecclesiastical residence, with the garden and curtilage thereto*” is to be given to the Church upon payment “*of a sum equal to twelve times the amount of the annual value of the site of such ecclesiastical residence estimated as land, and of the said garden and curtilage*.” There are at least 340 glebe-houses upon which there are no building charges (see the Church Commission Report, Schedule V., col. 11, No. 2). These 340 houses accordingly become the property of the future Church at twelve times the yearly value of the site (which is nothing), and of the garden and curtilage, covering an acre or two of land. If the tenement valuation of the garden

be adopted, then some forty or fifty pounds will be the total purchase money of each house. But when there is a building charge, then the Church has the option of paying either the "*building charge, or a sum equal to the value of such ecclesiastical residence, with the garden and curtilage thereto, taken at twelve years' purchase of the annual value as estimated by the general tenement valuation.*" Now, there are 114 benefices on which there are building charges in no case amounting to £200, and in the aggregate amounting to £11,350. The price of these houses averages, accordingly, £99 for each. But there are 525 houses on which are building charges to the amount of £187,354, or £356 each. In the case of these heavily-charged houses, the Church, if it takes them at all, has the privilege of paying the smaller sum, or the amount of the twelve years' purchase. Thus, instead of paying £1,520, the building charge on Adamstown, in Ferns diocese, the Church will pay merely £200, or thereabouts, the annual value of that house, with garden and eight acres of land, being only £24 5s. The building charge on Kells, in Meath, is £2,461; the price of the house at twelve years' purchase of the tenement valuation is £480. The charge on Cappagh, Derry, is £2,152; on Garrycloyne, Cloyne, £1,826; on Desertlyn, Armagh, £1,374; on Elphin, £900; and on Aghabullogue, Cloyne, £808. The prices of these houses, at twelve times the annual tenement value, are respectively £432, £288, £312, £252, and £240. That is to say, the Church may retain those six last-mentioned glebe-houses, upon paying, not, as Mr. Disraeli said, the amount of the building charges, which is £9,521, but the smaller sum, namely, the amount of twelve years' purchase of the tenement valuation, which is over £2,004. The Church need not accept a single "unmarketable" house; but, by buying on the terms offered by the bill and selling at a profit any which from size or situation are

unsuitable for Church purposes, may realize a considerable sum.

Perhaps our bishops, if they studied the bill with a view to find how its details might be rendered available for the benefit of the Church, would be inclined to give it somewhat gentler terms than those applied to it by the prelates of Derry, Ossory, and Dublin, who have styled it "the very atrocity of tyranny," a measure of "unmitigated severity," and equivalent to "garotting."

[*The foregoing "Remarks," excepting those "on the Irish Church Bill," lately appeared as letters in the TIMES and other leading Newspapers.]*

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