

IRELAND AND THE WELLINGTON DESPATCHES.

The "Times," in reviewing the fifth volume of the "Wellington Despatches," says:

"The most interesting part of this volume is that which refers to the Irish question, then in one of its most important phases. At this juncture O'Connell had joined the whole Catholicism of Ireland in a league to demand the grant of their claims, and the Catholic Association, sustained by the force of Liberal opinion in England and Europe, and with an organisation which made it supreme in three at least of the four Irish provinces, had just struck down, at the Clare election, the authority of the Protestant landlord, and baffled the Executive in its feeble attempts to cope with its enemy and rule the country. The influence of the Government has been reduced to nothingness throughout the island south of the Bann; and though, as has often happened in Irish history, agrarian and social disturbances merged for the moment in the political movement, and Ireland wore a look of ominous peace, the terror of the Protestants was extreme, and order, in fact, was maintained by demagogues who knew that an outbreak would mar their projects.

The Duke himself, though not an alarmist, wrote:—

"No man can answer at present for rebellion or no rebellion. The collision at Ballybay, if not prevented by the officious but fortunate interference of General Thornton, might have occasioned the murder of every Protestant in the Province of Munster.

He tells me that he knows that the Roman Catholics in Clare are so well organised, and the Protestant gentry, as well as the others, are so well watched, as that with the notice of a very few hours the whole of them could be seized and massacred. . . . The state of society in Ireland is daily becoming worse. In the South the worst evils, excepting actual civil war, exist. . . . Every effort has been made to bring to bear against the association the existing laws, but in vain."

A rising, however, against the Protestants was not the real danger of Ireland, and was never contemplated by the Catholic leader. The aim of O'Connell and the association was to supersede and checkmate Government; and in attaining this they were completely successful. This is acknowledged in a number of passages in the correspondence between Wellington and Peel. We cite the following from the Duke to George IV.:—

"It is quite obvious that those who conduct the affairs of the Roman Catholics of Ireland do not propose to commit any breach of the peace, or other act which can occasion a conflict with your Majesty's troops. Everything is done by their leaders to excite hatred and contempt of the Government, and their influence over the people of all ranks of the Roman Catholic persuasion is unbounded. I do not suggest an impossible hypothesis to your Majesty when I state the possibility—I might state it more strongly—of the Roman Catholic tenantry of the country refusing to pay tithes or rates. . . . The carrying on of the Government is now a most melancholy task. The execution of our orders and instructions depends upon this self-constituted body, the members of which pay their shillings at the door."

The manner in which the people were organised is thus described:—

"This year the priests have appointed collectors in every townland; the collector is supplied with a book, in which is a particular form of schedule; he is to insert the number of the houses in the townland, and the names of every individual in each house—men, women, and children, even to the new-born infants—Protestants as well as Papists, with notes and observations as to their means and circumstances; and he is to make himself acquainted with their individual disposition and feelings towards the cause of 'Civil and Religious Liberty' (words substituted for Roman Catholic Emancipation), and which are partly to be judged by the amount and punctuality of the payment of the rent."

The Catholic Association thus formed a complete *imperium in imperio* in Ireland, and backed as it was by the huge masses of a people always on the verge of want, and directed by a man of singular powers, who splayed the old Irish priesthood, it was the most formidable embodiment of national discontent which modern history has perhaps witnessed. Yet it was not this organisation, menacing as it was, which really alarmed the Duke and the Cabinet; what chiefly moved them, and, in the long run, determined the purpose of their resolute chief, was the attitude of Parliament, which made the hope of resistance for any length of time vain, and the false position in which the Irish gentry had been placed since the Clare election had revealed their weakness and destroyed their influence. This appears abundantly from such passages as these:—

"You are quite mistaken about Parliament; and the truth is that the mischief is there and not in Ireland. They will not put down the association, they will not even put down the rebellion should it occur, unless concession should be made. You must not compare Ireland with Manchester. The majority think, or pretend to think, that there is a remedy for Ireland besides the measure of coercion. For Manchester nobody thought there was any other remedy. . . . I confess that what has moved me has been the Monaghan, the Louth, the Waterford, and the Clare elections. If I could believe that the Irish nobility and gentry would recover their lost influence, the just influence, of property, without making these concessions, I would not stir. . . . Have we any resource, but concession in the existing state of men's opinions in as well as out of doors? If we have, I would willingly adopt it."

The state of foreign opinion was also a motive:—

"There is an evil still remaining behind which well deserves the consideration of a man in your position in this country; and that is the new and growing interest taken by foreigners in the state of this question. In every Court of Europe it is the subject of the most anxious solicitude and inquiry. The interest is not confined to Courts and Cabinets. In France, as well as America, there are large subscriptions to the rent, which, I hear, no law can reach and no diplomatic art prevent."

These considerations made the Cabinet resolve that things in Ireland could not remain as they were; and that, as continued resistance was hopeless, the only alternative was concession.

DISCOURSE OF THE POPE TO A DEPUTATION OF CATHOLIC SOCIETIES.

The following is the full report of the discourse spoken by the Holy Father, as given in the "Journal of Florence," to the representatives of the Catholic Societies of Rome, who, in their own name and in that of their constituents, have made the vow to erect a church in honor of the Sacred Heart.

The Holy Father said:—

I fully approve and I accept, in the name of God, the vow which you have just uttered in your own name and in the name of a great number of others not now present, but who share in your sentiments.

At the present moment there presents itself to my mind the idea of the rapid progress made by the human family in certain sciences which I will call "utilitarian," because, not only in the development of material well-being and conveniences of life. Yes, the human family has thrown itself into this pursuit, it is going after it with sure and rapid steps, and it is gaining ground. Man cultivates ardently all those sciences that promise him enjoyment on this earth: and they constitute, so to speak, the special boast of the age.

And yet, among all these sciences, the science of pauperism, although much cultivated theoretically—although treated of in books—although talked about by speakers—although discussed by learned societies—this science, I say, so much cultivated in theory, gives but very scanty results in practice. While material progress is advancing pauperism advances too, and unhappily the neglect to apply any remedy increases in the like proportion.

Look around you, and consider the evils that assail us on all sides. Physical evil and moral evil; evil sent by the anger of God and evil produced by the wickedness of men, and therefore constituting what I call artificial evil. It is unnecessary to go over in detail the history of so many evils: their mere enumeration is almost too much for us to bear.

Thus, speaking of physical evil, you find the doleful spectacle of inundations, earthquakes, of destructive storms and other public calamities. Speaking of moral evil you see presented to your view the infernal picture of immorality triumphant, of blasphemy unrestrained and unpunished; of heresy publicly maintained; of the bad liberty of teaching; of persecution—so much relished by the impious in Italy and out of Italy—of the ministers of the sanctuary, and of all those who keep the Catholic Faith in its fulness. Lastly; speaking of that evil which is produced by men placed in authority, you find taxation, acts of injustice, and legal vexations; facilities afforded for exacting and hoarding up money, and of slowness in paying that which is due; many things going to destruction, and little or nothing done unto edification. After all this, tell me, have we not reason to cry out with the Psalmist—*Adhaesit pavimento anima mea?* Is not Our soul sunk in the mire and in the dust under the weight of such an oppression?

But you—you have found the remedy for evils so great and numerous. O yes, my children, you have found it. You have remembered that there lives in heaven a Divine Heart that can console, help, and comfort you. Ah, yes, let us draw near to that Heart, and let us stay before that wound which was opened by the soldier's lance and meditate with love and with faith: *Prospiciens per cancellos*. Let us observe how that Heart, according to our manner of comprehending, desires ardently to spread abroad that fire which burns it interiorly; that fire which would set the whole earth on fire with love and with charity. Let us draw near to that Heart; and, filled with admiration, let us observe the celestial economy with which the Church was formed, and how she went forth vigorous from that divine source, supporting herself on the seven pillars which represent the Sacraments. Let us approach, filled with humility and respect, to that Heart, and we shall hear those sweet words: *Erant oculi mei ibi cunctis diebus*. They mean that the Heart and the eyes of Jesus Christ will ever turn towards His Church, which is spread over the face of the globe; but particularly will they turn towards this city of Rome, because here has been established the seat of Truth, and the centre of Catholicism. Hither was sent the Prince of the Apostles, whatever the impious and satirical enemies of the true Church of God may say to the contrary—hither did St. Peter come, fearing not to adventure himself in that forest of fierce wild beasts, preaching intrepidly the truth in the midst of the crowd of errors of the Roman nation, which after having conquered many other nations, itself embraced and fell into servitude to all the turpitudes and aberrations of the other peoples. After the blood shed by so many sovereign Pontiffs and by so many thousands of martyrs, this highly favored city, which had been the disciple of error, and enslaved to abominations, became by the merits of that blood, and by the Divine will, the mistress of the truth.

From this chair of holy doctrine proceeded lessons to instruct, counsels to enlighten, decrees to define, from the very beginning of the Church down to the *Syllabus* and to the decrees of the Council of the Vatican.

Blessed then be that Divine Heart, the origin of so many goods, and the source of consolation and of solace in affliction. Blessed also be you, who so far from going to seek distraction in the frivolities of mankind, come on the contrary to seek peace and happiness at the source where alone they are to be found. I know that the impious blaspheme even that Adorable Heart. But the time will come when God Himself will curse those blasphemers. *Redebit et subannabit eos*.

As for us, let us approach to that holy refuge of our souls, let us present to it the protestations of our love, and let us beseech that Divine Heart to encourage us by its Benediction. Let us say to it with Jacob: *Non dimittam te, nisi benedixeris mihi*. O Most Holy Heart, filled with love, and source of all graces—bless us; and may Thy benediction give us courage in the conflict, firmness in good resolves, and may it accompany us even to the last days of our life.

Meanwhile, I raise my feeble hand, and I bless you, I bless your friends and your relatives. Be you the echoes by which this benediction may extend over all the faithful of the Catholic Church, may it give you the needful courage, and may it keep you constant to the latest moment of your life.—*Benedictio Dei, &c.*