

ARCHBISHOP MANNING ON IRELAND.

We continue from a previous issue and conclude the publication of the important letter sent by His Grace Archbishop Manning to the Lord Primate of Ireland, after the consecration of Armagh Cathedral:—

The progress of Ireland is on the pathway of Christianity, which has made the nations of Christendom and the glory of them. They have departed, or are departing from faith, and their glory likewise is departing from them. For them I see no future. I see no future for Imperial Germany, or for revolutionary Italy, or for Spain, if it abandon its ancient Catholic traditions; or for France, if it continue to deify Voltaire and to glorify the principles of 1789. But I do see a future for England—if Ireland be Ireland still, and if England have still a Christian heart. Here is the trial which has now reached its crisis. The trial is this: Shall the next generation of Irishmen be formed as Catholics? Shall the next generation of Englishmen be formed as Christians?

III. I am at a loss to understand the blindness which has fallen upon a multitude of men at this day. They would indignantly claim to be Christians. But they deal with Christian education as they would deal with the casting of iron and the combing of wool; as a necessary but expensive work, in which there is no motive for enthusiasm. Not so those who desire to rid the world of the Catholic faith, of doctrinal Christianity, and of religion in any form. They know perfectly well that the school is more fatal to their policy than the church. Our churches would so stand empty if our schools were not full. They see what we are either blind enough not to see, or, as they may well think, stupid enough not to understand: that the shape and mould, and form, and character of the next generation is to be decided in our schools. Bring up the children without religion, and the next generation will pull down the churches. We in England were upon the brink of being terrified by agitation, and juggled by Leagues into a compromise, which is the beginning of interminable concessions. This danger is I hope past, because the momentary scare is over, and the weakness of the agitation is found out. We have need, however, of a hundred eyes, and of keeping them all open, to watch the dangers which beset the Catholic and Christian education of these countries. The popular education of Ireland is indeed safe: not through any favour of legislatures, but through the fidelity and industry; which will render all experiments at mixed education in Ireland useless, because the Catholic laity in Ireland refuse them, and the Catholic Church is resolved to provide colleges and a higher education for its people. When the late proposal for university education in Ireland was first made known, I was, for a time, induced to believe, looking at it as for us in England, that it could be accepted with safety and worked for ultimate good. But this impression, for I will not call it a judgment or even an opinion, I carefully guarded by the consciousness that those only who are upon the spot and familiar with all local and personal conditions could form an adequate judgment. I was fully aware that what could be tolerated in England might be intolerable in Ireland; and that what would be a gain to a handful of Catholics in a vast non-Catholic population, might be a great loss, and even a wrong, to a Catholic people of which the religious unity and Catholic traditions are unbroken. When, then, the Catholic Episcopate of Ireland refused the proposal on the high Christian principle that it involved two things which the Catholic Church inflexibly refuses, the one mixed education, the other education without faith, I recognised the higher and nobler attitude of its refusal. I saw in it the broad assertion that a Catholic people have a right to Catholic education; that education is impossible without faith: that already enough had been endured by Ireland; and that had been done by Parliament in the establishment of primary schools in which Catholic religion could not be taught, and in the founding of colleges where education is mixed; that both these things are wrong, against a Catholic party; and that it was therefore impossible to consent to a measure which would consolidate, perpetuate, and extend this system of mixed and Godless education, in the heart of a people profoundly religious and profoundly Catholic. When I saw this, I at once recognised not only the truth and the justice, but also the higher elevation of your reply. Such mixed and Godless schemes of university education have become inevitable in England by reason of our endless religious contentions. England has lost its religious unity and is paying the grievous penalty. But Ireland may well remind the Imperial Parliament that it has not forfeited its religious unity, and that such penal legislation is neither necessary nor tolerable. Even Scotland has made this plea good, in bar of schemes of education at variance with its religious convictions. The Scotch Education Bill is essentially religious and denominational. Parliament has legislated for Scotland wisely and justly; according to the desires and the conscience of the Scotch people. It will assuredly take its measure of any education schemes for England from the ideas and choices of the English people. To their shame be it spoken, there are Englishmen and Scotchmen who will claim this for themselves and will deny it to Irishmen. We have of late years fully unmasked this injustice. For a long time your claim was not denied, because it was not distinctly enunciated. Ireland had borne with a long course of ingard and ungenerous legislation; in which the least possible recognition was admitted that Ireland is a Catholic country, and the Irish a Catholic people. But when certain politicians began to claim Presbyterian education for Presbyterian Scotland, the whole truth was told, and the claim of Ireland was unintentionally established. The Presbyterians in Scotland are as somewhat more than four to one of the population. The Catholics of Ireland are about the same to their non-Catholic fellow countrymen. The late Irish University debates have lifted the whole question, and placed it upon this level. Catholic Ireland justly claims that its higher education shall be Catholic. And from this demand, I trust, under God, it will never go back. The Bishops and people of Ireland who, in resistance of the Godless colleges five-and-twenty years ago, founded a Catholic University, will not fail now in resisting the scheme of a mixed university, to give permanence and development to the university which already exists. The vigorous unity of the pastors and people of Ireland will

not hesitate to take up and to consolidate the work which was well begun with so much foresight, and with so much self-denial. Its very existence on Stephen's Green is a witness that Catholic Ireland claims a pure Catholic University. I trust that no line, no letter of this noble and explicit inscription, will be effaced. It was the work of the Irish Church and nation. It has stood for more than twenty years, bearing witness to the claims of the laity of Ireland, and to the duty of the Imperial Parliament towards the Irish people. If it served no other purpose in our day—and it does serve a multitude of other and excellent uses—this one alone would suffice to bind the faithful to maintain it in its integrity, and to make it the centre of the higher national education of Ireland.

IV. If this be done by the spontaneous efforts of the Irish people, the day must come when a juster spirit will prevail in our Legislature. It will not for ever obey the narrow bigotry of Covenanters, nor the jealous fears of Sectarians, nor the imperial haughtiness of tyrannical Liberals, nor the supercilious contempt of infidels. The Parliament of the future will be broader, and more in sympathy with the constituencies of the three kingdoms. England and Scotland will not claim to legislate for Ireland according to English and Scotch interests and prejudices; and Ireland, when it is justly treated, will have no more will than it has now to make or meddle in local affairs of England or Scotland. The three peoples are distinct in blood, in religion, in character, and in local interests. They will soon learn to "live and let live," when the vanishing *reliquiae* of the Tudor tyranny shall have died out unless the insane example of Germany snail, for a time, inflame the heads of certain violent politicians to try their hand at what they call an Imperial policy. I have watched with a mixture of sorrow and indignation the writings and the speeches of a handful of boisterous and blustering doctrinaires, who are trying to turn men away from doing what is just towards Ireland by grandiloquent phrases about the Imperial race and Imperial policy. An Imperial policy, in the mouths of doctrinaires, means a legislation which ignores the special character and legitimate demands of races and localities, and subjects them to the coercion of laws at variance with their most sacred instincts. Not so the Imperial policy of ancient Rome, which wisely consolidated its world-wide power by the most delicate regard to the religion of every race and nation. But our doctrinaires either have no religion, or a Scotch or English creed. They will take good care to make provision for themselves.

Imperial policy means, and may be defined as, legislation to hamper and harass the Catholic Church in Ireland. Such Imperial legislation would be intensely English for England, and Scotch for Scotland; but Imperial, that is anti Irish and anti-Catholic, for Ireland. Imperial legislation means using Imperial power to force Ireland into subjection to the religious ideas of England. These same gentlemen lament openly that the policy of the Tudors stopped short of exterminating the Irish Catholic race. They are saying: "If we had lived in the days of our fathers not a Catholic soul should have been left in Ireland, and then we should now have had no trouble with questions of Church, or land, or university education." The appearance of such public counsellors is a portent. They distort the vision and heat the blood of men; they revive animosities and kindle old hates. They may be the forerunners of convulsions which would lay waste our public peace, if there be not calmer heads and juster hearts to repress their inflammatory declamation.

The rise of an empire is no cause of joy to men who love their country. It is the sign of the loss of true liberty. When local government, springing from pure national self-control, grows weak and impotent, then, and then only, it is that imperial centralization becomes possible and necessary. France has tried it, and is expiating the fault by half a century of successive revolutions and a chronic instability. Germany is beginning to indict upon itself a vengeance worse than France could wreak, by an imperial despotism which legislates in violation of the religion and conscience of its subjects. Its present ecclesiastical laws have been hailed and heralded by our newspapers as the policy of Henry VIII. Till the other day no Englishman was found to glorify Henry VIII. Now he has received his apotheosis as a great Englishman and a wise king. Germany is applauded because it is persecuting the Catholic Church. The Imperial power is setting to us the magnanimous example of defying the Pope. Articles without end appear every week, all alive with sympathy for this ignominious tyranny, which violates liberty of conscience, of religion, of speech, and of action, in its most sacred sphere. And Englishmen, who have prated for three hundred years of the duty of private judgment, of the rights of conscience, of civil and religious liberty, are praising the German penal laws with all the fervor with which they used to denounce the fables of the Spanish Inquisition.

V. I cannot say that I have much fear of an imperial policy in Great Britain and Ireland. The day is past, and the work would be found too tough for our doctrinaires. My chief reason for this confidence is, that the people of these three kingdoms will not have it so. They mean to manage their own affairs with a great extension, rather than a hairbreadth of diminution, in the freedom of local self-government. They are willing, as I said, to live and let live; not to meddle with others, nor to allow anybody to meddle with them: above all, in matters of conscience and religion they will not be interfered with by any authority. They have no desire to interfere with the conscience or religion of their neighbors; and they do not mean to be used again as the tools or the weapons of any party, political or religious.

Such is certainly the mind and will of the English people, as I believe I can undertake to say; and I think your Grace would be able to add your testimony as to the people of Ireland. They have least of all any desire to meddle with the political or religious affairs of their neighbors; and they have no intention that any neighbors whatsoever should meddle with theirs. In this temper of mind I see the surest guarantees of our future peace; and of the healthful development of a local self-government over the three kingdoms, suited to the character, faith, conscience, traditions, and interests of each. We shall thereby remove every day further from the dangers of "Imperial" centralization, which is everywhere, as it has been in France, the paralysis of all local