

PRIVATE JUDGMENT.—STATE OF ENGLAND.

THE reputed father of the so-called "Reformation" in England, Henry VIII., knew well that the right of private judgment in interpreting the Bible must lead to the gravest social evils, and was indeed incompatible with any fixed authority in the civil or ecclesiastical order of society; that it would lead to insubordination and confusion, and consequently to vice and war. He accordingly inveighed against all who presumed to interpret the Bible according to their own "phantasie," as he expressed it. But he denounced them in vain. From his day to ours England has suffered from these "phantasies;" she is especially suffering from them at this hour. So long as men are cold and indifferent, or nearly so, about religion, so long as they act merely from habit or motives of worldly interest, the tenets of the so-called "Reformation" may be comparatively harmless. But when they seriously attempt to act from principle, from religious principle, as so many in England are now doing, then the hollow and unsatisfactory nature of Protestantism, its tendency to breed licence and confusion, come to be painfully seen and felt. England is now passing through a new Reformation, upon which every Catholic must look with the most lovely interest. He sees his religion now receiving at the hands of Englishmen a degree of serious consideration, such as it has never met with since the days of Henry VIII. The Established Church in Ireland has "vanished like a dream." The Established Church in England is tottering to her fall, assailed from without by open enemies, and torn to pieces within by contending factions, her pretended friends acting on their "private judgment." The grand old Catholic Church is rising like a giant refreshed, and slowly but steadily advancing from one triumph to another. Without the aid of royal power or physical force, but by the sheer force of goodness, reason, and truth she is under God gradually bringing into willing subjection of her spiritual authority all classes from the lordly baron in his hall to the humble artisan and peasant in their cottage. What a happy and glorious prospect for England and the Church does not this open up! LAIC.

A SEVERE AND DIGNIFIED REBUKE.

FROM Archbishop Manning's reply to Mr Gladstone, we give as follows the concluding passages which are full of strong rebuke:—

"And now there only remains for me the hardest and saddest part of the task, which has not been sought by me, but has been forced upon me. A few months ago I could not have believed that I should have ever written these pages. I have never written any with more pain, and none of them have cost me as much as that which I am about to write. Thus far I have endeavoured to confine myself to the subject matter of Mr Gladstone's pamphlet; but before I end I feel bound by an imperative duty to lay before him, in behalf of his Catholic fellow-countrymen, the nature of the act which he has done. He has not only invited, but instigated Catholics to rise against the Divine authority of the Catholic Church. He has endeavoured to create divisions among them. If Mr Gladstone does not believe the authority of the Catholic Church to be Divine, he knows that they do. If he thinks such a rising to be 'moral and mental freedom,' he knows that they believe it to be what his own Litany calls 'schism, heresy, and deadly sin.' If he believes religious separations to be lawful, he knows that they believe them to be violations of the Divine law. I am compelled, therefore, to say that this is at least an act of signal rashness. No man has watched Mr Gladstone's career as a statesman with a more generous and disinterested good will than I have. No one has more gladly appreciated his gifts; no one has more equitably interpreted certain acts of his political life, nor has hailed his successes with greater joy. But when he casts off the character of a statesman, for which he has shown so great a capacity, to play the Canonist and Theologian, for which he has here shown so little, and that with the intent of sowing discord and animosities among six millions of his fellow countrymen—and, I must moreover add, with an indulgence of unchastened language rarely to be equalled—I feel bound to say that he has been betrayed into an act for which I can find no adequate excuse. I must tell him that if he would incline the Catholics of the Empire to accept the ministries of his compassion, he must first purify his style both of writing and of thinking. Catholics are not to be convinced or persuaded by such phrases as 'the present perilous Pontificate,' 'the Papal chair, its aiders and abettors,' 'the great hierarchy power and those who have egged it on,' 'the present degradation of the Episcopal order,' 'the subversive or pliability of the Council,' 'hidious mummeries,' 'headquarters,' 'the follies of ecclesiastical power,' 'foreign arrogance,' 'the myrmidons of the Apostolic Chamber,' 'the foreign influence of a caste.' I transcribe these words from his pages with repugnance; not, indeed, for our sake against whom they are levelled, but for the statesman who has thought them fitting. Mr Gladstone can do many things, but he cannot do all things. He has a strong hand, but there is a bow which he cannot bend. He has here tried his hand at a task for which without something more than mere literary knowledge, even his varied gifts will not suffice. The Expostulation is, as I have already said, an act out of all harmony and proportion with a great statesman's life. I have written these words with a painful constraint; but, cost what it may, duty must be done; and I believe it to be my duty to record this judgment, in behalf of the Catholics of this country, on an act unjust in itself, and therefore not only barren of all good result, but charged with grave public dangers. But I cannot break off with a note so cheerless. If this Expostulation has cast down many hopes both of a public and private kind, we cannot altogether regret its publication. If such mistrusts and misconceptions existed in the minds of our fellow subjects, the sooner and the more openly they were made public the better. We are not content to be tolerated as suspect or

dangerous persons, or to be set at large upon good behaviour. We thank Mr Gladstone for gaining us the hearing which we had before the public justice of our country; and we are confident that his impeachments will be withdrawn. His own mind is too large, too just, too upright to refuse to acknowledge an error, when he sees that he has been misled. It is also too clear and too accurate not to perceive that such is now the fact. I see in this the augury of a happier and more peaceful future than if this momentary conflict had never arisen. We shall all understand each other better. Our civil and religious peace at home will be firmer by this trial. If the Great German Empire shall only learn in time, thirteen millions of contented Catholic subjects, reconciled as they still may be by a return of just laws, will give a support to its unity which nothing can shake. If Italy shall only come to see that the 'Roman question' is, and for ever will be, a source of weakness, contention, and danger to its welfare; and, seeing this, shall solve it peacefully, as Italy alone can do, by undoing its un-Catholic and therefore un-Italian policy, then its unity and independence will be secured by the spontaneous co-operation of a united people, gathered around the centre of all its Christian glories. Such a solution would then be consecrated by the highest sanctions of its faith. If wise councils prevail, and wise friends of Italy shall gain its ear, it may be again what once it was, the foremost people in the Christian world. And, lastly, for ourselves, our world-wide Empire cannot turn back upon its path without disintegration. But justice and freedom cannot be put asunder. They flow from one source; they can be kept pure only by the same stream. They have come down to us from our Christianity. Divided as we are, we are a Christian people still. By religious conflict our Christianity will waste away as a moth fretting a garment. By religious peace, all that is true, and wise, and just, and Christian, will be perpetually multiplied, binding indissolubly in one all men and all races of our Imperial Commonwealth."

CHRISTCHURCH.

TEN years to-day exactly, the first Catholic School in Canterbury, patronised by the priests, was opened in a building which still stands in Lichfield street, East Christchurch.

Had you visited it on Monday morning, May 3rd, 1865, between the hours of 9 and 11, you would see a bashful, delicate, clean-faced youth, whose nationality you could not mistake, catechising two little urchins, his only pupils during the remainder of the week. His school apparatus consisted of a few books, slates, and copies, and his furniture comprised a few forms lent him by the good priest, and a large packing case converted into a table. Setting that he had to pay 14s per week house rent, and support himself into the bargain, having only two children during a full week he had but poor consolation for a beginner—for he had only just arrived in the Colony.

The following week a few fresh faces made their appearance, and as the parish priest could bear testimony to the teacher's worth, and as the few who attended progressed satisfactorily, the number gradually went up. Yet the income was hardly sufficient to defray expenses, so the teacher opened a night school, which took well, and both incomes combined enabled him to live. Rev. Father Chataigner, the then parish priest, was trying hard to raise funds to build a decent schoolhouse, but as Catholics then were few and far between, a long time elapsed ere the building was completed, it was far advanced in October, 1865, before the children could take possession of it. You will perceive that five months of the severest part of the year had elapsed since first starting the school in the cottage till the completion and opening of the building which was to be used as the only Catholic School in the Province for many years afterwards.

How things went on with the teacher you can form an idea, when I tell you that he marched 86 children from the old into the new school on the day the latter was opened. I think you will allow, though he had a poor beginning, that his patience and perseverance were eventually crowned with remarkable success.

The Government then allowed the Catholic School a sum of money towards the payment of the teacher's salary, provided he passed a satisfactory examination, which he did, under Mr. Restell, Government Inspector of Schools. Our new building was then considered a very fine one, high, well ventilated, and measuring 40ft. by 19ft. There being plenty of space the attendance increased rapidly, so an assistant was needed. A Miss Vallance, a lady of no mean attainments, was engaged, who looked after the junior portion of the children—it being a mixed school. After she left a Miss Oakes was engaged, who remained till the arrival of the "Sisters." The Catholic School then had a good name, which can yet be seen from the Government Inspector's periodical reports at the time, and circumstances at the present time go to show that it has lost none of its *prestige* in bringing on those children who attend thereat regularly.

The "Sisters" having arrived, the indefatigable Father Chataigner commenced erecting a girls' school, which they (the sisters) took charge of. So now, in a few years, there were two schools—one for boys, another for girls.

The Rev. Father Chataigner left Christchurch for Timaru shortly after completing the second school, where he is still working for the cause of religion and denominational education. He was succeeded by the Rev. Father Chervier, who in time was replaced by the Rev. Father Ecuyer.

Some two years and nine months ago the schools were literally crammed, especially the boys, so a *third* school, very much larger than the others, and which has already been described in your valuable journal was erected for the boys by the Rev. Father Ecuyer, who has since left, and been replaced by the Rev. Father Belliard.

Many changes, you will perceive, have taken place re the