

The Catholic Journal

Vol. V, No 23

Rochester, N. Y., Saturday, March 10, 1894.

BRITAIN'S NEW ERA.

Resignation of Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister.

The resignation of Mr. Gladstone as prime minister and its effect upon Irish questions are subjects of vital interest. That the grand old man, whose voice on account of his extreme age has long been known, his last great public act was a declaration of war against the house of lords, in a forcible speech on the parish councils bill.

Mr. Gladstone began by saying that the government had reached the conclusion that the time for passing bills back and forth from one house to the other had ended and had decided upon a definite course. (Laughter and cheers.)

To continue the process would be loss of dignity to both houses and the government has decided to stop the operation and take a decided course. The action of the house of lords regarding the bills of this session has raised a question of the gravest character. Two of those bills—the home rule bill and the employers' liability bill—occupied the attention of the house of commons 100 days. They involved vast labor. The house of lords without giving it much consideration wrecked that legislation. (Cheers.)

Mr. Gladstone said he remembered a book published in 1880 called "Fifty Years of House of Lords." The contents of the book left under the mind of every liberal a painful but firm conviction that the action of the house of lords during those 50 years had been grievously unsatisfactory. (Cheers.)

After further reviewing the action of the lords in the past on various vital questions Mr. Gladstone said:

"We have now come to a more gentle stage. The question now is whether the judgment of the house of lords is not only to modify, but to annihilate the whole work of the house of commons." (Continued cheering.)

Without using any hard words or without presenting to judge motives, we feel our duty to state the indisputable fact that the issue is raised between a deliberative assembly elected by the votes of seven million men and a different kind of an assembly, though it was occupied by some men of virtue and talent. That controversy, once raised, must go forward to its issue." (Loud cheering.)

Between the representatives of the people and those filling the non-elective chamber, he admitted that the house of commons could not take it upon itself to pass judgment on the matter or be the final judge of its own case. There was a higher authority than the house of commons. There was the authority of the nation (cheers and counter-cheers) which must in the last resort decide the crisis at once. The government would regard the decision as absolutely final.

The time had come, Mr. Gladstone continued, to invite this decision of the people. The circumstances under which the decision would be invited constituted a question of the gravest character. His own duty for the present terminated with calling attention to the fact. (Loud liberal and radical cheers.)

Mr. Gladstone's resignation, following immediately such a speech, created various comment, and Queen Victoria came in for her share of condemnation.

The Chronicle comments bitterly upon the court circular, which announces boldly that the queen has graciously accepted Mr. Gladstone's resignation. "It does not express any regret," says the Chronicle, "for the departure from her councils of the mightiest living Englishman after sixty years of service—one who, moreover, alone of all others, has been the safeguard of the monarchy against anarchy, friends and open foes. When Lord Salisbury retired, after vainly trying to coerce Ireland, the queen notified him that she accepted his resignation with much regret."

The Times says editorially:

"The general outcome of the manifold discussion in the liberal party undoubtedly is that nobody can assume the leadership with anything like Lord Rosebery's prospects of success. Outside his party this conviction is even stronger. It must be assumed that the new ministry will, as long as it lasts, follow every motion led by the old one. The duration of the term of office cannot be a matter of serious solicitude to Lord Rosebery. He was thrown suddenly and, doubtless, reluctantly into a position where he finds a chaotic party fettered in all sorts of informal ways by all sorts of incompatible engagements, and despite of any coherent body of convictions and as any intelligible principle of action. He must address himself to rescuing it and placing it in the possession of a straightforward, patriotic policy. The task cannot be prosecuted with any hope of success within a period of ordinary discipline and reflection in the parliamentary opposition."

Tribute to Catholic Worship.

There is something in Catholicism so poetic and attractive—I was about to say so material—that it will ever exercise a charm over the minds and hearts of men. The soul finds a delicious repose in the silent chapel, before the lighted candles, in the suave atmosphere where sweet-smelling incense and harmonious music mingle. It nestles close to the bosom of a celestial mother, where it feels itself immersed in the sentiments of humility, its filled with filial love and made capable of lifting its thoughts to the Redeemer Himself. The Catholic church, with her open doors, her luminous altars, her thousands of preaching and singing tongues, her hymns, her mass, her feasts and anniversaries, is ever admonishing us with tender, pathetic solicitude that her maternal arms are open, ready to welcome all those who find their earthly burden too heavy to bear alone. She is ever offering the sweet banquet of love, and her hospitable doors are ever open day and night to the wandering, seeking rest and peace. When I look upon the incessant activity of the priests expounding daily the blessed sacrament and restoring it again to its place, when I behold the ever varying colors of their vestments, like a perpetual spring, the Catholic church appears to me a broad, overflowing fountain in the heart of some populous city, whose tired, drenched it refreshes, comforts and cleanses.

Irreligious Publications.

An important address delivered by the Most Rev. Dr. Nulty, Lord Bishop of Meath, appears in the Westminster Nationalist. We make the following extract from the report:

Bishops were not merely acting from their own intrinsic right, but also as delegates from the Holy See, in condemning newspapers, pamphlets, and leaflets that contained anything that was injurious to the faith or morals of their respective flocks. And with that view and with that Divine authority by some time ago condemned the reading of a newspaper published in this town. He forbade its reading by his flock in Westmeath, and more particularly by that part of his flock living in Mullingar. He condemned its reading, and he warned his flock that they could not read it or encourage that print without serious danger to their own faith and morals. That condemnation he pronounced, and not merely by his own authority, but by the authority of the Holy See. He was told that his condemnation had been misrepresented and misunderstood, and a different feature of interpretation put upon it. It was said he did not forbid it under pain of sin. He did not mention sin, but from the way in which it was delivered he did condemn it under the pain of sin. He had no right to condemn any political or scientific doctrine. If a man differed from him in politics, he (Dr. Nulty) would argue with him and try to convince him by his own way of thinking. He would do the same on a question of science, for example, geology or astronomy. He (Dr. Nulty) would discuss the matter as well as he could, but he had no right to condemn the other man's opinion. But when a publication, newspaper or periodical, contained doctrines that were either opposed to the faith of his people or to Christian morality which they were bound to practice—that he condemned as a bishop, as being intrinsically sinful. His condemnation always implied that the reading of these books or newspapers, when they were a violation of morality, was essentially a sin. But now he would inform them that there was no improvement in this newspaper, he repeated that condemnation again and he distinctly condemned reading that as sinful. Furthermore, he declared that as long as men continued to read that they were not fit subjects for the sacraments. He said, although he may believe he is, he may go to confession to a priest, but a priest who knew his theology would not give absolution. If he did, the absolution is null and void, and certainly a priest could give absolution only to a penitent who is disposed, and any man who reads that newspaper after this condemnation could not be supposed to have contrition and the purpose of never off-nding God any more. As long as he continued the reading of that newspaper he cannot be forgiven.

Christian Press Association.

A movement has been begun in the Catholic church which is to be conducted on lines somewhat similar to those under which the Methodist book concern is carried on. It has been started by the Rev. James L. Meagher of Caronova, N. Y., who has founded the Christian Press Association, which is composed of priests and lay persons, governed by a constitution approved by Mgr. Satolli, the apostolic delegate. The association is recommended by more than forty Catholic prelates.

In the Christian Press, which is the organ of the new association, Fr. Meagher tells how the work is to be carried on. "The object of the association," he says, "is to teach truth, to enlighten men, to clear up difficulties, to remove errors, to bring about the spirit of Christian unity to break down prejudices, to draw churches nearer, to educate our people, and to spread knowledge and the love of Jesus Christ among men."

We wish to uphold the constitution of the United States, to foster the liberties we enjoy, to teach our people to obey law, to love the American commonwealth, to be good citizens in peace and brave soldiers in war—in a word, the association will teach men how to be contented in this world and how to gain heaven in the next.

"To do this the Christian Press Association proposes to establish a publishing house, write books, translate from other languages, publish the fathers of the church in English, get priests to write for us, do in this country what the Abbé Migne did in France, and, perhaps more, and use the modern improvements in the printing and the scattering of Christian literature all over the world."

This is in the spirit of the apostolate of the press, which may fairly claim the Rev. Isaac T. Hecker, founder of the Paulist Fathers, for its pioneer.

At the convention of the apostolate of the press, held under the Paulist management two years ago, in New York, Fr. Meagher was an active participant.

God in the Constitution.

The Judiciary committee of the United States house of representatives are listening to arguments on the resolution of Representative Morse, of Massachusetts, proposing an amendment to the preamble of the constitution of the United States, "acknowledging the supreme authority and the just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and nations." This question has been before congress at intervals ever since the constitution was adopted. Of late the pressure from those who believe that such an amendment should be made to the constitution has been so great that it could not be ignored. The proposition is antagonized by representatives of various societies, of free thinkers, atheists and agnostics, and it will be supported ten times more strongly by representatives of the various religious denominations. The hearings will occupy several weeks.

In dealing with those whom in the various intercourse of life you may meet across, whether in spiritual or secular things, whether at home or abroad, always bear yourself as if you had it in your mind that they might one day become your enemies instead of your friends.—St. Francis Xavier.

THE LABOR QUESTION.

The Ann Arbor Strike and the Law of Mining.

From an able article on "The Ann Arbor Strike and the Law of Mining," by George McDermott in the Catholic World, we quote as follows:

It is a very obvious fallacy to suppose that a starving artisan stands on equal terms with the employer who takes advantage of his necessity to make him work for a wage which would not long keep body and soul together. It is idle to say that it is unjust to compel an employer to pay more than the price for which he can get his work done. It is rather to like the supposed benevolence which regards the worker from its subjects a few centuries ago, the employers say. The laborer, so it is argued, offers his commodity in open market. The purchaser buys it as cheaply as he can—buys it as he would an ox or an ass, a load of potatoes or a load of hay. It does not matter that the laborer sells at a low price because he can get no more, for that is the case with every other producer. The purchaser does him no injustice by taking it at its price. Nay, he does him a kindness.

The argument has that degree of plausibility that sort of verbal exactness which when spoken it is very hard to combat, but when written it is as gross, palpable as a mountain. Of course, it rests on an utterly false analogy. Agricultural produce, productions in general, are not human beings. It is himself he hires or sells, and not a production, when the laborer comes to an employer. If the view so insistently put forward by capitalists, that they were purchasing a commodity in no way different from anything produced by labor, were pushed to its legitimate issue it would justify any contract, however infamous. It would be the right answer of the fraudulent ship-owners who found men reckless enough to go on board their heavily-laden craft, when Mr. Edinboro stirred the minds of England against the atrocious contracts by which the lives of wretched seamen were gambled for, he had very little to do. The sailors were ready to take the risk for the pay. They could not get employment elsewhere. When the labor market is glutted of course wages will be small. If Jonathan or Paddy will not work blow a certain price, Carl or Luigi will. There are Russians, Poles, Scandinavians, Hungarians, besides Cypriots and Laigis. The market is ruled by capital because labor is superabundant. Such arguments would justify the sale of a man's honor, a woman's virtue.

It is quite possible that the consequences just mentioned would not disturb the equality of many capitalists. It appears to me that Sir Parnham MacSweeney expresses the views of morality pretty well. Disgusted with his son's tutor for not advising the young man to play the villain, he predicts that he will never rise in the church. Sir Parnham naturally thought that the conscience of a young clergyman should be at the service of his patron. If the patron of a living buys the incumbent's conscience for the consideration of presenting him to the living, good people will be shocked at the simony, simony, says the lawyer knows what. But those who reduce a laborer and his wife to the level of a commodity, dependent on the fluctuations of the market, cannot object to the profligate contract of the patron of a living and his priest.

Cynical Philosophy.

Are the public at large, is society, is the state, wise in allowing such a philosophy to regulate its life? It is the reduction to practice of the notions of those scoundrels and sophists who referred everything to political economy, because they dabbled in it with some appearance of success and failed in everything else. That at the worst tradesman in a village is always the tribune of the pot-house club, as men who fall as doctors usually become men of science, so the dull man of his year, of his profession, of parliament, was wont to become a political economist.

These philosophers are the men who tell us that the individual conscience is nothing more than an accidental evolution from some ancient superstition, the origin of which is as hidden as the sources of the Nile. Consequently there is no such thing as public spirit, no duty to society or to the neighbor. Supply and demand, land, rent, wages, capital are the words to conjure with. They contain all wisdom, all morality.

These impudent pretenders yelled from the house-top that their crude theories were right and inexorable as the conclusions of mathematics. They obtained such influence over clubs, coteries and drawing rooms that their words were law. A man might deny every truth of revelation, but he was an infidel if he questioned the generalization of these teachers. Yet no two of them agreed in the definition of any term of economic science, although every conclusion rests upon the definitions. No two of them agreed in the scope and application of the science, although the limit and utility of an experimental science should be easily ascertainable.

Consequently when they maintained that society was an aggregate of atoms, or a tumultuary crowd localized and shaped somewhat by environment, they could very easily infer that society was not a necessity of man's nature, but an advantage to the individual; that the individual in society preserved all the rights of his savage state, subject to the constraint which the common safety put upon their existence. Then a man might cheat and swindle and extort as long as he could do so with impunity. Capitalists thought the political economist a second devil. They will soon find him far less enlightened and interesting than Balzac's man.

All the same, these opinions produced to some extent and undoubtedly perpetuated to a large extent, the frightful evils under which the laboring classes suffered in England and Scotland during some decades of the last century and the earlier part of this. This influence was hardly less in the United States among the wealthy and leisured class which sprang

from looms, with promoters whose connection with it, and in a manner forms the social splendor of the great employers of labor.

The New School.

As I have said, these opinions are cherished in England by the rising thinkers. How far the new school owes its origin to the increased power and increasing attitude of the industrial masses I do not profess to judge. I think, however, it is generally admitted that the labor organizations are a more powerful influence in the modern equality than here. This system upon the whole, seems better adapted to the work they are doing, to fit with more harmony into the framework of the social hierarchy amid which they are placed, than the American system. At the same time, there is no reason why the laborer should not acquire the same standing as the English or continental.

I think this is the best time for such an improvement of the laborer as will bring them more closely to the level of the English. The possession of influence in the press and the legislature, and thence upon the entire public, will be the result. In this effort every man of public spirit—every man must sympathize who desires the welfare of his country, and the preservation of society from the evils the magnitude of which no man can measure. We are standing, perhaps, upon a narrow isthmus between the old order of ideas, with its strong bias towards obedience to authority and law, and the new order, which tends to make authority and law subservient to an industrial activity and endeavor to be forced in every other respect at any cost. If the scale tips the lead in the movement, if society helps workmen over the hard road before them, there seems no reason why the whole difficulty of their relations with employers should not be arranged. If society is scornful, if it stands negligent in the supreme crisis approaching, the result will be beggary among the masses, vast fortunes among a few, national bankruptcy out of which the country will emerge in a condition discolored as Italy or the republics of South America.

Force No Remedy.

These are startling words. But they contain the true forecast of the steps of national decline. Whoever regards lightly this conflict in the midst of us, whoever supposes it can be settled by the piecemeal whiff of grapes in Parisian boulevards, or the sorted ranks sent forth from a German slaughter house, or by additional conspiracy statutes, or untried Pinkerton detection, knows nothing of the danger and difficulty of the time.

It is not long since in England a strike would fall within the meaning of a spiritual conspiracy. The reasonableness of the demand would not be taken into account, concerted action was evidence of conspiracy, and as the effect was in some degree to injure a person it was criminal. A strike may now take place, accompanied with circumstances of force, numbers and parade, such as have been held and admitted to convert a political meeting into an unlawful assembly. The British bridge measure during the strike agitation in Ireland, and the Protection measure, during the great railway agitation in England, took place in political demonstrations and meetings not so much as formidable as the assemblies and processions of the London dock laborers a few years ago.

We say a like advance in the United States in the legal recognition of unions and their demonstrations. Trade organizations are powers that cannot be ignored. Perhaps it would be better if the different organizations were made subject to a central executive, and the gathering of any particular trade or calling were made the business of all unions met.

But the number of societies and their membership constitutes a powerful factor among the moral forces of the present so that I want a line to see how these needs or their rights—for I regard the words as interchangeable—can be absorbed by any government without of its responsibilities to the public. All else seems required to render the unions viable in enforcing the highest justice, such a solid and united front as has been presented by means of membership dues to a common control. Now, at this juncture, and prudence should consider the sensitive men who will actually weigh all complaints and demands before endorsing them, but when once sanctioned will press them to the last.

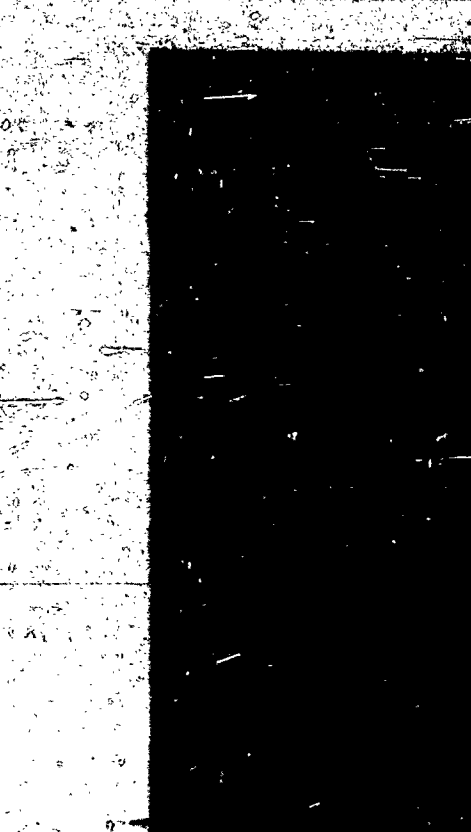
Another Blue Law Measure.

In the New York state assembly Mr. Brownwell has introduced a bill amending the penal code regarding public houses by prohibiting all manner of public sale of any articles of merchandise, except that articles of food may be sold before 12 a. m. and except that the same may be sold on the premises, and sold or served elsewhere by taverners, and maltsters and surgeons apothecaries may be sold in a quiet manner at any time of day.

Produce the Patch.

Anyone calling himself a Catholic who is afraid to publicly profess his religion is no Catholic. Such a person would do better to openly confess himself outside of the church, because he lacks the moral courage to live up to the principles he pretends to believe. Outside the pale of religion, the standing of Catholics and Protestants is simply as citizens, some good, some bad.—Catholic World.

The consecration of Rev. Michael Shanley, of New Britain, as Roman Catholic Bishop of Hartford, succeeding the late Bishop McMahon, was held in St. Joseph's cathedral, on Feb. 28, beginning at 10 o'clock in the morning. The bishop-elect was Archbishop Williams, of Boston, and the sermon was preached by Bishop Denis M. Bradley of Manchester, N. H. Twenty bishops and vicars-general from all over the country were present, besides many priests outside the diocese. Every priest in the diocese was present, except a few detained by illness. The musical service was sung by a choir of 100 voices, accompanied by an orchestra of 20 pieces and the grand organ. The vesting priests were entertained after the consecration. There was a grand supper served in the evening.



HON. GEORGE W. ALDRICH.
ELECTED MAYOR OF ROCHESTER, N. Y., 1893.



DR. BERNARD J. O'CONNELL.

The following speech from Rev. Dr. O'Connell, given in St. Joseph's cathedral, on Feb. 28, 1894, is worthy of notice. It is a powerful and eloquent address, and is a fine example of the power of the Catholic press. It is a fine example of the power of the Catholic press. It is a fine example of the power of the Catholic press.

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