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Church still numbered 6,000, professing all the main articles of the Roman faith except Papal infallibility. The Jesuit policy has thus proved only too successful, and a movement which might have matured into a thorough reform from within has languished away into a sterile schism.

Within the last half-century the philosophy of evolution has influenced even theology so profoundly that such problems as those handled by St. Augustine and his successors require restatement before they can be finally discussed. This we cannot attempt at the close of an article—but we may be allowed to enter a caution. There are some well-intentioned apologists who, to lighten the ship, would throw over the Christian doctrine of sin. The type is perfected through struggle; and, viewing the process from its consummation, the physicist will tell you that sin is only “a necessary condition of all progress, and pre-eminently so of moral progress”;<sup>1</sup> it is conduct tending to the extinction of the sinner, who is simply the weaker that goes to the wall. Original sin is the outcrop of inherited tendencies which in the primitive savage state were useful and life-sustaining. This is surely Pelagian teaching; its only message to the wounded, sin-laden conscience, seeking peace with God, is the sentence of Nature, “red in tooth and claw,” upon her weaker organisms—*Væ victis!*

W. YORKE FAUSSET.

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### ART. III.—THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND.

AT the present moment, when Church Reform in connection with the Church of England is attracting so much attention, a short sketch of the constitution of the sister Church of Ireland, which she adopted after disendowment and separation from the State, may not be destitute of interest. That constitution is no mere academic one; it is a very real thing, an active, vital organization, bearing from day to day the strain of actual working. It is a constitution which has now been in existence for more than five-and-twenty years, has been found efficient for the purposes for which it was designed, and has enlisted in its favour the adhesion of the vast majority of the members of that Church. It consequently may be considered as an object-lesson of a plan of representative

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<sup>1</sup> Le Conte, “Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought,” pp. 336, 337. Cf. Correspondence (L. Huxley and others) in *Journal of Education*, January, 1897.

Church government, elaborated in our own time, and in full and active working order.

The "Irish Church Act, 1869," by which the Church of Ireland was deprived of her endowments and cut off from any further connection with the State—introduced on March 6, 1869—passed both Houses of Parliament, and received the Royal assent in July of the same year. If it deprived the Church of her endowments, it at least conferred on her liberty. The 19th section enacted that "From and after the passing of this Act, there shall be repealed and determined any Act of Parliament, law or custom, whereby the Archbishops, Bishops, clergy or laity of the said Church, are prohibited from holding assemblies, synods or conventions, or electing representatives thereto for the purpose of making rules for the well-being and ordering of the said Church, and nothing in any Act, law or custom, shall prevent the bishops, the clergy and laity of the said Church, by such representatives, lay and clerical, and to be elected as they—the said bishops, clergy and laity—shall appoint, from meeting in general synod or convention, and in such synod or convention framing constitutions and regulations for the general management and good government of the said Church and property and affairs thereof, and the future representation of the members thereof in diocesan synods, general convention, or otherwise."

The Church, thus emancipated, immediately took action. The Church Act was to come into force on and after January 1, 1871. The two Archbishops summoned their synods by mandates addressed to their suffragan bishops, and the assembly thus convened formed itself into a convocation. Amongst other resolutions, one was passed to the effect that "under the present circumstances of the Church of Ireland, the co-operation of the faithful laity had become more than ever desirable." It was agreed that a General Synod should be summoned, to be composed not only of bishops and clergy, but also of laity. Shortly after, a meeting of eminent laymen was held, and by them a request was addressed to the Archbishops, that they would convene a representative assembly under the name of a "lay conference," in order to make arrangements for lay representation. Representatives of all parishes of Ireland, to the number of 417, attended in Dublin in October, 1869. It was then arranged that a convention of bishops, clergy and laity, should be held. On February 15, 1870, the convention met, and continued to sit until April 2—and afterwards in autumn—and completed the formation of the constitution, and a code of laws.

The following preamble and declaration was adopted by the General Convention :

*“ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.* Whereas it hath been determined by the Legislature that on and after the 1st day of January, 1871, the Church of Ireland shall cease to be established by law, and that the Ecclesiastical Law of Ireland shall cease to exist as law, save as provided in the ‘ Irish Church Act, 1869,’ and it hath thus become necessary that the Church of Ireland should provide for its own regulation,

“ We, the Archbishops and Bishops of this the Ancient Catholic and Apostolic Church of Ireland, together with the representatives of the clergy and laity of the same in General Convention assembled in Dublin in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy, before entering on this work, do solemnly declare as follows :

### I.

“ 1. The Church of Ireland doth as heretofore accept and unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as given by inspiration of God and containing all things necessary to salvation, and doth continue to profess the faith of Christ as professed by the Primitive Church.

“ 2. The Church of Ireland will continue to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments and the discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded, and will maintain inviolate the three orders of Bishops, Priests or Presbyters, and Deacons in the Sacred Ministry.

“ 3. The Church of Ireland, as a Reformed and Protestant Church, doth hereby re-affirm its constant witness against all those innovations in doctrine and worship whereby the Primitive Faith hath been from time to time defaced or overlaid, and which, at the Reformation, this Church did disown and reject.

### II.

“ The Church of Ireland doth receive and approve ‘ The Book of the Articles of Religion,’ commonly called the Thirty-nine Articles, received and approved by the Archbishops, Bishops, and the rest of the clergy of Ireland in the synod holden in Dublin, A.D. 1634 ; also the Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Church of Ireland, and the form and manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, as approved and adopted by the synod holden in Dublin, A.D. 1662, and hitherto in use in this Church. And this Church will continue to use the same, subject to such alterations only as may be made therein from time to time by the lawful authority of the Church.

## III.

“The Church of Ireland will maintain communion with the sister Church of England, and with all other Christian Churches agreeing in the principles of this Declaration, and will set forward, as far as in it lieth, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people.

## IV.

“The Church of Ireland, deriving its authority from Christ, Who is the Head over all things to the Church, doth declare that a General Synod of the Church of Ireland, consisting of the Archbishops and Bishops, and of Representatives of the clergy and laity, shall have chief legislative power therein, and such administrative power as may be necessary for the Church and consistent with its Episcopal constitution.”

In anticipation of Disestablishment and Disendowment the Church of Ireland may be said to have found herself in the position of having to face three difficult problems—to find an answer to three difficult questions. These were the following:

1. Was it desirable that any changes should be made in the Prayer-Book, and if so what changes?
2. What scheme of finance should, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, be adopted? and
3. What representative constitution should be devised for the future government of the Church?

The first of these questions—that with respect to the Prayer-Book—after many and occasionally heated debates, was in the end happily set at rest by the Prayer-Book being left, with the exception of some very slight changes, practically unaltered. With regard to the second problem, there was drawn up a scheme of finance, which, supported loyally as it was by the voluntary contributions of Church-people, amounting since disestablishment to more than four millions and a half, has proved thoroughly sound; and in respect to the third, a constitution for the government of the Church was devised which has been found to be most workable and efficient.

Of that constitution of the Church of Ireland, as amended and codified by an Act of the General Synod passed in 1889, it is the object of this article to give a brief and general outline.

In this constitution of the Church of Ireland the *parish* is the unit of organization, and in the parish the constituency is composed of the *vestrymen*, who meet and vote at the General Vestry. Every male of twenty-one years, who is either:

- (a) An owner of property in the parish; or
- (b) A resident in the parish; or
- (c) An accustomed member of the congregation, and who

has signed a declaration stating that he is a member of the Church of Ireland, and that he is qualified as above, is entitled, upon the production of such declaration to the revising authority, to be registered as a vestryman of the parish; with the proviso, however, that any Diocesan Synod may require as a further qualification for a vestryman that he shall be a subscriber to the church funds, and may make regulations accordingly. The clergy of the parish are *ex-officio* members of the General Vestry, and the Rector *ex-officio* its chairman.

It may be well to observe here in passing, in order to prevent any possible misunderstanding, that the body of registered vestrymen in a parish is merely the constituency of the parish for the purposes of voting and of discussing its affairs at the Easter or any other meeting of the General Vestry. As regards the clergy of the parish and their spiritual ministrations, all baptized persons and their children belonging to the Church of Ireland or the Church of England residing in the parish, constitute the flock committed to their care.

The Easter Vestry, composed of vestrymen qualified as above, must, by the laws of the Church of Ireland, be held in every parish within six days after Easter. At this meeting the parochial officers for the year are appointed, and matters connected with the parish are discussed. The officers of a parish appointed annually are two churchwardens (one of whom is appointed by the incumbent and the other elected by the General Vestry), and a Select Vestry, consisting of not more than twelve persons, elected by the General Vestry. The incumbent of the parish and the curates, as also the churchwardens, are *ex-officio* members of the Select Vestry, and the incumbent is *ex-officio* chairman of all vestries.

In addition to the above-mentioned parochial officers elected *annually*, there are elected *triennially* at the Easter Vestry, synodsmen—that is to say, lay representatives of the parish for the Diocesan Synod—in the proportion of two lay synodsmen for each clergyman in the parish. Every clergyman in each diocese, it may be observed here, whether an incumbent or curate, is *ex-officio* a chairman of the Diocesan Synod.

There are also elected *triennially*, at the Easter Vestry, three parochial nominators, who, in conjunction with the Bishop and three diocesan nominators (elected triennially by the Diocesan Synod), are to form the board of nomination for the appointment of a new incumbent, in the event of a vacancy occurring in the parish. The incumbent of a parish appoints his own curates.

The Select Vestry meets in important parishes usually once a month, and in parishes of less importance whenever there is

any business to be transacted. It discusses the financial and other affairs of the parish, administers those funds which in the Church of Ireland have to be raised every year by subscription, or from the offertories, to meet the necessary expenses incidental to the maintenance of the fabric of the church and its services; and in large parishes it usually appoints one of its number as hon. treasurer of the Parochial Sustentation Fund, whose duty it is to collect subscriptions to that fund, and to see that the amount is made up at which the parish is assessed under the diocesan scheme of finance. The regulation of the church services is entirely in the hands of the incumbent of the parish, subject, of course, to the authority of the Bishop. Matters of ritual are very clearly defined by the canons of the Church of Ireland, and if any parishioner is dissatisfied with anything on this head he can appeal to the Bishop of the diocese, and should that not be effective, to the Diocesan Court, with power of appeal to the Court of the General Synod.

In each diocese (or united diocese) there is a Diocesan Synod, composed of the Bishop, the beneficed and licensed clergymen of the diocese, and the lay synodsmen, the former *ex-officio*, the latter elected by the several parishes, triennially, at the Easter Vestry, as already mentioned. The Bishop is president of the synod, which meets at least once a year. The Bishop, clergy, and laity sit together in the synod, and debate all questions together. If a division be called for on any question, all the members except the Bishop vote together, unless, upon the division being called, six members at least of either order present, require the votes to be taken by orders, in which case the votes of the clergy and of the laity are taken separately, and unless there is a majority of each order, the motion voted on falls to the ground.

“In case the Bishop dissent from the other two orders with respect to any proposed act of the synod, all action thereupon shall be suspended until the next annual meeting of the synod; and should such act be then reaffirmed by two-thirds of each of the other orders present and voting, and the Bishop still dissent, it shall be submitted to the General Synod, whose decision shall be final. Provided always that where any act has been affirmed by a majority of each order, it shall be competent for the Bishop to refer the question to the next General Synod for decision.”

The Diocesan Synod appoints a Diocesan Council yearly from among its members, consisting of the Bishop and such number of clergy and lay synodsmen as the synod may determine. The Diocesan Council meets usually once a month to transact business connected with the financial and other

affairs of the diocese, under the presidency of the Bishop, and presents a Report annually to the Diocesan Synod.

The General Synod holds its ordinary session in Dublin every year. This—the parliament of the Church of Ireland—consists of three distinct orders, viz., the Bishops, the Clergy, and the Laity; and of two Houses, namely, the House of Bishops and the House of Representatives; but both Houses sit together in full synod for deliberation and transaction of business, except in certain cases, to be presently mentioned.

The House of Bishops consists of all the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland for the time being. The House of Representatives consists of 208 representatives of the clergy and 416 of the laity, taken proportionally from the various dioceses, and elected triennially by the several Diocesan Synods; the clerical members of each Diocesan Synod electing the clerical representatives for the General Synod and the lay members the lay representatives. Every lay representative in the General Synod, as well as in the Diocesan Synods, before taking his seat signs in a book kept for that purpose the following declaration:

“I, A. B., of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby solemnly declare that I am a member of the Church of Ireland and a communicant of the said Church.”

The General Synod is presided over by the Primate, or, in his absence, by the Archbishop of Dublin. On occasions when both are absent one of the Bishops presides. The following is the mode of legislation in this Parliament of the Church of Ireland:

“Every proposed statute or canon shall be introduced as a Bill, and the course of procedure shall be as follows: No Bill shall be introduced except on leave given by a resolution passed in full synod. The Bill shall then be read the first time and printed. It shall then be set down for debate upon its principles, and a vote shall be taken on the question whether it shall be read a second time. If the Bill be read a second time a day shall be fixed for considering thereof in committee of the full synod. The Bill being reported, a day shall be fixed for the third reading, one clear day at the least being interposed. When the Bill shall have been read a third time and passed, it shall become a statute or canon of the General Synod, and shall thenceforth be a law of the Church of Ireland, and binding on all the members thereof.”

“The Bishops shall vote separately from the representatives, and no question shall be deemed to have been carried unless there be in its favour a majority of the Bishops present if they desire to vote, and a majority of the clerical and lay representatives present voting conjointly or by orders. Pro-



vided always that if a question affirmed by a majority of the clerical and lay representatives voting conjointly or by orders, but rejected by a majority of the Bishops, shall be reaffirmed at the next ordinary session of the General Synod by not less than two-thirds of the clerical and lay representatives voting conjointly or by orders, it shall be deemed to be carried, unless it be negatived by not less than two-thirds of the then existing order of Bishops, the said two-thirds being present and voting, and giving their reasons in writing."

"No question shall be deemed to be carried in the House of Representatives unless in case of both orders voting together there be a majority in favour of the same of the representatives voting thereon, or in case of the votes being taken by orders, there be a majority in favour of the same of the representatives of *each* order voting thereon."

*The Representative Body of the Church of Ireland.*—This body, to represent the Church of Ireland and to hold property for the uses and purposes thereof, was incorporated by charter on October 10, 1870, and entitled the Representative Church Body. It is composed of three classes, viz., the *ex-officio members*, who are all the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland for the time being; the *elected members*, consisting of one clerical and two lay representatives for each diocese; and the *co-opted members*, equal in number to the number of dioceses for the time being. Every elected and co-opted member retires from office on the first day of the third Ordinary Session of the General Synod after his election or co-option, but is eligible for re-election. The Representative Body is the highest executive body in the Church of Ireland: administers the financial and other business of the Church, and presents annually to the General Synod a Report of the financial affairs of the Church and of its own proceedings.

Another body connected with the General Synod, and a very important one, is "the Standing Committee of the General Synod." It is elected in the first session of each synod, and consists of *ex-officio* members, elected members, and co-opted members. The *ex-officio* members are the Archbishops and Bishops, and the Honorary Secretaries of the General Synod, all for the time being; the elected members consist of one clerical and one lay member representing each diocese; and the co-opted members, equal in number to the number of dioceses for the time being, are chosen by the *ex-officio* and elected members at their first meeting. The duties of the Standing Committee are to make all necessary arrangements for the meetings of the General Synod, and to manage all matters connected with the Synod Hall, etc.; to watch all legislation in Parliament likely to affect the interests

of the Church of Ireland, and to take such action with respect thereto as they may deem necessary. The Standing Committee also acts as a Permanent Committee of Educational Endowments, with the view of preserving and regulating all such endowments connected with the Church in all matters not sufficiently provided for by existing organizations. The committee presents an annual Report of its proceedings to the General Synod.

It remains to describe the Ecclesiastical Tribunals of the Church of Ireland. These are the *Diocesan Court* in each diocese, and the *Court of the General Synod*. The Diocesan Court consists of the Archbishop or Bishop of the diocese, and a Chancellor (who shall be a barrister of ten years' standing at the least at the Irish Bar) appointed by the Bishop as his assessor, and, in rotation, one clergyman and one layman, out of three clergymen and three laymen, elected by the Diocesan Synod and holding office for five years.

It is provided that, "in every case which involves a question of doctrine or a decision as to the criminality or the status or rights of any clergyman, all questions of fact shall first be tried in the Diocesan Court, composed of the Archbishop or Bishop, or his commissary or his chancellor, as the case may be, and a clergyman or layman appointed as aforesaid, and the case, with the evidence and findings upon such questions of fact, shall then be sent by letters of request to the Court of the General Synod, which, if either party so require, shall re-hear the case, or, if neither party requires a re-hearing, shall, upon the evidence and findings aforesaid, determine all questions involved in such case, and shall deliver judgment and pass sentence thereon according to law."

The Court of the General Synod whenever summoned shall be constituted of three Ecclesiastical and four Lay Judges. The three Ecclesiastical Judges shall be the three members of the House of Bishops first in order of precedence who may be able to attend. The four Lay Judges shall be the persons first in order upon the list of Lay Judges elected by the General Synod; those who are eligible being every person who, being a member of the Church of Ireland, has held the office of a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature, or certain other legal offices specifically mentioned. Ten such Lay Judges are to be elected in the first ordinary session of each General Synod. "The decision of the majority of the members of the Court of the General Synod shall be the decision of the Court, but in every case which involves any question of doctrine, or a decision upon the status or rights of any clergyman, the concurrence of two at least of the

Ecclesiastical Judges shall be requisite for an adjudication adverse to the clergyman charged."

"The plaintiff or defendant shall be at liberty to appeal from the sentence of a Diocesan Court to the Court of the General Synod, which Court has power to set aside, vary, or confirm the judgment or sentence of the Diocesan Court."  
"The several proceedings on all trials or appeals shall be preserved by the Registrar of the Court in which such trial or appeal shall be heard."

It will be readily seen that this constitution of the Church of Ireland is thoroughly and frankly representative of all orders in the Church. The archbishops and bishops, the incumbents, the curates and the laity, are all represented. Each part of the constitution, too, corresponds, and is subordinated to the part immediately above it. The General Vestry is the parliament of the parish, and elects the parochial executive body, namely *the Select Vestry*, and also elects its own lay representatives for the Diocesan Synod. The Diocesan Synod is the parliament of the diocese, and elects the diocesan executive, *the Diocesan Council*, and also elects its own representatives for the General Synod, the clerical representatives being elected by the clergy, and the lay representatives by the laity; while lastly, the General Synod is the parliament of the whole Church, and elects the executive body of the Church, namely, *the Church Representative Body*.

This constitution of the Church of Ireland has proved, as already observed, most thoroughly workable and efficient, nor has any friction worth mentioning occurred between any of the parts of the legislative machine. Each subordinate body is so fully represented in the one immediately above it that there is practically no opportunity for any friction between them to arise. The part of the constitution in which there might appear to be most danger of disagreement might be thought to be between the clergy and the laity in the Diocesan and General Synods, or perhaps between the House of Bishops and the House of Representatives in the General Synod. But the danger of conflict between the clergy and laity is obviated by the plan of taking the votes of the synod by orders, instead of collectively, if six members of either order should demand it, and also by the rule that in such case a motion falls to the ground, unless there be a majority of *each* order in its favour, because these regulations preclude any motion from being carried which is particularly distasteful to the clergy on the one hand or to the laity on the other. As regards disagreement between the House of Bishops and House of Representatives in the General Synod, it will be seen that the veto of the House of Bishops to be effectual as against a motion

re-affirmed in a second Session by the House of Representatives by a two-thirds majority, must be supported by not less than two-thirds of the then existing order of bishops, the said two-thirds being present and voting, and giving their reasons in writing. These safeguards have proved sufficient to prevent any serious collision between the clergy and the laity on the one hand, and between the House of Bishops and the House of Representatives on the other. As a matter of fact, the latter proviso has never come into action.

It will be observed that the number of lay representatives in the Diocesan and General Synods has been fixed at double that of the clerical. This is not found in practice to give the laity an undue preponderance, because the attendance of the clergy at the synods is in general much more regular than that of the laity.

The attendance, however, of the laity at both the Diocesan and General Synods is very large and influential, and exhibits in a most satisfactory manner the deep interest which they take in the affairs of the Church. The Sessions of the Diocesan Synods are sometimes concluded in one day, but often do not come to a close until some time the following day. Of the General Synod, the Session is usually prolonged into a second week. The synod meets in Dublin annually in the Synod Hall—a building which was specially erected for the purpose of its meetings by a munificent citizen of Dublin, Mr. Henry Roe, at a cost of about £12,000. It adjoins the ancient cathedral of Christ Church, with which it has internal communication. On the evening before the day the Session opens, there is held in the other cathedral of Dublin—the National Cathedral, St. Patrick's—a special service, with a sermon suitable to the occasion, and on the following morning, before the synod meets, there is a special celebration of the Holy Communion in Christ Church Cathedral for the members of the General Synod. The Hall in which the Synod meets is a rectangular chamber, at one of the longer sides of which is a platform, which is occupied by the archbishops and bishops forming the House of Bishops, whilst the remainder of the Hall is occupied by the clerical and lay representatives forming the House of Representatives. Both Houses sit and debate motions together, unless the bishops wish to discuss among themselves the measure before the House, in which case they retire for the purpose, and the debate is suspended until their return. The presiding prelate is assisted by a legal assessor, who sits beside him, and is usually a Judge of one of the Superior Courts. The rules of debate are laid down by the Standing Orders of the General Synod—the assembly comprises most of the leading men in social position and learning amongst the clergy and laity of the Church of

Ireland—and whilst the debates are often of an animated character, they are marked almost invariably by a tone of good feeling among the different members, and deference to the ruling of the chair, worthy of the best traditions of the House of Commons.

Such is a brief sketch of the constitution of the Church of Ireland, and its practical efficiency has been proved through years of peculiar difficulty and trial. It is of course closely linked with the system of finance which has been adopted throughout the Church; and questions of a financial character form a considerable portion of the business which comes before the Diocesan and General Synods. The general finance of the Church of Ireland, however, does not come within the scope of this sketch of her constitution. One point only in reference to finance may be mentioned, which is this—that in each diocese there is what is called a diocesan scheme of finance, under which stipends proportionate to the importance and means of each parish are appointed for incumbents and curates, and each parish has to raise annually by subscriptions or otherwise a certain lesser sum, at which, under the diocesan scheme, it is assessed. The clergy, both incumbents and curates, receive their stipends quarterly—on the first day of each quarter—direct from the office of the representative body; but the stipend of an incumbent is liable to deduction if the full amount of the assessment for the previous year has not been paid by the parish.

In connection with another point which excites much interest in the Church of England at the present moment—that is, Church patronage—the mode of appointment to ecclesiastical offices in the Church of Ireland may be interesting. And, first, with regard to incumbents: The appointment to any vacant parish is made by a *Board of Nomination*, composed of the Bishop of the diocese, who presides, and six nominators, three of whom—laymen—have been elected by the Easter general vestry of the parish in question at the previous triennial election, and who are termed the *parochial nominators*; whilst the three others—of whom two are clerics and one a layman—have been elected by the Diocesan Synod at the last triennial election, and are called the *diocesan nominators*. The mode of proceeding is this: Within a specified time after the vacancy in the parish occurs, the Bishop summons the Board of Nomination to meet on a particular day. The parochial nominators have in the meantime an opportunity of considering what appointment they would wish to be made; and it is certainly a matter of due courtesy—although not required by the constitution of the Church, and very frequently omitted—that the parochial

nominators should seek an interview with the Bishop, and confer with him on the subject of the appointment. In cases where this point of courtesy is omitted misunderstanding and disappointment are very apt to arise. When the Board of Nomination meets, any member of the board can bring forward the name of any clergyman whom he may think eligible, and the qualifications of those whose names are brought forward are discussed. Should the members of the board not be agreed, the matter may be put to the vote, in which case the clergyman who gets the greatest number of votes is appointed, or, as sometimes happens, it may be agreed to adjourn the meeting to a future day. It not unfrequently happens that the parochial nominators are united in supporting some clergyman whom the diocesan nominators do not consider the most eligible, and so the votes of the nominators are equally divided, in which case the decision of course depends on the way the Bishop may choose to vote.

This plan of appointment to parishes seems on the whole to be a very fair one, and to meet with general approval. It seems to carry out in its principle the representative character of the rest of the constitution. The parish is represented by the three parochial nominators, and the interests of the diocese by the three diocesan nominators, whilst the Bishop is given a fairly strong controlling influence. Occasionally, of course, appointments are made that cause dissatisfaction; but it would be impossible that any plan of appointment which the art of man could devise would result in perfect success, or would ensure general satisfaction being given in every case.

Appointments to vacant sees are made in the following manner:

Whenever any see becomes vacant, the Archbishop of the province convenes, so soon as may be convenient, the Diocesan Synod for the election of a successor. When the Diocesan Synod meets, the clerical and lay members present vote by voting-papers, each for one or more persons (not exceeding three), being bishops or priests of not less than thirty years of age, but no person is entitled to vote for himself. The voting-papers are then examined, and a select list prepared of such persons as have obtained not less than *one-fourth* of the votes of the members present and voting of each order, or *one-third* of the votes of the members of either order present and voting. If necessary, the voting shall be repeated until two persons at least shall be so qualified; and it is in the power of the synod, by a majority of both orders, at any time to add names to this select list. The synod then proceeds to vote on the names so selected, each member voting for one person only; and such voting must be repeated, if necessary, until

one person shall have obtained a clear majority of the votes of the members present and voting *of each order*. If the majority so obtained shall amount to *two-thirds* of the members present and voting *of each order*, such person shall be declared elected; if not, the name of the person shall again be submitted to the synod, and if *two-thirds* of the members present *of each order* shall *then* vote in his favour, he shall thereupon be declared elected. If there shall not be such a majority of votes in his favour, the voting must be repeated on the remaining names on the select list, until at least a second person shall have been chosen by a majority of the votes of the members of *each order* as before.

“ If any one person shall have been declared elected by the synod as aforesaid, his name shall be forthwith transmitted to the Bench of Bishops, who, if satisfied of his fitness, shall take the necessary steps to give effect to such nomination; and if more than one person shall have been chosen by the synod as aforesaid, the names of such persons (not exceeding three) shall be transmitted to the Bench of Bishops, who shall thereupon elect by a majority of their votes one of the said persons, if satisfied of his fitness, to the vacant see.”

The elections in the present year of Dr. Mervyn Archdall, Dean of Cork, to the Bishopric of Killaloe, rendered vacant by the lamented death of Bishop Wynne, and the election of Dr. Peacocke, Bishop of Meath, to the Archbishopric of Dublin, afford examples of the mode of election of Bishops in the Church of Ireland which may illustrate the foregoing remarks. The joint synods of the diocese of Killaloe and Kilfenora, Clonfert, and Kilmacduagh met on January 8, in the present year, in the Havergal Hall, Limerick, for the purpose of electing a Bishop of the united diocese. Previous to the opening of the synod Holy Communion was celebrated in Trinity Church by his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, who afterwards presided at the election. After the President had delivered a short address and the assessor had explained the mode of voting and election, the synod proceeded to vote. In this first voting no fewer than seventeen different names were voted for. Of these the names of the three clergymen who had received more than one-fourth of the numbers voting were placed on a select list. The three names on the select list were then voted for, and it was declared that the Dean of Cork had received the votes of more than two-thirds of the clergy present, but was nine votes short of having received two-thirds of the votes of the laity. The question was then submitted to the house “aye” or “no” upon the name of the Dean of Cork; and on the vote being taken, the assessor announced that the Dean of Cork had two-thirds of the number of those who had voted,

whereupon the President declared him to be the Bishop-elect of the diocese.

Within a little more than a month after this election the revered Archbishop of Dublin himself passed away, and strangely in the providence of God it devolved on the Bishop of Killaloe (Dr. Archdall) to preside at the election of his successor. In this case neither of the two candidates received the number of votes required for their election by the Diocesan Synod, and the two names accordingly were transmitted to the Bench of Bishops, by whom Dr. Peacocke, Bishop of Meath, was elected Archbishop of Dublin.

On the occurrence of a vacancy in the see of Armagh—the Primacy—the Diocesan Synod of Armagh meets and elects a Bishop, who bears *ad interim* the title of Bishop-elect of Armagh. After his election the House of Bishops meet, and by a majority of their votes elect one of their number to the Archbishopric of Armagh and Primacy of all Ireland. And for the purpose of election the Bishop-elect is a member of the House of Bishops. The Bishop-elect may be elected to the Archbishopric of Armagh and Primacy of all Ireland; if not, he shall be consecrated Bishop of the see vacated by the Prelate elected to such Archbishopric and Primacy.

The appointment of Deans, Archdeacons, and other dignitaries, Prebendaries and Canons, rests, except in certain particular cases, with the Bishop of the Diocese. As regards the cathedral church of St. Patrick, Dublin, which has been made, since May 2, 1872, a national cathedral, having a common relation to all the dioceses of the Church of Ireland, each diocese has the right of appointing to one prebendal stall, and the Dean, as previously was the case, is elected by the members of the chapter out of their own body. It was enacted "that there shall be stalls in the said cathedral for the Archbishop of Armagh, the Archbishop of Dublin, and the other Prelates of the Church of Ireland."

In conclusion, it may be said that this uniformity of constitution, and its thoroughly representative character, the uniformity of financial arrangements, of ritual, and of the mode of appointment to ecclesiastical offices, and the centralization of power in the General Synod and its executive, the Church Representative Body—in a word, this union and discipline, combined with the free action of representative institutions, have had the effect of welding more and more every year the Church of Ireland into a compact, loyal, and united body, and she may be truly said to stand at this present moment—thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church—strong and united, "as a city that is at unity in itself."

ANDREW C. ROBINSON.