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of our liberties—social, political, religious—the faith which has come down to us from battles which our fathers fought, and from scaffolds where they fell.

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ART. V.—THE UNITED DIOCESES OF DOWN, AND CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

AT a time when trouble and perplexity are in the hearts of the true friends of Ireland, and when they are straining their eyes to discover some rift in the dark cloud which rests upon her fortunes, it is something to be able to indicate at least one spot of brightness and hope, and one possible solution of the difficult question as to the future of Ireland and her ancient Church.

The results of the late census have been in some respects disappointing. They show a general diminution of the number of members of the Church of Ireland, which, though it might have been predicted, is none the less disheartening. The diminution of course may be explained. In many parts of the country, landlords, whose incomes were diminished, and whose lives were not safe, shut up their houses, and withdrew with their establishments to places where they could live at less expense, and with less danger. In most of the districts thus affected, the withdrawal even of one family with its belongings would make a sensible impression on the small congregation attending the parish church, and a still more sensible impression on the sustentation funds of such parishes. Moreover, it was well known that the action of a considerable portion of the Primitive Wesleyan Methodists, or "Church Methodists," as they were called, would tend to show a decrease in the numbers of Irish Churchmen. Many of those Church Methodists, who in previous decades returned themselves as members of the Irish Church, on the occasion of the last census, untrue to the traditions of their Founder, returned themselves as members of the Wesleyan community. The decrease, amounting as it did to little more than 30,000, by no means exceeded the anticipation; still, it is 30,000 on the wrong side, and it is to be distinctly traced amongst those professional classes in which much of the strength of the Church of Ireland lay. It is small comfort to be able to account for this by the steady action of political patronage and promotion, and the growing influence of Romanism in

the Poor-law Boards and Dispensary Committees of the South and West; the result is as it is, and, being so, is disappointing.

This result, however, truly disappointing as it would have been had it been all along the line, is modified by the returns from some of the Northern Dioceses, and notably from that united Diocese of Down, and Connor, and Dromore, the name of which is at the head of this paper; nor is it without its own significance that a diocese which exhibits a substantial increase in its church population, is in material things the most prosperous as well as the most law-abiding in Ireland.

It may then be interesting to attempt a brief sketch of the past and present of these dioceses. It may also be useful to do so, having regard to what, without offence, may be called the prevailing ignorance amongst our English friends with regard to Irish affairs in general, and Irish Church affairs in particular.

Speaking geographically, the Dioceses of Down, Connor, and Dromore include the whole of the counties of Down and Antrim, with a small portion of the county of Armagh, and a very small portion of the county of Londonderry. The Diocese of Connor, which includes the greater part of the town of Belfast, is the largest of the three, and is nearly conterminous with the county of Antrim. This Diocese of Connor has far and away the largest church population of any single diocese within the limits of the Church of Ireland.

Speaking ecclesiastically, these dioceses, in the course of their long history, have been independent of one another, united, disunited, and partially re-united, previous to the present settlement, which was effected by the Church Temporalities Act of 1833. By that Act, the Diocese of Dromore, then a separate diocese, was, upon the death of its Bishop, to be joined to the See of Down and Connor.[1]

It is conjectured by Ware ("Works," vol. i., p. 195, ed. Harris), that, for centuries after the year A.D. 583, Down had no peculiar Bishop of its own, but was included in the Diocese of Connor. Dean Reeves, however, seems to think that, having regard to the number of names of Bishops of Down, as well as of Connor, recorded in the "Irish Annals," we may reasonably suppose that, for a considerable time at all events, the two dioceses were independent of one another, their union being effected at the Synod of Rathbreasil, A.D. 1118. We may therefore for convenience' sake, in our notice of the foundation and early records of these dioceses, follow the ordinary classification, and treat of them as Down, and Connor, and Dromore.

A few preliminary observations as to the nature of the

[1] A union which took place in the year 1842.

Episcopate in the early Irish Church may be of use at this stage of the proceedings. One peculiar feature of the early Irish Church is the number of its Bishops, and, we may add, the number of little Sees, which were subsequently grouped together so as to make a diocese of orthodox dimensions. Nennius sums up the labours of St. Patrick by ascribing to him the foundation of 365 churches, the consecration of 365 Bishops, and the ordination of 3,000 presbyters; and the tripartite life of St. Patrick makes the number of Bishops consecrated by him to be 370, and of priests to be 5,000. These Bishops seem to have been, for the most part, suffragans, and somewhat of the nature of Rural Deans; and they also seem to have been called forth by the sudden accession of great numbers to Christianity; for, as has been remarked by Dr. Lanigan, there is no instance of any other nation which received the Christian religion in as short a space as the Irish nation did. The number of petty principalities into which the county was divided, led to a corresponding number of these "Chorepiscopi," or "country Bishops," who differed from what have been called the "Cathedral Bishops" by receiving their consecration from *one*, and not from *three* Bishops. The institution of Rural Deans, which appears to have taken place at the Synod of Kells, A.D. 1152, gradually led to the suppression of these minor members of the Episcopal order.

That these Chorepiscopi, however, possessed higher privileges than those which pertained to the priestly function, is clear from the case of St. Columbkille, the Abbot of Iona, whose biographer and successor, Adamnanus, tells us how a certain stranger from Munster, a Bishop in disguise, was made known to the saint in the breaking of bread, and how due reverence was rendered to his superior by the saintly Abbot.

This multiplication of Bishops had its own inconveniences as well as its own advantages; it developed into an order of roving Bishops, who, having no special duties of their own, became *Episcopi vagantes*—wandering stars—intruding into other dioceses in strange countries, and there using the functions of their office to the often annoyance of their brethren. It was therefore in the nature of things that, having served the purpose which called them forth, they should in due time have to pass away; but some notice of their existence is necessary even in so brief a sketch as this, were it only for the fact that, before the Diocese of Down reached its present form and dimensions, it absorbed the sub-Dioceses of Dunlegthlas, Nendrum, Maghbile, Beanchui,[1] and —name still harder to be pronounced—Rathmurbhuilg.

[1] Or Bangor (White Choir).

The first of these names, *Dun*-leg-thlas, gives its title to the Diocese of Down; and the name Down-patrick, which belongs to the cathedral of the diocese, accords with the prevalent opinion that it was founded by St. Patrick. Indeed, the grave of the saint is shown in the churchyard; and three niches, still remaining in the gable over the east window of the cathedral, are said to have contained the statues of Sts. Patrick, Brigid, and Columba.

> "Hi tres, in *Dumo* tumulo, tumulantur in uno,
> Brigida, Patricius, atque Columba pius."

According to another tradition, Rossius, or Rus—the first convert to Christianity in Ulidia—is said to have been the first Bishop; and, according to others, one Loarn. Mention is also made of a St. Thassach; but, as we have seen above, there was no stint in the matter of Bishops in the early Irish Church, and it is enough to indicate St. Patrick as the Founder, and the latter part of the fifth century as the time.

Dun-leth-glas, or the *camp* or *fort* of Lethglas, was the capital of the surrounding territory, which went under the name of Ulidia.[1] The importance of the place led to its supremacy as the cathedral city, and the affix Leth-glas, which doubtless arose from local circumstances, dropping off, the word *Dun* remained, which became in Latin *Dunum*, and in English *Down*.

Before we proceed to later times it may be well to make a few observations on the Dioceses of Connor and Dromore.

Like Down, the present See of Connor comprised several churches, which on one or more occasions have been Episcopal seats, and have given their title to their Bishops; it is needless to particularize the hard names, and it will suffice to say that the See of Connor was founded during the latter half of the fifth century by Ængus MacNisse, who became its first Bishop and Abbot.

Connor, which is now a small village, is about five miles from Ballymena, a large market-town in the centre of the county of Antrim. It is also about half a mile from the village of Kells—where are the remains of a monastery—to which it is probable the ancient cathedral church was attached.

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[1] About the beginning of the twelfth century, in many instances the old *cathedral* names of the Irish Sees were for a time superseded by *territorial* designations: thus the Bishop of Dundalethglas became the Bishop of Ulidia, the Bishop of Connor became Bishop of Dalaradia, the Bishop of Dromore became Bishop of Iveagh; and this nomenclature continued for some ages among the natives, until by degrees it died away, and all the dioceses of Ireland resumed their own cathedral names, with the exception of Meath and Ossory, which still retain their territorial names.—See Dean Reeves' *Eccl. Ant. of Dio. Down*, &c.

As far as can be ascertained—the monastery and cathedral became permanently separated about the end of the twelfth century, and another church, subsequently called the Church of Connor, was founded for cathedral or parochial purposes. The edifice then erected has long since disappeared, and previous to the Reformation nothing in the nature of a regular cathedral chapter seems to have existed; in fact, up to that time the only dignitary connected with the cathedral was the Archdeacon, and all capitular acts were performed by the Archdeacon and clergy assembled in Synod. The present chapter was constituted by charter of King James I. in the year 1609.[1]

The Church of Connor is now only parochial and is, what used to be called in directories, and the multitudinous books of those who travelled in Ireland, and gave their impressions of what they saw then to the public, "a small neat edifice in the Gothic style." The church at Lisburn, or Lisnegarvie,[2] is now called the Cathedral of Connor, and the dignitaries and prebendaries are installed there; but surely it would seem that the time has fully come when this great diocese should have in the busy centre of Belfast a cathedral worthy of its importance.

The See of Dromore was founded by St. Colman, who established a monastery there, and presided over it in the joint capacity of Bishop and Abbott. Similarly with Down and Connor, Dromore has grouped under its own name several smaller Sees, and two of the parish churches at present within its bounds, viz. Donaghmore and Magheralin, once laid claim to cathedral dignity as being Episcopal seats. The Cathedral of Dromore, a very unpretending edifice, was dedicated to St. Colman, and up to the time of the Reformation had for its chapter a Dean, Archdeacon and Canons; but in the year 1609, James I. not only changed the constitution of the chapter by transforming the Canons into dignitaries with one Prebendary; but he also changed the name of the cathedral, ordaining that from henceforth "erit et vocabitur Ecclesia Cathedralis Christi Redemptoris de Drumore."

At the period of what may fairly be called the Anglo-papal

[1] The first Dean being Milo Whale, the Archdeacon Nicholas Todd, the Precentor William Todd, the Treasurer Samuel Todd, the Chancellor Robert Maxwell. The prevalence of the name of Todd in the chapter may possibly be accounted for by the fact that Bishop Todd was then at the head of the three Sees of Down, Connor, and Dromore.

[2] The Church of Lisburn was made by charter of King Charles II. the cathedral for the Dioceses of Down and Connor. At that time the Cathedral of Down was in ruins; but as it has since been restored, the Diocese of Connor now enjoys the sole privilege, such as it is, of using this building for the purpose indicated above.

invasion, the Church of Ireland reaped certain advantages in the way of form and organization, whilst she undoubtedly lost much of her old independence and purity of doctrine and practice. St. Bernard draws a doleful picture of Down, Connor, and Dromore in the year 1124; he describes the faithful in those parts as being beasts rather than men, as Christians in name but Pagans in reality. And yet a close analysis of this holy man's complaint makes it sufficiently clear that the great fault of these Irish Churchmen was that they did not conform to the Romish discipline. Indeed, during the whole of the twelfth century it seems to have been the cue of the advocates of Papal ascendency in Ireland to depreciate the native institutions of the country and to exalt the discipline of Rome. But the union of the Sees of Down and Connor and Dromore, under the presidency of Malachi, in the year 1124, points to a consolidation of small Sees, which, whilst after the manner of human affairs it ran into an opposite extreme, must have tended to better government and greater unity of action. On the retirement of Malachi, the See of Connor seems to have again had a separate Bishop of its own; and so things continued till the year 1441, when, the See of Down becoming vacant, John, Bishop of Connor, entered on the administration of Down and Connor, and from henceforth the two dioceses were incorporated under one Bishop.

At the time of the Reformation, the Bishop of the United Sees was Eugene Magenis, whose episcopate extended from 1541 to 1560,[1] and therefore included those stirring periods of change and excitement, the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII., the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, and the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. When he came to preside over the See, he found his Cathedral of Downpatrick in ruins, it having been pillaged and burned by Lord Leonard de Grey, who defaced the monuments of Sts. Patrick, Brigid and Columba. This occurred in the year 1538; and it is one amongst many proofs of the stormy and unsettled character of succeeding centuries, that the Cathedral of Down remained a ruin until the close of the eighteenth century, when, by the exertions of Arthur, Marquis of Downshire, and Dean Annesley, it was restored to something of its former grandeur.

The history of the Reformation in Ireland during the reign of Queen Elizabeth is very much of a blank; and on the whole it is better that it should be so. Reformation of religion, in the real sense of the word, was confined to Dublin and

[1] The Bishop who succeeded Eugene Magenis was John Merriman, an Englishman, Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth; his appointment does not seem to have been made until 1568.

some few of the larger towns. In the country parts much more was done in the way of burning than of building churches, and—it is sad to say it—the Bishops were far more intent on alienating the revenues still left to their Sees, than in reclaiming the flocks committed to their charge from barbarism and Popery.

The north of Ireland had its full share of misery and unrest; in fact, under the O'Neills it was in a chronic state of rebellion during a great part of Elizabeth's reign. As Spenser said: "It is ill preaching amongst swords;" and the sounds of the Gospel of peace were hardly heard amidst the din and clash of arms. Still, it is a striking instance of the overruling Providence of God that the district of Ireland, once the most wasted and disturbed, is now the most peaceful and prosperous and Protestant; and the fact that we have such an instance to point to, ought to give us some hope and cheer when we are inclined to despair of the future of this country.

On the accession of James I. the flight of the two great Irish chieftains, the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell, whose conspiracies were detected and frustrated, threw into the hands of the Government an immense quantity of forfeited property. To this flight and forfeiture we trace the celebrated "Plantation of Ulster," a measure which, notwithstanding all the jobbery which followed it, and the division which it unfortunately introduced into the Protestant camp, has left its mark for good upon the face of the Province of Ulster, and more particularly on the counties of Armagh, Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Down, and Antrim.

This plantation was carried out by the advice and under the superintendence of the Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester. The colonists were of three kinds: viz., undertakers, or immigrants from England; servitors, or persons who had been connected with the Government service; and Irish natives, who, after strict examination of character and antecedents, were allowed to come in. The lands were allotted in portions of 2,000, 1,500, and 1,000 acres. He who had the assignment of 2,000 acres was bound to plant forty-eight able and honest men on his estate, and the others were bound to plant in a like proportion. Each proprietor was to build a castle, house, or bawn, and all were to take the oaths of allegiance and fidelity to the Government. Nor were the interests of the Church forgotten in this plantation. It was provided that a church should be built, rebuilt, or restored in every parish, and that glebes of 60, 90, or 120 acres should be assigned to the clergymen. In the interest of education also a considerable portion of the confiscated land was assigned to Trinity College, Dublin, which also obtained the patronage of six

good livings. As the result of this wise measure multitudes of people flocked from England and Scotland; the London Corporation obtained vast tracts of land, and built the cities of Londonderry and Coleraine.

Two difficulties attended this plantation: one, almost inevitable, though happily not permanent; the other, which still to a certain extent remains and will remain for many years to come.

It could hardly be expected that the natives, who were driven from their lands and homesteads, should have looked with much favour on those who took their places. At first, indeed, they had nothing to do but grin and bear it, for they were weakened by crushing defeats, and the Government was too strong to be assailed with any hope of success; but they bided their time, and the massacre of 1641, which chiefly took place in the plantation of Ulster, was a testimony to the hatred of the native Irish to the immigrants, and was the cruel outpouring of wrath long pent up. The colonists, however, soon rallied when the first shock of terror was over, and their ranks have never since been broken.

Another difficulty, however, was not so easy to be dealt with. Many of the colonists came from Scotland, and brought over with them modes of religious thought and ideas of ecclesiastical discipline which were not in accordance with the doctrines and form of government of the Church of Ireland. It is not very easy to say what might have been effected with some of those people if large concessions had been made to their prejudices and predilections, but there is no doubt that, whether in Scotland or Ireland, they were a stubborn generation, and, for their part, were not much disposed to make concessions, large or small. Certainly Archbishop Ussher was very tender with them; and even Archbishop Bramhall was fain to introduce a softening clause into the letters of Orders of their conforming ministers. On the other hand, poor Bishop Echlin received scant courtesy from Mr. Robert Blair, who returned his Diocesan's concession in the matter of ordination by rebuking his patron, Lord Claneboy, for kneeling at the Lord's Supper. It is to be feared that the temper of the time, and the relations of triumph and defeat in which each party found itself as the wheel of fortune turned, were not conducive to close union and cordial feelings of friendship.

Time, however, is a powerful solvent of merely traditional animosities; and time has already done so much, that we can safely leave the matter in his hands.

An illustrious name—the name of Bishop Jeremy Taylor—is connected with another temporary union of the three Sees soon after the Restoration. The Dioceses of Down and

Connor, with Dromore, united in the time of Malachi, were again united under the presidency of the English Chrysostom, who, "for his virtue, wisdom, and industry," was entrusted with the government of the See of Dromore in addition to those of Down and Connor. Had it been the will of God to have prolonged the life of this excellent prelate, more might have been done in the way of consolidation, and much of the work of later days might have been anticipated; but it is something to say that the illustrious Jeremy Taylor presided over the diocese in its full form—the form which it now has, and which it is likely to retain.

On the history of the diocese during the eighteenth century we need not dwell; that history has not much to interest or attract. The Church held her own quietly, and after the manner of the age, exhibiting an unvarying aspect of conservatism and loyalty which was not always exhibited by the parties surrounding her.[1] But as the nineteenth century advanced, tokens of renewed life and vigour began to be manifested. In Belfast, then rapidly rising to the status of a first-class town, the labours of the late Archdeacon Hincks, and subsequently of the late Dr. Drew, told effectually, and church after church began to rise in a town where before there were many meeting-houses, and but one small parish church;[2] and it is a fact that shortly before the disestablishment of the Irish Church the merchants of Belfast endowed six new churches in different parts of the town, to which four more have been added since. Nor was this revival of energy and advance of numbers confined to the town of Belfast. In the town of Ballymena, in the centre of Antrim, there were hardly 80 members of the Irish Church eighty years ago; the population was almost entirely made up of Presbyterians. There are now, according to the late census, nearly 2,300 members of the Church, the whole population being considerably under 9,000.

[1] A strong feeling of sympathy with the French Republic led many of the Presbyterians into rebellion in the year 1798; but the murderous excesses of the Romish rebels in Wexford and other portions of the South effectually quieted the spirit of insubordination which found itself in such strange and uncongenial company.

[2] There are now in Belfast and its suburbs twenty-four churches, and yet even this number is quite insufficient for the wants of the Church population. In the district in which these churches are situated—which includes the portion of Belfast in the county of Down, and Ballysillan, Canmoney, and Whitehouse—there must be from 65,000 to 70,000 members of the Church of Ireland. Oh for some Belfast Guinness or Roe, who would build and endow a cathedral, which might be done for half the money which it took to restore the Cathedrals of Christchurch and St. Patrick in Dublin! or oh for the spirit of the Cork Protestants, who rebuilt their cathedral at a cost of over £100,000, and are now thinking of an endowment!

And these observations may lead us to consider the results of the last census with reference to this diocese. The whole result of the census, as we have already stated, is disappointing, though it might easily have been anticipated; but the revelation made as to the strength of the Church in the counties of Down and Antrim is most reassuring, and is full of hope as to what may yet take place when the Church, recovered from the shock of disestablishment, is allowed to pursue her work steadily and quietly, and to leaven the minds of the rising generation with feelings of attachment to her forms and doctrines.

The figures which follow are taken from a table of statistics, carefully compiled from the census returns, by a respected clergyman of the Diocese of Connor. They give the population of each parish in the three divisions of the diocese for the years 1861, 1871, and 1881, noting the increase and decrease in these respective periods. It would be altogether beyond the limits of this paper to enter into the subject of the parochial statistics, nor indeed is it necessary to do so. What we want is a general summary, and a comparison of the increase or decrease, with the increase or decrease of the Nonconformists and the Roman Catholics; and it may be remarked that, in this table, the Nonconformists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and others, are all grouped under one head, though, of course, the great bulk of Protestant Dissenters from the Church in the North of Ireland consists of Presbyterians.

From these statistics it appears that, in the Diocese of Down, which includes a large part of the county of Down, the total of Church members in the year 1861 amounted to 24,732; in the year 1871 to 28,247; and in the year 1881 to 30,192. The returns for 1861 are not given in the case of Nonconformists and Roman Catholics; but those for the two following decades exhibit these results: for 1871, Nonconformists, 79,008; for 1881, 75,650. Roman Catholics for 1871, 30,327; for 1881, 27,727. And, making allowance for the fact that the increase in some parishes is affected by a decrease in others, the net result, as to the three denominations in the Diocese of Down, may be stated as follows: for the Church, a net increase of 1,945; for the Nonconformists, a net decrease of 3,358; and for the Roman Catholics, a net decrease of 2,600.

In the Diocese of Connor, where the population is much larger, including, as it does, the whole of the county of Antrim, the results are still more striking. In the year 1861, the total of the Church population in Connor was 76,817; in the year 1871 it increased to 92,027; and in the year 1881 to 102,377, thus showing a net increase of 10,350. In this diocese the Nonconformists amounted in 1871 to 213,727; and in 1881

to 223,040, showing a net increase of 9,313. And the Roman Catholics in 1871 to 107,569; and in 1881 to 107,706, showing a net increase of 137. Thus the Church population, which was the smallest of the three, has made the largest increase; and the increase of the Roman Catholics is so trifling as hardly to count for anything.[1]

We now come to the Diocese of Dromore, which is partly in the county of Down, and partly in the county Armagh, which, having few large towns, and so being more liable to the drain of emigration, has decreased all round; but which, even in its decrease, has its own lesson. In Dromore, the Church population in the year 1861 amounted to 51,918; in the year 1871 to 50,488; and in the year 1881 to 45,735, thus showing a net decrease of 4,753. At the same time, the Nonconformists amounting in 1871 to 62,168, in 1881 numbered only 56,676, showing a net decrease of 5,908; whilst the Roman Catholics, who in 1871 numbered 76,474, in 1881 sank to 67,539, showing a net decrease of 9,583. There has, as we have said, been a decrease all round; but the Church, in that reduction of members, has suffered least, and the loss of the Roman Catholics is nearly twice as much as hers.

Now, when we add up the populations of the three dioceses, the result is more striking still. In 1871, the total Church population of the United Diocese of Down, and Connor, and Dromore was 170,762; in the year 1881 it amounted to 178,304, showing a net increase of 7,542. In the same decades, the Nonconformist population of the three dioceses was 354,903, and 355,366, showing a net increase of only 463; whilst the Romanists, amounting in 1871 to 214,370, and in 1881 to 202,972, have in ten years lost 11,398 of their members.

From the foregoing figures it will appear that, whilst the Church is an important and growing factor in the component parts of this diocese, and whilst her numbers now nearly equal the numbers of Roman Catholics, and fairly promise at

[1] The increase of the Church population in the town of Belfast is marvellous. The estimate given does not include the population of Ballymacarret, which is a suburb on the east side of the river Lagan, and is in the Diocese of Down. This suburb, including the parishes of Ballymacarret, St. Jude's, Willowfield, and Knockbreda, has a population of 8,054 Church people, as against 3,102 in the year 1861. We are dealing more particularly with the great parish of Belfast proper, or Shankhill, in the Diocese of Connor. In the year 1861 the Church population of Belfast amounted to 29,436; in the year 1871 it was found that the Church members had increased to 44,386; and in the year 1881 to 54,681, showing an increase of 10,295 in the space of ten years. In the year 1871 the Nonconformists, consisting for the most part of Presbyterians, amounted to 68,927, and in 1881 to 82,168, showing an increase of 13,241; whilst the Roman Catholics, amounting in 1871 to 54,194, and in 1881 to 57,821, only gained a net increase of 3,627.

the next census to equal or even exceed them, the Non-conformist or mainly Presbyterian element is very much the strongest; indeed, in the counties of Down and Antrim, the Presbyterians amount to nearly two-thirds of the whole body of Presbyterians in Ireland. This fact, however, has not at the present time the significance which it had two hundred years ago; nor is it in any way connected with the difficulties and dangers of the south and west of the country, where the scattered Church members are hemmed in and pressed on every side with the masses of the Roman Church. It is not that the Northern Churchmen love their Church less, or that the members of the Presbyterian Church are less strongly attached to their own system. It is not even that the old political feeling, which was the heritage of Presbyterianism, and which was fostered by what it fed on, the idea of inequalities and disabilities, is dying out—for it still lingers amongst a large section of the community—but there is a common sentiment felt rather than understood between the two great bodies of Protestants in the face of a common danger; and this sentiment derives no small element of strength from the fact that Churchman and Presbyterians agree as to the sufficiency of Holy Scripture for a rule of faith, and as to the duty of framing their lives according to the precepts contained therein. The canny Northener, with his Scotch traditions, has a very shrewd idea as to his own interest, and an accurate estimate of the value of pounds, shillings, and pence; but withal he feels that he should do unto others as he would have others do to him, and, above all, he shows a reverence for the commandment which tells him, "Thou shalt do no murder."

There is, therefore, abundant room for approaches as between the two great parties, and for interchange of kindly feeling. The writer of this paper can bear testimony to general and kindly sympathy of the members of the Presbyterian community of Ballymena, when the noble parish church of that town was destroyed by fire some three years ago—sympathy which was in nowise confined to words—but which placed at his disposal for the use of his congregation, and that for the space of fifteen months, a large and handsome Presbyterian place of worship. That the interchange of kindly offices and Christian courtesy must in the long-run prove beneficial to the interests of the Church is hardly a question, since experience has shown that it has already done so; but still the real progress of the Church must be looked for in her own activity and in faithfulness to her principles.

Nor are such faithfulness and activity wanting; no doubt there is call for more self-denial with reference to the tem-

poralities and spiritual work of the Church in these dioceses, but the reports of the Diocesan Synods will show how bravely the shock of disestablishment was met, and how well and wisely the work of organization has been carried on; no one who has been privileged to take part in the proceedings of the Diocesan Council, and who has observed the patient constancy with which busy laymen have sacrificed their valuable time to the interests of the Church, can withhold his meed of praise, nor fail to admire the tact and wisdom of that excellent Bishop, whose praise is in all the dioceses, and whose business capacity and governing power have made him in effect the permanent chairman of the General Synod.[1]

We have no temptation and no desire to throw a roseate hue over the prospects of Ireland and Ireland's Church. In all sincerity the prospect is gloomy enough. We have simply stated certain facts which pertain to certain dioceses in the northern part of the island; and if we are to state further what lies at the root of those facts, they may be comprised in two words—emigration and immigration—emigration and immigration carried out on the principles of the nineteenth century; *i.e.* in a liberal spirit and with a due regard for the interests of all concerned.

Statesmen have a knotty problem to solve in the settlement and pacification of Ireland, but if they wish to deal with the question honestly and fairly, they should look closely into the circumstances of that portion of the country which is prosperous and peaceful,[2] and they should ask, How much of that peace and prosperity is due to the operation in the reign of King James I. known as the Plantation of Ulster?

J. W. MURRAY.

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[1] In vol. iii. of the biography of a famous Prelate, edited by his son, the Irish Church and the Irish Bishops come in for a double portion of slanderous detraction. It was hardly to be expected that one who was not tender of the reputation of his own father should have been tender of the reputation of Irish Bishops and the Irish Church. The course of events since the disestablishment may well be set against the slanderous innuendoes of gossiping letters; and the Bishops—and notably the Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore—can well afford to pass such insinuations by with silent contempt.

[2] It is very instructive to contrast the criminal statistics of the northern province with those of the southern or western provinces—or we may even say of the Province of Leinster. The very small percentage of crime in Ulster, as compared with the other provinces, ought surely to carry its own lesson with it.