

# Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

THE meeting of the Irish Catholic Members of Parliament which was held at the Mansion House, Dublin, on Thursday May 17, was a significant and timely reminder to all whom it may concern that Ireland knows what her duty is when her religious and political interests are concerned. Forty-three members, including the Lord Mayor, attended. The resolutions, which were unanimously adopted on this occasion, pointed to the conclusion that the Holy Office Circular was employed by the unscrupulous enemies of the Holy See and Ireland, as a political weapon to prejudice the Irish cause; and that the allegations of facts put forth in that document are unfounded such as for instance, the assertions regarding free contract, extortion of rent from tenants, and sundry other matters. Deep regret was also felt that the Holy See did not select for its condemnation the crimes perpetrated in the name of the law in Ireland, and the cruelties that eviction brings with it in its train. It was furthermore resolved, that while unreservedly acknowledging as Catholics the spiritual jurisdiction of the Holy See, the members present recognised no right in the Vatican to interfere with the Irish people in the management of their political affairs. These resolutions were, as our readers will observe, moderate, but uncompromising in spirit. They reflect the views and feelings of the Irish people at home and abroad on the entire question.

A most important and highly-successful mass meeting of the citizens of Dublin, convoked for the purpose of endorsing the action of the Irish Catholic members of the Parliamentary party on the Papal Circular, was held in the Phoenix Park, on Sunday, May 20. The attendance was very large, and the demeanour of the people most orderly. The tone of the various speeches, while being respectful to the Pope and the Holy See, was firm and uncompromising. The chair was taken by the Lord Mayor, who, in a few happy epigrams, observed that the Irish Catholics were connected for different purposes and in different ways with the Powers beyond the shores of Ireland. By their own consent they were linked in spiritual affairs with the Holy See. Against their will they were in secular affairs and by secular laws linked to England. Their religion was independent of England as their politics were independent of Rome. They would, therefore, continue his Lordship, as soon think of taking their politics from the palace by the Tiber, as they would their religion from the palace by the Thames. The Lord Mayor was followed by Alderman Dillon, who proposed: "That the citizens of Dublin, in public meeting assembled, cordially endorse and adopt in their integrity the resolutions of the Irish Catholic Members of Parliament with reference to the late Circular of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, and respectfully decline to recognise any right of the Holy See to interfere with the Irish people in the management of Irish political affairs." This resolution was carried by acclamation. Mr. John Dillon observed that if the allegations contained in the Rescript were true, there was no man—Catholic or Christian—in Ireland who would not admit that they had been all pursuing an immoral path. Several other stirring speeches were delivered by William O'Brien, Daniel O'Connell, and Dr. Kenny. The demonstration was in every way an endorsement of the action of the Catholic members on the subject of the Rescript.

The Bishop of Limerick last week, ending May 26, wrote a letter, ostensibly addressed to the Mayor, but in reality sent at first, not to the Mayor, but to several anti-Irish and Orange journals. This letter was intended to influence the public meeting announced to be held in Limerick as a protest against the Roman Rescript. In it Dr. O'Dwyer "officially and authoritatively" declared that the Decree is binding on the consciences of all whom it concerns, and that it is a grievous sin for anyone to deny that the Pope has authority to issue it. Having thus treated the question as a matter of faith and morals, Dr. O'Dwyer showed that he regards the Rescript as directed against a political act; for he says, "It seems a pity for a mere detail of political action" to run the risk of rending the whole Irish nation to its base, at home and abroad.

The action of Dr. O'Dwyer had no effect whatever in minimising the greatness of the meeting. It was powerful only to prevent the attendance of the clergy. Probably its only effect was to cause a much more numerous attendance of the laity. The gathering, which was held in the Market-field, was of enormous proportions. It is stated in the report of the *Daily Express* that there were about 20,000 persons present. The city guilds and League branches came out in imposing strength and much picturesque display of banners and bands. Great squadrons of men came in also from various parts of the County Limerick, and the neighbouring Counties of Clare and Tipperary were also pretty well represented in the throng. Mr. Francis O'Keefe, Mayor of Limerick, took the chair, and a resolution adopting the action of the Irish Catholic Members of Parliament was moved by Mr. Maloney, of Knocklong, and seconded by Mr. Henry O'Shea, of Limerick. Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., who was still suffering considerably from the effects of his recent accident, and spoke under much disadvantage, then delivered a vigorous defence of the action of the Campaigners, and criticised strongly the political action of the Bishop. Mr. Flanagan, M.P., who followed, referred happily to the high antiquity of boycotting. He pointed out that it originated in the days of Adam and Eve, who boycotted their son Cain when he murdered his brother. Mr. Cox, M.P., also delivered an appropriate address.

There is an aspect of Bishop O'Dwyer's letter which has no political significance, but which may, nevertheless, when all's said and done, turn out to be the most piquant feature of the whole document. We shall await the action of Rome on the point with the deepest interest. Dr. O'Dwyer has been betrayed into committing a high theological misdemeanour almost similar to, though far less grievous, than that for which Father Mathew was brought to book by the Holy See over fifty years ago. He has, on his own responsibility, created a new sin.

The Rescript, as it was drawn up by the Inquisition, purported to be no more than a piece of advice and admonition, backed up by a pious opinion. It carefully abstained from attaching any penalty to disobedience, and thus avowed that it was not intended as a document of obedience to which was to be obligatory. This attitude of the Inquisition does not please Dr. O'Dwyer. He thinks the Holy Office and the Holy Father ought to have gone a good deal further, and as they did not he has no hesitation in repairing their omission himself. He "authoritatively and officially" attaches a penalty to disobeying the Rescript, the most awful penalty known to theology, the penalty of eternal damnation. He makes disobedience a grievous sin. Henceforward, according to Dr. O'Dwyer, the man who joins the Plan of Campaign or "agitates" against the Rescript *ipso facto* forfeits grace, and if he dies in that state he will be consigned to hell for all eternity. If Bishop O'Dwyer's assumption of Papal authority be taken as valid some twenty thousand of his own flock must be regarded as having incurred this dreadful penalty last Sunday.

The coercion intriguers at Rome are not by any means as cock-a-whoop as they were. The special correspondent of the *Forger*, instead of congratulations, has taken to offering condolence to discomfited coercionists. The Rescript, it seems, is only a matter for individual conscience. The Pope is in no hurry to promulgate or enforce it. It is not intended to affect the political situation. So much we gather from a column of incoherent bosh on the subject of the Papal infallibility. The following telegram of the Reuter agency is briefer and more explicit:—"Rome, Tuesday, May 29.—It is affirmed in well-informed Vatican circles that the Pope will do nothing for some time which may tend to disturb further the public mind in Ireland; having decided to observe this attitude of reserve in order not to lay himself open to reproach in political questions." So this is the end of the series of rescripts, excommunications, and anathemas we were promised would be hurled against the Irish people if they did not forthwith embrace the landgrabber and emergencyman and put their necks under the feet of the evictors. They are not all to be cut off from the Church like rotten branches after all, Mr. Kernaghan, of the *Daily Express*, to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Irish people have themselves to thank for the change. His Holiness has, we doubt not, realised the falsehoods with which his ears were wearied by designing intriguers, and the danger into which they were willing to plunge the Church for their own selfish ends. The Inquisition was, doubtless, persuaded that the Plan of Campaign and boycotting were cruel expedients, fostered by a few unscrupulous agitators, from whom the mass of the people were burning to be released. We know the old I.L.P.U. fable well. The people here and beyond the ocean by meeting and resolution have given their answer to the calumny. Their sorrowful and indignant protest has been heard as far as Rome.

"That Tiber trembles underneath her banks

To hear the replication of these sounds

Made in her concave shores."

Henceforth it will be no longer possible to mistake their patience for apathy, or their religious devotion to the Holy See for toleration of foreign dictation in their political affairs.

Six hundred Yorkshire Liberals visited, on Tuesday, May 22, Hawarden Park, where they were cordially received by Mr. Gladstone, who, in response to loud calls for a speech, said that the Liberal party never stood upon broader, firmer, and surer grounds than they stand upon now. The Liberal party was never engaged in higher and nobler pursuits. Ireland, continued the right hon. gentleman, is at this moment the key to the position of every English question, and the real helm that steers the ship of politics. As regards Ireland, what, he asked, are we struggling for? We are labouring to restore peace to a distracted country. Mr. Gladstone's speech was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the audience. On the whole the demonstration was most impressive, and highly successful.

Mr. Chamberlain has, through the columns of his journal, the *Birmingham Daily Post*, given the public another panacea for the ills of Ireland. His article—for there is no reason to doubt its authorship—is, we are informed, the first of a series of papers expounding the Unionist policy. The opening sentences of this remarkable manifesto prove that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has not as yet given over that arrogance and flippancy which characterise his oratorical and other performances. When, for instance, he dwells on the decline of the national movement and the effects of the Papal Circular, he maunders the most unmitigated twaddle. The Irish national movement can never die; and as for the results of the Inquisition Rescript they may be seen in the resolutions passed a few days ago by the Catholic members of the Irish Parliamentary party. Where the Birmingham bird is not altogether as blind as a bat is in his statement that coercion is no remedy, and that something must be done on a large scale by way of extending local self-government to Ireland—the Imperial Parliament, of course, always remaining the supreme arbiter of our destinies. The new Birmingham programme comprises, in other words, county government and provincial assemblies.

His article has fallen like a bombshell in the Tory camp, where old fogies still cling to their pet theory of coercion, and nothing save coercion for Ireland. Lord Salisbury and his followers are now beginning to see that they are leaning on a broken reed in the person of Blummagem Joe; that the wily magnate is at last leaving them in the lurch; and that they must never again expect Birmingham to fall into line with them in the political arena. Irish Tories of course, stand aghast at the proposal to hand over county government to the Nationalists; and howl like a herd of hyenas at the prospect of four provincial Parliaments starting into life throughout the country. The antics of these forlorn fellows are highly amusing to witness. They see the inevitable coming on them. They know now instinctively that no matter how the wind may blow, the lingering power and influence which they possess will be ultimately wrenched from them. The handwriting is on the wall, and warns them that they have had their day, and must now make their bow, and retire. Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in both of whom they so implicitly trusted, are abandoning them to their fate; and in a very short time the Salisbury Cabinet itself