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Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH has written an article **LORD BELMORE ON Home Rule in the Nineteenth Century** for July, **TALKS SENSE**, which principally may serve to show those who read it how even an able man may write foolishly when he allows his prejudices to interfere with his judgment. The Professor, among the rest, writes as follows: "The Irish malady, let us say once more, is the multiplication of a heedless peasantry, liegemen of a Church which does not teach providence or thrift, in a country which, in spite of Irish rhetoric, is poor, and is daily being made poorer by the competition of foreign imports with its produce. For this, no cure would be found in a political revolution which could not put loam into loamless bogs, make wheat ripen without sun, or cause factories to rise where there was no coal, while the internal convulsions, which, in a land of hostile races and creeds must infallibly issue, could not fail to be fatal to commercial improvement." The Professor's remedy for the evils of Ireland, meanwhile, is emigration—but this may well be the remedy of a man who remembers only when he speaks that he dislikes the Irish people. It is, nevertheless, interesting to find, and even in the same publication in which the Professor writes, another article in which his conclusions are denied, and with all the greater force that the man who denies them has hardly any greater liking for the people than has Professor Goldwin Smith himself. He does not deny, indeed, the accusation brought against the Church by the Professor, for he is an Orangeman and would gladly agree with it, but it hardly needs any more denial than can be given by pointing to the peasantry of Belgium and France, who, though "the liegemen" of the Church, are if anything, over-thrifty.—But how could the Church teach worldly prudence if not by enjoining honesty, sobriety, justice, and the duty of providing for the family, upon her children, all of which she does? Lord Belmore, however, throws doubt upon the assertion that emigration is calculated to prove the one cure for all Ireland's misfortunes. "I see," he says, "that a proposal has been made to transfer to Manitoba the population of a whole district, and to put them into ready prepared farms and houses, on the terms of a reproductive loan. By all means let it be tried; but I have my doubts as to its ultimate success. I have occupied an official position for more than four years in a large colony, (as Governor of New South Wales) and have had plenty of opportunities of observing emigrants who had become immigrants. The young, the active, and those of steady habits do well at many occupations; probably far better than if they had remained at home. But for an old man or woman the work is often up hill. It is hardly necessary to add that a person of unsteady habits (and in an entire community there must be such persons) might just as well have remained in the United Kingdom. And at the occupation of farming on a small scale, there is much to be contended with in a new country in any case, owing to the vicissitudes of seasons and distances from markets."—But to those who advocate emigration for the Irish people these drawbacks seem a very slight thing—to get rid of the people is all they want, and afterwards these people may fare as they can—this very choice of Manitoba as the place of their exile, is sufficient proof that it is so. Lord Belmore, however, does not seem to think that it would be of advantage even to the landlords to get rid of the people, and he certainly writes in the landlord interest. "This paper is written," he says, "with a view to encouraging the creation of a peasant proprietary as a thing good in itself, as well as a method of compensation to landlords." And further on in stating and answering objections to his plan, he replies as follows to Professor Goldwin Smith's remarks as to the multiplication of the people and the poverty of the soil. "As regards a peasant proprietary itself," he writes, "it is said that to create one in districts such as the West of Ireland would be only to perpetuate a race of paupers, who could not live out of the proceeds of the land, which is greatly over-populated; and that emigration is the only remedy. To this I reply that Ireland does not consist merely of the two counties of Mayo and Galway, and of the most barren districts

of Donegal and elsewhere. I do not think that, taking it as a whole, Ireland is over-populated, whatever may be the case in particular districts; and I believe that there are plenty of farmers in Ireland who would flourish as peasant proprietors."—The writer has, moreover, acknowledged that there have been cases of rackrenting. But neither for landlords nor for tenants do the propositions of Professor Goldwin Smith contain much that is cheering.—Loam cannot be put into loamless bogs, he writes, nor can wheat ripen without the sun—and supposing the tenants to have emigrated and to have left the lands free, what are their owners to do with them? Can tenants be induced to come over from England and Scotland, as it has been proposed, to undertake the cultivation of land that it will not pay them to cultivate? What can even the great corporation of landlords make out of these lands that will not grow wheat, and cannot be improved to any large extent? If Ireland be made poorer for the peasant, again, by foreign competition, will it not also be made poorer thus for the landlord? Lord Belmore has probably had the shrewdness to see even more than he has published—to see how the matter really stands, and that the only thing to be done, not only to settle the old difficulties of land tenure but to meet the altered and still altering circumstances of the times is that the land may be given over to men who by their personal labour and minute incessant care can make it sufficiently productive. It is evident that not only in Ireland, but all over the United Kingdom the time is approaching when, for the salvation of the country, a measure of this kind must be taken. We have already explained, indeed, our reasons for putting forward such an opinion, and confirmation strong once more reaches us in the intelligence but now received that inclement weather has again, and still further, injured the English harvest. Landlords themselves, then, will do wisely to follow Lord Belmore's example and try to make the best terms they can for themselves before things reach a point at which it may no longer be possible to exercise a choice—nature itself is declaring against them.

It is commonly remarked that we often go from home to hear news of what takes place there—and **ORANGEMEN INVISIBLE AND VISIBLE.** it is therefore not strange if we find in an Irish paper intelligence relating to these colonies that none of the colonial newspapers have published—that is concerning the immense demonstration made at Sydney on the twelfth of July by eighteen thousand Orangemen. The *Ballymena Observer*, which narrates this fact, glories in the narration, and considers New South Wales far advanced on the path of progress, and humanity's upward march. The source from which the *Ballymena Observer* obtained its information will be seen to have been infallible when we add that it was a telegram received by "Bro. J. S. W. M'Neal, D.G.M. New Zealand, delegate to the Triennial Orange Council." The telegram also contained the gratifying information that the "weather was fine, and the demonstration was an entire success." Of the entireness of the success we, however, may be excused if we are somewhat doubtful, since we do not recollect to have heard of anyone's head being broken on the occasion, or of any of those agreeable phenomena having taken place which are wont to mark a successful demonstration of Orangemen.—Orangemen who assemble, nevertheless, in an invisible condition, as, for the greater part, those eighteen thousand did at Sydney, for aught we can tell, may actually make a demonstration which they regard as successful, without working any mischief, or marking their success by violence or bloodshed, as it is their wont to do when they may be seen by the naked eye. Meantime, in Ireland on July 12 the words and actions of the Orangemen and their leaders were plainly to be seen and heard, and they were, as usual, of the kind to show how great a curse the system in question is among those who belong to it—how it poisons their religion, and robs them of all share in the patriot's heart—and leaves them a starved and narrow-minded sect, isolated from humanity, and stripped of all sympathy with their fellow-men. A glance at one of their own newspapers, the *Tyrone Constitution*, reporting the demonstrations of the twelfth, shows us parsons prostituting their churches by inciting their congregations as usual against "Popery," bringing politics into their pulpits, and under cover of religion exciting the murderous disposition and hatred of the neighbour that are the distinctive characteristics of Orangism.