

even Presbyterian writers admit that episcopacy was well-established within a few decades after the death of the last Apostle, and we may add, so well established that all recollection of a previous (supposed) different state of things had quite vanished from the Church. Even Dr. Watt admits that the supposed change from an assumed Presbyterianism to Episcopacy set in "in the Church very early." In fact, he meets the full-fledged Catholic system—Pope, bishops, priests, Saints Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, and the rest—at the farthest dim dawn of the Church's history. In dealing with his topic he had, therefore, perforce to refer to the Catholic system. It was a necessity of the situation. But it is a matter of regret that he felt himself called upon to adopt towards the oldest and the greatest religious body in Christendom a tone of discourtesy as marked as it was unexpected and uncalled for. Such terms as "Popish," "Papist," and "Romish" may be well left to the slums of religious controversy. In the mouths of men of learning and refinement these fierce epithets of the penal code bear at least the semblance of intentional offence. The Rev. Doctor has, in effect, taught his pupils the use of these theological "swear-words." The law of the land and the canons of good society have alike discarded them. Even learned Doctors might well follow suit.

WHY WE WRITE.

The subject dealt with by Dr. Watt is too vast and many-sided to be dealt with adequately in the amplest space we could allow ourselves in the N.Z. TABLET, much less in the restricted and uncertain space allowed in the correspondence columns of a secular daily paper. The purpose of this and the following papers is merely to give the lay reader a general grasp of the subject, referring him for fuller information to books dealing with the matter *in extenso*.

HOW HE FAILED.

At the outset we may state that our objection to Dr. Watt's treatment of the Apostolic succession covers his discourse as a whole, and, in addition, each of the five leading positions he has taken up, and almost every statement he has made. When we saw that the learned Doctor was on the warpath against Episcopacy, we had thought that he would have gone on the trail with shield as well as tomahawk and arrow—with weapons of defence as well as of offence. In undertaking to establish the Presbyterian character of the early Church he should have

- (1) Advanced arguments to establish his claim—if he could.
- (2) He should, moreover, have at least made some attempt to demolish the very serious facts and arguments, both from Scripture and from ecclesiastical history, which, on the face of them, tell against his contention.

HOW'S THIS?

Dr. Watt has done neither the one thing nor the other. (1) He has treated us to a division of the One Fold into two camps—"the ministry" and "the Church." He has favoured us with some of his private ideas as to the workings of grace, and as to what, in his judgment, the all-wise God ought to have done (but did not do) in founding His Church. The good Doctor has declaimed. He has scolded. But he has quite forgotten the one thing needful: from beginning to end he has not made one serious attempt at proving the thesis which he stated with so much flare of trumpet and beat of ecclesiastical drum. The omission is significant. The reader may divine its cause.

VERY SIGNIFICANT.

(3). It is usually an easy matter to establish a plausible case by suppressing all reference to facts or arguments that tell the contrary way. This Dr. Watt has done. And even with this advantage of loaded dice, he has—for the reason stated above—signally failed to score. The objections against his contention are derived from Scripture and from ecclesiastical history. They are many and fatal. Some of them will be stated by us in the next of our articles on this subject. Dr. Watt may believe, or affect to believe, that they are flimsy and of little weight. That is not the question. It is sufficient for him that such difficulties are stated and are notorious. A more urgent reason for dealing with them lies in the fact that they brought conviction to thousands of the greatest minds that Christendom has produced. Even Grotius, himself a member of the Presbyterian body, held that the Angels of the Churches in the *Apocalypse* of St. John were diocesan bishops and nothing else. All this might well have urged Dr. Watt to deal adequately with some at least of the tangle of difficulties in which a man finds himself involved when he sets forth to prove that the early Christians were Presbyterians. In Catholic Theological Seminaries all over the world objections to the Church's dogmas are strongly and persistently urged. Her doctrines are tested by a very searchlight of fact and logic. Dr. Watt is apparently not a believer in extending such a system to the examination of the question of Episcopacy *versus* Presbyterianism, by the pupils of the Theological College. He has given

NO WHISPER,

not a breath, regarding the biblical and historical difficulties with which his thesis is bristling on all sides. No one reading his lecture could gather from it a hint as to the nature, or even the existence, of these difficulties. Still less could he learn that they have swayed the beliefs of the whole of Christendom for 1500 years, and of the vastly greater part ever since Presbyterianism arose rather late in the day. We are not called upon to hazard an opinion as to the results of feeding the youthful theological mind on such half-ideas on a great question which divides the Presbyterian creeds from the rest of Christendom. We had looked for a strong and scholarly treatment of the subject from the learned Doctor. He has given us only evidences of conscious weakness. The fault lies with the theme, not with the man. So much for a general review of the subject. We purpose to touch on matters of detail in our next issue.

(To be continued.)

THE WAR CLOUD.

THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN.

SINCE our last issue went to press, the situation between the United States and Spain has become more acute. Matters have now reached a stage at which the tension between the two countries is well-nigh unendurable. The war-spirit has grown into a war-fever; the preparations for the conflict are being pushed on with feverish activity, and the fleets of both powers are mobilised and ready to strike at any moment. A regrettable feature in the preparations is the number of privateers that are being got ready to prey upon commerce. Spain and the United States were not parties to the treaty of 1856 which declared privateering abolished. In this respect Spain runs very little risk—for she has little to lose—and, in the event of war will undoubtedly endeavour to levy some of the cost of the struggle off the vast and ill-protected commerce of the United States. The only thing that prevents active hostilities is apparently the difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives with regard to the proposed action in Cuba. The following is the substance of the Press Association's cable messages since our last issue:—The House of Representatives by 324 to 20 passed a resolution authorising the President to use force to secure permanent peace and a stable independent government for Cuba. A minority proposal for the recognition of the Cuban Republic was rejected by 191 to 150. The Senate Foreign Committee has reported that the Maine was destroyed by the official act of the Spanish authorities, or by gross negligence equivalent to criminal action. A great scene occurred in the House. Members fought and rushed the aisles like madmen, exchanging epithets such as "liars" and "scoundrels." Heavy books were thrown, and the Speaker vainly tried to restore order. One member on appealing not to disgrace Congress was hissed.

The American flying squadron, consisting of two battleships and the armoured cruiser "Brooklyn," and two coast defence cruisers, left Hampton Roads, the naval station at the mouth of James River, under sealed orders. The squadron assembled at Key West includes two battleships, the armoured cruiser "New York," four other cruisers, two gunboats, the monitors, and the torpedo flotilla. The American China squadron consists of the cruisers "Olympia," "Baltimore," "Boston," and "Raleigh," and the gunboat "Concord." Five patrol ships and naval reserves guard the coasts of Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New Jersey. Eight regiments have been ordered to New Orleans; seven to Tampa in Florida; seven to Mobile, in Alabama; and six cavalry regiments to Chucamanga. A flying squadron is stationed in Hampton Roads. The War Office authorities are mobilising regiments at Key West. Congress has been asked to authorise the summoning of 400,000 militia. General Lee's evidence regarding the cause of the Maine disaster has aroused an intense outcry for vengeance throughout the United States.

Cable messages received on the 18th inst. report that the senate by 67 votes to 21, adopted the resolutions carried by a majority of the Foreign Relations Committee declaring for the independence of Cuba and requiring Spain to evacuate the island, and directing President McKinley to use force. The Senate then adjourned. As one House directs the employment of extreme measures, while the other merely leaves authority to the President to resort to force if he deems it necessary, a conference between the two Chambers is expected. The Senate resolved that the United States shall not exercise sovereign control, except for the purposes of pacification, and when that is accomplished she will leave Cuba to the control of her own people. The House of Representatives will probably resist the recognition of the Cuban rebel Government. A deadlock between the two Houses is feared. It is stated that the Senate's recognition of the Cuban Republic is the outcome of a Democratic, Populist, Silverite, and Radical pro-Cuban coalition to embarrass President McKinley. Other messages announce that the Boston Legislature, inside half an hour, voted half a million dollars for the assistance of the militia of the State of Massachusetts, and that Great Britain will treat coal as a contraband of war if shipped to the West Indies.

In Spain the war feeling runs quite as high as in the United States. The American consulates at Barcelona and Malaga have been attacked by mobs and the windows smashed. The Spanish Government have addressed a Note to the Powers complaining of the offensive attitude of the American Senate towards Spain. The Queen Regent of Spain has abandoned her opposition to war, and subscribed a million pesetas (£40,000) to the war fund. Senor Bernabe, the Spanish Ambassador, has been ordered to withdraw from Washington immediately. Spain is furious at General Lee's imputation of Spanish officers being cognisant of a plot to blow up the Maine. The navy fund has amounted to more than 3,000,000 pesetas (a peseta is 9d). The Minister of War and the Minister of Marine reported to the Spanish Cabinet that measures for the defence of Cuba were completed. The Cabinet decided that the attitude of intervention on the part of America was incompatible with the sovereign rights of Spain. The Government would not admit of interference with internal affairs. An official Note which has been issued adds that Spain will not take action unless America resorts to coercion. Consciousness of right (it says) gives the Government serenity to watch and defend the sacred interests of the Spanish race. General Blanco is negotiating with the Cuban insurgent chiefs for an armistice. Don Carlos has appealed to his supporters to assist the Government. He has also issued a manifesto, in which he declares that the Spanish Government will be traitors if, through fear of war, they permit the loss of Cuba. Don Carlos announces his intention to visit Spain in order to raise volunteers. The Madrid Press display a warlike tone. One journal states that unless they wish to close Spain's history they must fight. Madrid is practically under martial law. A mob of 5,000 paraded the streets a few days ago demanding the declara-