

Priests in Politics.

NEW YORK, Nov. 1.—G. W. Smalley cables to the Sunday Tribune: Making every allowance for the indignation of Irish reporters, it is beyond question that Cork has been the scene of serious rioting, which, but for the police, would have been far more serious still. The city would, in fact, have been given over to two contending mobs. Nobody seems to doubt that had the police been under municipal or under any purely Irish control these mobs would have been allowed to fight it out, the police probably taking sides with one. There have been threats of burning the city. Certainly attack on the rival headquarters of each party have been planned and prevented. Nothing but the steady hand of English rule has saved Cork and nowhere else has been seen of late a more perfect object lesson of Home Rule.

The priest in Ireland are playing their game, I will not say too low down, but too openly for prudence. They forget the English gallery looking on—and the American. Cork is at this moment the scene of their most interesting performance. If you care to see what Irish priests are like in politics look at them in Cork. Eighty of them were on the platform at Mr. Dillon's meeting on Tuesday night. The platform was black with them. The streets are black with them. No such black band has been seen of late years even in Irish politics, nor bent on business so black. Their business is to rivet the political fetters of Rome on the neck of the Irish people, and their prospect of success is very considerable. Their tactics in Cork are thorough. Neither freedom of speech nor freedom of vote is allowed. Speech and vote must be such as please the priest, or both are anathema. They take active part in canvassing for Mr. Flavin against Mr. Redmond, and there canvassing is of a kind which no Protestant community would tolerate.

The question, Who shall be member for Cork in Mr. Parnell's place is purely a political question. Electors are told that their salvation depends on their voting for Mr. Flavin. All the terrors of the church are invoked against sinners who would vote for Mr. Redmond. They may not confess. Absolution is denied them. They are allowed to go straight to hell if to them Mr. Redmond should seem a person more fit to represent the City of Cork in Parliament. The Inquisition is at work in a new form, a fin de siecle inquisition. Priests do not think it enough to canvass for their own man. They set spies on their opponents' canvassers, and upon those whom they canvass. When a canvasser for Mr. Redmond walks out, the canvasser for Mr. Flavin walks in, note book in hand. He is either a priest or accompanied by a priest, and then and there the unhappy voter is summoned to say what he has promised or refused to the other side, and to pledge himself to vote for Mr. Flavin. If he refuses or hesitates, the curse of Rome is invoked against him, ruin in this world and damnation in the next. In a word, the most tremendous machinery the world ever knew for the propagation of dogma and for spiritual ends is now daily

and hourly employed in Cork for political ends.

The Attitude of the Roman Catholic Church

Rev. R. Crawford Johnson, the Irish delegate to the Methodist Ecumenical Council, now in this country, speaking of the opposition of the Roman Catholic bishops to the government schools and colleges of Ireland, says:

"These excellent institutions, the Model schools and Queen's colleges, in which there was every safeguard against interference with religious opinion, were ruthlessly boycotted because the Catholic bishops themselves could not control them. To kill the schools every spiritual weapon was employed. Every Catholic favoring them was excommunicated and denied the rights of Christian sepulture after death. As an evidence that this spirit of intolerance is not extinct, the reverend gentleman cites the case of two Methodist clergymen who were recently imprisoned for preaching in the open air in Arklow, County Wicklow. The Irish priests have ever been dictatorial and intolerant. Drawn from the peasantry and educated at Maynooth, they are insular, narrow and bigoted in their ideas. They have none of the culture and liberalism of their predecessors, who are generally raised at European universities. The present fight between the priests and people is instructive and encouraging. It is purely and simply a revolt against church supremacy. The Parnell divorce proceedings were the occasion, not the cause of the rebellion. For years the men of Ireland have been chafing under ecclesiastical tyranny.

They are now up in arms against it. For McCarthyism and Parnellism I would have you understand clericalism and anti-clericalism. With the political aspect of the scrimmage I have nothing to do. I only notice the quarrel at all to illustrate the fact that the days of priestly domination in Ireland are doomed. Every vote cast in favor of Parnell at the recent elections was in defiance of clerical dictation. There is a spirit of liberalism abroad in Ireland that augurs well for the future. With spiritual intolerance ended there will be a hopeful outlook for the friends of the Christianity of the Gospel.

Protestantism has no principles or consistency. It was the creation of a drunken, thieving and lustful mob, and consequently must always act as the mob dictates.—Omaha Roman Catholic Organ.

THE mistake must not be made that this warfare is being made against particular Catholics. It is against the church as a political organization.

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