THE PRIEST IN POLITICS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649224890

The priest in politics by Philip H. Bagenal

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PHILIP H. BAGENAL

THE PRIEST IN POLITICS



The Priest in Politics.

BY

PHILIP H. BAGENAL,

AUTHOR OF

"THE AMERICAN INIBIT AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON IRISH POLITICS," ETC.

With Hutchinson & Co.'s Compliments.

LONDON:

HUTCHINSON AND CO.,

34, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1893.

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PREFACE.

THIS book has been called forth by the necessities of a great crisis. It seemed to me of the highest importance that some connected narrative should be given of the action of the Irish Roman Catholic priest in the political life of Ireland during recent years. I have been a student of Irish affairs for the past fifteen years, and I can claim to have intimate knowledge of Irish political history during that period. the time I was engaged in conducting a weekly newspaper in Dublin, and the events which I relate, passing as they did before my very eyes, necessarily became deeply impressed upon my mind.

Viewed in its true perspective, who can say the political attitude to-day of the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy is not fraught with tremendous consequences? The recent protest of an important section of the Roman Catholic community demonstrates that there is

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grave uneasiness in many minds outside the Protestant churches at the unparalleled position and conduct in politics of the Roman Catholic clergy.

My last desire has been to attack in any way the tenets or religious convictions of Roman Catholics, and I wish to deprecate in the strongest possible manner any idea that such is the aim or scope of this publication. My sole object has been to awaken men's minds in Great Britain to the actual facts of the situation, and to show what has been said and what has been done by Irish priests in Irish politics in recent years. I hardly think the Roman Catholic clergy themselves at all appreciate the trend and logical result of their own action. Perhaps when they see it in all its startling nakedness they may be awakened to a sense of the dangers which surround them.

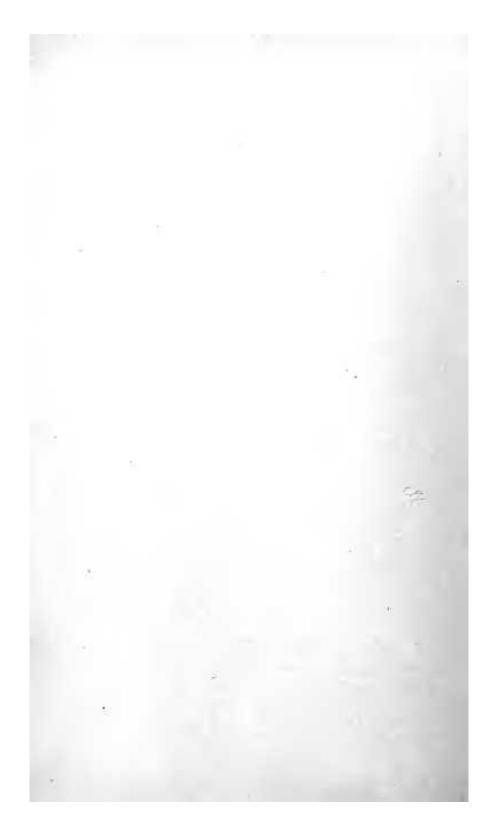
On the other hand, I have endeavoured as strongly as I can to emphasise the existence of two distinct communities in Ireland, and to show the depth of the earnestness and determination which animate the Irish Protestants in their resistance to Home Rule, Their feelings and opinions may be right or wrong, but they exist largely, because of the action of the priest in politics, and it is right their attitude should be fully appreciated.

I acknowledge with pleasure my indebtedness in points of matter, phrase, expression and inspiration to many interesting books dealing with Irish affairs—more especially to Mr. Harrison's The Scot in Ulster, Mr. Goldwin Smith's Canada and the Canadian Question, and his Irish History and Irish Character; Mr. Nassau Senior's Journals and Conversations in Ireland; to Pictures in Ireland, by Terence McGrath; Paddy at Home, by Baron de Mandat-Grancy; last, but not least, to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's pamphlets upon Valicanism and The Valican Decrees, and generally to the various publications of the Irish Unionist Alliance.

P. H. B.

48, EDITH ROAD, WEST KENSINGTON, W.





CONTENTS.

	CIIA	PTE	R I	00					
								P	AGE
INTRODUCTORY .	*		•	*	*			22	1
	CHA	PTEI	ll 3						
THE CHURC	сн ог	RO	IE I	N II	RELA	ND.			
Policy of the Roman Ca and McCabe, Oppose of front after the Dea	ed to R	evolu	tion:	ry M	ovem	ent.	Char	ige	
Archbishop Walsh.	*	*	*	•	*		7		4
	CHA	PTER	: 11	I.					
THE CLAIMS	OF 1	RISH	SA	CERT	OTA	JSM			
The Case of Messrs, Coga Archbishops Walsh a ism. The Plan of Ca Walsh and Croke, 1	nd Cre mpaigr	oke. n. Its	Care Re	linal cepti	Logu on by	e on Arch	Parn bish	ell- ops	
Ryan			17/	**	*	*	15		13
	CHA	PTE	11	/.					
SOME CATHOLIC	VIEWS	OF	IRIS	н Р	ROTE	STAI	NTIS	M.	
Mr. Biggar's Views, Th The Jesuits on Home Hughes, Scotch Ch	Rule.	Extr	aord	inary	Spee	ch b	y Fat	ber	
Protestantism. Mr.	Healy	on Ca	thol	ic Cl	ims.	×		16	26

A		No. in	of which		~~
	ı a	\mathbf{p}	ΓE	12.	V.
· .					

CHAPTER V.
POSITION OF THE IRISH PRIEST; HIS INFLUENCE, AND HOW HE USED IT.
Birth and Education of the Irish Priest. Early Impressions and Feelings. Exceptional Position. His Leadership in Local Politics. The National League Code enforced by Priests, Instances of Action of Priests in carrying out the Behests
the League
ACTION OF THE IRISH PRIESTS IN POLITICS.
Violent Language of an American Priest. Cases quoted in Special Commission. Imprisonment of Two Priests for Breaking the Law. Father McFadden. Intimidation by Priests in Local Elections
CHAPTER VII.
THE PARNELL DIVORCE CASE-AND AFTER.
Sketch of the Episode. Attitude of the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy. Their Decision, when and how Given. The New Plan of Campaign. Mr. Leamy, M.P., on the Bishops' Views
CHAPTER VIII.
THE PRIEST AT BYE-ELECTIONS, 1890-92.
The Kilkenny Election. The Star's Correspondent thereon. The North Sligo Election, The Carlow Election, Action of Bishop Lynch, Descriptions by Parnellite M.P.'s of the conduct of the Election, The Cork Election. Canon O'Mahony's Advice, The Waterford Election 8.
CHAPTER IX.
THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1892.
The Cork Election. Extraordinary Letters of Canon O'Mahony.
Mr. W. Redmond's Correspondence with the Canon. Mr.