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March 20/37

My dear Gladstone,

I know, I need do no more than congratulate you, on your speech on the Church Rate Question - for compliment would become neither of us, either to give or receive.

You will believe that, I watch your proceedings with great interest, and truly rejoice at every growing evidence of promise & success. I was truly rejoiced to see that, you took the highest ground of Christian obligation for the country, & the Legislature - and could not but feel that, you have a most blessed calling to make a manly, & irresistible appeal to all that remains true of our faith. It seemed to me to produce the greatest effect of any part of your speech - whether I am right or not you can

best judge. My firm belief is that, anyman  
who will go the full length, & breadth of  
true Xn, & Catholic principles, in carrying  
out his faith in "one Holy Catholic, and  
Apostolic Church" must in the end be the  
greatest man in England. And that every  
measure of coming short of this high standard  
will put him, sooner or later accordingly,  
out of the conflict, which is daily drawing  
on, & narrowing in compass between the  
English Church, & Protestant, a Roman  
Schism. My fear abt Sir R. P is that he  
will commit himself to a middle course, by  
which, tho' never drawn among our adversaries,  
he will lose his commanding place at the  
head of the Church of England. That no  
man, but one of the highest, & deepest Ca-  
tholic principles can in the end, stand in  
that post is plain. Many moderate men  
may fill it, & hold it for a time, & be put  
aside, <sup>tho' excellent in excellence</sup> very much, as the present party  
in power have shed, or mounted, every mo-  
derate colleague, and at last as Stifford  
said, "nothing but thorough will do it"

Your great advantage, my dear friend, is in seeing these things before hand, and having an apprehension of the end from the beginning; & you may therefore take heed of any commitment to inconsistent or imperfect views, & may shape all your course to that last & full development. This is a subject I have myself thought of, & almost always with yourself in my mind. But I wd not without your sanction write all I seem to see further hereafter, hanging on every word & action of the present.

In your speech, if rightly given, you seem to have been drawn to the hypothetical objection, "what if Church lands shd cover the whole country, or Church property swallow all, or half its wealth?" I have always thought that, no laws of reasoning even in the abstract, much less of debate in a deliberative body, can require of us to meet more than the actual, present difficulties of a case, & that we may fairly say, "when the case shall come, I will meet it, for the present I content me -"  
But I have not thought it enough to leave the hypothetical objection, unconsidered. and I wd add shortly some thoughts which occur to me. Can anything be inalienably consecrated to God?

or can anything so become God's property as that it may never be taken away without sacrilege? This involves these questions. Does the law of God permit it? & if so does the law of man allow it?

Will not the law of dedication under the Jewish Covenant answer the first question? Was it ever heard that things, consecrated by free will to God were the disposable property of the Jewish state, or people? It was not the property of Judah, but of God - And in what is the law of consecration changed? And if not changed, is not the property consecrated in the land, the property, not of the state but of the Church? and the property of the Church, because <sup>actually</sup> the property of God - and not reputatively the property of God - because legally the property of the Church. If the reputative proprietaryship can be touched the actual cannot without sacrilege - Hooker says. b.v. ch. LXXIX. of church goods a. "But the main foundation of all, whereupon the security of these things dependeth, as far as anything may be ascertained amongst men, is that the title, & right, which man had in every of them (i.e. possessions) before donation,

cloth of the act, & from the time of any such donation, dedication, or grant remain the proper possession of God till the Waldend. unless himself renounce, or relinquish it.

This exactly conveys my belief: which I cd bring other witnesses from the American Ch: to show was that of our Catholic forefathers. It seems a continuous tradition from the earliest age, thro the Mosaic, & Xtra dispensation that consecration transferred an inalienable proprietorship to God.

The next question is whether the law of man allows it. Factum valet. Human law is bound to observe the right after consecration.

Ought human law in any way to hinder, or to restrict consecration? Human law restricts entails to a certain number of years, or generations - and nothing but a clear recognition of the difference between the property of man, & the property of God, that is between bequest, & consecration, has acknowledged perpetuity in the one, while it has restricted <sup>it</sup> in the other.

Has a state any legal right, has a state any moral right to restrict the bequest offering

of Xtra in the shape of Consecration?

Certainly not, except in such cases as  
we fall under our Lord's condemnation  
of the Corban.

And could it be said that, the consecration  
of every acre in Gt Britain wd make any  
the very least of God's Commandments of  
none effect?

But it might be said that it is un-  
necessary, being too much for the purposes  
of the Church. I do not argue for the  
consecration of more property than enough.  
but I am at a loss to say how much  
more than we have already wd be enough  
for supporting by adequate incomes our  
present clergy, for providing due, & necessary  
ecclesiastical education, for building Churches,  
& repairing them, & maintaining a sufficient  
clergy for our destitute flocks of millions.  
And even if we should find ourselves  
disposed of more than all these objects,  
besides the support of school systems, &  
ecclesiastical foundations for Charity &

might require, I wd ask. Would it not seem that, God, thro' the munificence of our forefathers giving us enough & to spare, had thereby laid on us the great obligation of communicating to the Church of Christ at large, and of extending his Kingdom on the earth. "Truly have ye received &c."

I cannot therefore fix the bounds of "enough" in any Christian sense. How can we with Christ's persecuted Church in Ireland by our side. today no more - & India <sup>with</sup> 100,000,000, and hardly as yet 3 Bishops.

The only remaining point is that the consecration of a whole Kingdom would be contrary to Political Expediency. May God forgive the thought of our hearts if we dare to think so. I do not say it would not be a very difficult condition for mankind in our present fallen, doubly fallen because almost dechristianized state - but I believe it is the will, & wisdom of God that "holiness to the Lord" should be upon us, & ours in away

and measure of which our dull hearts  
have never so much as dreamed: and that,  
the scattered, half-buried laws of Christ's  
Kingdom, which are now struggling in the  
seeming weakness of decay thro' the  
snaps & body of this world's low born wis-  
dom shall one day come forth, and gather  
into the perfection of symmetry; &  
strength, overthrowing every power, &  
dynasty below God, & consecrating  
the Kingdoms of the world to be the  
Kingdoms of the Lord, & of His Christ.

But I shd fall under my own  
censure most justly, if I were to  
detain you longer about future destinies.

~~I~~ I am almost ashamed of sending you  
so long a letter, which has grown not  
beyond my intention, than your future success.

Believe me, my dear Gladstone,  
Yours ever & affectionately  
H. E. Manning.

Ms. A. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1.  
Mch. 20.  
Rev. H. E. Manning

March. 20.