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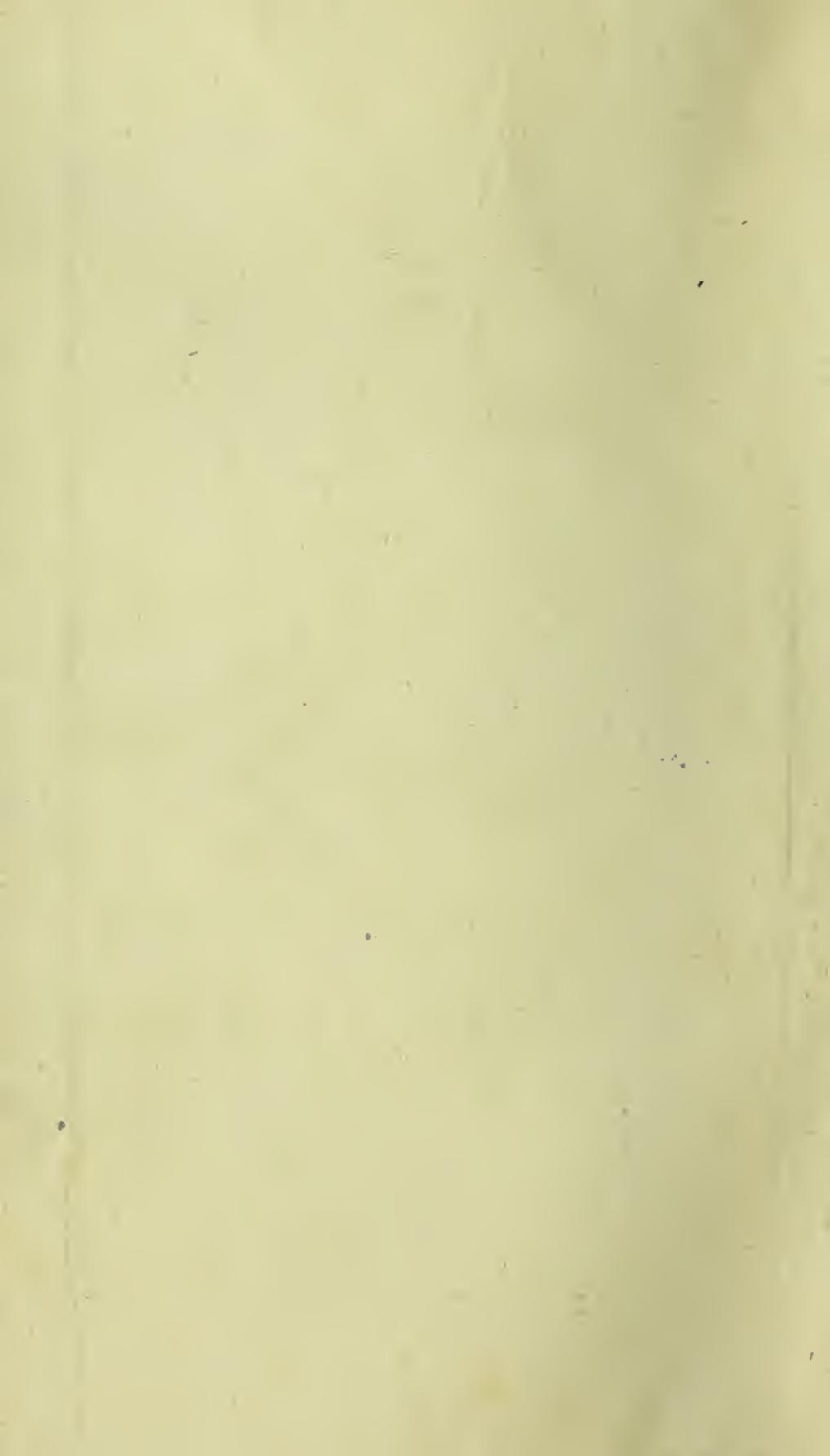
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THE LETTERS

OF THE

MOST REVEREND JOHN MAC HALE, D.D.

UNDER THEIR RESPECTIVE SIGNATURES

OF

HIEROPHILOS; JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA; BISHOP OF KILLALA;

AND

ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

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TO THE READER.

OF the following Letters, some have been already diffused in previous editions, others have appeared in the public journals, and a considerable number is now published for the first time, forming a large portion of the volume. Since the publication of the earlier letters of "Hierophilus," nearly a quarter of a century has passed over, carrying with it, in the silent celerity of its course, almost an entire generation of readers. To many of those who have since grown up, filling the gradual void occasioned by those who have gone before them, those letters will not altogether appear bereft of novelty. But novelty itself has its countervailing drawbacks, though one of the most charming sources of attraction. Literary productions seem to be regulated by the same laws, and liable to the same casualties as the productions of nature or the human race; and the embrowned complexion, bearing evidence to the action of time and labour, is often no less grateful than the

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more fresh and florid colours, which, in youthful compositions, may be signs of a hectic, as well as of a healthful constitution, and may, therefore, be equally the harbingers of vigour, or of a premature decline.

It is, however, less to the artificial skill of composition, than to the value of the materials out of which they have been wrought, the portion of the letters already published, has been indebted for a large share of adverse, as well as favourable attention. On the hearts and understanding of the Irish people, the interesting topics out of which they grew, are not soon likely to lose their hold. The social, as well as moral blessings that follow in the train of knowledge ; the malignant influence of the tyranny that first strove to seal, and of the treachery that is since labouring to poison its salutary fountains ; the necessity of an education entirely free and Catholic for the Catholic people—Catholic in its conductors, in its books, in its living instructions,—in short in its influences on the senses and the hearts of the growing generation, with the like free privilege to all others of adopting their own favourite systems ; the bigotted monopoly of the Protestant establishment, to which the freedom of education has been hitherto, and yet continues to be sacrificed : the necessity of a great reduction of that useless, nay, noxious establishment, which encumbers the country, standing in the way of statesmen in any effort to achieve its regeneration ; the miseries entailed on the people of Ireland by the forcible and fraudulent abstraction of its legislature, growing with each succes-

sive year, until they at length broke forth in an awful national famine, and likely to accumulate into a series of similar disasters, until that fountain of public misery is sealed, by the solemn restitution of its own Parliament;—these and subordinate subjects, of a similar tendency and spirit, form the leading themes of this series of letters. Of those grievances, some will soon, I trust, be matters of history. Until then, they shall not cease to interest, to engross, nay, to agitate, the public mind.

In the meantime, it will require the most incessant vigilance, not to be surprised into the toils that are artfully laid, for perpetuating the miseries of the country, by ensnaring the freedom of its religion. Among those whose influence is chiefly aimed at, are the Catholic Bishops and clergy of Ireland. Their vigilance alarmed the enemies of the Catholic faith; their firmness filled them with despair. They were ever found united with their flocks, borrowing vigour and courage from that Apostolic stem, whose root is at Rome, and on which the Irish portion of the Catholic Church has been early engrafted. The aim is now to sever them, if possible, from their flocks, as well as from the rock of Peter. The present destitution is deemed by those, whose God is Mammon, an auspicious time to try the experiment; and whilst numbers of the people are starving without relief, measures are in contemplation to make a cheap purchase of the fidelity of their clergy. Instead of leaving them, as heretofore, solely in connexion with the people; the policy is now to bring them into

anomalous alliances with those of an alien creed, for the purpose of standing as useful outposts for its protection, and to place them in an isolated independence on their beloved flocks, by endeavouring to make them sharers in the patronage of the crown, and in the gold of the treasury. Against the success of those schemes, a portion of those letters is directed ; and, with the primitive Fathers as my guides—the sacred Canons of the Church as beacon lights to direct me—with the successors of St. Peter proclaiming the sacred rights of the episcopacy to be still intact—calling on them to assert those rights against the violent rush or more subtle insinuation of modern errors, and imparting to every See in union with that rock, a portion of the firmness and immobility of the Apostolical substruction on which it reposes ; it has been, and ever shall be, my untiring aim to lend my aid, in protecting from open or ambushed aggression from any quarter, the rights and virtue of the Hierarchy of Ireland.

The strong impression of the injustice with which we have been treated, has been deepened by contemplating the far happier lot of other countries, less favoured by soil or climate. The letters written from some of the principal places on the Continent, and occasionally touching on this painful contrast, are now published for the first time. The period in which they were written, was during a respite from the harrassing labours undergone in the year 1831, in endeavouring to mitigate a calamity such as the present, but which was far less awful in its range and its intensity. The

smiling fields, the comfortable cottages, the contented, nay, the cheerful countenances you generally meet in those calumniated regions, soon convinced me that some of their venal defamers only laboured to avert, by their caricature of the miserable condition of other countries, the execration which their oppression of the people of Ireland, had earned. Not the least consoling circumstance in this visit to those countries, was the practical knowledge it afforded of the authentic claims of Ireland to its ancient fame, and of the veneration in which the memory of its saints and sages is embalmed. On either side of the Rhine, as well in France as all over the German Mesopotamia, and along the Alps and Apennines, there is scarcely a place of note that is not redolent of Irish sanctity. The paths of our countrymen you can track by the streaks of glory that still linger on the lands which they traversed ; and in the sanctuaries of their most magnificent cathedrals, as well as in the hearts of their present inhabitants, their ashes or their memories are devoutly enshrined.

But it was Rome, “the eternal city,” of the “seven hills,” that chiefly attracted and fixed my contemplations. It was not with a view of any attempt that would be as vain as presumptuous, to describe the countless monuments of its arts, its history, and its profane and sacred empire. For such Herculean toils, individuals of congenial constitution, appear to be born and to be trained. Such were Donatus, the learned Jesuit of Sienna, and Grævius, and Nardini, and

Pitisco, whose lexicon is one of the richest, as well as readiest of the treasures of Roman antiquities and literature. Such, too, were Winkleman and Lipsius, the one eminent for his rare collection of Roman monuments, the other for his learned dissertations on the military and political institutions, that contributed to extend and consolidate the Roman power. To collect the gleanings of such industrious and successful workmen, would not be worth the toil, even were one possessed of taste and leisure for such labours; and to exhibit, as the result of one's own research, those masses of antiquarian wealth which were dug and disinterred by their industry; would be to incur the reproach from which Lipsius himself was not free, of appearing in his classical descriptions to be only a personification of the ancients; so identically did he appear clothed in the majesty, nay, the very form of that ancient eloquence, which he literally, and, perhaps, unconsciously, transferred to his own writings. Far, then, from entertaining the ambitious project of describing Rome, and its pyramids, its aqueducts, its triumphal arches, its churches, and its fountains; mine was only the humble task, or, rather, amusement, of noting down the few reflections which occurred to me, by way of coincidence or contrast, as I strayed over its "seven hills," so celebrated in classic, as well as in mystic story. Seen in this way, the vast region of of Rome, will present a variety of views to every observer. In short, ardent as was my early enthusiasm for visiting the "eternal city" and its ancient hills, it

was my devotion to the shrine of the Apostles in the Vatican, on the other side of the Tiber, that chiefly led me to this venerable spot; and these brief and simple letters are only intended as authentic memorials of that devotion—in imitation of the ancient pilgrims, who hoped, that their humble offerings would not be disdained acceptance, among the gorgeous votive gifts, with which more favoured personages, had decorated the walls of its temples.

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

St. Jarlath's, Tuam, Feast of the Nativity
of our Blessed Lord, 1846.

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LETTERS,

&c.

LETTER I.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
January 29, 1820.

Θυμοδακνης γαρ μυθος.—ODYSSEY.

For slander stings the soul—POPE.

IN a late number of the *Dublin Journal*, which came into my hands, I observed some critical strictures on the lives and writings of our celebrated historians, Hume and Gibbon. I cast my eye over the article, rather with a view to amuse myself, than with a hope of extracting much information from that writer's criticism. I considered it one of those tasteless articles which the barrenness of his materials obliges him sometimes to insert: such were his dull extracts on the feats of knight errantry, in which he must have imagined that his readers had returned to the days of boyhood, as the insipidity of the grotesque adventures, was not relieved by one particle of skill in the plan, or elegance in the composition, of the story. If the writer had contented himself with filling the chasms of his journal with articles merely uninteresting, I should only smile at his imbecility; but when they have generally for object, the aspersion of a large and respectable portion of society, then our pity for his weakness, is warmed into indignation for his malevolence. Such is the tendency of the article to which I have alluded.

After some flimsy observations on the writings of Hume and Gibbon, he tells us in a very sapient tone, that if the process of the latter's religious changes had been reversed, by passing from Paganism to Popery, and from Popery to Protestantism, there he would finally have rested his conviction.—Wise and incontro-

vertible conclusion ! The comprehensiveness of this writer disdains the slow and gradual process of enquiry, and his sagacity discovers inferences which would have escaped less discerning intellects. I should wish to learn from what premises he has deduced such a consequence. I know of no *a priori* principle that could warrant its extravagance ; and if we recur to the less fallacious criterion of experience, the history of the sectaries that sprung from the bosom of Protestantism, should have pointed out to him an opposite train of argument.

History furnishes us with numberless examples of persons—nay, of nations—passing from Paganism to Popery, and reposing there. It has preserved instances too, of many reconciled from Protestantism to Popery, and enjoying all the tranquillity of a settled conviction. As I must suppose that the writer of this article has some acquaintance with biography, I will now spare myself the necessity of swelling this letter by detailing a variety of examples. But I have scarcely read of any passing from the extreme of Infidelity to the opposite one of Popery ; and gently returning to the well-poised mean of the Protestant religion. Did the writer but advert a little, to the bent of the human mind, he would discover, that after freeing itself from the burden of authority, it proceeds by an easy and natural consequence, to the extreme of licentiousness. Thus we find Protestantism, soon after its establishment, producing Socinianism ; Socinianism refined into the more philosophic name of Unitarianism, until the private spirit, like fame, acquiring strength in its progress, has closed its career in Deism and irreligion. In this manner we can trace to the principles of Protestantism all the errors that have, for three centuries, assumed and disgraced the name of Christianity.

This truth is further exemplified in the life of Mr. Gibbon.* He tells us himself that early in life he imbibed the spirit of religious controversy ; that the eagerness of his curiosity prompted his enquiries beyond the polemics of his own sect, and that the result of his labours was a sincere conversion to the Catholic faith. He tells us further, that his conversion was achieved by the writings of Bossuet ; a compliment extorted from his prejudice and his pride, by the genius of the illustrious prelate. But how was this conviction conquered ? The youth, by following the genuine principles of the Protestant religion—thinking for himself—had abandoned the faith of his fathers, and incurred the inexpiable guilt of apostacy. This was a crime which no integrity of life could atone for, and no brilliancy of talent could redeem. To cure him of his distemper he was sent to breathe the lighter atmosphere of Lausanne. He could not be ignorant of the object

* See his own Memoir of his Life and Writings.

of his exile. He felt his father's displeasure, and was threatened to be disheired if he did not retrace his steps. Such is the boasted freedom of the Protestant religion.

Whoever then reflects on the influence of temporal motives on a mind young, sanguine, and aspiring, in which the principles of religion were not suffered to ripen, will not be surprised at his desertion of the Catholic communion—

For present joys are more to flesh and blood
Than a dull prospect of a distant good.

Even this apostacy is honourable to the Catholic faith. His first enquiry, and consequent conversion, the fruits of an unfettered freedom of judgment, prove the insecurity under which he laboured in the Protestant faith. But on being compelled to desert the pale of the Catholic church, he was far from taking shelter in the communion which he first abandoned. He had too much discernment not to be disgusted with the half faith and half philosophy of the Protestant religion; and, therefore, the same insecurity of mind that first prompted him to abjure its tenets, made him now push them to the farthest verge of their application, until at last he sought repose in absolute infidelity. The writer of the article tells us that Mr. Gibbon was armed with as much logic and general argument when he abjured the Catholic religion, as the defenders of that religion generally possess. Waving that point, Mr. Gibbon's logic and criticism cannot be a cause of alarm to the Catholic, or of triumph to the Protestant, when we reflect that he rejected the Pope's supremacy because he believed, though contrary to the evidence of history, and the admission of Protestants, that St. Peter never came to Rome; and disbelieved the real presence, because mysteries are not capable of physical demonstration.

Such was the revolution of Mr. Gibbon's religious opinions—a revolution naturally arising from the genius of the reformation, and exemplified in the character of many eminent men. If any one can rest his conviction in the Protestant religion, he can rest it in what is unsettled and undefined. For what is the Protestant religion but a negative system, fashioned to the genius of every clime, and bending to the caprice of every teacher—incorporating in its creed, doctrines the most discordant—and concealing, by a community of name, sectaries the most irreconcilable.—Episcopalian in England—rejecting Episcopacy as anti-Christian in Scotland and Geneva—in the expositions of Drs. Marsh and Burnet making the thirty-nine articles the standard of orthodoxy—in the moderation of Dr. Hoadly enlarging the terms of communion—but in the unbounded liberality of Dr. Watson, admitting the human race, by adopting the phrase of Tacitus as its maxim, "*sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias, dicere.*" No wonder

that a system so loose and arbitrary should conduct its votaries to downright scepticism. It has been well remarked by Rousseau, that the philosopher who rejects Revelation, and the Catholic who admits it without reserve, are both consistent. But the Protestant, who attempts to steer a middle course, by adopting for his religion an unnatural mixture of faith and freedom, exposes himself to the just ridicule of either.

To take up half on trust, and half to try,
Call it not faith, but bungling bigotry.

I dread, that my letter has extended beyond its just limits. From the copiousness of the matter, it has swelled to a size greater than was first intended. In conclusion, I would advise the *Dublin Journal* to spare his oblique reflections on the Catholic religion. For the work of abuse, indeed, he may be fitted, as it requires not much capacity ; but for wielding the weighty weapons of controversy, nature never destined him. He may occasionally fling his objurgations at the errors of Popery, of which he probably knows as little as of the mythology of the Zendavesta.* As well might the lowly workman cast an artist's glance over the vastness of St. Peter's, and rise to its sublimity, as the *Dublin Journal* attempt to comprehend the grandeur of Christ's spiritual edifice, and feel the beauties of its proportions.

HIEROPHILOS.

* The Zendavesta, also known by the name of Zend, is the code of laws and religion which the Persians are supposed to have received from Zoroaster. See D. HERBELOT, *Bibliotheq. Orient.*, p. 917.

LETTER II.

TO THE CATHOLIC CLERGY OF IRELAND.*

Feb. 12, 1820.

Αἰδως δ' αὐτὸν νεον ανδρα γερασιτερον εξερεσθαι.—ODYSSEY.

Awful th' approach, and hard the task appears,
T' address with wisdom men of riper years.—POPE.

To persons whose breasts are burning with zeal, and whose minds are the repositories of knowledge—whose virtues have been proved in the most trying period of our history, and who have gathered wisdom from experience—admonition may seem unseasonable and obtrusive. However, as all are not equally sensible of the danger which menaces the religion, of which they are naturally the guardians, it may not be useless to address the great body of the Catholic priests; and if the prelates should be respectfully reminded of their trust, they will pardon a freedom which will be always tempered with reverence for so venerable a body.

During the short period which has passed before my observation, revolutions have arisen that have had no parallel in history. Among those, I have watched the progress of a society the most singular in its composition, and yet the most systematic in its operation, of any that hitherto appeared—a society that is spreading with rapid increase, and profusely scattering its colonies over different quarters of the globe. Of the object and tendency of these societies (for now they are multiplied), no one needs information who has glanced over the reports that inveigh with such holy warmth against the superstitions of Popery. Although I have not been unobservant of their movements, I was hitherto silent, either because I saw the danger too distant to excite alarm, or from a consciousness of my own inability to arrest its progress. I knew that ere they reached the firm array of the Catholic Church, they had a warfare to carry on with those who were attached to no particular creed, and those of the Established Church, on whom its faith sits so loosely, as to become an easy prey to every adventurous enthusiast.

That great numbers are now detached from the Established Church, and ranged under the standard of one or other of those societies, the complaints of our Protestant ministers bear ample

* It is singular that the very subject of anti-Catholic education, which twenty-five years ago almost opened the series of those letters, is that which still most excites the hope of the enemies, or the fears of the friends, of Ireland.

testimony. Flushed with the confidence inspired by such a defection, they are now making redoubled efforts to carry their system into the heart of the Catholic population. But, thank God, they have met with a firm and decided resistance. Mortified by defeat, they have not resigned the hope of conquest ; and while they seem to suspend their hostility, they have only changed their method of attack. It is true, that now their tone is altered : their professions are become more liberal ; but you may rest assured that it is only for the purpose of stealing into your confidence, and disarming that opposition which harsher methods could not subdue.

If the men of rank, and weight, and character in the country, are sincere in their endeavours to diffuse education, unembittered by religious bigotry, it is not difficult to put that sincerity to the test. If I could offer an advice, I would suggest that you should avail yourselves of the favourable moment of the accession of his present Majesty. Convey to the throne the sincere expression of your condolence and congratulation, and to parliament a petition for a portion of those grants that are given for the purposes of education. If but a small sum of money were put into the hands of each of the Catholic bishops, schools could be established for educating the Catholic children ; and a few tracts, containing a simple summary of religious and moral principles, might be circulated among them. This would be a method less expensive to the subscribers, less derogatory to the dignity of the sacred volume, than that which is now pursued, and still less prejudicial to the peasantry, as it would save them from the danger of extracting from its contents a dark and desperate fanaticism. If the legislature should acquiesce in the prayer of such a petition, I am sure they would find it to their account, in the growing attachment of the people for so liberal and conciliating a system. If you should be disappointed in that appeal, make still an experiment on those who are loudest in the praise of education. But if they should refuse their aid to any plan that will not be regulated by the principle of these societies, is it not then clear, that whatever may be their pretensions, their purpose is proselytism ?

It is to be regretted that some uniform system of defence has not been hitherto adopted. If some have evinced a steady zeal in opposing the designs of the Gospellers, others have aspired to the merit of a more prudent line of conduct. Thus the activity of some is neutralized by the passiveness of their colleagues, and the enemy is strengthened by the evidence of indecision in your councils.* It is not by desultory efforts, however ably conducted,

* It would appear as if those lines were prophetic of the present position of the Catholic body, when the adverse movements of a few weaken that force which union would render irresistible in securing the blessings of free education.

that the enemy is to be defeated, but by a compact well-regulated plan, originating with the bishops, and adopted by the great body of the clergy. The exertions of the societies cannot be any longer contemplated with indifference. It is then the duty of these whom the Holy Ghost has placed as bishops, to rule the Church of God,* to provide for its defence. Let the more humble labourers in the ministry be assiduous in instructing their flocks, and dispensing to them the truths of Christianity, in language adapted to their simple comprehensions. Let them, in the words of St. Paul to Timothy, “Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, intreat, rebuke with all patience and doctrine.” Thus you will remove these causes of complaint, on which our enemies dwell with rapture, and refute the insidious slander, that the people are consigned to a studied and systematic ignorance. Hitherto some irresolution might be excusable, from an anxiety to discover the sentiments of Rome. Now that plea is removed, her accredited document is before you, deplored the delusion practised on the people, and cautioning the pastors from suffering the growth of weeds in the vineyard confided to their care. Do not then suffer yourselves to be over-reached by the arts of the designing. Let not too confiding a disposition betray you into a security which you may have afterwards cause to deplore. Recollect how the unsuspecting simplicity of many was duped, in the reign of Constantius, by those who were practised in the intrigues of the Arian faction. Judging of the sincerity of others by the singleness of their own minds, they were seduced into measures at which they afterwards startled.

Far be from me the wish to impede the current of information that is now working its way through the humble classes of society. Far be it from me to endeavour to embitter it by the infusion of religious acrimony. I should, if possible, give it a wider and more rapid diffusion, and purify it from every ingredient that could infect its salutary qualities. But as this cannot be done while there exists a suspicion, that, under the mask of educating, there lurks a design of proselytizing the people, let the abettors of the Bible-system remove the cause of such well-grounded distrust: let them not insist on the introduction of the Bible, and our prelates in their wisdom will determine what books may be substituted. With regard to the latitude allowed to private families, that, too, may be safely entrusted to the same discretion. I may be permitted to add, with Mr. Lingard, that it is not the spirit of the Catholic Church to lock up the Scriptures from the laity, unless compelled by necessity.

How often must it be asserted that the Bible, the most sublime of all compositions, is not a book fitted for the unripe under-

standing of a school-boy? Written in a language which has ceased to be the vehicle of familiar intercourse, its truths are often veiled in the necessary obscurity of an obsolete idiom. Imparted to a people of ardent feeling and warm fancy, its language is enlivened by all the animation of oriental metaphor, and obscured by allusions to now unknown customs. Yet this is the book which, it is confidently asserted, is adapted to persons of every age and condition. Nay more, it is not only to be indiscriminately circulated, but put into the hands of the peasantry, without notes to illustrate its meaning, or pastors to enforce its authority. The simplifying process that pervades natural philosophy is now reaching religion itself, and the elixir of life has been discovered in the all-healing qualities of the Bible. If people are discontented, give them the Bible, and it will appease them—if they are hungry, the Bible will satisfy them—if they are out of employment, the Bible will give them occupation—in short, the Bible will remove every discontent, and assuage every suffering. But it must be the pure simple Bible, without the admixture of such *abominations* as notes, or creeds, or commentaries; because these spiritual alchymists have discovered that the least particle of human authority infects the blessedness of the inspired volume. I will not now draw out the dark catalogue of errors to which an undisciplined perusal of the Scriptures gave rise. But I must say, that while I read the evidence of their obscurity in the comment which the finger of history has traced, in the dire disorders of fanatics of every age, I cannot resign my conviction of the danger of their indiscriminate diffusion. Men of warm and benevolent feeling are often caught by delusive theories for promoting the happiness of the human race. That such men are engaged in the Bible-system, in justice to human nature, I must admit. It were to be wished, however, that they listened to the sober lessons of experience. But that there are others, actuated more by a deadly hostility to the religion, than by compassion for the ignorance of the people, I am equally convinced. Hence, their unyielding perseverance in their own plan, in opposition to any improvement that may be proposed. Education coming from such men I should receive with the most timid and scrupulous caution. Better listen in time to the admonition—

— Aut ulla putatis
Dona carere dolis Danaum? *

than afterwards to deplore, in the language of the same poet, the blindness which made you insensible to your danger.

* Somewhat is sure designed, by fraud or force;—
Trust not their presents, nor admit the horse.

Captique dolis lachrymisque coacti
 Quos neque Tydides nec Larisseus Achilles;
 Non anni domuere decem, non mille carinæ.*

But I hope better things. The zeal which supported your predecessors in an open contest, will now arm you with vigilance against a more covert hostility. To conclude: to you religion looks for support against fanaticism—to you the repose of the country against those who would shake it with a religious warfare—to you the peasantry, already too irritable, look for aid against those who would enflame them with a biblical frenzy—and to you the growing generation, who hunger for instruction, turn with fervent hopes, that while food is administered to their minds, you will not suffer their faith to be poisoned. I cannot more appropriately close this address than in the words of the dying Mathathias to his children—"Now, therefore, O! my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers; and call to remembrance the work of the Fathers, which they have done in their generations, and you shall gain great glory and an everlasting name."†

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER III.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
 March 4, 1820.

*Tum Vero Manifesta fides, Danaumque patescunt,
 Insidiæ.—VIRGIL.*

And now his faith was manifestly clear'd,
 And Grecian frauds in open light appear'd.—DRYDEN.

YES, the designs of the Bible Society are at length unmasked—the visor which bigotry has worn is now torn off, and her object is held up without disguise to the observation of an impartial public. In my last I ventured to assert that the abettors of that system, were animated by a secret hostility to the Catholic religion. The assertion may have been deemed hazardous;

* What Diomede, nor Thetis greater son,
 A thousand ships, nor ten years' siege had done,
 False tears, and fawning words, the city won.—DRYDEN.

† I. Machabees, ii, 50, 51.

however, it has been justified by the result of the last meeting—a result which has imposed on the Gospellers the necessity of coming to a fair and open contest. Thanks to the intrepidity of Mr. O'Connell, who was not to be appalled by the frightful array which bigotry had drawn up against him. I look upon the last meeting as auspicious, because it brings the principles of the Society, uncoloured by specious pretences, before the tribunal of public opinion. I should hope there is an end to all suspicions on the one hand, and to all palliatives on the other; and now that every subterfuge is removed, the system must stand or fall by its own intrinsic merit. For eight years and more, have the Catholics been assailed by the emissaries of this Society; and if they were incredulous enough to distrust its object, they were sure to be taxed with bigotry and superstition.

Doubtless, the consequences of the last meeting will furnish a rich theme for pathetic declamation. The young aspirants after literary fame will soon take occasion to pour out their pity or indignation at the incurable folly and stubbornness of the Irish. But while they deplore our perverseness, we shall be content with the arguments furnished by the names of Leinster and Cloneurry, to justify our distrust. While these benevolent noblemen thought, that to circulate knowledge was the object of the Kildare-street Society, they cordially lent it their support; but, on learning that a proselytizing principle was its treacherous purpose, they indignantly disclaimed any alliance with so unholy a project. Well might Mr. O'Connell make them a present of their majority; when the corner-stone is removed, it is easy to predict the fate of the edifice. The generosity of such conduct will not be unappreciated; and, while I dwell with pleasure on the virtues of the Duke of Leinster, I should not withhold the meed of gratitude from the son of Curran, who emulates the spirit of his illustrious father, and breathes a portion of that eloquence which often struck dumb the advocates of illiberality.

To Mr. North, the advocate of the Bible Society, I beg leave now to address myself. In your eloquent address to the Society, I have no doubt, Sir, but you imagined you were asserting knowledge against ignorance, and religion against superstition. It would be derogatory to the known benevolence of your character to make any other supposition. But I regret, Sir, that your zeal for a favourite opinion has led you to underrate the powers of your own mind. You assert that the Scriptures are obvious to every capacity; for you never discovered any difficulties in them, nor were you ever enlightened by commentators. It might be an incalculable loss to mankind, were you to divert your attention from the study of the law, which you may be destined to illustrate, to the heavy pages of Polus or of Lightfoot: and hence, it is not surprising that you were not enlightened by their labours.

You have discovered no difficulties in the Scriptures!! I will not suppose that you have not read them; it would be injurious to your piety; though it must be confessed that the genius of your eloquence is fonder of lingering on Parnassus than on Sion; nor does it breathe those deep inspirations from Siloa's brook that are found in our immortal countrymen, Burke and Curran. But as you have discovered no difficulties in the entire of the Scriptures, I congratulate the public on the important truth. Perhaps you would favour us with an *antidote* against the Apocalyptic mania that has, for near three centuries, diseased the intellect of the sister country. You, Sir, have discovered no difficulties in the Scriptures; they, therefore, are obvious to every capacity. Admirable conclusion!—Were I to assure you that I discovered no difficulties in the law, and hence it was obvious to every individual, you might be inclined to bend the gravity of your muscles. If, however, you have been enabled to sound the depths of the Scripture, imagine not that all are equally gifted. What may be clear to some, may be comparatively obscure to others; and, while the mind of Mr. North sheds a train of glory over the path of its enquiry, others must grope their way by the feeble lights of criticism and conjecture. I will not, Sir, dispute the supremacy of your intellect, but without meaning disrespect, I must assert, that after some attention to the inspired volume, I have been led to embrace a different opinion. It is but right to respect each other's honest conviction.

Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.

To the Bible Association I would now direct myself, in the name of the people of Ireland, in language which, if all could not be supposed to utter, all would understand.

If you had tendered to us the blessings of education solely, we would have accepted the boon with hearts full of thankfulness, we would have gladly hailed the dawning of a spirit which mitigated the rigour of former times, and our gratitude would consecrate the remembrance of our benefactors. But, alas! we have been duped by hollow professions; and while persuasion sleeked the tongues of our deceivers, we were not aware of the “venom that was under their lips.” You give us the Bible, but we, whose lot is labour, have not time to peruse its contents. Why withhold from us the Catechism, a regular system of faith and morals, compiled from the Scriptures by the zeal of our pastors, and best fitted to our necessities? But still, if you give us the Bible, why take away the spirit that enlivens and informs it. In reading over its mysteries, like the Eunuch of Ethiopia,* who was bewildered by the visions of Isaiah, we would be obliged

* Acts, viii, 26.

to cry out, How can we understand, unless some one point out the meaning? Take not then from us the anchor of our faith, lest, loosened from its hold, we be drifted to and fro by every wind of doctrine. Talk not to us of the illuminations of the spirit; uninformed as we are, we have heard of its extravagancies. Leave us the simple uniformity of our creed, and we will not envy you the diversity of your Babel dialects. Spare your invectives against the despotism of our pastors. Under circumstances the most discouraging, they have ministered to our spiritual wants, and explained the truths of the Gospel to those to whom they were inaccessible. Loosen not the firm hold they have on our gratitude; our fortunes have been bound by a kindred sympathy, and, when every other hope was dashed, the accents of the pastor were the sweetest solace of our afflictions. Our religion is said to be superstitious; still we are able to understand that it is the only one that ascends to Christ. While you then may boast of the charms of novelty, we feel that a religion, hoary with the honours of eighteen centuries, has the strongest claims on our veneration. Do not ask us, how do we know its antiquity? It is as easy to trace back the series of our pontiffs as the succession of our kings; and it is as easy to date the era of a spiritual rebellion, as the epoch of a revolution and the establishment of a new dynasty. If our religion be superstitious, it is a superstition we share with the most enlightened nations, and the purest ages of the Church: unreasoning then as our faculty is, it is not difficult for us to discover the superiority of our faith to a religion fanciful in its creed, confined in its extent, and recent in its origin. These are the arguments that have been pressed upon our attention; they are obvious to our capacity, they are analogous to the plan of Providence in enlightening the poor as well as the rich, and, as we are conscious of our weakness, that very consciousness gives them force irresistible. We cannot pretend to half the lights of those who disagree among themselves; we would therefore tell you, in the language of one of your own members, "do not pull down one system until you establish another—endeavour to adjust your own differences before you can lay claim to our confidence." Too long has our country been torn by religious discord; we hoped that the spirit of charity had hushed it to repose. Suffer us, then, to enjoy the quiet convictions of our religion, and do not blow up all the bad passions by the unhallowed breath of fanaticism. If, under an influence that preaches patience and respect to the constituted authorities, some of our brethren are unfortunately turbulent, you ought to tremble for the consequences when a fanatic might point to every man in power, as one of the odious characters denounced by the Hebrew prophets. As you value, then, the peace of the country, leave us in the

enjoyment of the only legacy that has been left us. You may enlighten our minds without insulting our religion.

Such is the language which the Irish people would now address to you; and, give me leave to add, in reply to the sciolists who associate our religion with ignorance, that it is the religion which inspired the muse of Vida, and sublimed the eloquence of Bossuet. It has satisfied the inquisitive mind of Pascal, and has been illustrated by the labours of the early Fathers. If, then, the Catholics are reproached with superstition, they will be consoled by treading in the path which Leo and Chrysostom have trodden. I hope that the prelates will not be inattentive to the appeal that has been made to them. If there be a disposition manifested to contribute to the progress of education, they will surely encourage so liberal a proposal; by training up the youth of Ireland to reading and learning the Christian doctrine, their minds would be prepared to benefit by the instruction of the clergy.

A word at parting to the *Dublin Journal*. It must, I suppose, be his impartiality that made him withhold from the public the proceedings of the last meeting. Although I deplore, perhaps, more than the *Journal* the excesses of the peasantry, I cannot but admire the ingenuity that could compare them with the treason of Thistlewood. He has disclaimed a wish to attack the Catholics; if he confines himself to this negative merit, we will dispense with his advocacy. I may have occasionally an eye to the columns of that paper, and, if he should be disposed to forget his apology, he may rest assured that he may have occasion to favour the public with another specimen of the delicacy of his ideas, and the politeness of his language.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER IV.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
April 1, 1820.

Τῷ τοι ἐπιτλήτῳ κεαδίν μυθοῖσιν ἐμοῖσιν.
Αἴψα τε φυλόπιδος πέλεται κόρος ἀνθρώποισιν.—ILiad.

Then hear my counsel, and to reason yield;
The bravest soon are satiate of the field.—POPE.

My last letter has been honoured, it seems, with the perusal and attention of one of the Evangelical Association. As I presume that my readers cannot feel much interested in the personal merits of two rival writers, I will not waste my time, nor their patience, in returning the compliments which "Biblio-philos" has been pleased to bestow upon me. I shall not, therefore, stop to analyse his composition, although it has strong claims to praise; nor shall I enquire after what model of the ancients or moderns it has been fashioned. For aught that regards the present controversy, it is to me a matter of indifference, whether my adversary chooses to stray on the banks of the Peneus or "the flood of Chobar,"* and crop the flowers of his diction in the vale of Tempe or of Hebron.

But there is another species of literature which he seems to have cultivated with success, and which seems to have given a dignified cast to his style. That he is deeply read in the ceremonial of chivalry, his manner bears striking evidence: while the bucklers, and lists, and lances, that figure in his letter, reveal the breathings of a mind burning for the combat, the measured tone of his language shows that he is not more anxious to distinguish himself by his prowess than his politeness. I would recommend a portion of his civility to those who sour the most sacred subject by the most offensive acrimony. To engage with such a champion cannot be an ungracious task. Although it may be a loss of time, there is little danger of a loss of temper; and, though the justness of his cause, or the temper of his weapon, should fail to secure success, he is sure to enlist the public sympathy by the courtesy of his demeanour. After this salutation, it may be necessary to proceed to try the strength or weakness of my adversary. I must remark, however, with regard to his unmerited attack on the *Weekly Register*, that I will be content to make so respectable a paper the vehicle of my thoughts, while I cannot imagine that the elegance of "Biblio-

* A river in Chaldea, frequently mentioned in Ezekiel. See i, ii, x, chapters, &c.

philos" will ever borrow a richer tinge from the medium of the *Dublin Journal*.*

As his first observations may be considered as feeble outposts to guard the citadel, they shall not detain me long. However, they exhibit a specimen of his skilful disposition; calculating, no doubt, that though his cause was not staked on their strength, they might exhaust the patience of his opponent. How does he acquit the Education Society of the charge of bigotry and intolerance? By the most unheard-of mode of justification. Little did I imagine that I should find a writer, jealous of the nicest civilities of life, the panegyrist of the most outrageous violation of decorum. Little did I imagine that the advocate of liberality and freedom would applaud that monopoly of mind which laboured to wrest from others the invaluable privilege of discussion, which itself exclusively arrogated. "By the unqualified disapprobation and dismissal of Mr. O'Connell's motion, they asserted the purity of their views, they vindicated their honour, and confirmed the confidence of their country." A novel way of winning confidence, indeed!

If any circumstance could rivet still more closely the distrust of the country, it is the proceedings of the last meeting. If their conduct was as blameless as they boasted—if the principles and practice of the society were in unison—why not fearlessly court investigation? Surely, such solicitude to dismiss Mr. O'Connell's motion, betrays a consciousness that there was something within too tender to sustain a public scrutiny. It is in vain that he may reason on the virtues and benevolence of the members. No, not all the speculations of "Bibliophilos," however ingeniously clothed, and pointedly expressed, can resist the stubborn testimony of the facts that are on record; and, "though they should multiply to themselves the herb borith," it will not blot out the deep impression. If he should ask, what could induce persons to devote their time, "gratuitously," to such an object, I will refer him to the speech of Lord Cloncurry, who had an opportunity of drawing aside the veil that covered the mystery of their proceedings.

From his Lordship has transpired the important secret, that some of the members of the society were drawn within its magic circle, not more by the invitations of the spirit, than by the attractions of the treasury. But as this part of the letter furnishes a finer specimen of the rhetoric than the reasoning of

* The three letters of "Bibliophilos" appeared in the columns of the *Dublin Journal*. It is long since defunct; but the spirit of bigotry by which it was animated appears to have transmigrated to some of its successors. It is but justice, however, to that journal to state that it made congruous atonement for its offensive attacks on the Catholic religion, as well as on the first letters of "Hierophilos."

my adversary, I envy not the society the aid of his declamation. I am myself unwilling to confound all its members—I have before acknowledged that it is patronised by some whose motives are above impeachment—but even the great and the good may be deceived by splendid projects, and the worthless endeavour to hide their own littleness under the shadow of their virtues.

Fallit enim vitium specie virtutis et umbra.

As to Mr. North, if he is not cased in the panoply of “Biblio-philos,” he would probably dispense with the officious advocacy of his friend. Surely, I have no enmity to that gentleman. That he is an excellent pleader, I am ready to acknowledge; but though I might bow to his opinion on a point of law, I might consider him an unsafe guide in concerns of religion. I will bear willing testimony to the eloquence of his panegyric of the Scripture at the late meeting; yet I have read still more fervid eulogies from persons who believed not a tittle of their inspiration. But, really, the subject is too important to hinge on the opinions of any individuals; I will, therefore, beg leave to allow Messrs. North and O’Connell, as they are perfectly competent to the task, to defend their own cause.

I know not how my supposed address to the Irish people, which he has been pleased to call eloquent, but fanciful, is affected by his observations. I have not violated the congruity of character, by putting reasoning into their mouths too abstruse for their simplicity; nor have I paid the dangerous compliment to their ignorance of erecting it into a tribunal of religious truth. Although they might be capable of comprehending the few arguments with which I furnished them, still might they require the aid of the good and benevolent. It is rather strange to deny to the people the apprehension of a few obvious principles, who, if we believe our adversaries, are capable of ranging with safety through the inspired volume, and understanding with ease the visions of Ezekiel.

As to his picture of the turbulence and immorality of the Irish people—a picture which, “by its dark colouring and distorted features, betrays the hand of an enemy”—I must remark that I was not the apologist of their innocence; but, until he shows that they are below the level of their neighbours, who are amply provided with Bibles, and that the Bible is a panacea for the evils which he exaggerates, it is quite unnecessary to dwell upon the subject. To whom does he refer me for information?—to vague and nameless authorities, or the more suspicious reports of the Bible Societies! I question whether he has ever waded through the shapeless mass; he seems to have shown more anxiety for the improvement of his time and talents, than to have wasted his attention on such whining compositions.

When he introduces the Catholic prelates, and forcibly classes them with these “errant saints,” to depose in favour of his system, they must surely appreciate the compliment of being put in such good company. I did expect from the sobriety of “Bibliophilos,” a more temperate allusion to Scripture than to apply the words of Daniel to persons, of whom some might be more strongly marked by the denunciation of another prophet.* But as I would tremble to introduce lightly the words of the inspired writings, perhaps, they would find themselves appropriately habited in the costume of an English poet :—

In gospel-phrase their chapmen they betray,
Their shops are dens, their buyers are their prey ;
All hands unite, of every jarring sect,
They cheat the country first, and then infect.

We now come to the last and greatest point of “Bibliophilos,” for which he seems to have reserved all the resources of his skill and dexterity. To this part, as it is one of vital importance, I invite my reader to come with a severe, unbiassed, and discriminating judgment.

As I would not expect, from the ingenuousness of my opponent, that he would recur to the subterfuges of little polemics, I am willing to believe that he has rather mistaken than misrepresented my meaning. He says, I have appealed to the practice of the Church ; and after coming up with a heavy phalanx of the Fathers, triumphantly concludes that I had no claim to their support. I know not how this is reconcileable with the anxiety he feels to know my opinion on the diffusion of the Scriptures—an opinion which, according to him, I have studiously disguised. Lest, however, I should fall into a similar mistake, of mis-stating his letter, I subjoin his own words :—“ On the circulation and perusal of the Scriptures, and their introduction into schools, the only question at issue, ‘Hierophilos’ has judged it unnecessary or unadvisable to hazard an opinion.”

I am, therefore, opposed by the authority of the Fathers on a point on which he says I have not expressed my sentiments. My expressions were, that the religion of the Catholics was the religion which was illustrated by the early Fathers, and that they would be consoled in treading the path which Leo and Chrysostom had trodden. I would wish to know, will he undertake to combat this assertion ? If not, his long array of Fathers will not bear on my position. The Fathers have said nothing which, if understood in the spirit it was spoken, the most rigid Catholic would not subscribe to, without any impeachment of his orthodoxy. Fortunately, I have answered him by anticipation.

* *Jeremias, chap. xxiii, v. 31, &c. :—Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, who use their tongues, and say, “the Lord saith it.”*

From the attention he bestowed on the last, I may presume he has read my other letters. In one of them I have unequivocally asserted, that it never was the spirit of the Catholic Church to withhold the Scripture from the people, unless compelled by necessity. As my sentiments are in perfect accordance with this spirit, he may be induced to think, that "Hierophilos" and "Bibliophilos," though evidently assumed for the purpose of invidious contrast, are not irreconcileable characters. So far, then, we agree. But, to allay the triumph he may feel on this admission, I must add, that I have too much respect for the sacred volume to make it the play-thing of every school-boy; and too strong a conviction of man's weakness, to allow him to wander through it without a guide. He, as an abettor of the Bible system, will controvert either position. Here, then, we are at issue. As the question is stripped of every circumstance that could perplex its simplicity, let us examine who is most likely to be supported by the authority of the Fathers.

According to his reasoning, the Fathers have recommended the reading of the Scriptures to the faithful: therefore, the system of the Education Society is sanctioned by the practice of the purest ages of Christianity. This is a conclusion that stretches beyond the extent of his premises. If he does not see a wide disparity in the cases, perhaps I could furnish him with a supposition more analogous to the present circumstances.

If, after the Catholics began to breathe from the persecution of Valens, a society had been formed to circulate the Scriptures among the Catholics, composed of Arians and Donatists, and Nestorians, and Eutychians of a later period, and, to complete the aggregate, of a few Catholics, whose guileless simplicity betrayed them into a support of the system. The more exalted members of the society, probably sincere, profess they have no wish to disturb the religious scruples of the Catholics, and hence retire to a secure distance from the din of the fanatics; while the more busy agents push on the god-like work of distributing the Scriptures, accompanying them with the most exasperating comments on the tyranny of the priests, and the most sarcastic commisseration of the ignorance of the people. They tell them that hitherto they have been detained in the most degrading ignorance; and that now, by seeing the light with their own eyes, they will renounce the guilt of exalting to the honours of the divinity one who was clothed in the infirmities of man. If the first fervour of the zealots should occasionally subside, let us suppose that a seasonable contact with the Imperial Exchequer restores their languid energy—

For gain has wonderful effects,
'T improve the factory of sects.

Will “Bibliophilos” say that such a system would have been sanctioned by the Fathers? Ignorant he must be of the sternness of their principles, if he could entertain a supposition so revolting to the tenor of their lives. Had St. Augustine been so yielding, he would not have waged an alternate and unremitting war with the Pelagians and Donatists of his day; and had St. Chrysostom courted the favour, he never would have fallen a victim to the revenge of Eudoxia. Really the Fathers were not sufficiently enlightened for the enlarged liberality of the present times; and though they knew and practised Christian charity, perhaps, as well as our modern orators, they never could “extend their view to the expansive circle of universal religion.” This, or similar language, now so familiar with all who aspire to the praise of eloquence and evangelism, is what Persius would call—

Grande aliquid quod pulmo animæ prælargus anhelet.*

This general view of the subject must, I am sure, convince every reader of the inconclusiveness of the reasoning of my opponent. Lest, however, it should be imagined that I shrink from the Fathers, I intreat his attention to the continuance of this very weighty subject. As the ground is of my adversary’s choosing, I will track him in his own path; and I must, therefore, be excused if the reader finds no grateful pauses to solace the weariness of the way. It may not be unnecessary to direct the attention of “Bibliophilos” to a canon of criticism which reason and candour will approve. When the Fathers wrote against the Pagans, who despised the authority of Scripture, or preached against the faithful, who were regardless of its precepts, we are naturally to expect from them the most animated language, in enforcing the utility, or arraigning the neglect of the inspired writings. But, again, when they pointed their reproofs against the rashness of the sectaries, who perverted their meaning, they dwell with serious solemnity on the necessity of treading over the sacred ground with a trembling and respectful caution. The contrast between his quotations and mine, from the same Fathers, will illustrate the truth and justness of this principle:—

“They abandon the rule of truth, who interpret the Scriptures contrary to ecclesiastical tradition.”—CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *7th Book of Sentences*.

* All noise and empty pomp, a storm of words,
Labouring with sound, that little sense affords.—DRYDEN.

Lines truly characteristic of some of our much admired oratory; which, by losing sight of the chaste and simple models of antiquity, has adopted a vitiated style, in which the most ordinary thought struggles under the cumbrous weight of unnecessary ornament.

“ As often as the heretics (the reader will pardon the offensiveness of the expression, for it is not mine) produce the canonical Scriptures, which every Christian believes, they seem to say, ‘Behold, the word of God is made the inmate of your houses.’ But we ought not to believe them, nor to stray from the older ecclesiastical tradition, nor to believe otherwise than according to what has been delivered to us by the succession of the Church of God.”—ORIGEN, *Homily on St. Matthew*, 29.

“ Will every one who pleases be the judge of those books, although he is not able to point out his master, nor the time he spent learning them, nor exhibit any of those qualities necessary to form a judgment of books. But I know that it is not lawful for every individual to subject to his own private judgment the things that are spoken in the oracles of the spirit.”—ST. BAZIL’S *75th Epistle to the Inhabitants of Neoacæsaria*.

“ In expounding the Scriptures, we ought to feel the same alarm as persons putting to sea; not so much from the dangers of the deep, as because we are unskilful navigators.”—ST. CHRYSOSTOM, *Homily on Mathusalem*.

“ Without being previously instructed in poetry, you would not attempt Terence without a master. Asper, Cornutus, Donatus, and numberless others, are necessary for interpreting each of the poets; and do you rush into the sacred books without a guide, and dare to explain them without a master? And, again, if every art, in order to be attained, requires a master, what can argue a prouder temerity, than not to learn the sacred books from their lawful interpreters?”—ST. AUGUSTINE, *On the Utility of Believing—the 7th and 17th chapters*.

I have reserved this Father for the last place, both because he is last in the order of time, and, also, because he affords me an opportunity of taking my adversary on his own ground, and giving a triumphant answer to his interrogatory, where he undertakes the task of interpreting Mr. North’s opinion. With Saint Augustine on my side—for, I confess, I revere the unfashionable epithet—I need not fear the formidable union of Mr. North and his interpreter. As I do not mean to fatigue his, nor my own, patience with further quotations, I would recommend the above-mentioned treatise to the perusal of “Bibliophilos,” as it was addressed to Honoratus, whose opinions on the plainness of the Scriptures seem to have been cast in the same mould as his own.

I have now taken a patient review of the Fathers, and furnished a simple method of disengaging the different passages which might perplex an illiterate mind. I, too, then, may confidently appeal to the judgment of the severe and the impartial, whether the Fathers are favourable to the uncontrolled perusal of the Scriptures, on the principles of the Education Society.

I hail the spirit of wholesome curiosity that has directed “Bibliophilos” to those venerable guides, and that has given me an opportunity of introducing them to my readers. They may, on the first appearance, make an unfavourable impression; but, like many other characters of solid, though unostentatious, merit, they will improve on a more familiar acquaintance. However I may rejoice, I fear that his indiscretion will not be much applauded by his Biblical brethren. The aid of the Fathers has been long since despised of, as they were found uniformly enlisted on the side of the Catholics; nor will all the ingenuity of “Bibliophilos” be able to reduce them to the flexible fidelity of Swiss auxiliaries.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER V.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.
April 29, 1820.

Δαρμόνε, φθίσει σε το σού μενος.—ILIAS.

Thy dauntless heart, (which I foresee too late,) Too daring man, will urge thee to thy fate.—DRYDEN.

IT has been often remarked, nor has the frequency of the observation deterred from the repetition of the practice, that to divert attention from the principal point of debate, by detaining it on other topics, has been one of the usual artifices of controversy. To avoid such an imputation, I endeavoured, in my last letter, to give the present subject the simplest form it could assume. I was sparing of the introduction of every topic which might amuse the imagination, without satisfying the judgment of my readers. I fancied that I had thus narrowed the scene of contest, and that my adversary and I might meet, by gradual and nearer approaches. But what was my surprise, when, after the perusal of a letter, which, if I am to judge by the time consumed in its composition, is more entitled to the ambiguous compliment of elaborate than mine, I could scarcely discover a sentence that could deserve the name of argument. After travelling over the dark legends of Gothic mythology, and

exhausting much mirth and facetiousness on his favourite subject, he seems to forget or fear his former opponent, and turns on the other correspondents of the *Register*, to discharge on them the vial of a sportful and merciless irony.

Of the labours of these gentlemen, whom, after all, it cannot be reproachful to call associates, I am induced to abstain equally from praise or censure, lest the one should be ascribed to the partiality of an ally, or the other imputed to the jealousy of a rival. With their merits or demerits my cause is totally unconnected. I beg leave, therefore, to pass quickly over the barren ground ; but, in passing over, I may be permitted to drop a tear over the fate of my fallen brothers of the war ; or rather to hope that if the sleep of death is not come upon them, they will again start to arms and revenge, at the call of “ *Bibliophilos*. ”

I thought I had already divested the subject of every personal complexion, by resigning to my adversary the uncensured privilege of collecting his materials from any quarter. Again, however, he takes occasion to fasten on my unsparing use of poets and profane writers. He is not the first, indeed, that has felt, that truth is not the less caustic by being conveyed in the golden cadence of numbers. If, instead of concealing my obligations by melting them into the mass, I have broken the current of my composition by their insertion, he may exult that his own, like the sullen stream of *Arethusa*, refuses the taint or refinement of the exotic mixture. I have, indeed, complimented him on the complaisance of his manner. Without meaning to retract it, I must observe that his language, which before was cold and ceremonious, has risen in the course of the contest to a due temperature of heat and animation. I should be sorry to inflict a willing pang on any individual ; but, alas ! it is one of the unavoidable results of arms. If, then, the weakness of his cause has not been able to resist the thrust of the enemy, I may soothe his troubled spirit by reminding him, that the stately politeness of the most courteous of the sons of chivalry, did not always protect him against the rude shock of his assailants.

I should be unreasonable, indeed, if I did not make allowance for the warmth inspired in the combat ; I even give him credit for the ingenuity with which he endeavoured to disguise it. He recommends to me a cool and dispassionate tone ; and, conscious that he has himself been betrayed into a slight immoderation, he is earnest in his censure of all asperity, like the valorous Falstaff, who, by the repetition of “ *plague upon all cowards*, ” laboured to cover the shame of his own recreancy. As to his reflections on my vanity, it is through the mirror of his own mind that he must view that of his opponent. He may hear with rapture the music of his own praise, while he may rest assured that a similar feeling is not the motive of the labours of “ *Hierophilus*. ” His

secrecy happily secures him against the false flattery of any discerning friends ; but, were he disposed to be vain, the praise bestowed by an acute foe, who was not in the mood of compliment, in spite of the censure with which it is mingled, he should not look upon as the least equivocal approbation. While “Bibliophilos” then deplores the fate of those who have committed their fame to the frail memorial of the *Register*, posterity may regret that he has not chosen a more durable mausoleum for the preservation of his own.

I am almost ashamed to have detained my readers so long from the main question. Such, however, would be the tenor of my whole letter, were I to follow the footsteps of my opponent. As to the Education Society, in mercy to its character, let us bury it in profound silence. Waving any discussion on the genuineness of Lord Cloncurry’s speech, “Bibliophilos” has himself revealed the indiscreet secret. If the sensitiveness of conscious guilt, discovered in my gentle insinuation the charge of embezzlement, the public will undoubtedly thank him for the justness of the commentary.

When first I engaged in this important discussion, I was unwilling to give it the features of a religious controversy. But viewing it in its connexion with the peace of my country, I was anxious to direct those who might be interested in its welfare to unrul the volume of history, and to contemplate, according to the maxims of the Roman historian, the danger of the present system registered in its records. I might marshal texts of Scripture to prove its obscurity, and array a host of Protestant polemics, who have acquiesced in the same truth ; but conscious of the general insipidity and occasional harshness of religious discussion ; aware that it was too weighty a subject for the vehicle of a journal ; and unwilling to treat it with the dryness of a special pleader, I gladly declined the irksome and uninviting task.

But now that it is pretended, by one of the ablest advocates of the Bible system, that the question turns on the respective authorities of the Church and the Scripture ; and that I am reluctantly drawn to the discussion, I may be allowed to ask “Bibliophilos,” does he seriously imagine that a book so comprehensive in its matter, so elliptical in its language, and so dark in its mysteries, was ever intended to be the sole guide of the bulk of mankind, who, notwithstanding every effort, must be ignorant from the necessity of their condition ? Does he imagine that Christ, who came to dissipate the errors into which the fancies of philosophers had plunged the world, would have abandoned his own revelation to the licentiousness of man’s caprices ? Does he imagine that he would have instituted a church without a ruler—a sacrifice without a priesthood—and sacraments without a ministry ? Or, that the naked Scriptures supply the place of church, and

priests, and sacraments, and penance, and all the ordinances of religion? For, mark, such is the consequence of a system that releases man from every external control. Does he imagine that Christ, abandoning the example of every wise legislator, would have left laws that have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, nor tongue to speak, without the informing spirit of a living authority, to illustrate their difficulties, enforce their observance, or avenge their violation? No—the paradox is too revolting to human reason. It is only fit for the raised imaginations of the saints who are sighing for the approaching millenium. Never did a sect practically adopt the tenet. Like every topic of popular delusion, it favours, for a time, the purposes of the designing. In the struggles of contending parties, the Scriptures become the theme of the religious, as liberty of the political fanatic. But, when the work is done, it is dispensed with, as a superfluous, or dreaded, as a dangerous engine, and the revolutionary conventicle guards its ephemeral existence, by wielding the stolen thunders of the Catholic hierarchy.

For how can she constrain them to obey,
 Who has herself cast off the lawful sway?
 If she reform by text, ev'n that's as plain,
 For her own rebels to reform again.

He may call this Catholic declamation; but it is the declamation of truth and feeling. He may gravely tell us, that we are not to enquire into the line of conduct that Christ should have adopted, but regulate our views by what he has revealed. He may then repeat the solemn and frigid observation, that the Scriptures are clear. Yes, they are clear; and, confining myself to what Christ has taught, they clearly tell us, that, “as Christ was sent by his Father, so he sent his apostles, promising to be with them to the end of the world,”* that, “he that despiseth them despiseth Christ:”† that, “he that hears not the Church is to be a heathen and a publican;”‡ that, “to Peter were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven;”§ and the power to “feed the lambs and sheep—the people, and the pastors of the Church;”|| and that Christ “gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers, for the work of the ministry, that we may not be carried away with every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, with which they lie in wait to deceive.”¶ With the evidence of these texts flashing on his eyes, how can he deny the actual existence of a teaching order of men, rising in regular

* St. Matt., xxviii, 18, 19, 20.

§ St. Matthew, xvi, 19.

† St. Luke, x, 16.

|| St. John, xxi, 16, 17.

‡ St. Matt., xviii, 17.

¶ Ephesians, iv, 11, 12, &c.

gradation, to guard the faith of the people against the contagion of impostors. But, if the meaning of these passages is still controverted, as he will not, in the fulness of his modesty, deny to the Catholics the common privilege of interpretation, he must adopt the alternative of the obscurity of the Scriptures, or the pertinacity of the disputants. He may choose what conclusion best suits his purpose. Either inference equally establishes the necessity of an unerring arbiter, by whose decision all should abide.

“Bibliophilos” is not ignorant that the Christian religion is not the discovery of human reason. It has been imparted by heaven, in compassion for its weakness. It is, then, a subject on which the powers of the human mind can throw no light; its labours must, therefore, be confined to the examination of the purity of the medium that preserved it. This single remark exposes the fallacy of the current observations on the progress of liberality. There are many departments of philosophy as yet unexplored. Over these the human mind may range unrestrained, pushing her conquests with the ardour inspired by her triumphs, until every science is led captive in her train. But, religion has its fixed boundaries; the Almighty has said, “hitherto thou shalt come, and no farther;” and he that disregards the divine prohibition must pay the forfeit of his own temerity. The liberality, then, which would outstep the boundaries fixed by our Fathers is licentiousness. Any improvement in religion is corruption. As revealed religion, then, is a sacred deposit, it must be preserved by a series of unimpeachable witnesses, who transmit it to their successors with a religious fidelity. Without this traditional authority, what certainty have the faithful of the inspiration of the mysterious volume, or how can they have a tranquil assurance of the divinity of their religion? Thus, by discarding authority, you sunder the intermediate link that connects the Scripture with a divine origin. I could cite numberless Protestant writers in proof of this assertion; however, I shall content myself with two, and clothe myself for a moment in their armour.

Mutemus clypeos, Danaumque insignia nobis.
Aptemus.

As the comprehensive orthodoxy of “Bibliophilos” will, undoubtedly, rank those writers within the pale of the Church, he will not surely reproach me with “trusting to Assyria for succour, or fighting the battles of the Lord with the profane weapons of the Gentiles;” though, really, it matters little whether the man of Gath be slain by the sling of his opponent, or the falchion drawn from his own scabbard.

“He that will not submit to the concurrent evidence of the

Fathers and Councils, may bring into controversy the divine authority of the inspired writings, Infant Baptism, Episcopacy, the Lord's day, and so blow up at once the Catholic faith and Church."—DR. HICKES' *Christian Priesthood*, Vol. I., page 145.

"It remains that we affirm whatever the whole Church from the beginning hath received and practised for the rule of faith and manners, all that to be evidently true, by the same reason for which we believe the Scriptures."—THORNDYKE'S *Epilogus*, B. I., c. vi, p. 35.

But why quote authorities, or why close our eyes on the melancholy evidence of history? Is it not to the opposite principle that we can trace the clouds of sectaries that have floated in dark succession over the fair face of Christianity, dimming its divine lustre in their transient obscuration.

These few arguments, from the necessity of an authority, the evidence of its actual existence, the admission of Protestants, and the analogy which is furnished by experience, may afford some exercise to the controversial talents of "Bibliophilus." Unless he disproves its existence, it is unnecessary to justify its exercise, or dwell more fully on the ill-understood and much-abused tenet of Catholic intolerance. He may call the doctrine antiquated; for aught I know, he may qualify some other solemn tenets with the same name. For the present, then, I will only observe, that I am ignorant of the scale by which he has measured his theological creed. But I beg leave to assure him, that if it has not risen to the highest point of scepticism, others, of larger liberality, will equally deplore the narrowness of his mind, and the intolerance of his system.

As my letter is already sufficiently long, little remains to be said with regard to the spirit of the Catholic Church and Clergy concerning the diffusion of the Scripture. Happily, however, it requires not much labour to disentangle the question from the perplexity in which the narrow and discordant views of some have involved it, and to show that the spirit and practice of both are in the most perfect unison. Her uniform conduct, then, is to extend the perusal of the Scriptures to the people. In support of the assertion, I might adduce the authority of the present Pontiff; nor will "Bibliophilus" be able to produce any example of a prohibition, unless when the divine volume is offered by the insidious for the purpose of perversion. In such circumstances the church, conscious of the awful trust reposed in her, cannot resign the assertion of her own rights. Thus, when the minds of Europe became fevered with the immedicable mania of Reformation, no wonder that the Church should labour to arrest its progress. If, then, we find a temporary and qualified prohibition of the Scriptures, such prohibitions are to be considered as exceptions to the general rule; but, if the danger should continue

or revive, the clergy are only the faithful organs of the Church, in cautioning the people against the seduction. When, therefore, in a period of religious frenzy, the Church prohibits the sacred volume, she is actuated by the same wise policy that directs the vigilance of government to the movements of the seditious, lest the arms which are given the citizens for the defence of their lives, should be pointed against the bosom of the state by the fury of radical reformers. Had her views been seconded, we should have been spared many a tale at which modesty would blush, and humanity would shudder. Had my adversary studied with more attention the history of the Church, or even read the short treatise of St. Augustine which I recommended, I might have been saved the trouble of this vindication. But why speak of St. Augustine ? He has given up the Fathers, as hard work, and, as if tired with the toil of his former researches, he seems to have since sought repose by holding high converse with the mighty shades of Montalvo and Lobeira.*

After this view of the motives that guided the councils of the Church, it is superfluous to defend the Irish clergy against his dark insinuation. A generous foe should not thus covertly attack an order of men who are shielded from reproach by the blameless tenor of their lives. I am unworthy to be their eulogist; but if any one is still ignorant of the heroic virtues of the clergy of Ireland, let him but pause over the scenes of most tragic interest in her story, and he will find that when Catholic education was a crime, and the Catholic priesthood was felony—when war had wasted her fields, and her children sought shelter in her mountains, they walked forth, like the Baptist, robed in the weeds of lowliness and penance, pouring the consolations of the pastor's voice across the wilderness of their country.

HIEROPHILOS.

* Though to exclusively English readers those names must appear strange, it requires no lengthened or elaborate notes to explain them to those who are familiar with Spanish literature.

LETTER VI.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
June 17, 1820.

Πειθώ μεν γαρ ὄνειας, ἔξις δ' ἔριν ἀντιφυτευει.—PHOCYCLIDES.

Strife kindles strife, inflicts a deadly smart,
While soft persuasion steals upon the heart.

THE public has been favoured, at length, with another epistle of “Bibliophilos.” After the candid and pacific temper which he displays, together with an intention of retiring from the contest, it would be ungenerous to treat him with hostility. Still, the interest of truth may require that I should rectify his misapprehensions.

Having bestowed very high compliments on the superior excellence of my last letter, he ascribes, with evident complacency, much of the real, or fancied improvement, to the influence of his own admonition. I should be sorry to deprive him of such an innocent source of vanity. But, perhaps, on reflection, he might be induced to ascribe the imaginary amendment to a calmness which was not to be disturbed by his provocation. On finding that the intemperance of his opponent was not likely to furnish a theme for ridicule; and dreading, perhaps, that his favourite weapons might be successfully pointed against himself, he has been induced to resume the former dignity of his style. Without, however, wasting time on a subject comparatively uninteresting, it is impossible not to admire the playful versatility of this writer; who, after drawing me into an extensive field of discussion, dexterously eludes the arguments with which he was unwilling to grapple, and shifts the last scene of the controversy to the sixteenth century, for the purpose of pronouncing a fervid panegyric on the labours of the reformers.

Similar is the artifice, by which he endeavours to turn the arms of his adversaries against each other. After failing by open force, he has had recourse to stratagem, and flings the torch of discord among his opponents, by insinuating that “Hierophilos” is their secret foe, or that he shows his friendship like the elephants of Pyrrhus, whose undistinguishing rage had trodden upon their friends as well as on their enemies. Surely they will not listen to the insidious suggestion. He frankly confesses that the Fathers have deserted his standard. Yet, I know not why he should complain that I have not pressed his retreating steps, unless he

were conscious of being formidable, even in his flight, by displaying the dangerous dexterity of the Parthian.*

To illustrate the advantage of the perusal of the Scriptures, he directs my attention to the sixteenth century, and exhorts me to contrast its splendour with the darkness of the preceding period. My curiosity is then solicited to some of the writers of my own creed, who have confessed the magnitude of the abuses that oppressed the Catholic Church. Without mentioning the names of those from whom he has probably drawn his information, it must be confessed that there have been some writers, who, affecting to rise above the tameness of their contemporaries, abjured the spirit of the religion, of which they retained the profession, and fancied they were displaying a superiority of intellect by the freedom of their censures on the Church which they dishonoured. Yet, they have generally distinguished between the faults of men, and the abuses incorporated with religion. They have not justified the temerity that would deny the doctrine of indulgences, on account of the ignorant exagge-
rations of some of its abettors; nor applauded the insubordination that would annihilate the Pope's spiritual supremacy, on account of the rapacity of some of his ministers.

In return, I beg leave to refer him to the candid, as well as illiberal Protestant writers,† who have shown how little of the light of the sixteenth century is to be traced to the Reformation. It sprung from other causes, over which the reformers had no control;—the invention of printing—the impulse given to the human mind by the spirit of commercial enterprize, and the discovery of new nations—but chiefly, to the fall of Constantinople in the preceding century, from which the seeds of science were scattered over Europe, and reared in the Italian soil, by the cultivation of the Bishops of Rome. Hence, Bolingbroke, speaking of the liberality with which learning was encouraged by the Fifth Nicholas, and the other Pontiffs of the illustrious house of the Medici, makes an observation more deserving of the gratitude than the irony of a generous mind, that the “Popes were the

* Parthumque fidentem fuga versisque sagittis.—*VIRGIL, Georg. III.*
Terga conversi metuenda Parthi.—*SENECA, OEdip.*

† Of the latter class, see Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 12th Vol., 66th Chapter. Of the former class, see Roscoe's *life of Leo X.* 1st and 4th Vols. octavo edition.

It is with pleasure I introduce the name of this learned and candid author, who, in a work embracing much of these invidious topics, so warmly agitated between Catholics and Protestants, has kept the balance with a firmer hand than writers of much more pompous pretensions to neutrality. In the fourth volume he shows what little effect the reformation had upon literature, if we except the polemical tracts, which were calculated to exasperate, rather than humanize the temper of the times. In the first, he gives a narrative of the learned men who formed societies in Rome and Naples in the 15th century, and shows that learning was already shedding a strong and steady light over Europe, before its peace was disturbed by the sound of the reformation.

first to touch the talisman that dissolved the fabric of their own greatness." To those, then, who have not examined their characters, and scrutinized their motives, he may extol the merit of the worthies of the Reformation. He will, however, excuse me if, on the faith of history, I should represent them as men whose religion was profaneness, whose politics were anarchy, and whose morality was licentiousness*—men, whose renowned chief reformed the discipline of the cloister by a double violation of its most solemn engagements, and, like his predecessor of Mecca, of still more daring impiety,

Then beckons some kind Angel, from above,
With a new text to consecrate their love.

Indeed, it is unfortunate for the advocates of the Bible to have the merits of the first abettors of the system, the subject of such frequent animadversion. It is unwise in them to impose on their adversaries the hard necessity of offending some of their dearest prejudices, by exhibiting the true characters of the reformers to the gaze of the world. Better let them sleep in peace, until the lurid glare of their vices is lost in time; and when, like the predatory founders of ancient cities, their memory recedes into legendary dimness, then may they exalt them to the honours of an apotheosis.

But what are the advantages that resulted from an indiscriminate perusal of the Scriptures? History has recorded them in all the wild varieties of error. When Luther first arose, he preached to the people the widest latitude of religious faith, adjuring them to appeal to the Bible only, as their creed, and their conscience as its interpreter. For a while he was heard as an oracle, and enjoyed a monopoly of apostleship. Soon, however, the success of the reformer diffused among his disciples the spirit of a dangerous rivalship. They, too, erected the standard of revolt, and divided with the patriarch the allegiance of his followers. His haughty soul was mortified by the partition of his empire. In vain did he threaten to rivet the chains which he struck off; in vain did he appeal to the evidence of the divine word; the divine word was mute, and its fragments were idly brandished against each other, by the adverse fury of the sectaries. All who addressed the people confidently appealed to the Scripture, to give a sanction to their own pretensions, and inveighed against the despotism of any church which could not sustain the test of enquiry.

* I could illustrate every member of this sentence, by a peculiar reference to each of the reformers. Without drawing on my fancy, I could exhibit the edifying pictures they drew of each other. But I should dread to offend the delicacy of my readers, by such disgusting representations, for, such is the coarseness of their expressions, that it could not be endured by the decency of modern manners, or the dignity of modern language.

The artifice was not novel ; it has been practised in every age, and once betrayed into the errors of the Manicheans the inquisitive mind of St. Augustine. I will take occasion to quote the affecting passage at a future period. Still the artifice succeeded ; the people were loosened from the holding of the ancient faith, and have been drifted for three hundred years on the tide of human opinion, without being able to find resting place.

As if aware of the inevitable consequences of such a system, my antagonist gives up the hope of union, and enquires in a tone of despondence, where a directing authority is to be found ? He may recollect that I have already shown its necessity and existence. He may recollect that Christ commands acquiescence in its decisions, under the most awful denunciations. I will, therefore, content myself now with observing, that a tribunal, to which Christ commanded all to appeal, cannot be inaccessible ; and that a Church, of which he requires all to be members, cannot be obscure in its characters, or difficult in its approaches. The sincere enquirer after truth may soon discover a large society, invested with the splendid characters of the true Church, and justly likened, by Christ himself, to a city on the mountain top, lighting, by the blaze of its watch-tower, the steps of the wanderer. Really the conclusion of his own letter should furnish, in my mind, the strongest proof of this authority. Unable to extricate himself from the difficulties resulting from its rejection, he is obliged to extend salvation indiscriminately to the professors of every creed ; and, by one dash of his pen, to efface every feature between a Christian and an Infidel.

Such are the lamentable lengths to which modern liberality conducts its votaries ; and hence their severity against the stern intolerance of the Catholic Church. As the length of my present letter prevents me from pressing the subject, I may soon take occasion of giving a fair and accurate view of this appalling tenet. It may be useful to correct the mistakes, not only of the Protestants, but of some of my Catholic brethren, to show that the interests of truth are not incompatible with true liberality ; and that the strong conviction of its possession, instead of relaxing the charities of the human heart, has given, in every age, the strongest spring to its benevolence. I would exhort "Bibliophilos" to consider well the boundaries between science and religion ; and to reflect that great improvement in the one, is often associated with great errors in the other. Hence, when I reflect that the country on which Tacitus bestowed the epithet of *despectissima pars generis humani*, ("the most despised portion of the human race,") was the sole repository of Heaven's revelation, while Rome sat in darkness, I can listen with pity to the invectives of a neighbouring nation against the religious ignorance of our own. Nay, when I contemplate the singular

lot of that nation, poised in the happy mean between democracy and despotism,—enriched with the treasures of every art, and ennobled by the conquest of every science—her chief city “the mart of the nations, and her traders, the nobles of the earth,”—still more agitated by religious factions than the waves that are breaking round her cliffs, I am obliged to characterise her in the language of one of the divinest of our own bards,

A wand'ring bark, upon whose path-way shone
All stars of Heav'n, except the guiding one.

And now that my adversary, on retiring, has been pleased to express a desire of a more unreserved correspondence: if he means a private interview, I should gladly meet his wishes, if I thought it would lead to any satisfactory results. If he means, however, that I should give my name to the public, I beg leave to decline the proposal, though I purpose to give expression to no sentiment which I would be ashamed to avow. While I must consider his conjectures highly flattering, he may rest assured, that whatever be the station of “Hierophilos,” he has written with the impression, that, where there is argument, it wants not the aid of the magic of a great title; and where there is none, no title can supply its deficiency. He feels that, in other contests, the actors may well exhibit themselves to the admiration or ridicule of the public; but that religious controversy is too sacred a subject, for vanity to presume to thrust her little figure into the fore-ground. Unwilling, then, to dissipate the conjectures that are collecting around any individual, he is content with the soft obscurity of a private character, and smiles at the competition of his cotemporaries, to jostle into fame. If my adversary has determined to take his final leave, it is only justice to his merit to acknowledge that he has written, in defence of his cause, with elegance and ingenuity. He may be convinced, that I will always respect the honest convictions of a liberal mind; and, perhaps, derive some satisfaction from the assurance, that I have given to the candour and acquirements of “Bibliophilus,” a notice, which, on harsher provocation, I refused to the graduated sons of the University.

I may be permitted, however, to pursue my original purpose, of denouncing the designs of the Bible Societies, and cautioning my Catholic countrymen against the treachery of their friendship. To throw some light upon the subject, it may be necessary to inform the public, that a meeting of the Sunday School Societies took place at the Rotunda, on the 19th of April last. It would naturally be expected, that the proceedings of men, who pretend to act upon the most honourable principles, would be accessible to my curiosity. But, strange to say, I was denied admittance, on pretence of having no ticket; but to show that

by this was meant a positive exclusion, where I was directed to for a ticket, none could be procured. This is the boasted publicity of their proceedings. But, I suppose, they profited by the indiscretion of the Kildare-street meeting; and, finding it made the subject of discussion by the profane pen of "Hierophilos," they were resolved to protect their own against any sacrilegious intrusions. Hence, the mysteries of Eleusis were never guarded with a more jealous vigilance. But they may rest assured that no secrecy will secure their designs against detection and exposure. In the hope that some gifted writer would rise, to assert the majesty of the Catholic discipline and doctrine, against the dreams of these speculatists, I have listened in silence to their clamorous egotism ringing in my ears. The day, I trust, is not distant, when my hopes will be realized; but, in the meantime, they may be convinced, that I will occasionally watch their conduct, concluding, in the words of the pious Bishop of Alba, to whom literature is more indebted than to the whole group of cotemporary reformers—

Induat in facies centum, centum ille figuras
Ipse adero retegamque dolos fœcundaque fraudis
Agmina disjiciam et magna virtute resistam.*

HIEROPHILOS.

* Let them, like Proteus, all their arts display,
And shift their fraudulent forms night and day;
Their toils are vain, for mine shall be th' employ,
Their wiles to baffle and their force destroy.—VIDA's *Christiad*.

An epic poem, which rivals the Eneid in the sweetness of its versification, as it immeasurably surpasses it in the sacredness and majesty of its theme. When the above passage, prophetic of its destruction, was applied to the Kildare-street Society, its advocates fancied it had taken such root in the country, that they could smile at the harmless menace. Yet ten years did not elapse, when it was obliged to yield to the united zeal and energy of the Catholic people. Such, too, will, assuredly, be the fate of all other systems of education not based on Catholic principles. They may amuse or deceive for a time; but, after the lapse of a few years, there will not be a trace of their existence.

LETTER VII.

ON INTOLERANCE AND EXCLUSIVE SALVATION.

ISLAND OF ARRAN,
Aug. 13, 1820.

*Longe aliud studium atque alios adcincta labores
Non tamen absistam cæptum detexere munus*—VIRGIL.

Though other labours destined to pursue,
My promis'd purpose I shall keep in view.

BEFORE I can be prevailed upon to return the salutations of the other personages who have condescended to solicit the correspondence of "Hierophilos," it may be expected that I should conclude my observations on the letter of my late more talented, though, perhaps, less titled, opponent.

I am willing to believe that his remarks on the Catholic Church were less the misrepresentations of an angry polemic, than the effusions of a heart teeming with benevolence to mankind. It is painful, then, to combat principles which, from their amiability, must have many admirers; and the writer who undertakes their refutation, must often array against himself the kindest feelings of the human heart. Though there is no objection more frequently urged against the Catholic Church than its intolerance, yet there is none more destitute of argument, when stripped of the exaggerations with which it has been generally invested. The argument is generally addressed to the feeling or the fancy, rather than to the judgment of the reader; and as readers blessed with a slender shade of judgment may possess an abundant stock of either, it is not difficult to bring conviction to such understandings. Provided the writer possesses a peremptory tone of assertion—that he is capable of animating his composition with some eloquence, and sharpening it with some ridicule, and of infusing into the whole a seasonable portion of sensibility—he is sure, without one particle of argument, to lead captive the understandings of his readers. Hence, the hollow declamations of some modern speakers about universal charity—a charity which, it is to be feared, evaporates, through its extent, and burns with little intensity for any individual; and hence their unsparing invectives against the principle of exclusive salvation. More intolerant than the church they condemn, they arrogate the right of exacting exclusive acquiescence

to their opinions, and treat with a contemptuous compassion all those who would refuse to bow to the supremacy of their understandings.

Much of the misapprehension which exists on this subject has arisen from confounding two principles that ought ever to be separated—*theological* and *civil intolerance*; and as Catholics are known invariably to hold the one, the disingenuity of their enemies has connected with it the imputation of the other. The principle of civil intolerance, either as it regards sovereigns or citizens, forms no part of the doctrine of the Catholic Church; and that it is not practically illustrated in the lives of its members, their conduct in the interchanges of every social duty, with persons of every communion, bears ample and decisive evidence. It would be superfluous, then, to rebut a charge, which the evidence of their lives has more triumphantly refuted. The other consists in this, that while Catholics are under the conviction that their church is the true one, they must necessarily hold that all who reject it are in error, and, of course, if it be wilful, liable to the awful consequences with which Christ has threatened such contumacy. Such is the tenet which has roused so much hostility against the Catholic Church; such are the grounds on which we are reproached with impiously usurping the prerogatives of the Deity, and presumptuously deciding on the destinies of man. A few reflections will show how unjust and inconsequent is the accusation.

It is remarkable in this discussion, that our adversaries begin at the wrong end of the argument, and reverse every principle by which they establish the truth of Revelation. In discussing the evidences of Christianity, the Protestant as well as Catholic apologists forcibly expose the absurdity of rejecting Revelation from its repugnance to our prejudices.* Whatever may be our feelings, we are taught even by the soundest principles of the inductive philosophy to distrust them when a doctrine, impressed with the character of a divine origin, is offered to our acceptance. Yet this method, so consonant to reason, is abandoned by Protestants in their controversies about the church, and instead of judging of its doctrine, by the natural method of first ascertaining its authority, they preposterously condemn that authority, because they cannot relish the severity of its tenets. Hence, their usual method is to exhibit the amiable toleration of their own church in terms of the most fervent admiration, and,

* Besides eminent Catholic divines, whom I might cite on this subject, Doctor Chalmers, Presbyterian minister at Glasgow, has, in his "Evidences of Christianity, ably reasoned on this subject. How strange, how hidden, the charm that could give force to his arguments, when applied to *some* mysteries, and render them feeble when extended to *others*! Alas! the force of prejudice which recurs to different weights and measures.

after comparing it with the Catholic Church, to condemn the latter for its unfeeling austerity.

Were we to institute a comparison between political institutions, which human wisdom had contrived, or human power had erected, then we might be allowed to weigh their respective merits on the same principle, and praise the wisdom, or arraign the folly of either institution. But the criterion that should direct us in our estimate of civil institutions, will be inadequate when applied to religious societies that lay claims to a divine origin. Whatever our notions of perfection may be, surely that form of society is entitled to the praise of superior excellence, which approximates nearest to the model which has been traced by divine wisdom. From this principle it clearly follows, that our adversaries should check the freedom of their abuse, until they had enquired and ascertained what was the form of government which Christ had instituted for his church—what were to be the leading features of its character—and what the nature of that authority, which was to guard the purity of the faith against the contagion of error. For in the supposition (doubtless a possible one) that Christ had established his church, as the unerring arbiter to which private judgment should ultimately appeal—that he commanded all to obey it, under pain of sharing the fate of the Heathen—and that he had invested it with ample powers to inflict its denunciations on the rebellious children who should refuse acquiescence to its authority—then the boasted system of religious liberty would be the open way to death, while the stern intolerance of the Catholic Church would directly lead to happiness and life. But to avoid being misunderstood or misrepresented, religious liberty I take in opposition to theological, not to civil, intolerance. Though it be true, that no human power can coerce the convictions of the human mind—which is beyond the reach of its penal sanctions—this principle is often pushed to an erroneous and dangerous conclusion. For here there is no question of the application of physical force or civil enactments, but of the existence of a moral obligation. Hence, should it appear, that God has imparted to his Church a delegated authority; as the existence of authority imports the co-relative obligation of obedience, it follows, that a contempt of her ordinances involves, by implication, an infraction of the law of God.

But is it not unfair to level, exclusively, against the Catholics a weapon with which Protestants are equally assailable? Nay, does not the principle of theological intolerance enter into the nature of every religious system? The Church of England, which embodies with its liturgy the Athanasian symbol, cannot admit within the pale of the Church, or of salvation, the Socinians, who deny the Trinity. Although the principles of

the latter are still more comprehensive, yet there is a boundary which even their liberality would not presume to pass, and they scruple not to refuse the hope of pardon to all who deny the divine mission of the Messiah. Even the Deist—whose principles are scarcely characterized by any religious peculiarity—would tremble for the safety of the Atheist; and thus it is evident, that intolerance marks with stronger or fainter colours the tenets of every creed. The only difference, then, between the intolerance of Protestants and Catholics is this, that while the former is occasionally relaxed, and gently accommodated to the varieties of human opinion, the latter is always stretched to an invariable and uniform tension.

Surely a respect for truth, which cannot equally exist amidst discordant systems, must sanction this principle. A respect for the wisdom of Christ must authorize its adoption, unless we suppose him indifferent about the religion which he came on earth to establish. If the feeling of every individual is to be the standard of his faith, every distinction between truth and error will be confounded, and it will become a matter of equal indifference whether one believes or blasphemers the Divinity of the Redeemer. But the principle would not stop at the destruction of revealed religion; even the most sacred principles of morality would not escape its desolating influence. Our ideas of charity and intolerance are relative; and hence, the whining sensibility of novelists may be shocked at the uncharitableness of the apostle, who excludes from the kingdom of heaven the votaries of those crimes, to which their courtesy gives the softer name of fashionable follies.* Nay, the doctrine of eternal torments itself, the profligate will not fail to rank among the dreams of superstition, which, while they alarm the fears of children and females, according to the language of the French satirist, his superior courage may safely deride—

Un libertin d'ailleurs qui sans âme et sans foi
Se fait de son plaisir une suprême loi,
Tient que ces vieux propos de démons et de flammes
Sont bons pour étonner des enfans et des femmes.†

Having shown that the principle of theological intolerance must attach to all religions that admit of any limit to their belief, and that the system which admits of none, must lead to their destruction; having shown, by striking contrast, the incon-

* I. Corinthians, vi, 9, 10.

† The creedless libertine, whose sensual soul
Is steep'd in pleasure, awed by no control,
Fit topics deems those tales of fiends and flames,
To frighten children and their nursing dames.—BOILEAU.

sistency of the charges that are preferred against the Catholic Church, and vindicated on the genuine principles of Christianity, the justice of her general intolerant character, it is only fair to exhibit its mitigating features.

The Catholic Church is far from condemning, by a sweeping anathema, all who are not members of its visible body. She rationally considers that some may be secretly connected with the soul or nobler part of the Church, who are not within the visible pale of her communion. Hence, without condemning those who are shut out from her fold, by circumstances over which they have, apparently, no control, and whose lot is left to the mercy of heaven, she includes among her children all who are baptized, and prevented by a premature death from wilfully embracing error. Adopting the doctrine of Saint Augustine, she absolves from the guilt of heresy, those who unconsciously inherit the errors of their fathers, and investigate the truth with a cautious solicitude, sincerely disposed to embrace it, however revolting to their prejudices. But though she acquits them of the crime of heresy, she does not indiscriminately extend to them the assurance of salvation. Who the persons are that may be comprehended in the class of this pious Father, it is beyond the reach of human sagacity to ascertain. That there are many, I should gladly hope, in compassion for human error. Yet it is much to be feared, that a mistaken liberality exaggerates their number. However, as this principle may be sometimes abused by a licentious interpretation, it is the duty of all to ascertain whether they have fulfilled the condition it requires, *of investigating the truth with a sincere and cautious solicitude*, before they can hope to shield themselves by its application.

Such, if I am rightly instructed, is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, wisely tempering its salutary severity with a reasonable indulgence. Surely such a doctrine is not calculated to infuse or to nourish the poison of religious rancour. The persuasion that it is necessary to belong to the true Church, in order to obtain salvation, instead of rousing the resentment of the Catholic against his brother, is calculated to awaken feelings of an active and benevolent compassion.

The inaccurate notions not only of "Bibliophilos," but numberless others, have reluctantly induced me to dwell on this unpalatable subject. If I have succeeded in correcting any of the prejudices, and soothing any of the hostility, so frequently manifested against our religion, I should rejoice at the prospect of reconciliation. If, on the contrary, I should have excited any hostile feelings—an effect which I sincerely deprecate—I must only remark, that truth is too sacred to be sacrificed to the hope of unanimity. In conclusion—though I deplore the existence of any angry recriminations on the subject of religion—I cannot

help observing, that I know not a greater solecism in language or morals, than to call those uncharitable, who denounce errors which they know to be dangerous ; while the epithet of charitable is bestowed upon those, who, under the specious name, are propagating a system of indifference, and betraying their fellow-men into a treacherous security.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER VIII.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
Nov. 11, 1820.

Discite justitiam moniti.—VIRGIL.

Warned, learn righteousness.—DRYDEN.

It is high time to redeem my promise of occasionally communicating my thoughts on the interesting subject which has already occupied so large a portion of the public attention. In deference to the momentous interest which hitherto absorbed every other feeling, I suspended my correspondence. I fancied that the spirit of bigotry would have been abashed by a decent respect for more exalted sorrows, and that its murmurs would have been hushed in the stillness of the fear that had come upon the nation. But, alas ! while the land may be rocked by an earthquake, it disturbs not the vexatious insects that are playing their little gambols upon its surface.

When first I ventured to offer my observations on the Bible Societies, I was aware that it was a hazardous undertaking to combat a system which had engaged in its support much of the rank and opulence of the kingdom. The blessings of the Bible became the theme of every tongue—its diffusion was hailed as the purest emanation of benevolence—and opposition to its progress was denounced as a sacrilegious encroachment on the evangelical liberties of man. Hence, I was not allowed to proceed far when an attempt was made to arrest my progress, and my attention was turned to an opponent of the school of a noble writer,* whose playful nature seemed more at ease, when disport-

* Lord Shaftesbury, the celebrated author of "The Characteristics," who would fain substitute ridicule for argument.

ing itself with the lighter shafts of ridicule, than when cumbered by the weighty armour of reason. The arrogance of triumph must ever be offensive. It is a sure indication of an ungenerous mind. But, as the result of the controversy is before the public, all have an opportunity of judging of the fairness of the charge, which imputes to a sinister policy the well-judged opposition of the Catholic priesthood. None are more sincerely anxious than they are to extend the facilities of education to the poor. But, they should prove unfaithful to the trust reposed in them, were they to suffer the faith to be perverted, under the pretence of education.

Let it not be imagined that this is one of those speculative topics, which may be solely abandoned to the discussion of the curious, without affecting, in its issue, the vital interests of the community. It has already excited the attention of men, high in station and character, in the country ; and such is become the magnitude of the subject, that it has formed a prominent figure in a charge which lately issued from the bench. I gladly hail the introduction of a spirit that dictated, from the judgment seat, an address so pregnant with deep observation, and enlightened benevolence. Though too long to be here inserted, it is too valuable to be entirely withheld ; nor shall I weaken the following passage, by exhibiting it through the medium of a commentary :—

“ Whilst the leading men of the country laid their hands upon transgressors, and introduced them to condign punishment, he (Baron Smith) was satisfied they would *endeavour to do away the causes of transgression*, by promoting the education, the morals, the comforts, and the well-being of their lower orders, and removing, in the same degree, those temptations and irritating provocatives to crime, which want, and ignorance, and wretchedness, and their attendant discontents, involve. As a main and sacred engine for the accomplishment of these ends, he agreed with the laudable impressions of the present day, that the dissemination of religious instruction is of vast importance. But this instruction ought, in his opinion, to be dispensed in a way conformable to the tenets of those who were to receive it, *without any attempt at making proselytes, especially without any attempts of an indirect description*. We are not to do evil that good might come of it ; and, least of all, ought we, by the admixture of ingenious contrivance, to poison the streams of Christianity at the source, or taint, with anything like imposture, the pure sincerity of religious truth.”

Such is the language in which one of the most enlightened ornaments of the bench addressed the jury of the county Mayo. It is the sober language of a mind placed above the prejudices that obscure, and the passions that pervert, the understandings

of little individuals. May the gentry of that county profit by his lordship's lecture ; for it cannot be supposed that, with the accurate knowledge which he possessed of the state of the country, his lordship would have so trifled with the jury on that solemn occasion, as to have addressed to them a supererogatory caution.

Hitherto, indeed, these gentlemen might plead a reasonable apology, as they were probably anxious to atone for the tardiness of their zeal by the superior vigour of their exertions. They might have felt that the Biblical spirit was nearly spent ere it reached that remote province ; and as it did not come upon them until the eleventh hour, they aspired to the merit and reward of those who were early engaged in the contest. Such an ardent effort of piety, however unseasonable, may be entitled to commendation. Yet it were to be wished that they were wise unto sobriety. They may now learn that, to prove their love of religion, or of country, it is not necessary to force the Bible upon the people. They may learn, that tranquillity may be preserved among the humbler classes without offering violence to their consciences. They may learn, that attention to their comforts, together with education conformable to their tenets, is a surer way to promote their welfare, than any indirect attempts at proselytism. Indeed, the fierce effervescence of religious zeal is gradually subsiding among all who have any pretensions to refinement or liberality. It had its passing day among the revolving fashions that attract the public gaze and command the public homage ; but now it is consigned to the fate of many a waning custom, that lingers long in the extremities, after it is banished from the centre of polished society. Such, it is said, is the high-spiritedness of the gentry of Connaught, that they would indignantly repel the imputation of being behind in the improvements of the age. I should, therefore, recommend to them the speedy adoption of his lordship's lessons, lest they should be found to imitate those who provoke the public ridicule, by displaying in remoter districts the faded finery of the metropolis.

It is remarked that evils, of which the existence is unquestionable, are often capriciously traced to a strange diversity of causes. The justness of this remark is strongly exemplified in the question under consideration. Although there are more obvious and palpable sources of the misery of our people, yet it is the policy of some to lay it to the account of ignorance, and then, by an easy consequence, to transfer it to the clergy. Yet it requires but little knowledge to perceive the disingenuous fallacy of such a representation. I will not, by any high-wrought picture of their distress, or the development of its causes, attempt to make them more sensitive to their wretched-

ness, and, consequently, more miserable. It is the duty of every good man, by holding up hopes of a better world, to soothe into resignation the fretfulness of their discontent. But I must confess, that while I reflect on the numberless petty vexations which the Irish peasant endures—vexations, some of which, from their local nature, are beyond the reach of the legislature, and within the influence of those who profess such an anxiety for improving their condition—and compare them with the mock remedies which are ostentatiously offered for their removal, I am reminded of the lines, in which the feeling poet* of a neighbouring country describes another cast of mankind—

Trade, wealth, and fashion, ask you still to bleed ;
And holy men give Bibles for the deed.

Let the lay gentlemen, then, labour to dispense these comforts of which they are the stewards, consigning the spiritual wants of the people to their legitimate pastors. Let the evils that are within the sphere of their benevolence be removed or mitigated. Let them administer education in a way conformable to the tenets of those who are to receive it ; and, instead of alienating the people, by giving encouragement to illiterate apostates, let them generously co-operate with the clergy, who, from station, and from influence among the people, which has grown with ages, are the most competent to direct the course of instruction which will be most efficient and beneficial in its consequences. Should these lenitives fail to assuage the soreness of those evils which afflict our peasantry, it will then be high time to make an experiment on the latent efficacy of the Bible.

HIEROPHILOS.

* The Author of “The Pleasures of Hope.”

LETTER IX.

TO THE MOST REV. DR. MANNERS, PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP
OF CANTERBURY, AND PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND.

THE QUESTION OF THE DIVORCE BETWEEN GEORGE IV. AND HIS QUEEN.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
Dec. 2, 1820.

*Faecunda culpæ secula, nuptias
Primum inquinavere, et genus, et domus.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.—HORACE.*

Fruitful of crimes, this age first stained
Their hapless offspring, and profaned
The nuptial bed ; from whence the woes,
Which various and unnumbered rose ;
From this polluted fountain head
O'er Rome, and o'er the nation spread.—FRANCIS.

MY LORD—During the late portentous proceedings which have awed public curiosity, your Grace and episcopal colleagues stood out in too prominent an attitude, not to attract and fix observation. As the question of divorce embraced much of ecclesiastical polity, it was naturally expected that the faithful would be enlightened by the wisdom and confirmed by the accordance of the hierarchy. But, alas ! these anticipations have been sadly frustrated, and the surprise and disedification that were feebly murmured among the Lords have been long since loudly re-echoed through the empire.* It has been a subject of regret to some, of triumph to others, and of wonder to all, to see the heads of a religion which hinges on the principle of the universal intelligibility of the Scripture, arrayed in adverse ranks on a momentous question, involving in its general tendency the best interests of mankind, and in this particular instance, the safety and the honour of the empire ; disputing every inch of ground with Scripture authority, and thereby demonstrating to the world the obscurity of the sacred volume. For I will not—I cannot, my Lord, suppose that any unworthy bias or flexibility to power could warp the judgment of men of such exalted station and sanctity. And hence, one cannot sufficiently express his indignation against those rash advocates of the Bible, who cannot

* Witness among others the speech of my Lord King, who sported a good deal of mirth and raillery at the expense of the premier, until his seriousness was restored by the shock which his faith had sustained in the collision of the prelacy.

defend its perspicuity without impeaching the integrity of its expounders. Hitherto, whatever might be the opinion of the prelates, they uniformly affected the language of orthodoxy and concord, and like the ancient philosophers, though they might inwardly disbelieve, they exteriorly revered the doctrines of the Church. But on this occasion they scandalized the faithful, and edified the sectary, by sincerely revealing the mysteries of their own disunion.

I have heard, my Lord, of the distinction of essentials, by which the lovers of subtlety, more than of truth, have thought to elude the arguments of their adversaries. It will not, doubtless, be recurred to on this occasion, nor will it be deemed presumption to assert, that there is nothing essential in Scripture, if the doctrine of marriage does not form an essential point of Christian morality. It is not a speculative article, on which one could be supposed to err without danger, and propagate his errors, without affecting the public repose. It is a duty of every day's occurrence, connected with the happiness of almost every individual; nor have the ministers of the establishment themselves aspired to such unearthly sanctity, as to be exempt from its obligations. It is, therefore, of vast importance to know whether the marringe contract lasts for life, or only during the discretion of the parties; and whether we are to believe, with his Lordship of Chester, that its ties are indissoluble, or, with your Grace of Canterbury, that adultery annuls its engagements.

On reading the report of your Grace's speech, I was not a little surprised to find a minister of Christ principally resting on the obsolete laws of Moses. However, it may appear consistent enough, that they who have abjured the living authority of the Church should appeal to the fallen power of the synagogue. Still, I would expect from your Grace, that connected and enlightened view of legislation which mounts to the origin, and catches the spirit of the law, flinging aside its exceptions, and not the heavy drudgery of a darkling critic, who fastens on a detached part, without comparing its effect with the symmetry of the whole. It is true, as appears from Deuteronomy,* that divorce was tolerated by the law of Moses. But did this permission originally enter into the views of the legislator; or was it not rather extorted by the stubbornness of a people, whom it was necessary to conciliate by indulgence to a compliance with the law? Hence the practice of divorce was not so frequent among the Jews as it is generally, but erroneously imagined. Hence it was uniformly marked as a licentious advantage which was taken of the letter against the spirit of the law, and denounced by those who were raised up by the Almighty, to enforce its observance or punish its infraction. I might illustrate the

* Chap. xxiv.

truth of these assertions by a reference to the purest period of the Jewish history. However, I shall content myself with citing the following passage of Malachy, which marks the indignation of the Almighty against this odious practice:—"And this again have you done; you have covered the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and bellowing, so that I have no more a regard to sacrifice; neither do I accept any atonement at your hands. Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, whom thou hast despised; yet she was thy partner, and the wife of thy covenant."* It is true, indeed, that towards the decline of the Hebrew republic the permission given by Moses had grown into a pernicious practice. But this relaxation may be traced to another cause. When we consider that the dispersion of the Jews introduced to their acquaintance the profane wisdom of the East; and that hence they mingled more freely with the nations, it will not be surprising if the purity of the law should have been adulterated by a mixture of exotic commentary. Then arose the celebrated schools of Hillel and Samaiah, of whom the latter confined the privilege of divorce to adultery, while the former abused the flexibility of the text to an indefinite latitude of passion or caprice. The Sandhedrim was divided by the credit of these doctors;† and we are told that until the time of our Redeemer, the controversy still trembled between the alternations of either party.

I have asserted that the liberty of divorce granted by Moses was rather the effect of necessity, than the spontaneous dictate of his wisdom. Such is the interpretation of Christ, who, while he explains the law of Moses, unfolds and propagates his own. And the Pharisees coming to him, asked him: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. But he answering, saith to them, what did Moses command you? And they said: Moses permitted to write a bill of divorce and to put her away. And Jesus answering, said to them: because of the hardness of the heart, he wrote you that precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife. And they shall be in one flesh. Therefore, now, they are not two but one flesh. *What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder?*"‡ I should now appeal to the candour of the unprejudiced, and ask what is the doctrine clearly conveyed in this language. The Pharisees ask Christ whether it is lawful for one to send away his wife. To obviate cavil, and to defeat that hostile spirit, which so often lurked under a pretended reverence for the law, he asks what did Moses command. Then,

* Malachy, ii, 13, 14. † Selden Uxor Ebraica, Lib. III, ch. xviii, xx, xxii.

‡ Saint Mark, x.

after showing that divorce was an imperfection which originated in temporary circumstances, he ascends to the origin, and develops the primitive institution of matrimony, showing its indissoluble connexion from the creation of only one of either sex—a connexion, if we are to believe the apostle,* which shadowed his own mystic union with his Church; and concludes by proposing this original compact, instead of the permission of Moses, as the positive standard of his own law.

I should now ask, if the solitary text of St. Matthew† be sufficient to weaken the force of this reasoning? “But I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, excepting the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: And he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery.” St. Luke‡ agrees with St. Mark, and what determines the controversy, the apostle,§ expressly in the name of Christ, prohibits marriage, even in case of separation. What canon of criticism, then, can warrant us to bend the evidence of three clear and consistent testimonies, mutually supporting and illustrating each other, to an interpretation of an ambiguous passage which is at war with the express principles of the legislator? But if there is an apparent ambiguity, the Catholic interpretation makes it accord with the tenor of the other evangelists. The Catholic Church authorizes divorce, or rather repudiation, in case of adultery—a practice evidently warranted by the first part of the text of St. Matthew. Yet she teaches the indissolubility of marriage, a doctrine clearly deduced from the second part, compared with the other evangelists; nor shall I exhaust the patience nor insult the understanding of my reader, by showing the violence that is offered to language in qualifying an absolute member of a sentence with a forced or fancied exception.

However, as if to satisfy the scruples and appease the prurient of the grammarian, we are told that after this discourse with the Pharisees, Christ was again consulted on the same point by his disciples, to whom he was in the habit of clearly explaining what he denied to the treacherous curiosity of his enemies, or only darkly delivered in mystery and parable. To them he thus solemnly addresses himself: “Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”|| Such, my Lord, is the conclusion of Christ himself upon that important occasion, when he undertook to instruct the future teachers of his Church. And hence I am justified in expressing my surprise, that the exception of an imperfect and abrogated law should be converted, by a Christian prelate, into the rule and practice of a perfect dispensation.

And now, my Lord, permit me to lay before you another

* Ephes. v. † St. Matt. v. ‡ St. Luke, xvi. § Cor. vii. || St. Mark, x.

proof of the truth of Catholic interpretation, in the demoralizing effects of the contrary doctrine. How different the idea of marriage in the Catholic and Protestant religion. In the one, we behold a contract exposed to all the waywardness of inclination and caprice ; and in the other, a sacred connexion subsisting for life, exalted by religion, and, instead of being at the mercy of the passions, subduing and chastening their violence by its salutary control. The facility of divorce weakens the mutual desire of pleasing ; a neglect of reciprocal attention soon creates indifference ; indifference may ripen into disgust, and rankle into enmity, until the unhappy couple see no hope of release from a cruel bondage, except in mutual separation, and the prospect of new nuptials. Behold, then, the consequence ;—a divorce must be effected ; adultery is a necessary step ; morality is sacrificed, the nature of law is reversed, and the apprehension, or rather the hope of punishment, operates as an incentive to the commission of the crime. What an unnatural state of society ! in which, according to the strong language of Seneca,* people marry for the sake of divorce, and divorce for the sake of marriage.

Witness the daily contracts, in which regular provision is made for these disgraceful contingencies. I shall not speak of the wound that is inflicted on national morals by the frequency of their recurrence. For such is now the facility of communication, that the tide of immorality flows through a thousand channels, and soon penetrates from the highest region into the remotest creeks of society. If we were to judge from observation, we could not believe that we lived in a Christian country. In the days of schoolboy innocence, our belief and our delicacy are equally shocked at the pictures of the Roman satirist.† Soon, however, the experience of age subdues the virtuous scepticism of youth : we see, in the licentiousness of the times, the most faithful comment on his writings, and are taught to absolve the heaviest strokes of his pencil from the charge of exaggeration. We behold the same shameful vicissitudes of marriage and divorce which marked the degeneracy of Rome, and may confirm our opinion of the baneful influence of the Protestant doctrine, in the words of an eminent Protestant historian :—“ A specious theory is confuted by this free and perfect experiment, which demonstrates that the liberty of divorce does not contribute to happiness and virtue.”

* *Exeunt matrimonii causa, nubunt divortii.* Seneca de benef. L. 3.

† As an instance of our retrocession to the good old times of Seneca and Juvenal, I might mention the fantastic plan of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who recommended a bill in Parliament, septennial in its operation, for the benefit of married persons. Your Grace will surely smile at the ludicrous licentiousness of the project. However, I have no doubt but it would be as acceptable to many individuals of the present day, as the law of Moses. See Spence's *Anecdotes of Books and Men* : London, 1820.

What is then, my Lord, the prolific source of these abuses ?

Unde haec monstra tamen vel quo de fonte requiris ?*

or what can stay the progress of immorality, while the doctrine of divorce is unsettled, and abandoned to the licentiousness of every interpreter ? The Catholic doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage is the only remedy—a doctrine that is already incorporated with the common law of England. Startle not, my Lord, at such a proposition. Some of the ministers of the Establishment have gone farther, and recommended a reconciliation with the Catholic Church. Alarmed at the defection that is daily thinning the ranks of the Establishment, they have seen no hopes of subordination except in such an alliance. Nay, the union of the Churches occupied much of the attention of your predecessor, Archbishop Wake, who, had he lived to witness the dreadful progress of sectarianism, would doubtless have pushed his overtures with greater zeal, and perhaps with greater success. You may dread that the archiepiscopal throne of Canterbury would be overshadowed by the amplitude of St. Peter's, and gradually shorn of its splendours. No, my Lord, it would borrow fresh lustre from such a junction. Such were heretofore the fears of some aspiring prelates, whose ambition made them impatient of the supremacy of Rome. But scarcely did they try the fatal experiment of separation, when they found that the effulgence of their thrones was only reflected. This train of thought naturally reminds me of Bishop Butler, another ornament of the Establishment. You know with what ingenuity he traced the analogy between natural and revealed religion, and discovered resemblances between physical and moral truth. However, had not his prejudices arrested his speculations, he might have discovered in the condition of his own Church another illustration of this striking analogy. Loosened from the centre of unity, her motions are capricious and irregular : unfed by any accession of light from the fountain, her original stock is constantly diminishing ; and like a distant star, still receding from the centre, she casts her lone and wanning splendour, gradually deepening into that sort of twilight which teems with wayward phantoms more than utter obscurity, and which, though too feeble to light the way, is still sufficient to make the darkness visible.†

HIEROPHILOS.

* Whence those grim monsters ? from what source they spring ?

† It is consoling to witness the effect of this truth on the men of Oxford, who have courage enough to quit the regions of those spectral shadows which they encounter in their enquiries, and are again returning to enjoy the light of the Catholic Church.

LETTER X.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

Πέμπτας δὲ εξαεσθαὶ, ἐπεὶ χαλεπαὶ τε καὶ αἰναῖ,
 Ἐν πέμπτῃ γάρ Φασὶν Ἐγίννιας ἀμφιπολυεῖν,
 Ὁρκον τίννυμενας τὸν Ἐρις τέκε πῆμ' επιόρχοις.—HESIOD.

The fifth of every week thy care require,
 Days full of trouble and afflictions dire.
 For then the Furies take their round, 'tis said,
 And heap their vengeance on the perjur'd head.

It may be a fanciful, yet it is a remarkable coincidence, that the day which the superstition of Hesiod denounced as ominous of discord should be singled out for the revival of similar scenes by the pretended followers of the Gospel. Before I take my leave of a subject to which the little time I have devoted I can still recal without regret, I shall take the liberty of directing once more the curiosity of the public to the last meeting of the Kildare-street Association.

The last year has been to them the most eventful one since the origin of their institution. From its infancy to that period they went on rejoicing in their way, and enriched by the accumulated offerings of their converts. At length, however, a fatal check was given to their career; a spirit of wholesome inquiry was directed to their proceedings; the extent of the benefits they conferred was compared with the extent of their specious promises; and when the opposition between both was laid open to the public, they were earnestly conjured to adopt a line of conduct more conformable to the spirit of their primitive regulations. Deaf to remonstrance, they sullenly persevered, in opposition to all that was elevated and enlightened in their assembly. And what has been the consequence of their rash and inconsiderate measures? The alienation of many who are still of their number, and the actual desertion of some of the most dignified members, who have given their cordial support to the establishment of a new society. Of schemes of improvement of which experience does not afford means of ascertaining the utility, I must confess I am not an enthusiastic admirer. Of the new society I know but little, nor does that little knowledge furnish sufficient data to warrant censure or commendation. Without discussing, then, the merit of the other, it will not be deemed

rashness to predict that should each returning year witness a similar defection with the past, the existence of the parent institution must soon become a tale.

The expectation that was raised, and the distrust that was excited, by the recent discussions, drew to the place of meeting a full and fashionable assembly. It was imagined that the chosen champions of its fame would clear it of the charges of proselytism and mis-government, or that the more moderate would recommend an union with the schismatics. But some of the leading orators of last year, either ashamed of its bigotry, or content with the celebrity which they obtained in the cause of the Gospel, resigned the theatre to a crowd of less efficient, but equally zealous advocates. The uniformity of talent displayed by the successive speakers happily spares me the necessity of irritating the jealousy of some, or distressing the modesty of others, by any invidious selection. I must except, however, one of the Fellows of Trinity College, on whose mind a strong light seems to have broken through some secret crevices, which has not yet penetrated the dull medium, nor reached the other members of the University. With the buoyancy of genius he has risen above the pressure, and resisted the contagion of its atmosphere; for

His delights

Are dolphin like, they show his back above
The element they live in.

Yet neither his wisdom, nor that of Lord Cloncurry, could overcome the inveterate prejudices of the members; and when their overtures for conciliation were rejected, like Camillus, they retired, perhaps, murmuring an indignant prophecy that the society would soon solicit, in the wisdom of its reverse, the councils which it rejected in the infatuation of its prosperity.

Why the members of this society adhere with such stubborn pertinacity to their system, it is difficult to conjecture. They know that the society was founded for the education of the poor; they know that the majority of that class is composed of Catholics; and yet with the most insulting mockery they proffer them education, on conditions which they well know cannot be accepted. Why refuse to entrust the education of the Catholics to those who convey to them the morality of the Gospel, without any mixture of fanaticism, teaching them a patient endurance of their sufferings, and inculcating an allegiance—not the calculating and conditional allegiance, which rests on no secure principle, but an allegiance founded on conscience and enforced by the apostle. Circumstances are daily arising which demand some alterations in their code of laws, and still they refuse to yield to them. Really such perverse opposition to the dictates of sound

policy cannot be explained, unless by supposing that, its author, like the legislator of Sparta, had bound the members by oath to the observance of his laws, and that then by an heroic artifice he sacrificed himself to the perpetuity of his institutions. Else how could they in the face of the world, with all the affectation of sincerity and solemnity of declamation, applaud their own exertions, which, it is well known, must be confined to a limited sphere, or idly wasted in unproductive activity? They may ascribe the reluctance of Catholics to prejudice or superstition. I have in my former letters sufficiently vindicated on that head their tenets and their practice. And those who amuse themselves at the expense of their piety, would doubtless laugh at the timid scruples of Eleazar, who refused life when it could not be preserved without a violation of the law.*

There was one, too, who declaimed long and loud on the absurdity of withholding the Scriptures in the nineteenth century! The old maxim of *laudator temporis acti* is reversed, and instead of the silly prattle which the dignity of age might render tolerable, however tedious, we are stunned with an incessant panegyric on our own times. The progress of mind in the nineteenth century is indeed a favourite theme; nor is it difficult to perceive, in the complacency of the orators, that they fancy they have had a large share in producing the general illumination. Full of their Utopian theories, it is in vain that the picture of history is placed before them. Occupied in the contemplation of a group, in which themselves form, doubtless, prominent figures, the most colossal forms of the past retire into diminutive and almost indiscernible perspective. Had they bestowed, however, a little attention on the comparison, they would discover that the sickly tapers of the present century would wink before the broad effulgence of the ages that are gone by. To reason with such minds, incurably seized with the love of system, is a hopeless task. You may convince them by argument of the inutility of their plan; but still, on account of some secret interest, you cannot persuade them to its rejection.

For when disputes are worn out,
'Tis interest still resolves the doubt.

Yet it is consistent enough that Protestants should talk of the improvements of their religion. The Catholics do not claim any such merits; and while every other system is corrected or disfigured by time, it is their glory that the faith of their Church is independent of its contributions. Those who pretend to be so familiar with the Scripture, cannot but recollect the earnest solicitude with which St. Paul exhorts Timothy† to avoid any

* Machabees, vi.

† II. Timothy, iii, 4, 5, 6.

communion with those whose discourse creepeth like a cancer, tainting whatever it touches, until it spreads a general infection. Now it will be readily conceded, that the world daily teems with men designated by the character of St. Paul, however people may differ about its application. Hence the Catholics only act in obedience to the injunction of the apostle, in reprobating a system of education which, by confounding every sect, would conceal from them the contagious poison which he cautions them to avoid; and thus lead them into deadly errors, under the semblance of an undefinable Christianity. Those who have heard the smooth, and flattering, and plausible language that was spoken at the Kildare-street meeting, may be surprised at the severity with which I have animadverted on their conduct. With no small share of confidence in the sincerity of my species, I am warranted in applying to that society the maxim—

Fronti nulla fides.

Their conduct, not their language, is the safest criterion of ascertaining their object. Whoever, then, wishes to know the moderation of the Bible-men, let him learn it in the vexatious tyranny to which some of the peasants are subjected, rather than at a public meeting, where every thing is calculated to produce a transient illusion. On witnessing how the concord, to which the jarring members of such meetings are attuned by the sounds of eloquence and charity, is almost dissolved on their dispersion, I am reminded of the fabled theatre of Orpheus, where beasts and birds, wild and tame, soothed by the charms of music, forgot their savage instincts; but as soon as the magic of song had ceased, they suddenly awoke to discord, and resumed the ferocity of their natures.*

HIEROPHILOS.

* *Otia sopitis ageret cum cantibus Orpheus
..... Sova feris natura reddit.*—CLAUDIAN.

LETTER XI.

*Turnus ut infractos adverso marte Latinos
Defecisse videt, sua nunc promissa reposci,
Se signari oculis : ultrò implacabilis ardet
Atollitque animos.—VIRGIL.*

When Turnus saw the Latins quit the field,
Their armies broken, and their courage quelled,

.....
He roused his vigour for the late debate,
And raised his haughty soul to meet his fate.—DRYDEN.

If it should excite surprise that I have listened so long to the haughty complacency of my former antagonist,* my silence is a proof that the desire of writing never engaged “Hierophilos” in controversy. While the work of discord was going forward among the preachers of charity and peace, I looked on with silent satisfaction, resolved to await the issue of their intestine divisions. Though challenged to the contest, I saw in the defiance an insidious design to create a diversion among the pious combatants; and was, therefore, determined that no provocation should shake my resolution of maintaining a cautious neutrality. I could, therefore, forgive “Bibliophilos” the indulgence of an illusion, which mistook his retreat for a victory. I had some toleration in store for his high commendation of his own prowess; nor would I refuse to swell the testimony of his worth, by the praise which the sage of Ithaca bestowed on the sinewy Ajax:—

Famed be thy tutor; and thy parts of nature
Thrice famed, beyond, beyond all erudition;
But he that disciplined thy arms to fight,
Let Mars divide eternity in twain,
And give him half:—

The sacred warriors have, at length, disappeared; and, to be serious, I must acknowledge the justness of the claims of “Bib-

* The letters of “Bibliophilos,” to which reference is made in this place, were published in the *Dublin Journal* of the 14th and 26th of November, and of the 19th of December, respectively. The two first are addressed to the Protestant Primate of Armagh, on the subject of his Grace’s secession from the Hibernian Bible Society; and, from the vigour with which they are conceived, the force of the reasoning, the nature of Protestant principles, and the silence of his Lordship and his friends, may be justly deemed unanswerable. The third, “Bibliophilos” terms “A Review of some of the Catholic Writers,” who took a share in the contention of the sectaries. The ridicule it contains bespeaks a rich, playful, though a cruel mind. As I have not authority, I cannot, of course, present them to the English reader.

liophilos," who ascribes to himself the merit of their dispersion. While I regret that the public has not been edified a little longer by the pious secrets* of the Society, I cannot but applaud the talents of the man, whose criticism has brushed away those dark productions, which spread the spirit of discord, and discoloured the face of literature. But, after all, "Bibliophilos" is, perhaps, too fastidious. With a taste sensitive to the most delicate beauties, and an ear attuned to the finest cadences, of language, he cannot endure any composition that has not been cast in classic mould. Why, however, refuse to any individual the right of using the sort of weapons with which nature has furnished him? The caustic severity of "Bibliophilos" against the writers of the *Patriot* may then be softened by the reflection, that necessity called for their interference. And to withhold one's aid when his cause is attacked, because his writings cannot minister to the luxury of learning, would be betraying the folly of him who would refuse to repulse the assaults of an enemy, because he had not studied the tactics of Vegetius, nor learned to draw up his forces in the classic disposition of the Roman column or the Macedonian phalanx.

While the minds of the advocates of the Bible Societies seemed pervious to persuasion, I undertook to demonstrate the folly and danger of their projects. But the disease has since grown so inveterate, that argument would seem now but a feeble remedy; and the change which time has wrought in the tone of their members, furnishes a practical illustration of the truth of my predictions. I should, therefore, hail the appearance of a writer, who, in the face of the Established Church, has put forth, in such a strong point of view, the principles by which

* Those who have read the *Patriot* during the last two months, need not be informed of the covert designs and pious frauds of the Societies. One of its correspondents has supplied us with the valuable information, that many of the members have, at the public expense, supplied their families with the Scriptures in gilt morocco, in order, I suppose, that the young and thoughtless, who could not relish the dullness of the book, might be attracted to its perusal by the decorations of the binding. He has also pointed out other circuitous little channels, into which the stream of lucrative devotion is diverted, before it reaches its destined object—the instruction of the poor. I shall not dwell on the indecency of females abandoning the duties and privacy of domestic life, carried away amidst the stir and bustle of enthusiasm, and drawing over the faithful into the conventicles of the elect, by offering their profound commentaries on the epistles of Saint Paul. But, though it may not rank among their secrets, yet every thinking man must perceive how dangerous it is to the interests of society, to suffer its peace to be scared away by those itinerant apparitions, who, with the most sepulchral hollowness of tone, and the most doleful longitude of aspect, are stalking in mid-day through our streets and highways, shrieking out the apostrophes of Isaias on the guilt and fall of Babylon, and piously applying them to the Protestant establishment. Ashamed of the disclosure of these tales, their authors have at length retired to secrecy—but in vain; no artifice can conceal the deformity of a system, which the indiscretion of its own advocates has bared to public view.

the Bible Societies are supported, if I did not tremble for their consequences. Unable to oppose the force of his arguments, the champions of the Church have retreated to the secure hold of authority ; but the irresistible reasoning of "Bibliophilos" has followed them there, resolved not to spare even the bulwarks of the Establishment, should they be opposed to the impetuous current of his opinions. Such is the obvious drift of his own language. In his second letter to the Primate of Armagh, after other passages, too plain to be mistaken, he writes—" In the controversies which have arisen on the subject, far more anxiety has been expressed by the champions of the Church for the preservation of the Establishment than the Bible. It is to be hoped that both may be secured ; but should their separate interest be found, at any time, incompatible, what honest man could hesitate upon the choice of evils ?"

I may be allowed to congratulate the writer and the public upon this candid avowal of his sentiments. The spirit of fanaticism must have been fermented to a high degree, when it could have worked up to the effusion of such ardent language, the cool and philosophic mind of "Bibliophilos." Lest, however, it should be imagined that these opinions are peculiar to him, I could cite passages of similar import from the writers of the *Patriot*, did I not dread to disgrace my letter by their insertion. Is it not, therefore, evident that the Bible distributors, secure of their own strength, disdain to disguise any longer the hostility of their purpose ? Panting for the riches, they are rushing forward to hasten the downfal, of the Establishment, and to proclaim, in the numbness that has seized its members, the approach of its dissolution. Their designs, now that they are revealed to the world, must be met, on the part of the Church, by a temperate, yet vigorous, exercise of authority. The Protestant Bishops of Armagh and Dublin have given an example befitting the dignity and responsibility of their station. It is to be hoped that others will soon be awakened to a similar sense of the danger, and to an imitation of their example. The consistency of the conduct of their lordships, or of the authority which they exercise, it is surely not incumbent on me to vindicate. But the question is now a question of policy, and not of religious controversy ; and there is no friend of peace who would not rather witness the inconsistencies of quiet and good order, than the tragic, however consistent, consequences of an unbridled license of opinion. The Bible Societies are become deaf as adders' ears to the whispers of persuasion ; the voice of argument would no longer be heard in the noise of their fanaticism ; and hence the necessity of some more powerful agent, to calm the rear, and stay the fury, of the agitated sectaries.

It is, then, high time to desist from unmeaning panegyric on

the inestimable advantages of the Bible. Let experience answer whether these societies have realized the prophetic visions of their first and most fervent eulogists. Have they plucked a single evil out of the mass of human misery? No. The members may continue to meet at stated periods, and feed the credulity of the public with the marvellous history of their spiritual exploits. Their orators may then come forward, and pour out their cold and vapid ecstacies before an assembly prepared to second the pious labourings of the spirit, by seasonable interruptions of tumultuous applause. What is the amount of all this declamation? Why, that they have, in the progress of a few years, distributed so many hundred thousand copies of the Scriptures. Can a greater deceit be practised on the public mind, than to persuade it that the spirit of God has been diffused, because numberless copies of the lifeless volume have been circulated? Let all the rhetorical exaggerations of the speakers be mathematically true—it only proves the melancholy conclusion of such a waste of public money. A portion of that money would do much to alleviate the misery now felt by the humbler classes of our people, and, perhaps, prevent some of those excesses over which piety must weep. But what benefits have the Bible Societies conferred on our wretched peasantry? They may distribute their Bibles until doom's-day; their efforts will be still as unprofitable as the labours of Sisyphus. One solitary reflection ought to cure the fever of fanaticism, or, at least, guard the public against the further progress of its contagion. Though the Associations have toiled for years at the godly work, and flung millions of Bibles through the mass of society, have they not shared the fate of the book flung by the Prophet* into the Euphrates, and sunk like useless lumber to the bottom, while not a portion of their spirit has rested on its surface, to move over the waters and still the troubled elements?

HIEROPHILOS.

* "And when thou shalt have made an end of reading this book, thou shalt tie a stone to it, and shalt throw it into the midst of the Euphrates."—*Jeremias*, li, 63.

LETTER XII.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

Sed hoc non concedo, ut quibus rebus gloriemini in vobis, easdem in aliis reprehendatis.—CICERO PRO LIGARIO.

It cannot be allowed that men should censure in others a line of conduct which receives a sanction from their own practice and panegyric.

IN concluding the subject to which these letters have been devoted, it may not be useless to direct the public attention to an occurrence which has lately called forth some invidious observations on the spirit of religious proselytism.

The conversion of Miss Loveday* to the Catholic faith has provoked the zeal of some of our modern journalists, who vie with each other in their animadversions on a daughter who seemed dead to every impulse of filial affection. Any interference with the faith which Protestants have inherited from their fathers, they qualify with the harsh epithet of seduction; and the profession of the Catholic creed they stigmatize as a dissolution of the tenderest ties of nature, and an undutiful renunciation of the parental authority.

The Catholic religion is immediately characterized with the polite epithet of superstitious, and the conviction it engenders is converted into the terrors of a weak and gloomy imagination. Even these establishments which piety has erected for the protection of female virtue, are not safe against their harsh insinuations. Instead of inveighing against these holy institutions, our gratitude should applaud that benevolence which founded those asylums, where virtue may be shielded against the dangerous seductions of life, or where the feelings experienced by sensitive minds, on a sudden reverse of fortune, may be soothed into resignation by the consolations of religion. All these advantages are overlooked, when balanced against the interest of the Protestant religion. The example of Miss Loveday is held up as a salutary warning against the dangers of perversion; and so intense is the sympathy felt for the misfortunes of the father and the child, that I doubt not but the pious sisters of the Bible Societies will celebrate an annual festival to bewail the virginity of the daughter of Jephtha.

Yet these people, whom the conversion of one individual has

* This Protestant lady became a convert to the Catholic religion in France, greatly moved by the piety and cheerfulness of the inmates of those convents, which the world foolishly mistakes for the abodes of melancholy.

filled with such alarm, can behold with indifference or satisfaction the efforts that are daily making to pervert the young minds of Catholic children. The exertions of the Bible Societies are a topic of unwearied commendation; nor do the unworthy means to which they resort ever draw forth an expression of resentment. Fathers have in this country been literally turned out of their little cot-acres, because they refused to expose their children to the peril of apostacy; and not a word of sympathy for the lot of these creatures, whose consciences are exposed to such violent trials, escaped the lips of those who express such pious horror at the *seduction* of Miss Loveday. Such conduct is surely not equitable, and I know no reason for its justification, unless by supposing it more criminal to retain people in the ancient faith, than to draw them over from that faith to the conventicles of modern sectaries.

Their conduct reminds me of the facetious fable of La Fontaine, in which the beasts assembled before Jupiter, blind to their own, expose each other's deformities with malignant penetration:

..... Mais parmi les plus fous
Notre espèce excella; car tout ce que nous sommes,
Lynx envers nos pareils et taupes envers nous,
Nous nous pardonnons tout, et rien aux autres hommes.*

Of all the charges preferred by the advocates of the Bible, there is none that has been more insidiously put forward, than that its indiscriminate perusal is prohibited by the Catholic clergy, lest it should weaken their own influence, and unmask their imposture. Experience sufficiently exposes the weakness of the charge; for surely there is little danger to be apprehended in trying any system of Christianity by the Bible, from which, if we are to judge by the different creeds of its advocates, the most opposite systems may be extracted. The objection, however ingenious, is not new; it has been pressed by the sectaries of every age, and its futility cannot be more forcibly exposed than in the language of St. Augustine:—

“ You know,” says this holy and enlightened man, writing to Honoratus, “ that the sole cause which engaged me in the party of the Manicheans, was their boastful promise not to check their followers by the restraint of a severe authority; but to free them from error, and lead them to God by the simple method of reason. For what other motive could have prompted me to despise the religion of my education, and to listen to those men with such avidity, but their having charged the Catholics with

* Amidst the vast assemblage, every beast
Deem'd his own kind with folly touch'd the least:
To others' faults our lynx eyes are confined,
While to our own we are, as moles, all blind.

frightening, by superstition, the members of their religion, and exacting the acquiescence of faith unfortified by argument. *They*, however, required none to believe until the understanding was gradually enlightened by the knowledge of truth. Who should not have been vanquished by such specious promises? and will any one be astonished that they made a deep impression on the mind of a young man fond of truth, whom his disputes and conferences with the learned had rendered inquisitive and presumptuous?" And again (for there is a sad interest in transcribing his ingenuous and pathetic description of the weakness and vanity of man), "the soul is naturally flattered with the promises which heretics make of pointing out clearly the truth. It reflects not on its own weakness, nor on the sad state into which it has been plunged by its own infirmity. Hence, while she hungers for wholesome food, which can only be profitable to the healthy, she perishes by the poisoned doctrine of her deceivers."

It requires no extraordinary stretch of ingenuity to apply the words of St. Augustine to the circumstances of our own times. The boastful promises of the advocates of the Bible are the same by which his young and unsuspecting mind was betrayed. Similar is their tone of triumph—similar their pretensions to the exclusive possession of the truth, and similar the insulting pity with which they affect to treat the religion of Catholics. The proud are flattered by the compliment paid to their understanding, and the profligate hail the introduction of a spirit which releases them from an inconvenient yoke.

Free in the choice of their teachers, they attach themselves to one until he is supplanted by another, who yields in his turn to the bolder pretensions of a more artful and accommodating rival, and thus to escape the despotism of authority, they pass under the successive dominion of a crowd of enthusiasts, who rise and disappear, until in their endeavours to realize the progressive perfectibility of our nature, they drink the deadliest errors that ever poisoned the human mind.

We are frequently told, by way of triumphant contrast, that the Bible is the religion of Protestants. By such frequent appeals to Scripture, they would fain insinuate that they have an exclusive veneration for the sacred volume. They seldom reflect that it is revered by the Catholic Church as the sacred charter of her privileges. But though it be originally her possession, it is one of those possessions which may be plundered by every apostate who deserts her communion. It is one of those badges by which the true Church is ludicrously personified, in the mimic exhibitions of the sectaries.

Behold, however, the awful consequences of this principle. When I am told that the Bible is the religion of Protestants,

the word *Protestant* presents an idea of such unbounded and intricate meaning, that I must confess it is difficult to comprehend its extent, or unravel its perplexity. The Protestant religion must be true, as the Bible is its sole rule of faith. A member of the Church of England must, therefore, be right, because the Bible is his rule of faith, and *he* is a Protestant. The Presbyterian must be right, because the Bible is his rule of faith, and *he* is a Protestant. The Socinian, who shakes the pillars of Revelation, must be right, because the Bible is his rule of faith, and *he* is a Protestant. The Antinomian, who piously absolves his followers from the obligation of the Evangelical law, must, of course, be right, because the Bible is his rule of faith, and *he* is a Protestant. And thus while infidelity and Popery lie at the opposite extremes, inaccessible to her influence, truth, with the variety of a cameleon and the velocity of lightning, beams on each chequered and deformed system that fills up the immense interval.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

Simul veritas plurimis modis infracta: primum inscitia reipublicæ ut alienæ, mox libidine assentandi, aut rursus odio adversus dominantes.—TACITUS.

Various were the influences by which truth was impaired; such as ignorance of the state in the first instance; and next the flattery and hatred of its rulers.

WHILST the character of our country and the religion of her people are assailed with unsparing enmity by some interested defamers, who are continually pouring their calumnies into the English press; and whilst unfortunately some local outrages of a savage nature give a specious colour to their misrepresentations, your attention is solicited to the statement of a writer, who, with ample opportunities of information, has no interest to mislead; and who, while he exposes the wrongs, and denounces the traducers of his country, is equally ready to acknowledge the extent of her misdeeds, and the indiscretion of her panegyrists. Perhaps in the history of the world no two countries have exhibited such an anomaly as England and Ireland. Not-

withstanding the proximity of their situations, which naturally seemed to invite to a cultivation of mutual intimacy, a spirit of sullen distrust has kept them ignorant of each other; and while the genius of knowledge and of enterprise has annihilated the vast space between England and the Indies, the Irish Channel has been like an impassable gulph, which, from a dread of the enemies on the opposite coast, the spirit of a benevolent curiosity has seldom ventured to explore.

Has autem terras Italique hanc littoris oram
 Proxima quæ nostri perfunditur æquoris aestu
 Effuge: cuncta malis habitantur mænia Graiis.*

We have been occasionally visited by some travellers or tourists, whose pictures, with few exceptions, are the best evidence of their unwillingness, or their inability to convey a just delineation of our country or its inhabitants.† Nay, as often as the English nation, animated by a laudable curiosity, sent some individuals to ascertain our characters and our resources, have they not generally returned, like the twelve spies of Israel, poisoning the public mind by a false representation of the land they had visited, and whose hospitality they had abused, whilst few have been found to possess the honest intrepidity of Caleb and Josue, to brave the public prejudice by a fair and fearless exposure of the truth?

This tone of vehement antipathy has been productive of the worst consequences. The injustice or ingratitude of English writers has produced a spirit of reaction equally injurious to our interests; and our ardent countrymen, stung with the sense of the unmerited aspersions that have been cast upon their native soil, have drawn on their fervid fancies in pourtraying the

* Let not thy course to that ill coast be bent,
 Which fronts from far the Epirian continent;
 Those parts are all by Grecian foes possessed,
 The savage Locrians here the shores infest.—DRYDEN.

† The present age furnishes us with many instances of travellers who, with superficial information, affect to pass the most deliberate judgment on the character, politics, and religion of the countries through which they happen to pass. They generalize every thing; they imagine themselves qualified to judge of a nation by some trait which they have observed in the streets; they do not give themselves the trouble to obtain information; or, if they do, they are not successful in procuring it; yet they consider themselves competent to assign motives and causes for every peculiar custom which they observe. The following anecdote will illustrate the truth of these observations:—“An ambasssador in Italy, who had spent a few days in London, was dining one day at the house of the British minister at Naples, when he introduced a discussion upon the subject of the British constitution—a branch of knowledge very difficult to be understood even by Englishmen who have not made it an object of particular study. The British minister was about to explain the subject to the company; when the Frncnh ambassador interrupted him by saying: ‘Give me leave, Sir, I was twelve days in London, and can explain to you the whole affair.’”—See *Memoirs of a Traveller*, Vol. I, London, 1806.

reproachless character of her sons. The descriptions were generally read with distrust ; facts of too stubborn a nature seemed to contradict the representation of the impassioned or interested advocate ; and thus the whole picture forfeited its claims to fidelity, on account of some exaggerated features. Between these extremes of overcharged eulogy and censure, there is doubtless a large interval ; and seldom, it must be confessed, have any been found possessing sufficient candour and discernment to enquire and ascertain the point of their mutual approaches.

To unravel the causes of Ireland's discontent and disturbances, and to resolve the complex subject into the just proportion that each cause may have in their production, would require the intuitive sagacity and painting eloquence of Tacitus. Such a view of the subject would be as foreign to the purpose, as it would be disproportioned to the talents of the present writer : he therefore will content himself with demonstrating that, in the present unhappy disturbances that distract some parts of Ireland, there is nothing of disloyalty to the government ; and that the influence of the Catholic religion, instead of fomenting the evil, has been uniformly exercised in mitigating its malignity, and arresting its diffusion.

Besides the opposite descriptions of writers just mentioned, there is another class, if the dignity of literature would not be degraded by their assumption of the name, who, instead of labouring to soften, are perpetually exasperating the causes of national alienation. These unnatural children, wishing to see the country of their birth a prey to intestine discord, because they thrive on its continuance, fling into the dying embers of disunion their ephemeral productions, which perish in the flame of their own creation.

The agitated state of Ireland has been propitious to the production of these extraordinary beings, who have regularly appeared on our stage, transmitting the original spirit with undecayed energy to their lineal successors. The race is not yet extinct : we have still among us some candidates, whose superior claims to the possession of the mantle of their progenitors arise from a rivalry in the work of defamation. Instead of being daunted by the detection of their calumnies, they only gather effrontery from refutation.

Iram atque animos a crimine sumunt.

Happily, however, their malignity is generally neutralized by their folly or their weakness. They may occasionally excite a smile, but never a more dignified sentiment : their names have passed into terms of scorn and reproach ; and they have earned, by their slanders, the just retribution of an infamous celebrity.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

*Non equidem hoc dubites, amborum fædere certo
Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci.*—PERSIUS.

Sure on both nations the same star has shone,
Joint are their fates, their destinies are one.

WHATEVER may be the visions of some romantic lovers of country, it is one of the soundest and most incontestible maxims of political science, that there are some countries whose fortunes must ever be dependent on the destinies of others.* This principle, which experience has confirmed in the example of other countries, seems peculiarly applicable to the condition of Ireland. To the strength and abundance of her natural resources, I feel proud in bearing ample testimony; but as these must be estimated in relation to surrounding states, it must be confessed that she seems to have been destined to be connected in some measure with the English nation. Though this reflection may be mortifying to our national vanity, we should still be consoled by the consciousness that we could securely repose under the protection of the British empire, instead of being placed in the doubtful position of Anactorium, which, if we are to credit the account of Thucydides, was disputed by the contending claims of Corinth and Corcyra.

This obvious principle has taken deep root in the Irish mind. The people are too sensible of the advantage of British connexion to wish for a separation. They would consider as their worst enemies, those who would entertain the chimerical project of divorcing that connexion; and the only object they sigh for is, to draw closer its relations, by a fuller participation of its benefits. We know that it is the dispensation of Providence, that one kingdom should share the adverse or prosperous fortunes of another. We know that our fate is connected with that of England, and that in “the peace thereof shall our peace be;” and, therefore, that he who would attempt to seduce the people from their allegiance, would be realizing the language which Jeremias held to the false prophet Hananias:

* See GROTIUS, *Des differentes sortes de Guerre, et de la Souverainete*, L. 1, chap. iii; with the notes of his interpreter, Barbeyrac.

“Thou hast broken chains of wood, and thou shalt make for them chains of iron.”*

The principle of connexion with the English government,† which nature seems to suggest, and which a sense of self-interest must confirm, derives from the Catholic faith a still stronger influence. The attachment of the Catholic to the person of his Sovereign is derived from a nobler source than those yet alluded to, and the loyalty he must feel, in common with every other subject, is hallowed by the peculiar instructions of his religion. It is a well-known truth, that the relative duties of sovereigns and of subjects have been discussed in the sister country with a bold and, perhaps, dangerous freedom of opinion. We know that some of its most eminent political writers have ventured to fix the boundaries where obedience would cease to be an obligation, and resistance would become a duty. These are discussions which, in the Catholic Church, are considered as questions of a delicate and dangerous tendency. Nay, they have even startled the impiety of Hume.‡ Seldom are these extreme cases agitated

* *Jeremias, xxviii, 13.*

† Within those late years, some English writers have been contrasting this letter with my sentiments on the repeal of the legislative union, with the view of impressing on the public that I now entertain opinions different from those which I advocated in the letters of “*Hierophilus*.” Among those writers, two Catholic peers hold a prominent place, who, utterly forgetful of the obvious drift of my argument, have expended much superfluous writing in endeavouring to show that I was once an advocate of the legislative union. Now, there is no question of the legislative union in the entire of this letter. The argument turns on the connexion between its Irish subjects and the British crown, and the necessity of the allegiance which is due to the British monarch. On the religious obligations of that allegiance my sentiments have undergone no change.

It is true that from the relative size and proximity of Ireland, a probable argument is drawn in favour of a connexion with England. Now, the advantages of such a connexion, under the same monarch, who would rule both countries with an impartial sway, are not controverted by the advocates of the repeal of the legislative union. Lest, however, the observations on the relative size and position of Ireland should be mistaken by the English as an argument in favour of any ascendancy on their part, I may be allowed to remind them, that they prove quite the reverse. The insignificant size of England, compared to Continental states, as well as its nearness to Ireland, prove equally the advantages of an imperial union with Ireland, in order to be able to cope successfully against the encroachments of greater powers. The union, then, which nature and their geographical position suggest, is one of mutual justice and protection. But as those and the union of two legislatures are found to be incompatible, it follows that a disruption of the legislative union must take place; for in the harmony of nations, as well as in the system of the world, the smaller, as well as the larger bodies, exercise their just influence; so that were the influence of the smallest to be destroyed or diminished from any cause, the consequence would be a severance of the mutual dependence. The jealousy of England forbids justice—the same jealousy must forbid the continuance of the legislative union.

‡ “Besides, we must consider that as obedience is our duty, in the common course of things, it ought chiefly to be inculcated; nor can anything be more preposterous than an anxious care and solicitude in stating all the cases in which resistance may be allowed. In like manner, though a philosopher reasonably acknowledges, in the course of an argument, that the rules of justice may be dispensed with in cases of urgent necessity, what should we think of a preacher

by its professors, and never proposed to its followers as maxims of practical adoption. We hold with Mr. Burke, "that the speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable; and that, with or without a right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good." Far, therefore, from entertaining the dangerous theory that would fix those bounds of suffering, which would justify resistance, we are reproached with extending our doctrine of obedience beyond what human nature can endure. Through the vicissitudes of eighteen centuries, the doctrine of the Catholic has remained the same that was preached by Saint Paul,* and illustrated by the commentaries of Tertullian; and it will ever be the reproach or the glory of our religion, that it will ever be inaccessible to the wisdom or the folly of modern maxims of allegiance. For loyalty which rests on so firm a basis, there is little room for apprehension. It is not that fluctuating loyalty which may shift with times and circumstances, and which is measured by the calculating standard of interest or convenience; ours is a loyalty depending on an eternal principle—the dispensation of a ruling Providence; and of which the calls of a capricious self-interest can never annul the obligation.

To any who soberly reflect on the conduct of the Catholics, through the sad vicissitudes of our national history, it must be a matter of surprise, how that conduct could ever have furnished grounds for impeaching their loyalty. With a fidelity which no temptation could shake, they clung to the fallen fortunes of one Prince, until dire necessity had severed every obligation; and

or casuist, who should make it his chief study to find out such cases, and enforce them with all the vehemence of argument and eloquence? Would he not be better employed in inculcating the general doctrine, than in displaying the particular exceptions, which we are, perhaps, but too much inclined of ourselves to embrace and to extend!"—*HUME, Essay 13th, on Passive Obedience.*

* "Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God; and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation. Wherefore, be subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."—*Romans, chap. xiii.*

"Christians are aware who has conferred their power on the Emperors—they know it is God; after whom they are first in rank, and second to none other. From the same source which imparts life, they also derive their power. We, Christians, invoke on all the Emperors, the blessings of a long life, a prosperous reign, domestic security, a brave army, a faithful senate, and a moral people."—*TERTULLIAN, Apologeticus adversus Gentes*, chap. xxx.

Such was the practical commentary of Tertullian on the words of St. Paul, when the Christians suffered from the cruelty of Severus. I know that Paley applies a more accommodating interpretation to the doctrine of the Apostle.—*See Moral Philosophy, B. VI, chap. iv.*

I must confess, however, that we are so incapable to keep pace with the progress of mind, as to prefer the simple exposition of the African Presbyter, to the adoption of the subtle ingenuity of the English Archdeacon, by which the force of the most rigid obligation would be soon refined away.

surely such heroic constancy, instead of justifying the foul impeachment of disloyalty, ought to be considered a pledge of sincere fidelity to every future Sovereign. The frequent and invidious reference is made to the insurrections which occasionally disgraced our country; they have never sprung from the influence of Catholic principles. Thus, in the instance of the Rebellion of Ninety-Eight, of which the memory is industriously transmitted in every anti-Catholic publication, the leaders of the Irish Directory declared, on examination before the Irish parliament, that so far from being actuated by the desire of establishing the Catholic religion, they would have as soon exchanged the cross for the crescent. On this subject much adverse learning has been expended; and notwithstanding the many able vindications of our conduct that have been occasionally offered to the public, yet there are some drivelling writers, who are ever pouring upon the English ear the obsolete calumnies of men deservedly forgotten; and who in the dull round of slander exhibit all the dexterity of the Athenian charioteer, who could perpetually revolve round the same goal, without deviating from the former track or marking a new impression.

Metaphysicians have displayed much idle cavil in attempting to prove the impossibility of civil allegiance, when spiritual obedience was exacted by the Roman Pontiff. Our feelings and our conduct refuted their subtle speculations. To put an end, however, to the interminable contest, the King graciously became our advocate, and a single ray of royal benevolence has dissolved the rusty prejudices, which have resisted the weight and vigour of arguments an hundred times repeated. In spite of the calumnies of ages, and the misgivings of some individuals, who distrusted, or affected to distrust, our allegiance, he resolves to come among us: the most distant parts of the kingdom pour in their thronging multitudes to greet his approach. With unhesitating confidence, he generously flung himself on the fidelity of his Irish people; and surely it was a glorious spectacle to have seen him borne aloft on the buoyancy of their uncalculating devotion.

We shall, therefore, be content that a host of noxious writers tax us with disloyalty, while we are conscious that the royal mind has received a different impression. If, therefore, when the Government was known to the Catholics only through the severities it inflicted, they cherished a strong and steady loyalty, which no force could pluck out of their breasts, they cannot be disaffected to a Government which cherishes and protects them, unless we suppose their loyalty to be like the famous tree* in Switzerland, which thrives on the barren rock, exposed to the tempest, but withers and dies under a kindlier cultivation.

HIEROPHILOS.

* Tanim.

LETTER XV.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

We are reviled, and we bless:—we are ill spoken of, and we intreat.—
ST. PAUL.

To the readers of this letter, on our side of the Irish Channel, it will undoubtedly be a subject of astonishment that I should devote any labour, which to them must appear superfluous, to a vindication of the conduct of persons whose eminent services are justly entitled to the public approbation. As the nature of an apology may possibly imply the suspicion of guilt, some will, perhaps, feel indignant at the indiscretion of an advocate, who attempts to justify a body of men, whose characters are equally beyond the reach of reproach, or the necessity of justification. However, it must be recollected that I write for an English public—a public, whose honest minds have been misled by continued calumnies acting on their religious prejudices; and that a vindication of our clergy, offered to a Protestant public, can no more be an imputation on their merits, than the apologies of Justin or Athenagoras could justify the impeachment of the conduct of the first Christians.

It is only by fairly estimating the different causes of discontent which operate on the minds of the Irish peasantry, that we shall be able to appreciate the merits of the Catholic priesthood. Although the advocacy of the people is generally considered an invidious topic, it must be confessed that the Irish peasant is subject to privations, which are not felt by the lower classes of any other country in Europe. This is a matter of notoriety; and the extreme wretchedness of his condition has often furnished a pathetic theme for exciting barren commisseration. I shall not speak of his exclusion from the benefits of the constitution, nor of the mode in which his prospects are clouded by the influence of the penal laws; these may be grievances of too refined a nature to affect the feelings of a people too depressed to be mortified by exclusion from such exalted honours: I shall merely confine myself to the privation of those more immediate necessities—food and clothing, which is sometimes associated with demoralizing habits. But as an entire letter will be devoted

to this ungrateful subject, I shall immediately pass to the vindication of the clergy.

In the discharge of the sacred duties of their profession, the Catholic priesthood are assiduous and unremitting: their ministry brings consolation to the sick and the indigent; the administration of the sacraments occupies a large portion of their attention, and the remainder of their time is devoted to the instruction of those whose humble condition in life has debarred them from every other source of moral and religious improvement. When we reflect on the wide extent of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Catholic priest, and the large mass of ignorance and misery to be controlled almost solely by his influence—though we may deplore the occasional outrages that disgrace our country, yet candour will acknowledge that, were it not for his exertions, they would still be more frequent and atrocious. If I did not dread to fatigue my readers' patience by frequent and minute references to facts, I could illustrate every sentence of this letter by cogent examples.

Men of rank and station in the country have borne repeated and honourable testimony to the meritorious services of the Catholic clergy. When the English public read the reports of speeches pronounced in the senate by Irish members, expressing alarm at the progress, and denouncing the dangers of the Catholic religion, they are naturally persuaded that the lively apprehensions betrayed by these speakers are caught from a closer contact with the clergy of that persuasion; but their mistake would be corrected, were they to learn that some of these gentlemen are, in private life, the attached friends and best benefactors of the very men whom they traduce as the worst enemies of the state! I could name individuals among the opponents of Catholic claims, who have given donations to Catholic clergymen, as a grateful testimony of their salutary influence; thus evincing an anxiety to expiate their public opposition by acts of private benevolence.

Of their indefatigable exertions in softening the evils that afflicted Ireland during the progress of the epidemic of 1817, I could quote abundant testimonies. I shall content myself, however, with citing the approving attestation of Mr. C. Grant, our late secretary. In his speech before the British senate he paid a just and well-earned tribute to their worth, in which there was little danger that the vigorous fancy and warm feelings of this enlightened statesman could have been hurried beyond the boundaries of truth. Though his memory teemed with facts of heroic devotion, yet, like the venerable father of poetry, he singles out a solitary example where a clergyman, unable to receive the confession of two dying people without the evident peril of his life, generously threw himself into the very focus of con-

tagion, content to inhale the poison of death, provided he administered to the wretched sufferers the medicine of immortality.*

The unfortunate individuals who disgrace their religion, and disturb the peace of the public, by the spirit of outrage and violence, are sure to release themselves first from the dread of the authority of the clergy. While the priest holds the ascendant over their minds, they are amenable to law and order; and never do they trample on the civil authority, until they first learn to disregard his spiritual denunciations. Do those who take a lead in the disturbances that unhappily disturb the south of Ireland, endeavour to enlist in their support the authority of the priesthood? No. Their exhortations to peace and patience are sometimes repaid with menaces of the same harsh treatment which is indiscriminately inflicted on the Protestant and Catholic laity; nor can it be supposed that those who would wantonly outrage the sacred person of the minister of God, would kneel at his tribunal to invoke his benediction.

Among the other instances of clerical zeal recorded in our public journals, it is mentioned that some of those turbulent individuals, irritated by the severe but wholesome admonitions of their pastor, endeavoured to intimidate him into a dereliction of his duty. But he, like the venerable Eleazar, "began to consider the dignity of his age, and his ancient years, and the inbred honour of his grey head, and his good life and conversation from a child; and he answered without delay, according to the ordinances of the holy law made by God, saying that he would rather be sent into the other world." Thus the priests preach peace, and they are accused of sedition; they are taxed with apathy in repressing outrages, of which, because they are zealous to check them, they are threatened to be made the victims.

Were their precepts listened to with respect, and followed up by a corresponding line of conduct, the country would soon assume another aspect, and the spirit of discord would disappear. They still continue to be the preachers of that doctrine, whose salutary influence on the peace and happiness of society is conveyed in the feeling apostrophe of St. Augustin to the Catholic Church:—"By thee the young, the adult, and the old are taught the respective duties of their age and condition. By thee the wife is connected with the husband in the bond of affection, chastened by virtue, and subjected to his person by a control mitigated by religion. Through thee the father and the child exercise the reciprocal relations of filial obedience exalted into

* Had this gentleman been better acquainted with the painful duties which the Catholic clergy have daily to discharge, neither he or such other persons could be much surprised at the above instance of devotedness, forming as it does only one of their frequently recurring occupations.

piety, and paternal authority softened into love. Through thee the ties of kindred and of blood are more closely knitted together by the hallowed influence of charity. Through thee the servant forgets the hardships of his condition, and converts into a willing duty the servitude which necessity first imposed. Through thee the master relaxes his dominion, while he is taught to conciliate by kindness those whom nature has subjected to his controul. It is thou that connectest citizens in the bonds of concord, spreading the affections of consanguinity over the different families of the human race, by the recollection of a common origin. *Thou* teachest kings to watch over the welfare of the people, and the people to bow to the majesty of kings. And through all the gradations in society, it is *thou* that teachest who are the objects of fear, of affection, of respect, of punishment, of consolation, of reproof, and of correction; impressing on our minds, that while these must be apportioned to different individuals, **ALL** are to be the objects of our charity, and **NONE** of our resentment."

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XVI.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

My virtue is weakened through poverty. I am become a reproach among all my enemies, and very much to my neighbours; and a fear to my acquaintance.—*Psalm xxx.*

HAVING vindicated the people from the charge of disloyalty, and the clergy from the imputation of supineness, or connivance at their excesses, I shall undertake briefly to explain the most prominent causes of the discontent and outrages of the peasantry. The principal sources from which these evils spring are wretchedness—often destitute of the necessaries of life—and a spirit of discord engendered by the political situation of the country, and aggravated by the insidious designs of individuals interested in perpetuating disunion.

That the lower orders of our people are wretched beyond the condition of any other peasantry, is confessed by the testimony

of every intelligent traveller.* The causes of this extreme misery it is unnecessary to explore; but it must be acknowledged that it has been considerably heightened by the late political changes, which have affected the condition of the other classes of society throughout the empire.

Many estates were out of lease during the fervor of war prices; the increase of his rent-roll multiplied the expensive habits of the landlord; and, notwithstanding the depression which renders it impossible for the tenant to meet the demands of his landlord, yet the latter insists on the full payment of his rents with inexorable severity. To satisfy these rigorous claims, industry is often strained to a painful yet unprofitable exertion. The farmer finds that the stimulus which he gives to his industry, in order to acquit his obligations to his landlord, has the opposite effect of increasing the demand upon his tithes.

This is a delicate subject, which has long continued a topic of angry discussion in this country. As it is still considered a sore and sensitive evil, both as it affects the clergy and the people, and which cannot be touched but with a trembling hand, I shall leave this important question to the wisdom of professed politicians.† One thing, however, is certain, that the multiplicity of pecuniary demands upon his labour, which, after having exhausted every expedient of ingenuity, he is unable to meet, has the effect of relaxing the industry of the farmer,‡ and throwing him into a gloomy despondence.

This is an obvious source of discontent: for how can he view his landlord with feelings of kindness, who, after bringing to the market all the produce of his land not necessary for his own consumption, beholds the rest seized for arrears of rent and tithes; and himself and his family cast out as aliens on the world, depending on the precarious bounty of persons almost reduced to the same level as himself. When the fruit of labour is not equivalent to the demands on the produce of the soil, the people must necessarily be discontented. Though I have spoken

* Kohl, in his recent travels through this country, assures his readers, that in no part of the Continent did he witness such wretchedness as in Ireland, and that the privations of its peasantry are far more intolerable than those of the serfs of Hungary.

† See, on this subject, the judicious observations of Sir John Sinclair.—*Code of Agriculture*, p. 64, Third Edition, London.

After some pertinent reflections on the subject of tithes, the Scotch Baronet quotes the expressions of Mr. Burrowes, a gentleman to whom the Irish public is indebted for many valuable communications on agricultural subjects.

For further information on this subject, see the celebrated speech of Grattan, on tithes, in the Irish House of Commons, 14th July, 1788; a speech that will retain its interest, even though the grievances that called it forth should pass away.

‡ As the same word is susceptible of a variety of meanings, it will appear that a different meaning is ascribed to the word *Farmer* here from what it assumes in England.

of persons bringing to market what is not necessary for home consumption, it may be expedient to inform the English reader what is the idea which the Irish peasant attaches to *necessaries*. By that word he neither understands bread, nor beef, nor warm clothing, nor comfortable lodging. These he must exclude from his ideas of contentment. They seldom enter into his speculations on taking his little *farm*; happy if, after discharging the accumulated demands of rents, and taxes of every description, he is able to furnish his wretched family with the humble fare, proverbially Irish—the Potato.*

Should the extensive proprietors of land, influenced by benevolence or policy, make some abatement, the benefit seldom reaches the immediate cultivators of the soil. In Ireland, the great landholders seldom come in contact with the humble tenantry; both are kept at a sullen and distrustful distance from each other by a series of individuals, who have obtained from their intermediate situation the appropriate name of *middlemen*. These gentlemen, too, must be supported out of the produce of the land, thus weighing down the peasantry with the burthen of rank, without imparting to them any of its benefits. Too proud to exercise any industry, yet too far removed from refined intercourse to possess the influence which generally attaches to exalted station, they are known to the people only in displaying a vulgar insolence, imitating the vices of the great without any of their correctives; thus proving themselves noxious members of society, by keeping the higher and lower orders at an inapproachable distance, and intercepting the complaints of the one and the bounty of the other. These larger weeds, which absorb so much of its nutriment, should be suffered silently to decay, in order to restore health and vigour to the humbler and more useful plants of the soil.†

Even those who possess large estates, experience at last the effects of the general poverty that overspreads the country.

Non sibi sed Domino gravis est quæ servit, egestas. ‡

The continued absence of the men of property from the country, is also an acknowledged grievance, which has not

* That the Irish peasantry deem themselves comparatively happy if they have abundance of this esculent, is now too forcibly proved by the fears of famine that have sprung from its diseased condition this season.

† From the general censure conveyed in the text against middlemen, I must exempt many individuals who deserve well of society, by their kind attention to the poor, when visited by sickness. But it is not with the individuals that I quarrel; it is the system I condemn—a system, which must be owned was the natural and necessary result of the contemptuous and cruel indifference with which the great proprietors habitually treated and still treat the mass of the people.

‡ The poverty which is inflicted on the slave recoils upon his cruel master.

escaped the attention of some of the wisest legislators. The constant residence of the rich in Ireland is, under existing circumstances, a hopeless wish. The seat of empire must be the centre which will ever attract the confluence of opulence and fashion ; and we cannot, therefore, be surprised at the comparative solitude of the Irish capital, when we reflect that neither the magic of the name of Rome, nor the dignity which age and conquest had thrown around her, could arrest the tide of emigration which followed Constantine to Byzantium, leaving the parent city of the Seven Hills to deplore her desolation.

A continued absence cannot, however, be excused, as it is reasonable to expect that, in return for their ample incomes, men of rank and fortune would occasionally diffuse through the extremities some of the improvements and elegance of the capital. Their absence has a positive and negative effect in deteriorating the condition of the people.

A negative effect—as their occasional residence might tend to civilize the habits, and cement the attachment, of the lower orders. A positive effect—as the desertion of their mansions, and the neglect of their domains, are the causes of consigning to indolence the numerous hands that would procure labour and subsistence from their improvement. As no large capitals are embarked in manufactures through the country, there is no common centre to guide the erring intellects, which, if fixed to steady habits of industry, would contribute to augment the national prosperity. Thus, the great mass of the peasantry is exposed, without any corrective but that of religion, to the complicated evils which must spring from extreme indigence.

To the sober-minded Englishman, this picture may seem to be drawn by an ardent apologist, who has industriously exaggerated the misery of the Irish people. In the delineation, I have not brought to my aid any colouring of fancy ; but, subdued and dispassionate in my tone, I have not gone as far as I might be authorized by facts. The instances of extreme wretchedness which might be collected among the body of our peasantry, are such as no description could exaggerate, and no fancy overcharge.*

When Cicero pleaded the cause of the injured Sicilians, and denounced the crimes of those who were the authors of their wrongs, he did not waste his time in idle declamation, nor in the vague description of injuries which could convey no distinct idea of their extent or their magnitude ; but, like a true master of eloquence, he flings away the subordinate draperies of fancy, and

* The various commissions of inquiry into the state of the poor which have been issued since the publication of these letters, reveal a state of destitution too hideous to contemplate. It must be confessed that our rulers are more solicitous about commissions of inquiry than about measures of relief.

interests the sympathy of the Roman people for his clients, by exhibiting to their view the naked victims of that misrule on which he invoked the retribution of their justice.

And could not I exhibit to the indignant compassion of the English people, evidence equally affecting of the miseries I describe? Could I not exhibit to the view of the English people many an unfeeling little ruler, through the periodical crowds of Irish labourers who cross the Irish Channel, stowed almost to suffocation, in order to procure subsistence by hard labour, and to restore that life which, for want of wholesome nutriment at home, had almost expired in their emaciated frames? To uphold in a foreign land a style of living disproportioned to their incomes, some scruple not to sacrifice the comfort and enjoyment of thousands; and when these unfeeling men happen to meet these living spectres gliding through the streets of London, like Ulysses, on encountering the indignant shade of Ajax, they must sustain the reproachful glances of the wretched beings whose happiness they have murdered. The apology often pleaded by the absentees is, the danger of residing in a country where their persons and properties would be continually exposed. They ought, however, to consider that fear, like affection, is generally reflective; that, perhaps, they are the first to inspire the terror which they feel, and that within their miniature dominion, they might apply to themselves the observation of the Roman sage—

Qui sceptra sœvus imperio regit
Timet timentes, metus in auctorem reddit.*

This reflection is justified by the pleasing contrast of some noblemen who have resisted the contagion of vanity and fashion, and reside in tranquil security on their estates, diffusing among their tenantry the blessings of their wealth and example. The traveller, in passing through the country, finds occasional relief amidst the contemplation of uniform wretchedness. On approaching the residence of those individuals, you immediately perceive the influence of intellect and benevolence that reigns within the happy circle; and your feelings, sickened by the surrounding scene, here find a grateful repose. From within the sphere of their beneficial sway discontent is banished; and should disaffection attempt to cross the forbidden boundary, it dies in the unpropitious atmosphere. Among those whom I could name on the present occasion, I shall content myself with adverting to one individual, who measures his superiority in rank by the superiority of his public virtue; diffusing his wealth

* Who fills with terror, and with vengeance fires,
Must share the fears his cruelty inspires.

over a contented and tranquil neighbourhood ; enjoying the happiness which he communicates, and standing the foremost in his country, as much by the unostentatious display of a practical patriotism, as he does by the splendour of his title, and the "thick honours" of a long and illustrious ancestry.

Whilst I expose the causes of the discontent of our peasantry, let it not be imagined that I am the advocate of that discontent, or the apologist of their crimes. Were I to address the people, instead of irritating their sense of suffering, I should endeavour to soothe them to patience in the meek and Christian language of St. Peter :—"Be ye subject, therefore, to every human creature for God's sake : whether it be to the king, as excelling ; or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of the good : For so is the will of God, that by doing well you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. For this is thanks-worthy, if for conscience towards God a man endure sorrow, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if committing sin, and buffeted *for it*, you endure ? But if doing well you suffer patiently, this is thanks-worthy before God."*

However I may lament the extreme poverty of our people, I must confess that language would not sustain my efforts to convey my abhorrence of some atrocities that have been committed.†

* I Peter, chap. ii.

† While I express a just horror at the outrages of some of the peasantry, it is only justice to the public to state, that the odium might be divided with some, who affect a zeal for the public interest. These outrages, cruel as they are, are much exaggerated. The English people may form a proper estimate of some of our Irish journals, when they learn that I have now before me one which heads a paragraph by the appalling title of "Dreadful Murder committed by the Insurgents;" and, strange to say, not a vestige of a murder is discoverable through the entire paragraph. This gazette is, by way of *lucus a non lucendo*, called *The Patriot*. That I may not be reproached with vague reference, the article to which I allude is found in the paper of the 31st of January. The artifice is not without its object. Conscious that few would enter into the *penetralia* of his composition, he wished to produce a powerful effect by a dreadful frontispiece. In looking for these murderers, you only discover the breaking down of a bridge, which to the imagination of this gazetteer was transformed into murder, as the windmills were metamorphosed into giants by the Prince of Chivalry !

For a similar purpose, this same journalist inserted a story about some persons being murdered for refusing to comply with a certain ceremony, which, of course, he was afterwards obliged to contradict. These insertions and retractions are not, however, without their end, as the editors well know that the first story will be circulated, and make a due impression, where the contradiction will never reach.

Ex uno discere omnes.

To convey to the English reader an idea of the humanity of some of our Irish gentry, it will be sufficient to observe, that there are individuals who associate their exertions in preserving the peace with their sportful amusements. It is a literal fact, that on the evenings of some of the most tragic days that disgrace our country, these individuals express their horror of shedding human

No provocation could extenuate these outrages; they were inspired by a more malignant principle than the mere importunity of distress. Their authors, if you will, were monsters whom human nature indignantly disowns; but, for God's sake, let not the misdeeds of these miscreants, by a constructive imputation, be visited on the whole people.

At all events, it is acknowledged, even by those who are not favourable to the national character, that there is in the Irish people an easy susceptibility of kindness or of resentment: it is, therefore, policy as well as wisdom to refine the ductile materials. They are ardent, enthusiastic, and impetuous; they possess those qualities of nature which, if improved, are the greatest ornaments of a people, and which, when neglected, are capable of producing the worst effects.

Instead, then, of aggravating the defects of the national character by harsh treatment, is it not the duty of those who value the interest of the country to correct them, by a kind and conciliatory demeanour? The face of the country would soon be changed, and all would soon feel the happy effects resulting from mildness towards a peasantry who, under kind treatment, are capable of the most lasting and faithful attachment, and who rush into such lamentable excesses when outraged by cruelty, and stimulated by the direful impulse of revenge.

HIEROPHILOS.

blood by the savage facetiousness of “a fine day's grousing.” In the absence of men of rank, and influence, and integrity, the preservation of the peace is necessarily entrusted to men who are unfit organs to convey the spirit of the laws, and who often trade on their violation.

The dispatches of our viceroy show that the people may be the dupes of systems, of which the origin is not ascertained. He mentions that illegal oaths are now administered in the county of Down, which proceed from a committee in Dublin. Would to God that all the illegal associations were traced to their source; it *would then* be discovered that the people are often actuated by an impulse of which they know not the cause; and that their acts, however irregular, might converge to one common centre.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

*Inter fintimos vetus atque antiqua simulas
Immortale odium et numquam sanabile vulnus
Ardet adhuc :—JUVENAL.*

With us still burns the old undying rage
Of direful discord, unsubdued by age.

To the other causes of irritation which work upon the feelings of the Irish peasantry, is unfortunately added the influence of religious bigotry. Religion has been often made a pretext for the worst purposes ; and, under the sanction of her name, deeds have been perpetrated which would dishonour human nature. Her sacred character has been thus exposed to the derision of her enemies ; and the infidel triumphed in detailing the ludicrous or tragic story of her follies or of her crimes.

In no country have the bad effects of this religious bigotry been more visible than in Ireland ; and in no country has hypocrisy oftener worn the sacred mask of zeal for religion. The severe laws that have been enacted with fresh rigor under every succeeding branch of the House of Stuart, have drawn a sharp and sullen line of demarcation between the inhabitants of the same country. Some saw themselves stripped of their fortunes, because they inherited the faith of their ancestors ; and others found that the profession of a new creed smoothed the access to emolument and honour.

Where difference of religion was productive of such an inequality of condition, there must have been some symptoms of discontent, and some angry collisions between both parties, embittered by the sense of unmerited humiliation on the one hand, and by the insolence of the ascendant party on the other. As religion was the distinctive mark that separated these two castes of people, it was thus unfortunately mixed up with politics ; and every aggression, however originating in other motives, was traced to the spirit, and embittered by the feelings, of religious rancour.

The memory of ancient wrongs was industriously kept alive, and members of the same community unfortunately visited on each other the crimes and follies of their ancestors, to the third

and fourth generation. Such an unnatural state of society must necessarily have arrested the progress of civilization and improvement. The inhabitants of this kingdom, instead of being blended into one harmonious mass, by the all-pervading influence of equal laws, were kept in a state of reciprocal repulsion ; and all the evils of clanship and of the feudal system, aggravated by the policy that was adopted, operated with a powerful and destructive energy.

There is not a country under heaven that has not been occasionally visited by war, and that has not passed under the dominion of successive masters ; yet in the lapse of a few years every vestige of the revolution is effaced, the memory of ancient feuds is forgotten, and the shattered frame of society is soon restored to its former vigour. But here, alas ! it would seem as if some malignant spirit were bent on perpetuating our woes, by refreshing the memory of the obsolete crimes of the old inhabitants.

The existence of party associations in this country has been a subject of just and strong reprobation. They have tended to retard the national prosperity, and to insult the national feeling. It is a melancholy truth that the exhibition of any colours, however harmless in themselves, is calculated to produce irritation, when these colours are displayed as symbols of the triumph of one party and the degradation of the other.

When a band of men, inflamed with wine and insolence, disgrace the nightly revel with sentiments mortifying to the pride of the people, and exhibit in wanton triumph the badges of their defeat, they arouse to a dangerous activity feelings which would have slept in forgetfulness. Often has the peace of the community been troubled by the insulting display of these symbols of discord, and a passive population stimulated by aggression to a dreadful retaliation. Happy, were these accursed distinctions for ever banished from the land. We should then be spared the recital of many a tale which is a blot on the page of our history.*

Let us only figure to ourselves (and the picture is only a feeble transcript of the sad reality) a knot of men of rough and ferocious manners, breathing a spirit of rancour against those who differ from them in religious opinions—swelled with the insolence natural to the favoured caste—flushed with intoxicating liquors, and almost maddened with martial music—parading through an unarmed multitude, irritating their feelings by party tunes, accompanied with appropriate gesticulations, and panting for the slightest opportunity of insult and of vengeance. Is it

* Thanks to the cool and steady firmness of our viceroy, and the energy displayed by our first municipal magistrate, the offensive decoration of the symbol of discord in College-green has been prevented on the last November anniversary.

not morally impossible, that amidst the numerous mass there would not be found some fiery materials, to kindle at such repeated provocations? A fray ensues—the murderous weapons are unsheathed—and the innocent and the guilty are the indiscriminate victims.

..... Sed jurgia prima sonare
Incipiunt animis ardentibus; hæc tuba rixæ.

Ludere se credunt ipsi tamen, et pueriles
Exercere acies, quod nulla cadavera calcent.*

The friends of the fallen brood over their wrongs, cherishing in gloomy silence an unconquerable resentment. A secret enmity thus rankles in the breast; the deadly purpose is, perhaps, entrusted to some confidential bosom—the infliction of revenge only provokes to fresh retaliation—and a spirit of hostility, incessantly reverberating, is kept up between the contending factions. What a pity that the causes of so demoralizing a system should not for ever be eradicated from the bosom of the country? The sources of her disunion and weakness would be removed, and all the members of the state would be united in one effective body.

In concluding this painful topic, I am cheered by the contrast which presents itself in the recollection of the parting injunction of the Sovereign. He came among us—he witnessed our ardent and instinctive generosity—and, conscious that the spirit of discord alone could poison such precious qualities, his farewell admonition breathed peace and conciliation. The impulse was felt and circulated, and every string that was susceptible of a fine movement was immediately attuned to harmony.

There have been, however, some individuals who have endeavoured to frustrate his Majesty's mandate, and to perpetuate dissension, because they thrive by the monopoly of *the few* and the exclusion of *the many*.† However strong the impulse, and however general the diffusion of the spirit of conciliation, there are still some minds which it has not yet approached. This, however, ought not to excite our wonder; for, though the sun of liberality may traverse the earth, it requires a certain elevation, to be visited by its light and warmed by its influence.

* From angry breasts the strife of words arose,
A fearful prelude to succeeding blows,
Deemed but a mimic combat, if the plain
Were not defiled with corpses of the slain.

† It was the indignant saying of Dr. Johnson, who was neither partial to Ireland nor hostile to the Government:—"The Irish are in a most unnatural state, for there we see the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the ten persecutions, of such severity as that which has been exercised over the Catholics of Ireland."

Notwithstanding these exceptions, the royal example has had a strong influence in cementing those ties which before were but loosely held together.* The system of conciliation will, it is to be hoped, be followed up; and it only requires its completion to give full play to the energies of Ireland, and to enlist in support of the national strength those talents, which are either wasted in indolence or neutralized by distraction.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XVIII.

TO THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1821.

.....*Mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur.*—HORACE.

Change but the name, of thee the tale is told.

THE existence of much misery in Ireland has been universally acknowledged. The wretched condition of its population has almost passed into a phrase of compassion or reproach, and has exercised, of late, the speculations of benevolence. It was the interest of those who were aware of their genuine cause, to ascribe all the calamities of the people to religious ignorance. Religious blindness, it was said, was the prolific source of all their crimes; the complaint was re-echoed in the sister country with sincere or affected commisseration; and so contagious was the sensibility, that a pathetic description of our spiritual woes was considered the surest indication of piety and eloquence.

The infection was not confined to the professed advocates of the Bible; it seized the colder breasts of the literary censors of the age; and they, too, occasionally condescended to swell the chorus of lamentations that were pathetically poured over the superstitions of Ireland. The generous minds of the English

* This union did not last long. It is no wonder; it had no foundation of justice to sustain it. The minds of Irishmen are, at length, sufficiently open to such delusions as those that were fostered by the royal visit. Justice, such as a native Parliament alone can establish, will be the only means of ensuring lasting reconciliation.

people were filled with compassion for our lot ; the wealth of the opulent and the zeal of the religious were immediately put in requisition, and a vast importation of Bibles was conveyed into the country, to satisfy the hunger of Scriptural knowledge under which Ireland laboured for centuries. The people, unprepared for this vast collection of spiritual light, were overpowered by its intense and sudden influence. The Bible* proved to be an exotic, which could not thrive in the Irish soil ; and hence, perhaps, the tame and uniform appearance of the kingdom, not chequered by the agreeable variety of sects, which diversify with all the fantastic shades of colour the prospect of the sister country.

The reluctance and distrust with which the boon was received, and the disdain with which it was generally rejected, served only to inflame the indignation of the societies, and aggravate the charges against the incurable depravity of the Irish character. In the gradations of its climax, their eloquence soon rose from the people to the Catholic clergy ; and to their perverse desire of perpetuating their own reign, which cannot be separated from ignorance, they failed not to ascribe the degradation of the people. It is difficult to convey an adequate idea of the arrogance of invective, in which the pious missionaries generally indulged. The press teemed with their complaints ; their meetings rung with their noisy declamation ; and little tracts, brought down to the purchase of the poorest, fraught with the most Godly denunciations against the domination of our priests, were circulated with a mischievous activity.

To check the career of the Gospellers—to vindicate our clergy against unmerited aspersion—and to justify the line of conduct adopted by them, was the first object of “*Hierophilos*.” On the sincere believers of Christianity I wished to impress the irreligious consequences with which the system was pregnant ; and to those who felt a zeal for the public welfare I was anxious to point out the impolicy of irritating a whole people, who feel the strongest suspicions that some treacherous hostility was meditated against their religion.

Our long silence was abused by their presumption ; and a forbearance, dictated by discretion, they failed not to attribute to the weakness of our cause.

I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
 In this unhallowed cause, but that these jugglers
 Would think to charm our judgment as our eyes ;
 Obtruding false rules frank'd in reason's garb.
 I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
 And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.

* As distributed by knaves and fanatics. For the knowledge of its faith and precepts, and for the fulfilment of the duties it inculcates, the people of Ireland are not surpassed by any people on earth.

A candid and necessary defence, after such long silence, disconcerted the plan of the societies. The exposure of their designs alarmed their apprehensions, and I was accordingly saluted with the courteous, but bold defiance of an adversary, who laboured to enlist in their support the combined authorities of the Scriptures and the Fathers. In the necessity I was under of following his footsteps, and of replying to his arguments, or unmasking his sophistry, the controversy expanded beyond my original intention, by embracing those general principles of Church government, and the exercise of private judgment, which are applicable alike to all times and countries.

The preceding letters, then, though distinguished by some national peculiarities, have an equal reference to the Bible Societies of England; and these societies cannot be proved noxious here, without showing that they are no less prejudicial to the interests of the whole empire. Since the publication of the letters of "Hierophilos" in Ireland, a silent reformation has been working in the Bible Societies. If their emissaries are still active, their activity is less ostentatious; if they are warm in their invectives, they are less ambitious to court notoriety; their appeals to the public are more temperate and subdued, and the puritanical moroseness of their zeal has been gradually softened by a gentle mixture of the language of polished life.*

They are still continuing to apply the remedy of the Bible to our distempered country, but in vain; her malady has little of a spiritual nature; and, therefore, requires a different process to restore her to healthy habits. Too long have our people been doomed to drink of the waters of bitterness; and though it might have been imagined by some honest enthusiasts that the Bible, like the mystic tree of Moses,† would sweeten their asceticity, experience has attested that it has only served to render them still more acrid and corrosive.

Having brought the subject of the preceding letters to a con-

* The meeting of the Kildare-street Society, which was long since advertised, without its adjournment being equally known, was held, at length, after a tedious prorogation. After going through the usual round of its former resolutions, unmitigated by the least infusion of liberality, the anniversary oration was repeated by one of its former advocates. I shall not quote the celebrated passage of Junius, to weaken the effect of a defence made by an individual, the happy pliancy of whose profession might retain him with equal indifference on the opposite side of the question. But as he seems to love the Bible, I will beg leave to remind him, that it is impossible to serve two masters. Those whose services are seldom solicited at the bar, may well turn over to the more lucrative advocacy of the Bible. But for Mr. North, whose eye is doubtless fixed on the highest honours of his profession; he ought to reflect that such is the keen competition of the age, that even genius is doomed to labour, and that, therefore, should he continue to distract his studies between the *law* and the *prophets*, by risking the dignities of the one, he will surely diminish the lustre of his fame, though by his attention to the other, he may be securing an accession to his fortune.

† Exodus, xv, 25.

clusion, I shall now resign the further discussion of the interesting topics they involve. I trust I have contributed something to the vindication of our country and our religion against the libellers of both ; and if I have, I shall reflect with some satisfaction on those hours which have been devoted to a subject that has cheered the labour, and relieved the uniformity of stated duties.

On a topic in which the name of Ireland had so frequently occurred, it was difficult, perhaps, to forbear from the introduction of sad and irritating recollections. Seldom is the state of Ireland discussed with calmness ; and of her we may truly say, that her annals, instead of presenting the uniform dignity of historical narrative, partake of all the irregular alternations of poetry, now depressed into the saddest strains of its elegy, and again exalted into the high-toned tension of its most tragic numbers.

I have, therefore, cautiously abstained from reviving these disagreeable topics, which, as it is the duty, it should be the endeavour, of all to bury in forgetfulness. History, though one of the noblest sources of moral and political wisdom, may yet be abused to the worst of purposes. I have, therefore, endeavoured to keep in view the maxims of a great statesman, conveyed in the following eloquent language, and which I might recommend as a useful guide in the study and application of history :—

“ In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind. History, one of the richest sources of wisdom, may, in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supplying the means of keeping alive or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. Wise men will apply the remedies to vices, not to names—to the causes of evil which are permanent—not to the occasional organs by which they act, and to the transitory modes in which they appear ; otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Different ages have different fashions in their pretexts and modes of mischief. Wickedness is inventive, and always adopts the most popular and pleasing form, to hide its own deformity. Sometimes religion becomes its agent, and sometimes liberty ; but it always associates itself with that which is in highest estimation. And thus the spirit of mischief transmigrates through successive ages, and far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad, it continues its ravages, while you are gibbeting the carcass or demolishing the tomb. It is thus with those who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty ; whilst under colour of altering the principles

of antiquated parties, they are feeding the same vices in different factions, and, perhaps, worse."

Such is the language of Edmund Burke, whose name will always be pronounced with reverence by the virtuous and the wise—whom Ireland will ever number among the most gifted of her sons—the vastness of whose political wisdom, not content with shielding the hearths, and throne, and altars of his country, against a demoralizing and revolutionary infidelity, comprehended within its grasp the cliency of the opposite hemispheres, and whose eloquence, which shook the appalling phalanx of domestic faction, was heard to roll its distant thunder across the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XIX.

TO THE MOST REV. WILLIAM MAGEE, D.D., &c., PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

Diligite homines, interficite errores.—ST. AUGUSTIN.

Love the man, destroy his errors.

MY LORD—The name and title of the Archbishop of Dublin necessarily give a circulation and authority to your Grace's Charge, to which, from its own intrinsic merit, it could never have been entitled. The weight and influence of the body against which its principal force was directed must still augment its interest, and add to its claims on public attention. While you meditated so severe an attack against the Catholic religion, you must doubtless have calculated its probable consequences. Had your Grace been content with the quiet enjoyment of the dignity to which your merit or good fortune had exalted you, you might have enjoyed the reputation of learning and liberality. But by your late intrepid aggression, you submitted to have both impartially canvassed; and though you probably imagined you were strengthening your claims to the one, you must have consented to risk every pretension to the other. Your Charge is calculated to excite a sensation through the country, which, though you

may regret, you will not be able to control; and whatever may be its influence on the repose of your Lordship's mind, it requires not the spirit of prophecy to predict that your address will not contribute much to your reputation with the public.

It has been foretold, that in latter times charity would grow cold, and faith would not be found among men. As the first part of the prophecy has been pretty clearly fulfilled, your Grace evinces a becoming zeal to shield yourself against the application of the other; and it is remarkable, that the slightest sound of danger to the faith has aroused the slumbering warders of the gates of the holy places, whose hearts could never yearn to the tenderest cries of charity. Yet we are told in Scripture, that to "visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation is religion undefiled before God," unless with the apostolic reformer of your church, you rank the Epistle of St. James among the apocryphal writings.

Some individuals felt, or affected to feel surprise at the tenour of your late Charge, as if it had been at variance with those principles which you early professed. Imagining they could discover something of liberality in your former writings, they would fain lament your apostacy, by characterizing it in the language of the poet:—

Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back;
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend.

Yet, the charge of inconsistency could only arise from ignorance of your recorded principles; for had the work on Atonement been read by those who are loud in its commendation, they would have discovered there occasionally the same superficial sophistry, and the same intolerant tone, that have so strongly marked your late production. I shall, therefore, give your Lordship full credit for consistency, rather than expose you to the invidious charge of turning your back upon those principles by which you were conducted, and on those persons by whom you were cheered in your ascent to elevation.

In alluding to the work which, I am told, is the pillar on which you would fain rest your reputation as a scholar, I mean not to contest your claims to erudition. But there is an erudition which bespeaks more of a passive than an active mind, displaying a laudable industry in the collection of its materials, without any of that quality by which they are transmuted into a new form. Even among those who have obtained the reputation of scholars, there are some who are indebted to the force of contrast

for their fame—whose learning is thought solid, because it is clumsy and inelegant—whose stock of knowledge is deemed ample, because there is a carelessness in the manner of expending it—who are estimated as profound, because a single ray of genius never lit their lucubrations ; and who, to use a metaphor, with which your Grace cannot be offended, are covered with the “slough” of learning, without ever shining with its brilliancy.

That the Archbishop of Dublin should have been under the influence of the corporate spirit of his order, cannot excite our wonder. But that in the exercise of your zeal you should have forgotten the dictates of prudence, is a circumstance that has given rise to conjectures as different as some of them are injurious to your Lordship’s candour. But I shall not entertain for a moment such unworthy suspicions, but submit to all the difficulties involved in the conviction of your sincerity, rather than suppose it could have been your Grace’s intention, by the vehemence of your charge, to multiply the enemies and thicken the embarrassments of the Establishment.

No ; whatever of acrimony there was in your Grace’s Charge, I am willing to attribute to the difficulty of your Grace’s situation. The generous ambition of illustrating in your own example the wisdom of preferring personal merit to the dull pretensions of superior age or dignity, could alone have induced you to hazard those dangerous topics of controversy, which it were the interest of the Establishment never to see revived. Else, how could you in the face of a Catholic country put forth such claims to continuity of succession, while the inanimate objects by which you were surrounded spoke your refutation ?

That in England, where the ancient religion has been almost extinguished with the abolition of those monuments that could still preserve its memory, some prelates might work themselves up to an illusion that they are the heirs of the apostles, is a circumstance which cannot excite our astonishment. And hence we only smile at the harmless effusions of those contented prelates, whom family influence has seated upon their episcopal thrones, and who disturb not the placid tenour of their lives by any laborious and painful inquiries. But that in a country whose very soil is interspersed with the traces of the ancient worship, and whose ancient hierarchy still exists in pure and apostolic splendour, the bishop of a new church should put forth such high pretensions to apostolicity, bespeaks a hardihood of mind in which humility had no share.

I fancied that the time had long since gone by, when the claims of “*Catholic and Apostolic*” were abandoned to Catholic theologians. Like the doctrine of legitimacy, which is exploded, while there are any old claimants to the throne, the doctrine of Apostolicity was derided by your predecessors, while the rights

of the old succession were fresh in every mind. But in proportion as they are forgotten, the claims of those who were substituted in their stead are gradually ripening, and their arguments shifting their ground, until at length you would fain represent in your own person the fulness of that apostolic authority, on the extinction of which whatever you possess was originally founded.

This position might be clearly established. But without entering on any tedious theological discussion, we know enough of history to ascertain what little value was set by your predecessors on episcopal consecration. We are informed by Burnet, and Burnet was a Protestant bishop, that the versatile Cranmer and his associates regarded the episcopacy as a mere municipal function, to be exercised, or resigned, or resumed, according to the extent of the royal pleasure. And surely the anecdote of Elizabeth threatening to unfrock one of her prelates, and the edifying meekness with which he bore the royal indignity, affords no strong instance of those claims to apostolicity, so haughtily put forth by our modern prelates.

Let us ascend to that period when the apostolical series began to diverge into two branches. So far the most illiterate can be the companion of our way. Here, however, we must separate; for thus far thou canst go, and no farther, appalled by the hideous avulsion of your ancestors from the parent trunk, which, like the crime of the unfortunate son of Adam, has descended in visible characters to their posterity, and which, though they may be softened in the descending series, are yet too inveterate to be obliterated by time. And hence, no length of possession can consecrate the title of a bishop defective in its origin, or invest a schismatical church with the authority of prescription.

The claims of your church to catholicity are still more untenable. While it was yet in its infancy, the prophetic reformers might well have amused the credulity of their followers, by predicting the future glories of the establishment. And when their hearts were depressed by the sad contrast between the vast extent of the empire of Babylon and the narrow limits to which the elect were confined, the preachers might still have reassured their drooping hopes by pointing to the gradual expansion of the spiritual conquests of Sion. But since time has laid open the fallacy of their predictions, I fancied that the pretensions to catholicity would have been modestly resigned. The want of catholicity is a consequence of the defect of apostolicity. Severed from the parent tree, from which she drew nutriment and life, she is consigned to decay, and barrenness has come upon her. Unable, therefore, to propagate her reign, she is doomed to a limited extent; nor will she ever be able "to enlarge her tent, or lengthen the cords, or strengthen the stakes of her tabernacle."

It would have been prudence, therefore, to pause before you insulted the religious feelings of those to whom you are indebted for your splendid revenues. Disclaiming any connexion with the Catholic Church, from which you derive whatever there is of dignity in your own, and spurning any connexion with your brethren of the Reformation, do you imagine you can support their mutual opposition? Whatever may be thought of the religion of Catholics, the fidelity with which they clung to it, through the heat of persecution, which would have dissolved less hardy virtue, should entitle them to respect. And whatever may be the form of the church of the sectaries, they are entitled to the praise of consistency in their reformation, by having emancipated human reason from every secular control.

But what has your Church to challenge admiration? "The Catholics have a Church without a religion, and the sectaries have a religion without a Church." This, no doubt, was, in your Lordship's opinion, one of those happy discoveries that could settle the controversy of ages, and save posterity from the repetition of these angry discussions. I have been struck with a wonderful idea of your strength, in witnessing those solemn gambols of the archiepiscopal character, gravely disporting itself amidst the very depths of religion, poisoning between a puerile play of language those mysteries which our ancestors could scarcely wield, and amusing the ears with sound, instead of conveying sense to the understanding. However, as this is one of those mysteries which ordinary minds cannot sound, I will not attempt to approach it, unless it is rendered more accessible to my intellect.

But as you are fond of defining your church by its relation to what you are politely pleased to call the church of the Romanists and the religion of the sectaries, allow me to tell your Grace what it is, defining it by the same criterion. It is a mock church, having all the supposed inconveniences of both, without the excellence of either; exercising all the severity of the one, without the security by which it is mitigated; and shaken by all the discord of the other, without the enjoyment of its freedom.

As the vial of your invective was too full for the Catholic religion, you have spared a portion for those children, who by their rebellion to your church, are only avenging that disobedience of which she first gave the example. "For thou hast taught them against thee, and instructed them against thy own head."* Yet, it is among those we could discover, in their full perfection, those principles which ushered in the Reformation. Among them we discover none of the vices accompanying slothful splendour, which were the theme of the invectives of the

* Jeremias, xiii, 21.

reformers, and which, if then existing, have rather transmigrated than disappeared. Placed in that mediocrity of condition which exempts them not from the necessity of exertion, and completely depurated from the fiery spirit of the reformers, the Presbyterians have exploded the lessons of intolerance with which their infant church has been reproached, and exhibit to the world the examples of decorous and valuable citizens.

Is it wise, then, to provoke the hostility of such a body, and to throw out imputations which must recoil upon their author, charged with the additional weight of inconsistency? Rather than force people to the manifestation of those distinctions, which must eventually show how few are attached to your Lordship's cause, it is wiser to suffer them to wear the general uniform of Protestantism. Better imitate the wise policy of the Romans, which forbade the slaves to adopt a distinct habit, lest by becoming confident of their strength, they might endanger the peace of the empire. For if all who disbelieve the doctrines of the Establishment would wear the peculiar colours, and range under the respective standards of their creeds, the strength and number of the host of the ungodly would smite you to the heart; and, like the ancient prophet, you would be left to weep over the apostacy of the people.

But, while your Grace possesses your ample revenues, they will, I trust, solace your griefs for the spiritual ravages committed in the fold. There is something in the dignity of the Establishment which throws so much light around its evidence, and something in its wealth that adds so much weight to its arguments, that they can scarcely be resisted by ordinary minds. While you are the dispenser of the favours of that Establishment, it is unnecessary for you to fatigue your own mind, or those of your hearers, with laborious argumentation. They will, doubtless, gratefully acknowledge themselves subdued by your arguments, and charmed by your eloquence; and should any symptoms of breaking off from the union of the Establishment be occasionally exhibited, its wealth will have silent but strong attractions, towards which their yielding minds will gently gravitate.

It is in vain, then, that naked and unassisted reasoning should contend against such powerful auxiliaries of truth. Let but the controversy be stript of these incumbrances; let but your arguments and mine be weighed in an equal balance, and the judgment left to its own native powers; and I pledge myself that the beam shall not tremble for a moment; but as soon as the weight by which one scale is depressed shall be removed, it shall instantly yield to the preponderance of the other.

LETTER XX.

TO THE MOST REV. WILLIAM MAGEE, D.D., &c., PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

A deceitful balance is an abomination before the Lord, and a just weight is his will.—*Proverbs*.

MY LORD—Your Charge to your clergy has excited a becoming interest; and if you were ambitious of celebrity, your labours are amply repaid, and your hopes are realized. My former letter was a reply to your address, such as it was delivered or published; this will embrace your authorized edition, improved by the slow re-touchings of time, and enriched by further illustrations. Though your Charge provoked the just resentment of those whose feelings were insulted, I still entertained hopes that your Grace would explain what was liable to misconstruction, and soften what was offensive. You had it still in your power to retrace your steps with dignity; and the forgiving generosity of your country would have put the obnoxious passages to the account of hasty and inaccurate publication, or to the zeal of an ardent mind, hurried by its own strength beyond the boundaries of discretion. But no: the heaviness of the Charge is still aggravated by the severer harshness of the commentary; and deeming it weakness to recede, with the exception of a solitary word, you glory in being consistent. Had you been content with publishing the Charge, such as it was delivered, you would have been spared the second notice of “*Hierophilos*.” But since you have presented yourself to the public in another form, we will now examine whether the hasty zeal of the preacher has been corrected and improved by the cautious labours of the commentator.

In delaying my reply to this stage of the controversy, I have obviated the plea put forth by your Grace, of the necessity of “consulting for a name and station that should be respected, by refusing to come into familiar association” with what you are pleased to call the “scurrilities of a degenerate press.” On the style and temper of your Grace’s production I shall make no remark; but on a comparison, the public will pronounce whether “*Hierophilos*” has not deprived you of that convenient subterfuge, by which exalted churchmen have often contrived to hide their weakness under the mask of their dignity.

Your Grace’s attempt to strip us of the ancient and envied name of *Catholic*, and to share in its honours, are almost unworthy of serious refutation. Never in so short a compass have

I witnessed so much of that happy ingenuity which labours to reconcile contradictions. In one page you speak as a “sincere Protestant, and glory in giving utterance to those sentiments which a Protestant bishop should never compromise;” and in the next, with wonderful versatility, you would fain transform yourself into a Catholic! Thus your Grace becomes at once a Protestant and a Catholic—blending in your own person those attributes which were hitherto deemed irreconcileable. On one occasion, your style rises to a tone of indignation against those politicians who have of late years appropriated the name of Catholics to a certain class of his Majesty’s subjects, and familiarized the public ear to its injurious misapplication. In your next address I would respectfully caution you to speak in more measured language of the religion of politicians, lest, irritated by such ingratitude, they might be disposed to prove how much you are indebted to their services for the establishment of your own.

It is not to the courtesy of parliamentary language that we are beholden for the name and honours of Catholic: it is derived to us from a higher source, and rests on more permanent authority. It is a name that is inscribed on the Creed of the Apostles, and which attached Saint Augustine to the faith which we profess—a name which, in every age, marked the rights of primogeniture, distinguishing the lawful heirs from those who were excluded from the divine inheritance—a name which has survived the ravages of time, and has never been lost by the true believers, nor usurped by the sectaries. Those who were conscious of the invalidity of their claims, have often attempted to impose on the credulity of mankind by the assumption of the genuine appellation, and by affixing on the rightful heirs some opprobrious epithet. Thus it was that we were branded in this country with names which were intended to obscure our title. They, however, last no longer than the force in which they originate; and as soon as the laws that imposed the obnoxious epithets are relaxed, the most bigotted acquiesce in the justice of our pretensions. To deny us, therefore, the title of Catholics, is to deny the just connexion between the name and nature of things, and to resist the current of thought and language by which each one is unconsciously borne along, as soon as the prejudice which resisted it subsides.

Non aliter quam qui adverso vix flumine cymbam
Remigiis subigit: si brachia forte remisit
Atque illum in præcepis prono rapit alveus amui.*

* So the boat’s brawny crew the current stem,
And slow advancing struggle with the stream;
But if they slack their hands or cease to strive,
Then down the flood with headlong haste they drive.

You acknowledge that the Roman Catholics are a branch of the Catholic Church, but that their religion is so incrusted with rust, that Protestants are obliged to exclude them from their communion!! While we admire your scrupulous piety, we must feel grateful for the charity of your concession. If the Roman Catholics are only a branch, I should wish to learn where is the trunk. Not, surely, the Protestant Church, since it would be an unnatural metaphor to convert a recent and divided religion into the trunk, and to characterize the most ancient one that professes Christianity as one of the branches. Unable, however, to deny its antiquity, you associate it with rust to depreciate its value. It is, my Lord, an old religion ; nor shall it ever boast of any ornament to its simplicity, by courting any connexion with the fashionable doctrines of modern times. The value of the genuine coin was sufficient to keep alive in every age the vigilance of those to whose care it was entrusted ; and if they were inclined to suffer it to rust, it has been kept polished by continual agitation. Like other precious jewels, it is gathering richness from time ; and it will always preserve sufficient value to provoke the hostility of those who are excluded from its possession. Its antiquity then is its protection ; and what would have rusted baser metals, has, in reality, only brightened its splendour.

Do not attempt, then, to separate the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion ; they are really inseparable terms. If we are a branch of the former, we are in possession of the latter ; and if you are excluded from the pale of the one, you are likewise shut out from the inheritance of the other. How precious is the title of Catholic, when it is sought even by those who have abjured the Catholic faith ! How fondly do you cling to its relics, and with what complacency do you repeat its venerable name ! But it is only the name ; and while you are amused with the unsubstantial shadow of the Establishment, you remind me of the Trojan chief, who solaced his exile by feasting his eyes with the image of which the reality was gone.

Atque animum pictura pascit inani.*

Content yourself, then, with the name and dignity of a Protestant bishop, nor associate with it a name which will only expose the absurdity of your pretensions. Do not attempt at the same time to be a Catholic and a Protestant bishop ; for they are two things so different in substance, as well as in name, that no chemistry can combine qualities so repulsive in their nature, nor logic associate terms of such different signification. Should you, however, persist in your pretensions to the name and pre-

* And with the shadowy portrait feasts his mind.

rogatives of Catholic, I would beg leave to remind you of the fate of the wit, who affected the dress and manners of the lord of the forest. But nature spoke through the disguise, and the ill grace with which he wore his new dignity quickly revealed the deceit to the ridicule of his companions, and earned for the cheat the just retribution of his imposture. The apologue was, doubtless, familiar to your earlier years, and your memory will readily catch the recollection ; nor shall “ Hierophilos” descend to expound the moral.

To support your arguments in favour of the right of Catholic, you quote the authorities of Cranmer and Cromwell. It is really surprising that Protestants can speak of Cranmer with respect, whose name and character, in mercy to their cause, they ought to consign to oblivion—a man whose pliant faith, ever obedient to his interests, successively yielded to the most opposite impressions—who shamefully practised incontinence while he professed celibacy—who would sanction a system of morality that once excited* the virtuous indignation of a Pagan audience, while his heart abjured the vows his lips had uttered—and who, like the two-faced Janus, presented opposite characters to the Protestants and Catholics of his time. As for Cromwell, most willingly do I make him over to your Grace ; nor do I envy you all the support you can derive from the name of the licentious favourite of Henry, whose disgrace and death were attested by the joy of the whole nation as the just punishment of his crimes.

I cannot dismiss this subject without adverting to the note in which your Grace insinuates two heavy charges against the Catholic Church, by stating, that “ that cannot be a true religion which prohibits the free use of the Scripture, and subjects the word of God to the authority of man.” I shall not stop my reader with any complaints against the usual artifices of polemical disingenuity. The ignorance of others might be endured, and their misrepresentation disregarded ; but the qualifications of a bishop should place him equally above the influence of both. If I were not determined to give a full refutation of every part of your Grace’s Charge, I would refer you to the former letters of “ Hierophilos,” in which the calumnies against the Catholic Church regarding the use of the Scriptures, were refuted to the satisfaction, or, at least, to the silence, of one of the most

* Πι γλωσσοφρον, η δε Φρενι αναμοτος.

The poet who put this language into the mouth of Hippolytus incurred the just resentment of the Athenian people. What a pity they had not the benefit of the lessons of the reforming archbishop, whose life would have furnished the best illustration of the text of Euripides ! Every member of the sentence in which I have sketched the character of Cranmer is founded on Protestant testimony.

strenuous and talented advocates of the Bible. But as you will doubtless feel more pleasure in being referred to your own than to any other productions, allow me to place before your eyes the following sentence, taken from your Grace's Charge:—"We, my brethren, are to keep clear of both extremes ; and holding the Scriptures as our great charter, whilst we maintain the liberty with which Christ has made us free, we are to submit ourselves to the authority to which he has made us subject."* After this sentence what becomes of the *free use* of the Scripture, which you hold essential to the true religion ? If by the "*free use*" of the Scripture you only mean a "*tempered freedom*," regulated by the authority of the Church in the use and interpretation of Scripture, then you adopt the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and we will hail your conversion. But if by "*free use*" you mean an uncontrolled license of regulating one's belief by the Scripture and his own caprices—and, mark, there is no other alternative—why, in the name of consistency, inveigh against the sectaries for asserting that "liberty with which Christ has made them free ?" If the authority with which you endeavour to recal the Dissenters, subjects not the word of God to the authority of man, why has the more consistent authority of the Catholic Church a different effect ? If the judge who expounds the law, and corrects the abuse of its licentious application, can justly spurn the imputation of invading the authority of the legislature, why will the Church, not claiming more than the authority of a judge, be said to usurp the rights of the legislature of heaven ?

The truth is, my Lord, you stand not in need of argument. The sentence I have just quoted, of which the want of sense breaks out through the clumsy artifice of a laboured and perplexed construction, is the best evidence that you are conscious of your own embarrassment. Knowing that you could not maintain your station without the exercise of an authority, of whose inconsistency you are convinced, you endeavour to soften it, by keeping up the language of the Reformation, like the crafty Augustus, who, whilst he exercised a silent despotism over the Roman people, still affected the language of freedom, to amuse the prejudices of those who cherished the memory of the ancient commonwealth.

You tell us that the Scriptures are the boasted charter of the faith of Protestants, until we are wearied with the repetition ; nor is the ludicrous spectacle of the shattered fragments of that faith which the sectaries hurl against each other, sufficient to cure their infatuation. We, too, appeal to the Scripture as the great charter of our faith, but we appeal to it with reverence.

* Charge, page 22.

We grasp no detached passages, which might appear more striking to our contracted view; but we reverence the whole as the dictates of divine inspiration; and lest we should err in adjusting the complex system of our duties by its standard, we listen with respectful docility to that guide, which after minutely surveying the whole, can best reconcile its apparent inconsistencies, and construct a balanced system of morality, by regulating the proper limits of our obligations, and assigning to the different virtues their respective proportions.

To conclude—and I intreat the attention of every thinking Protestant to the reflection, as it obviates that delusion which has taken strongest possession of their minds. The Scriptures were never intended to be made the instrument of every blasphemer, who would fain conceal his extravagance and impiety under the mask of respect for religion. The indecent levity with which the awful concerns of religion are often treated by polemics, and the flippancy with which they abuse the Scripture, would almost make one think that the Scriptures were written for the vain and irreligious, as a matter of idle disputation. But the Scriptures are too sacred for familiarity; nor ought the mysteries of heaven be profanely agitated between the vain contentions of men. Placed in the sanctuary of the Catholic Church, the Scripture is the monument of God's covenant with his people: it affords a proof of his presence, and a pledge of his protection. But when it is dragged out of that sanctuary by the impiety of the sectaries, and sacrilegiously carried out to battle, it becomes like the same ark of the covenant in the hands of the hypocritical sons of Heli: it provokes the vengeance of heaven—it becomes the signal of their shame—and the instrument of their discomfiture.*

HIEROPHILOS.

* And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Heli, Ophni and Phinees, were slain.—*I. Kings*, iv, 11.

LETTER XXI.

THE FOLLOWING LETTERS WERE WRITTEN TO ENFORCE THE NECESSITY OF CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1824.

*Dedimus profecto grande patientiae documentum: et sicut vetus **Æ**tas vidit quid ultimum in libertate esset, ita nos quid in servitude. Adempto per inquisitiones et loquendi audiendique commercio memoriam quoque cum voce perdidessemus si tam in nostra potestate esset oblivisci quam tacere.—TACITUS.*

We have, unquestionably, given extraordinary proofs of patience; for, as remoter times have witnessed the extremes of licentiousness, so have ours endured the worst of servitude. For, the channels of receiving and communicating intelligence being cut off, through spies and informers, we should have at once lost our recollection and our voice, if we had been as much masters of our memory as of the use of language.

SIR—In soliciting the attention of the British legislature to the present posture of Ireland, it cannot excite surprise if I should address myself to a statesman whose fame has been intimately blended with her fortunes. It will be readily perceived that I allude to the exertions of those splendid talents which have been early enlisted in her service, and to that uniform devotion to her cause which has hitherto marked your political career. You cannot, Sir, be indifferent to the interests of a country with whose misfortunes your youngest sympathies were associated, and which often awaked that pathetic and commanding eloquence which charmed a listening senate into still and admiring attention. Your talents, it is true, may now embrace a wider range; but still your efforts in the cause of Ireland will not cease to be remembered; and while we are struck with the loftier inspirations of his genius, by which the master of Roman eloquence averted the threatened destruction of the empire, we read with an intense interest his indignant denunciations against the misgovernment of the Sicilian Island, resembling in so many respects the condition of our own, being at once the granary of Rome, and the most wretched of her provinces.

While we looked on your appointment to your present elevated office, as the reward of your honorable toils in the public service, we hailed it too as the harbinger of better prospects to our country. We hoped that the talents which were so often devoted to our cause would not desert us when a wider scope was

opened for their exertion. When hopes are most ardent, disappointment is most deeply felt; and hence some have not failed to view, in your connexion with your present associates, some symptoms of alienation. However, in spite of appearances, there is still in the public mind a confiding disposition, which clings with strong reliance to the promise of your earlier exertions, and which has derived fresh strength from the solemn assurance of a persevering zeal for the Catholic interests, which you have made at the opening of the present session of Parliament. The frequency of disappointment has created in us a suspicion of the faith of statesmen; but though there are some few who have ventured to give expression to their distrust in all the warmth of confidence so often misused, there are more who still give you credit for sincerity, and regard your present policy as the result of Fabrician wisdom, maturing by wise delay those measures for the public weal which might be defeated by rash and precipitate councils.

After a melancholy succession of hopes, as capriciously defeated as perhaps they were too warmly indulged, we cannot dissemble that on the present occasion we feel more than ordinary disappointment. While the evils of Ireland were acknowledged and lamented, we might look forward with some confidence to the prospect of their removal. But now we are assured by the speech from the throne, that there has been a progressive amendment in her condition. Some further measures are recommended for her improvement, too vague to enable us to ascertain their precise nature. But if we are to take the opinions of those who seconded the address as a commentary on the speech, instead of directing our hopes to any great measure of national relief, it is rather calculated to deepen our despondence. If I rightly understand the opinions of my Lord Lorton, and others who spoke with him, the whole sum of Ireland's misery is to be resolved into the ignorance of the Irish people; and the only measure for their relief to be found in education.* Conscious of the deceit that is thus practised on the public mind by the solemn mockery of those who, under the guise of zeal for her welfare, conceal a treacherous hostility to the real interests of her people, I shall undertake to trace these evils to their source, and in exposing the fallacy of the half measures that are recommended, satisfactorily show the necessity of Catholic Emancipation.

In entering on the discussion of this interesting topic, which involves much of contradictory opinion and adverse feeling, I am sensible how difficult it is to conciliate the views of contending parties. But since in the zeal of ministering to the appetites of

* After a lapse of more than twenty years, the opinions regarding the nature of our evils, seem to be stationary. Infidel colleges are now deemed the only cure for our misfortunes.

a party, truth itself does not escape distortion, I shall in the present view of the state of Ireland give impartial expression to those reflections that have been suggested by the contemplation of her history; nor shall I dissemble the close connexion that exists between the nature of her laws and the character of her inhabitants.

Although in the conduct of the Irish people there is much to compassionate, it will not be denied that there is also something to condemn. But the more I would acknowledge the extent of the degradation of the inhabitants, the more I should be demonstrating the necessity of legislative interference to improve our condition. To solicit a remedy for evils which do not exist would be preposterous, and to demand to be placed on a level with our fellow-citizens would be absurd, without acknowledging our degradation as far as we could be degraded by mischievous laws. If there is, then, in the Irish character something of the evil ingredients with which it is reproached, to what source is it to be traced? Our revilers continually repeat that there is much ignorance, much indolence, united to great cunning and occasional ferocity among the lower, and a sullen discontent among the higher orders of our people. Yet, while they prefer those charges, they labour to continue the causes from which they proceed. We acknowledge the existence of evils which spring from the system by which we are governed, and are anxious for their removal. Who are most solicitous for the peace and prosperity of the empire I shall leave to your wisdom to determine.

If it were true that our people are ignorant to the degree they are misrepresented, is it not because the access to knowledge has been closed against them? If they are indolent, is it not because they have long felt the influence of those laws that abandoned the accumulations of their industry to every informer? If some of the lower orders of our peasantry ever resort to cunning and deceit, is it not because the ægis of the law was not interposed between them and the baronial or village despot, whose passions, as they were unable to resist, they strove to appease by a fawning adulation.*

And if they have exhibited instances of cruelty, is it not because they were goaded by contumely and harsh usage sometimes to retort on their oppressors their own barbarity, by endeavouring to get rid of those whose violence their usual artifices of deceit could not subdue. If the letters which "Hierophilos" has already addressed to the English people have,

* An important case of late occurrence is an illustration of the system of chastisement beyond the law which our peasantry often endured from the cruelty of their task-masters. If, therefore, at the present day, when the influence of the British law is extending to the remotest districts of Ireland, some men are found hardy enough to resort to such barbarous practices, we may presume what was its extent when they were unawed by the dread of punishment.

perchance, met your eye, you will not suspect that he is the apologist of crime, or the advocate of disaffection. But while I acknowledge and deplore those crimes which are exaggerated by our enemies, I wish to trace them to their origin—bad laws; and instead of wondering that their effects have been so melancholy, there must have been some noble elements in the composition of a people that could have so powerfully resisted their deteriorating influence.

If then, it be shown that the laws have been productive of those malignant effects that have darkened the character and aggravated the misery of the Irish nation, nothing but the repeal of the same laws can efface the odious impression. If it be confessed that those evils and those laws are connected in the relation of cause and effect, it is a waste of the expedients which the government can command, to attempt the healing of the one, without the abolition of the other. Hence, though I shall offer some reflections on the question of Tithes, Education, the Protestant Establishment, and other topics which have excited much interesting discussion, the total repeal of the Penal Laws, or the unqualified Emancipation of the Catholics, will be the theme to which I shall particularly solicit your attention.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

The customs of an enslaved people are a part of their servitude, and those of a free people a part of their liberty.—MONTESQUIEU.

SIR—Of the justness of this profound remark, England is, perhaps, one of the happiest illustrations. Though soil and climate may have some influence in the formation of character, yet it is little compared to laws and education, by which all the natural obstructions arising from climate have been subdued. To what are we to trace the vast difference between the inhabitants of the same country, in different epochs of their history, if not to the difference of their moral and political institutions. Carthage, whose commerce once covered every sea, and whose

resources enabled her to grapple with the Roman strength, now languishes under the despotic sway of the Dey of Algiers—its site almost a problem, and its inhabitants exhibiting the last symptoms of human degeneracy. Athens and Sparta still enjoy the same mild and temperate climate which preserved their inhabitants equally free from the effeminacy of the eastern, or the ferocity of the northern nations, to which their sages* ascribed their superior civilization. Yet, if we except some transient gleams of their ancient glory, which are occasionally seen to cross over the melancholy condition of Greece, in vain do you look among its inhabitants for those sublime models of the human character which were formed by the laws of Solon and the lessons of Socrates. While those nations exemplified in the salutary influence of their laws whatever was elegant in the arts or abstruse in the sciences, Britain was yet unknown or despised. Yet, when the corruption of the principles to which those states were indebted for their greatness, gradually produced their dissolution, the vigorous seeds of jurisprudence that were first transplanted from the forests of Germany, have thriven in the British soil,† and spread into such majestic growth, that arts and science, and peace and freedom, securely repose under its protection.

There is not, I should think, anything in the soil or atmosphere of Ireland unpropitious to their cultivation. Let but the experiment be tried: give us the laws that have fostered, and the liberty that has guarded, the energies of the British people; and then it will appear if our degeneracy is owing to our climate or to our religion. Whatever our natural capacities may have been, we were never yet afforded an opportunity for their development. If we are reproached with the early provincial feuds that grew out of our pentarchy, let it be recollected that it was when England was ruled by the sway, and distracted by the competition, of a greater number of kings. If the ferocity of the northern invaders subsequently retarded our advancement to union and civilization, it was a calamity we shared in common with our more distinguished neighbours. The personal obligations imposed by the laws of tanistry on the retainers of our chieftains, afforded, it is true, no exalted specimen of our jurisprudence. But though not precisely of the same character, it had some affinity with the feudal system of the Continent, and was less liable to any change on account of our insular situation. Before the union of our provinces could have been cemented by the vigour of a national monarchy, our feuds were embittered still more by the disunion of the pale which conferred all that

* Aristot. *Polit. lib. vii, cap. vii.*

† Ce beau système a été trouvé dans les bois.—MONTESQUIEU, *Esprit de Lois, lib. xi, chap. vi.*

was revolting in British rule, without the benefits of its legislation. This is not gratuitous assertion, since we have the unbiassed testimony of Sir John Davis,* who assures us that the English settlers, instead of abolishing the odious impositions of coin and livery, retained those remnants of our ancient laws, and aggravated still more the servitude of the people. And, finally, ere the narrow boundary of the pale could have moved to the extremities of the kingdom, and confounded the odious distinction of the settlers and the aborigines, it was guarded by the deeper and more inaccessible fence of religious bigotry, which repulsed mutual approach and perpetuated national enmity.

Hence, no country on the earth has been placed in circumstances more unfavourable to its improvement. Other nations might have laboured under temporary evils which yielded to the influence of time and salutary laws. But it has been the peculiar misfortune of Ireland, that, instead of profiting by any change, every new regimen was calculated to protract her weakness and aggravate her distemper. The rigorous laws that were enacted under the successive reigns of the daughters of James, who repaid the attachment of this country to the declining fortunes of their house with the proverbial ingratitude of that family, are as familiar to every memory as they are revolting to every feeling. The maxim of the unprincipled Shaftesbury—of neglecting his friends, and securing, by kindness, the support of his enemies—was adopted, not only by Charles, but improved, as it descended to the last member of his race who occupied the English throne. The deplorable effects of that cursed policy are yet too deeply felt to be easily forgotten ; and, if we except the last unfortunate monarch of the line of Stuart, whose memory is protected from reproach by the reverence or pity due to fallen greatness, I know not which is most calculated to excite our wonder—the generous and gratuitous fidelity of the Irish people, or the worthlessness of the objects on whom it was bestowed.

If the object of laws be to impose a restraint on the worst propensities of our nature, calamitous must be their effect, when our very passions are stimulated by their authority. What, then, must have been the malignant influence of that sanguinary code which passed towards the commencement of the last century, of which the avowed object was, to whet all the hateful feelings of man, and thus dissolve the most sacred ties by which society is held together ? If their tendency had been confined to the separation of our people into two distinct bodies, then, like the cantons of Switzerland, each might have endeavoured to enjoy within its own sphere all the kind intercourse of society. But no : the object of those laws was to generate division, and

* The English, when they had learned it, used it with more severity, and made it more intolerable.—SIR JOHN DAVIS.

by division, annihilation—violating the sacred rights of conscience as well as the security of property—poisoning every spring of social and religious feeling—nay, invading the repose of the domestic circle—until society was thrown into a hideous and confused mass, and the virtues by which it was cemented, were exiled to the solitude of the mountains. Thus every engine which the malignant ingenuity of man could devise was employed for the destruction of our people. It is acknowledged, even by their enemies, that the peasantry are a noble ruin. What, then, can be more worthy of the labours of a statesman than to collect the scattered materials, to refit the social edifice, and to restore it to that symmetry and form to which the massive qualities of the broken fragments show they were originally destined; unless it be intended that Ireland should remain an eternal theme to excite speculative admiration for her virtues, and barren sensibility for her wrongs.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

Natura tamen infirmitatis humanæ, tardiora sunt remedia quam mala, et ut corpora lente augescunt, cito extinguntur, sic ingenia studiaque oppresseris facilis quam revocaveris.—TACITUS.

But the work of destruction and decay is rapid—that of regeneration slow and progressive.

SIR—From this natural reflection it will appear that I do not anticipate from the repeal of the penal laws the immediate abolition of all the evils of which they have been productive. We are not so sanguine as to imagine that emancipation, by an instantaneous virtue, will banish every misfortune, and diffuse universal happiness through the land. It must, however, be the forerunner, without which no permanent good can be expected to follow. You may redress some partial grievance; but as long as these laws are unrepealed, the source of the waters of bitterness will

not cease to flow over the land, poisoning, by their noxious qualities, all the channels of social intercourse.

Nothing, then, short of a full participation of all the benefits of the constitution will appease Ireland's discontent, and quiet her dissensions. It is in vain to raise the people from their prostrate condition, unless they are permitted to regain that erect and dignified attitude which heaven has given to the human form, and of which it has been deprived by the misgovernment of man.

*ὅντωτε δουλειν κεφαλη ορθως πηφυκην
ἀλλ αἰνι σκολιη, κ' αυχηνα λοξαν ἔχει.**

Since the days of the Reformation, it has been the policy of our enemies to ascribe all the evils of Ireland to the errors of her religion. Accordingly every bitter remedy that has been administered was founded on the expediency of substituting another. Since, however, her inveterate attachment to her old religious habits has been found to have obstinately resisted innovation; it is high time to think of making some other experiment. Notwithstanding the numberless ones already resorted to, her malady is only gathering a deadlier inveteracy. Whenever she is agitated by intestine discord, we are told that she must first feel the vengeance of the law before she can hope to partake of its benefits. But when the vengeance of the law is appeased, its benefits are forgotten, and thus the history of Ireland exhibits only the alternating vicissitudes of insurrectionary frenzy, subdued by force into exhaustion, and exhaustion again stimulated into fresh cruelty by the reaction of despair. One expedient only has been left untried, and yet all have proved abortive. Already has she passed under all the signs of the political zodiac, save that of Emancipation; and still no conjunction has been found propitious to her destinies. But there are many who, while they affect a wish to heal our misfortunes, only labour to prolong them, knowing that an effectual remedy would ruin the profitable speculations of religious and political empirics, who are thriving on the continuance of her distemper.

The moral maxim of Pope, that "partial evil is universal good," has been rigorously felt by Ireland in all her political relations. Nay, it has been hitherto adopted by the government with a latitude of interpretation which no state necessity could justify. Hence, our interests were not only sacrificed to the apparent advantage of the whole empire, but sometimes to the very caprices of opposite parties. Need I remind you of the disgraceful scene that once occurred in the legislature, when an odious measure was proposed by the ministry, in order to transfer on

* With abject mien the slave is doom'd to tread
The soil; nor dares to raise his drooping head.

the opposition the unpopularity of its rejection, and adopted by the opposition to catch their foes in their own toils. Thus, each acquiesced in the injustice of a law that was equally reprobated by both ; the cause of the Catholics was converted into an arena on which men might make an innocent trial of their parliamentary tactics ; and, with a cruelty worse than that of Commodus, the lives and liberties of the Irish people were sported away for the sanguinary amusement of those political gladiators.

It is, therefore, no wonder if we are in such a state as to excite the commisseration of those friends of the human race who occasionally visit us, attracted by the fame of our misery, and the yearnings of their own benevolence. They come among us, and pour forth their real or dissembled sorrow over our suffering, and then strive to amuse our easy nature by prophetic assurances of unattainable perfection. There is much kindness in their professions, and great liberality in their views. Their theories are magnificent, since they are never to be reduced to practice. The future accommodations of our inhabitants are handsomely arranged on paper, and constructed with all the celerity of the palace of Aladin. No matter how dense our population ; should it swell to an hundred millions, all will be fed by some secret aliment that will be extracted from some unknown substance.

The atmosphere will become purified from the noxious mixture that is unfavourable to life, and our land, like that of Judea, will become more fertile, as it is more exhausted. In fine, though like the animals in the ark, each inhabitant should be confined to a few feet of ground, all will be provided with sustenance by the providence of the new system, and should any difficulty arise in the way of those theories, it is immediately obviated by the construction of some more squares, and the addition of a few figures ; and thus a mechanical prospectus, or a mathematical table, realizes more than Lycurgus could ever have achieved, or Plato have imagined.

These improvements are not to be confined to our physical wants ; but the whole system of man is to undergo a complete revolution : the faculties of mind are to be subjected to a regular scale of measurement ; the force of every will, and the extent of every memory is to be inscribed on a mysterious phrenograph ; and the degree to which each one's passions will rise or fall, is to be adjusted by the nicest graduation. Every received maxim is to be exploded as the result of tyranny or superstition, human nature is to be again fused in a crucible of a new and untried education, in which every passion burns with fierce intensity, and then it comes forth purged from all its grossness, and invested with perfection !!

The ignorance of the people seems to be destined rather for the purpose of exciting compassion for Pagan nations, than for

conferring on them a system of rational and religious education. Our slavery awakens more pity for the negroes than for ourselves; and instead of any exertions to benefit the wretchedness of their own country, some of our patriots pour their lamentations over some of the happiest countries in Europe, without considering that the consciousness of their happy condition would make them repulse with a lofty disdain the insolence of their commisseration. Burke lashes with a just indignation the hollow pretensions to philanthropy which were put forth by the French infidels, who exhibited an unfeeling indifference for their kindred, while they affected an intense benevolence towards their kind. The remark may be equally applicable towards those universal patriots, who, while they are whining their complaints over the misfortunes of other countries, are totally insensible to the sufferings of their own. Perhaps they have long since despaired of her situation; and really it would seem as if Ireland had been deemed a subject for experiments, and abandoned to religious and political anatomists to be studied and dissected, in order that they might apply the result of their experience to the renovation of the human species.

If any proof could be wanting to show the necessity of a sound and practical system for our relief, it is the easiness with which people listen to those wild and delusive theories. However, they are not probably without design, since they divert us from the contemplation of that object to which our views should be constantly directed. Because the visions of a distempered enthusiasm cannot be realized in our favour, are we therefore to be consigned to all the gloom of despondency? Since we cannot be restored to a state of more than primitive innocence, must we be deprived of all the salutary restraints which are imposed by wise and equal laws on the tyranny of the human passions? And since we cannot be exalted to a happiness of which our imperfect nature is now unsusceptible; must we be denied the common benefits that are enjoyed by our fellow-citizens, and be told that we hope in vain to be redeemed from our bondage into all the freedom of Catholic Emancipation.

While we are conscious that nothing less than a complete restoration of our rights can be productive of lasting tranquillity, we are not insensible to the favours which have been extended to us during the last reign. If it was wisdom to mitigate the severity of these laws by which we were aggrieved, it cannot but be wisdom to bring the work to a consummation. If arguments could be still wanting to illustrate this truth, they could be easily advanced; but such has been the triumph of argument and reason, that our adversaries could only shelter themselves behind the bulwark of the Protestant Establishment.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

Civil liberty, which is that of a member of society, is "no other than natural liberty, so far restrained by human laws (and no farther) as is necessary and expedient for the general advantage of the public. Hence we may collect, that every wanton and careless restraint of the will of the subject, whether practised by a monarch, a nobility, or a popular assembly, is a degree of tyranny.—*BLACKSTONE's Commentaries*, book i, chap. i, p. 129.

SIR—Britain boasts, above all other nations, of the spirit of justice that presides over all her institutions. There is a justice which not only one individual is obliged to observe towards another, but by which nations too are bound; and principally the legislators of any empire towards its dependant connexions. The sacrifice of any portion of an empire, and the detention of those common benefits of the State, to the support of which all contribute, is deemed by the best authorities on jurisprudence, an act of flagrant injustice, when such a sacrifice is not necessary to the interests of the whole. This is a principle which reason approves, and the authority of every civilian* has sanctioned. On what ground of justice, then, can an entire nation be still deprived of those civil privileges that are deemed the birth-right of a British subject, when all the pretences on account of which those rights were first withdrawn, have long since disappeared? The fears of foreign influence which were so much magnified, have long since passed away. The political pretensions of the last of the race of the Stuarts, which subsided in the enjoyment of the peaceful dignity of a Roman Cardinal, have been finally extinguished in the grave. Secure, no less in the constitutional justice of its claims, than in

* Civil liberty is the not being restrained by any law but what conduces, in a greater degree, to the public welfare.—PALEY, book vi, chap. v.

Paley adds, "that it is not the rigour but the inexpediency of laws and acts of authority which makes them tyrannical."

Some politicians, to justify the exclusion of the Catholics, have distinguished between civil and political liberty, a distinction which was unknown to Blackstone. However, since our enemies consider a government despotic, under which civil liberty is not enjoyed—since the jurists I have cited, consider civil liberty incompatible with unnecessary restraints upon natural freedom—and since the restraints upon the Catholics are now confessedly unnecessary for the public good, I will leave them to reconcile the conclusion with their own principles.

the affections of its subjects, the throne is no longer threatened with real or imaginary danger from any competitor. If, therefore, the laws which proscribed the Catholics from the pale of the Constitution, had their origin in those groundless apprehensions, what justifiable reason can now be assigned for their continuance? If this argument has been frequently and forcibly urged, it is one which has been never satisfactorily combated. It is one which never can be weakened by repetition, and on which time can have no other influence than that of strengthening its force by developing its consequences. Rome, in the days of her greatness, carried her hostility to the conquered countries no farther than was necessary for her own preservation. In exchange for their independence, she liberally imparted all the benefits of her laws and institutions, nor is there in the annals of that empire, any example of a lingering and protracted cruelty towards any of her provinces, that would reflect such disgrace upon her counsels as the treatment towards Ireland would cast upon the memory of British statesmen.

In appealing, therefore, to the legislature, to extend the rights of the constitution to the Catholics of Ireland, we appeal to those eternal principles of justice, which human policy cannot annul; from which statesmen are no more released than private individuals, and which Britain, beyond other nations, professes to revere.

While she extends her commerce over the world, and diffuses with it the improvements of her arts, the protection of her arms, and the lights of her literature, the high character which she affects for piety and justice are tarnished by the harshness of her treatment to this country. As long as Ireland remains in her present condition, the interference of Britain in the concerns of other countries, will be deemed less an evidence of her humanity than her ambition. If she interposes in the defence of an injured people, her policy will be considered the result of a selfish wish to secure her distant possessions, in which justice has no share, nor can she ever claim the proud distinction of being the avenger of freedom, while the slavery of the Irish people exposes in the eyes of mankind, the injustice of her pretensions.

With all her boasted freedom and religion, that freedom is not generous, nor is that religion wholly pure, which can suffer a neighbouring country to languish in a condition which is as hostile to the meek spirit of the one, as it is destitute of the civil advantages of the other. But there is a freedom which is unsocial and intolerant, and which is not far removed from the spirit of despotism. Such was the freedom of some of the factious leaders of the Grecian Republics, who, while they abused the name of liberty, retained more than half the people under bondage the most oppressive. Where the love of liberty is not softened by

the true spirit of religion, it degenerates into a savage independence, and then into a lust of power; and power is always gratified by the number of its slaves. It is no wonder then if we are amused by the sounds of freedom, where its benefits are but little felt; or if we are stunned with invectives against arbitrary power in countries where the condition of the subjects is happier than in our own. Whatever may be the advantages of liberty, that liberty is of little value which cannot be preserved but by the slavery of an entire nation.* Better would it be to blend the opposite extremes, even in these countries in which freedom was carried to the highest pitch, than purchase the happiness of a few, with the misery of the mass of the people. The reason why the rational and tempered freedom that is enjoyed under the mitigated monarchies of Catholic States on the Continent, is disregarded, because, like the light of the sun, it is steady in its influence, and uniform in its effects, and therefore does not strike us with astonishment. Whereas the light of liberty which occasionally shone on these ancient States, was only an intermittent glare, that revealed more fully to the view a frightful mass of misery, of servitude, and of crime.

When Athens gloried in her freedom,† it was generally defended by the blood of her slaves, who were exposed to the fiercest tide of the combat. The blood of Ireland has not been less profusely expended in the support of British freedom. Sparta too, has gloried in her free institutions; yet we look in vain for that equitable spirit which could reconcile them with the recognition of the rights of others. No, it was a freedom of which pride was the principle, and slavery the consequence. The haughty spirit of the Spartans was gratified by the subjection of their neighbour to a rigorous slavery; and in the oath by which they bound themselves never to release the unfortunate inhabitants of the neighbouring country of Laconia, some might behold an evil boding of the perpetual servitude of our own.

If the freedom of England, then, is not compatible with that of Ireland, in the scale of human happiness, it is surely of little value; and if it is, it has little of justice, and less of generosity. As for the spirit of Christianity, it breathes not in the laws that

* Perhaps, after reflecting on the fate of the Catholics of Ireland, the reader might be disposed to adopt the sentiment of the paradoxical philosopher of Geneva: "Quoi! la liberté ne se maintient qu'à l'appui de la servitude."—*Contrat Social*, lib. iii, chap. xv.

The contrast between the state of the Protestants and Catholics of the British empire might induce us to hesitate before we would pronounce this sentiment to be a paradox.

† The number of slaves in Athens, in the very zenith of her glory, is calculated to have amounted to double the number of citizens. While there were but twenty thousand citizens, there were forty thousand slaves.—LARCHER ON HEROD, book i, note 258.

consign us to degradation. When first it was ushered into the world, it broke the iron yoke of despotism which oppressed the human race—it raised the slave from the abject condition under which he groaned, and the mystic waters by which he was redeemed unto the freedom of the Gospel, wiped away after a long struggle with prejudice, the ignominy of his political servitude. By fermenting the corrupt mass of mankind with the active principle of an “exalted obedience” which it felt not before, it lessened the pressure of despotism, which substituted fear for affection, and thus secured the stability of Governments by mitigating their rigours. When this confidence then in the attachment of the people, is not inspired by the Government, it acts not on the benevolent and enlightened principles of the Christian religion. It forgets that paternal relation which is so strongly inculcated by our Redeemer, and plucks out of the hearts of its subjects the strongest, as well as the most lasting principles of action—the feelings of gratitude, of affection, and of duty.

It cannot then be pretended, that the policy which has been adopted towards Ireland, was ever inspired by the charity of the Christian religion. In vain, does England boast that her councils are guided by justice, tempered by freedom, and softened by religion. In her conduct towards Ireland, I have proved that she has departed from all. Without any necessity, she still closes against the Catholics the portals of the Constitution, in defiance of the laws of justice, and in contradiction to the authorities of Locke, of Blackstone, of Paley, and other great names whom she venerates as the oracles of her legislation. Notwithstanding her boasted freedom, as far as it regards Ireland, it has all that was harsh, intolerant, exclusive and imperious in the ancient republics: without being mitigated by that Christian spirit which subdued into a milder tone, the genius of liberty; and made Governments of whatever form, reflect in their equitable administration, the universal benevolence of that Being, from whose authority they are derived.

The Emancipation of the Catholics, then, is enforced by the eternal laws of justice, as well as by the spirit of that liberty that breathes through her Constitution, and the principles of that religion which England professes to respect. Against such arguments resting on an eternal and immovable basis, nought is opposed but the interest of the Protestant Establishment—an institution comparatively recent in its origin, and by consequence not essentially intertwined with the existence of the State, or the interests of society. In speaking of the Protestant Establishment, it may be considered in the relation of a religious or political system. If we view it merely under the former complexion, there is no Christian who will think it deserving of his

reverence, only in the same proportion as it reflects the revealed doctrines of Christianity. Under this point of view, its conformity with the doctrines of Christ becomes a subject of fair investigation: and should it appear that the doctrine of the Establishment has departed widely from that which Christ has revealed, such a religion could not be deemed essential to society; unless we were to suppose that error is more favourable than truth to the happiness of mankind, or to adopt the paradox of Hobbes, as dangerous in its consequence as it is absurd in its principle; that truth and error entirely depend upon the caprice of legislators, and that the will of the Government is the sole standard of our faith, and the sole measure of our duties.

If, on the other hand, we view it as a political establishment, endowed with temporalities, deriving its origin entirely from the legislature, and thus proving by the admission, that it can be dissolved by the authority by which it was created,—then we are relieved from the embarrassment that is produced by confounding it with its religious pretensions. We may bring to the subject a mind unawed by the reverence which a belief in the true religion imposes, and judge of the utility or inutility of the Protestant Establishment, by an impartial view of the benefits which it confers, or the evils of which it is productive.

Or, in fine, if we should consider the Protestant Establishment as a religious and political system, united by the legislature, the question will resolve itself into the views already exhibited, since no State can derive support from religion, but because it is supposed to be true; nor is it easily conceived, that any religion of mere State creation, can lend to that State by which it was created, any other authority than that which it has received from the State to which it owes its creation.

It is not my intention to detain you with any discussion on this subject under its former complexion. A comparative view of the respective excellence of the Protestant or Catholic religions would be foreign from my present purpose, nor shall I unseasonably obtrude on your attention, a subject that is generally unpalatable even to Protestant Ecclesiastics. However, I may be permitted to remark that it has been too long and too much the fashion to represent religious discussion as unworthy of a statesman, and to identify it with superstition. Your mind is too well stored with the knowledge of past times, and the principles of religion, to adopt a prejudice as opposed to the history as it is fatal to the happiness of mankind. Religion has been, what in every age has given virtue its strongest impulse, and government its steadiest security. While therefore religion is valued, it is a proof that public principle is sound; and that morality and government repose on a safe and solid foundation. But when, for a sincere

conviction of the truth, and an enlightened zeal for the interests of religion, you substitute that indifference which consigns truth to contempt, by confounding it with error; all the energy of virtue is gone, all the life of society is extinguished; and if there is a repose, it is that philosophic and fatal repose of voluptuousness which is at once the forerunner and the symptom of its dissolution.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

SIR—Imagine not that I am an advocate of a cruel intolerance; but while I disavow such a sentiment, I cannot sufficiently depurate that specious scepticism which, under the guise of liberality, dissolves all that is settled in religious conviction. I also wish to combat a prejudice generally received, because seldom examined, that the Catholic religion is less favourable to a sound and rational freedom than Protestant principles. If a suspicion should once prevail, that the Articles of the Church are not believed by those who solemnly profess them, such a suspicion would silently undermine the influence of religion, and be pregnant with consequences most fatal to morality. I am far from charging the dignitaries of the Establishment with insincerity; but, though I acquit them of such an imputation, it must be confessed that their different explanations* of the oath by which

* Dr. Blackburn, Archdeacon of Cleaveland, acknowledges that out of an hundred ministers of the Establishment, who, to prevent religious difference, subscribe every year to the Articles of the Church, not one-fifth subscribe or assent to them in the same uniform sense. Dr. Clayton, another dignitary, asserts that no two thinking men ever agreed exactly in their opinion, even with regard to any one article of it. And Dr. Clarke pretends there is a salvo in the subscription, namely, I assent to the articles, inasmuch as they are agreeable to Scripture, though the Judges of England have declared the contrary. The reader who is anxious to learn more of this discrediting contrariety of opinion among the dignitaries of the Establishment, about the fundamental articles of their church, may consult “Milner’s End of Controversy,” part ii, letter 15.

they subscribe to the Articles of the Church are calculated to weaken, if not to shake, the convictions of the people. Some imagine that the oath involves the obligation of an inward belief in the articles subscribed to; others maintain that it is only a bond to uphold an external communion. These explanations may satisfy their own minds, while they give proofs of their ingenuity; but others, who are not so deeply skilled in the refinements of casuistry, may be tempted to attach but little importance to the awful obligation of an oath, and thus to extend their indifference to the most solemn principles of natural religion.

How often is the attention of the legislature solicited to the petitions of Protestant clergymen, who pray to be released from the necessity of subscribing to those doctrinal points which are painful to their consciences. Even during the last session, a similar petition was presented, complaining of the violence that was offered to the uncontrollable right of private judgment by subscribing to such confessions. The creed of Saint Athanasius is become peculiarly objectionable; and though still read in the public liturgies, some of the clergy of the Established Church venture loudly to complain that their creed is still stained by this dark and cruel relic of antiquated intolerance. Some of the first names that have adorned the Establishment, confessed that they knew not what were the essential doctrines of Christianity; and others have so explained away whatever was hard to be understood in Scripture, as to lower its loftiest mysteries to mere ceremonial observances. I do not dwell on these observations either for the purpose of controversy or of casting reproach on the Protestant religion. I have casually introduced them, on account of their connexion with the subject to which I have first solicited your attention. From the repeated applications that are made in England to accommodate the liturgies to the growing improvement of the times, it is evident that the belief of its doctrines is loose and unsettled. To what pitch of reformation the improvement of the times and the progress of philosophy would bring this doctrine, it might not be easy to determine, amidst such a discordant variety of opinions. However, if the opinions of Paley, or some of the other most admired champions of the Church, were fixed for an orthodox standard, the cumbersome creed of the Establishment would be soon reduced to more than apostolical simplicity.

You must, therefore, easily observe, that among the most distinguished Protestants, there is little of conviction in the leading articles of their creed; and we know that where the principles of belief are loose, the rule of private or public virtue cannot be rigid. That approbation, then, of every error, which insensibly creates an indifference to religion, and enervates the

vigour of public morals, must be eventually injurious to society. I do not mean to propose the example of those to your imitation, who labour to save the nation from this lethargy by encouraging the war of sectaries. Religious sects are seldom the production of piety or talent. In the commencement of religious revolutions, they are sometimes the offspring of vigorous but perverted intellects. In a more tranquil state of society, they are the growth of deep design and sober imposture, produced by men who, encouraged by the example and success of others, trade on the follies and errors of mankind. Such precisely is the character of the sects that succeed each other with such rapid fecundity in the sister country. To share in the overflowing wealth of the country was devoutly wished for by many a needy adventurer, who could not reach it by the ordinary channels of trade or commerce, or the learned professions. Hence, a new and unheard-of factory of Bibles was set up, to which all contributed who sought a character for sanctity; and which employed a vast number of hands in their printing and circulation. Such is the real origin of the Bible system, of which I may have occasion to speak again—affording evidence of England's wealth, but none of her piety.

What counterpoise, then, to that religious indifference into which the higher orders of the country are fast subsiding, can be found in that crafty and counterfeit fanaticism of the sectaries, which has no higher origin than the superfluities of that wealth from which it is derived? In vain will any country look for the solid stay of her institutions among those reeling sectaries, who drink of the spirit of delusion until they fall victims to their own excesses. England boasts of her morality. If her morality were to be measured by the number of her Bibles, she would, undoubtedly, be the most moral nation upon earth. But, alas, we have frightful instances of the unfeeling indifference of her children to any moral responsibility, not only in those moments when, in the frenzy of passion, duty may be forgotten, but even in the moment of awful import, when the terror of approaching judgment ought to shake the most hardened insensibility. What avails, then, the profusion of Bibles that are never read; or, if read, are turned into a subject of ridicule or profanation? Or who is the best member of society—he who obeys an authorized magistrate in promulgating the laws, or he who, while he ostentatiously displays a copy of these laws, is as ignorant of their contents as he is careless of their infraction, or reads them only for the purpose of exposing the inconsistency of parliament, and trampling on its authority? From this correct delineation of the state of England, I may be fortified in concluding that there is in that country much of the pomp and circumstance, but little of the vital spirit, of religion. From

within, there is a slow decay that has worked to the very vitals of Christianity ; from without, there is sectarian bustle and agitation, gathering violence in its progress, and threatening the existence of the Establishment. To a statesman interested for its safety, the danger must appear equally serious and alarming, whether the State is shaken by external violence, or sapped by the gradual subdication of those principles on which society reposes. The vain efforts of the sectaries the Establishment may despise, since they carry within them the active principle of their own dissolution. But, should the external sources of her greatness be dried up, England will unquestionably find her greatest danger in that religious indifference, which is annihilating her moral energies ; and which, though characterized by the name of liberality, is not unlike that voluptuous liberality of the ancient Romans, which, by deriding every truth, dissolved every virtue, until at length it extinguished the spirit of freedom and ushered in the reign of despotism.

I have thus discussed the religious complexion of the Protestant Establishment at some length, in order to dissipate a prejudice too frequently entertained, that the Protestant religion is propitious to well-regulated liberty. If the tendency of a religion lead to that indifference about truth or error, which extinguishes those moral obligations that mitigate the sway of the Government, and ennable the obedience of the subject, that religion may be pregnant, indeed, with revolution, without being more favourable to freedom. Revolution is not liberty ; revolution and despotism approach, by way of extremes, and both ancient and modern history attest that despotism is most fixed, where revolutions are most frequent. If we have had a revolution which is deemed fortunate, it is no reason for making a second experiment. If of all the combinations of which the elements of society are susceptible, one has come forth admired for its symmetry, it would be rashness to throw those again into confusion, with the hope of bringing out another of a more perfect form.

By the Emancipation of the Catholics, this constitution, instead of being endangered, would acquire new stability. That religious indifference which knows no higher motive of action than self-interest, would be corrected. By the infusion of a masculine and vigorous morality, the decay of virtue would be restored—a new spirit would be poured into the constitution—and every member would feel an interest for that common centre of life and freedom, from which it derived its own strength and activity.

Having thus contemplated its religious aspect, I shall next proceed to view it under its political complexion.

It is one of which it is needless to announce the importance,

since it has already engaged the deep attention of the legislature, and excited in this country a long and serious controversy. It may not, however, be unnecessary to lead back your attention farther, in retracing the steps by which this controversy was introduced.

Of all the calumnies with which the Catholics of Ireland have been so unsparingly assailed, none has been more frequently or industriously put forward, than their unconquerable disaffection to the family of our gracious Sovereign. In vain did they tender the repeated assurance of their dutious attachment to the throne and persons of his august predecessors; in vain did they confirm this assurance by the solemn sanction of an oath, and seal their sincerity by the profusion of their blood. Those whose interests are bound up with the continuance of the system of rigour and exclusion, repeated the odious calumnies with a perseverance which no repetition could tire, and with an effrontery which no refutation could shame. It was signified, at length, that his present Majesty was to honor this country with a visit after his coronation, and the inhabitants rejoiced at the opportunity it afforded them of testifying their affection. The warm and enthusiastic welcome with which he was greeted on our shores, and the heart-felt homage with which he was encircled in our capital, proved that loyalty is not a counterfeit feeling among the Catholics of this country.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

*Tal fiero torna a la stagione estiva
Quel, che parve nel gel piacevo l'angue.—TASSO.*

Thus the sun's heat the glossy serpent warms
From Winter's sleep, and with fresh fury arms.

SIR—If his Majesty's visit was productive of good, it also provoked alienation; and while royalty diffused joy and warmth in its passage, it also quickened into deadlier action those poisonous

beings which had lain in the torpor of their own bigotry, until awakened by its warmth into a more vigorous animation.

The farce of counterfeit harmony that was played off during the King's stay in Ireland was quickly dissolved on his departure. Scarce was the centre withdrawn, which had attracted to a temporary order the discordant elements of society, when they again flew off with a more hostile repulsion. The work of discord again commenced with such earnestness, as if men were resolved to atone, by the sincerity of their antipathies, for the hollow and temporary reconciliation into which they had been betrayed. It might have been naturally expected, that the Church, on this occasion, would have interposed its meek authority, to allay the ferment of the times; and that the mandate of conciliation, which was issued by its head, would have been faithfully executed by his ecclesiastical functionaries. But, alas! their zeal overcame their charity, and through the intemperate charges of some of the bishops of the Established Church, the growing spirit of discord was further inflamed by polemical acrimony. While Doctor Magee denounced from his Cathedral the religion of Catholics, without condescending to assign a particle of argument for the sentence of proscription, the profound Corporation of Dublin pronounced his Grace to be an oracle of theological wisdom!! After the grave decision of so competent an authority, it would have been impiety to dispute his Grace's pretensions; and, accordingly, some of his paradoxes have been received with a submission, and propagated with a zeal, which afford unequivocal proofs of the readiness of the Protestant mind to receive impressions unfavourable to our religion.

Dublin, however, was not the only stage on which the Protestant ecclesiastics stimulated the expiring fervour of their followers. Doctor Trench, whose exertions in relieving the poor of the extensive diocese of Tuam are gratefully remembered, evinced, in the course of last summer, a more than ordinary zeal for the Protestant Establishment. It is with reluctance that I associate Doctor Trench with the other individuals who have endeavoured to ferment their flocks with the leaven of religious bigotry. Had his Grace refrained from those invectives against his Catholic brethren and their religion, which he discharged from the pulpit, he might have descended to the grave with the character of a meek and pacific prelate. The memory of those scenes of religious proselytism, by which he succeeded in ascending to the archiepiscopal throne, would probably never have been revived. Fortunately for his fame, a splendid opportunity had offered itself of burying for ever the recollection of those scenes that were associated with his elevation, and of merging the ardent zealot in the milder character of a benevolent and charitable pastor. The reader will perceive I allude to the

disastrous period when the sounds of discord had died away amidst the awful solemnity of public woe, and no sound was heard but of famine over the land. On that occasion, the solicitude of the Bishop was unremitting, in applying the relief which had been obtained from Government and the English people to the wants of the distressed peasantry. This kindness was not lost upon the people: and the day on which his Grace witnessed his harvest cut down by the gratuitous labour of the neighbouring peasantry, proved that they are not the insensible wretches they are represented to be by the violent and venal defamers of their creed. Such acts demonstrate that they possess a generous susceptibility of kindness from whatever quarter it proceeds; nor do they confine to the professors of their own faith the retribution of their gratitude.

But the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam was not content with the rich reward which he might have earned by his exertions in the cause of charity, without also signalizing his prowess in the defence of the established faith. Had he confined himself to the doctrines of his own Church, without reviling the creed of the Catholics, as well as the acquirements of its pastors, his remarks would have escaped animadversion; but in the overflowings of his zeal for the Establishment, his compassion extended itself to the spiritual misery of his Catholic brethren, whom his Grace did not fail to represent as the victims of ignorance, designedly perpetuated by an artful and interested priesthood. From the warmth of declamation he might have been transported to the effusion of language which he might have afterwards regretted. And he deserves some praise for his forbearance in not imitating one of his colleagues, who diffused his offensive sentiments in a printed publication. But that in the course of his charge to the clergy of Tuam, he assailed the faith, and insulted the feelings of Catholics, is attested by persons of each persuasion; and though some have affected to admire his orthodoxy and zeal, others have deplored his unseasonable intemperance.

Besides these splendid instances of provocation, which were calculated to irritate and inflame, the pulpit rung with the invectives of humbler parsons, who were anxious to catch the tone and earn the patronage of those who had to dispense the wealth and honours of the Establishment. The example set by these dignitaries was extensively adopted, with this difference only, that their imitators were freed from some of those restraints of decorum which were necessarily imposed by their superior station. All the worn-out calumnies against the ignorance and restlessness of our people, and the mischievous designs of our priesthood, were again and again put forth, without even the drapery of a new dress to disguise the disgusting exhibition. While the clergy thus poured forth the effusions of their intem-

perate zeal, they were zealously seconded by other co-operators, and the expiring sound of the pulpit was prolonged, by the echoing of the press, to the extremities of our provinces.

While the religious and civil tenets of the Catholics of Ireland were thus cruelly and wantonly misrepresented, a writer, generally supposed to be one of our bishops, undertook a vindication of both, which he addressed to our Viceroy. The interest which was excited by this publication, and the hostility which it provoked, are no unequivocal proofs of its merits. The novelty of a person of his character placing himself in the presence of the Viceroy, and pleading with respectful firmness the cause of his injured countrymen, was calculated to excite surprise. Surprise was soon succeeded by resentment: and those who were hitherto in the habit of exclusively approaching the Lord Lieutenant, have felt and expressed their mortification that their monopoly has been invaded. The respectful use of a privilege which is extended to all who feel themselves aggrieved, has been characterized as an insolent intrusion; and the wish of his Excellency to show a strict impartiality in the administration of the laws, has been artfully interpreted into a passion for an unworthy popularity.

It is no wonder, Sir, that an inflexible regard to justice would wear the appearance of partiality in the eyes of those who were taught by long habit to expect a partial administration. And, on the other hand, the Catholics have been so long accustomed to opposition, that it cannot be deemed a wonder if they should regard the cessation of insult as a kindness, and look upon justice as a favour. But while his Excellency has sufficiently proved, by not lavishing his attention on Catholics, that he is above being swayed by popular favour, it is to be expected that he will not be driven to a contrary course by the dextrous and insidious imputation.

Among the many who have honoured this distinguished prelate with their obloquy, one has appeared who has endeavoured to give force to his animadversion by undertaking a refutation of the bishop's principles. It is somewhat singular that this opponent of the ecclesiastical authority of Rome has assumed the name of one of her earliest missionaries to this country. Such is the charm of early impressions, that are retained, with a devout attachment, in spite of the affectation of riper years.

The pamphlet of "Declan," in point of purity of language and pretension to theological learning, is unquestionably the most creditable production by which the bishop has been combated. But when he reflects on the character of the foes among whom he is distinguished, his just discrimination will, doubtless, appreciate the extent and value of the compliment. With the

familiar demeanour of one who was conscious that he enjoyed all the privileges of the State religion, he rebukes the unwelcome intrusion of the prelate before his Excellency, and insinuates that he had forgot in whose presence he had placed himself. After reproaching his adversary with an antiquated garb, he then puts on his court costume, which he fancied he was exclusively privileged to wear, and endeavours to lay aside his scholastic terms. But he soon lost sight of the individual whom he addressed; since the harshness of his language to his opponent breathed but little of the courtier whom he affected, and could only be justified by his forgetfulness of the presence of his Excellency, or from a prejudice which has been long entertained, that the Catholics were out of the pale of the laws of civility as well as the constitution, and that they were a caste of people towards whom the courtesies of life might have been neglected without any violation of decorum. On a comparison of both productions, the impartial reader will determine which conveys more of the meek spirit of a religious, and the dignified tone of a cultivated, mind. The Catholic Bishop has been accused of warmth in his language; yes, he has been warm, and in his portrait of our unmerited suffering, his language rose to a tone of firm, but respectful, remonstrance. But, if he was eloquent and impassioned, his feelings were not pointed against the Chief Governor, but against those who had accused him of sedition, and dragged him before his tribunal: and if, like the Apostle, in presence of Festus, he exhibited the chains which we wore, the persecutions we underwent, and the religion by which we were sustained, the theme was suggested by the calumny of his accusers; and if he sought for redress, it was not by acting on the irritated passions of the people, but, with an high consciousness of the justice of his cause, and his rights as a Roman citizen, he sought protection from the frenzy of a persecuting multitude, by throwing himself into the arms of the laws, and appealing to the majesty of Cæsar.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

SIR—Among the evils which pressed severely on the peasantry of this country, the author of the vindication has deservedly numbered the tithes, which, independent of the anomaly of being claimed by a clergy from persons to whom they make no return of spiritual instruction, have become doubly odious from the mode of their exaction. Since the enactment of the law of agistment in the Irish House of Commons, by which the pasturage of the gentry was released from tithes, which were entirely transferred on the shoulders of the peasantry, this disastrous subject has been fruitful of unremitting vexation. Before the Union, the scenes of oppression to which this odious system gave rise, were distressing beyond description ; and the facts which have been recorded by Grattan, prove that the sad reality of the evils which it occasioned could not be exaggerated even by his eloquent denunciations. The miserable cottier, whose annual labour was entirely expended in paying the exorbitant rent of the acre on which he raised the scanty support of his wretched family, saw the tenth portion, seized by the agents of a parson, the blessings of whose ministry he never felt, save in this annual visitation. Without money to satisfy those rigorous demands, he often beheld the fruit of his hard earning snatched away beyond the hope of redemption, and himself and family consigned to the miserable alternative of beggary or plunder. The former alternative was most generally resorted to ; but when the resources of charity were exhausted, by indigence constantly accumulating, hence the peace of our country has been so frequently disturbed, and the property of its inhabitants so frequently violated by these desperate wretches, who, having tried the arts of industry in vain, are often driven to crime, with the hope of being expatriated. Miserable must be the state of society indeed, which dissolves all those ties by which the Irish peasant is proverbially attached to his native soil, and forces him to sacrifice all he holds most dear ; nay, to court the infamy of a conviction which procures him the means of emigration. Yet such is the state of Ireland at present ; and among the numberless convicts who are transported from this country, there are found many who express an unnatural cheerfulness at their lot, confident that any change of fortune will better their condition. I am far from putting all these con-

sequences to the account of the tithe system. The cause of misery so widely extended is more complicated in its nature. But certain it is, that these lawless associations, by which the peace of our country is so frequently disturbed, are more or less destructive in proportion to the rigour or the mildness by which tithes have been exacted.

Perhaps the best evidence of the evils which have been generated by this system, may be furnished by the attention which has been directed to it last summer by the wisdom of the legislature. Had the complaints which have been so often preferred, been the effusions of discontent, they would not have engaged the united efforts of the Government and Senate in devising means to redress them. From the caution with which petitions for redress of grievances are generally harkened to, the jealousy with which they are examined, and even the delay that preceeds any alteration in a long established system, we may safely conclude that the legislature would not have resolved on any modification in the tithe laws had not the evil grown into an inveteracy beyond further endurance.

It must therefore bespeak more than any ordinary confidence in any individual to arraign the wisdom of making some modification of those laws, of which the evil effects have been fatally illustrated. If the late measures of parliament have not given complete satisfaction, or entirely remedied the evil, let us recollect that they are only the incipient efforts of that deliberative wisdom which will gradually bring the work to its full consummation. Resting thus on the powers and wisdom of parliament, I cannot fail to shield myself against those sinister imputations which are frequently cast on the advocates for innovation. "Declan" will not surely misinterpret the motives of the man whose only appeal is to the legislature; since, according to him, the English legislature is the sole fountain of our laws, and the source from which our blessings are derived. After thus acknowledging the omnipotence of parliament in one instance, I know not with what consistency he can refuse it the same virtue in every other, unless he wishes to free it from the common lot of all human institutions, by investing it with immutability.

But perhaps the clergy of the Established Church would fain take a loftier position, by deriving their rights to tithes from the Levitical priesthood. I could not have imagined, unless I were convinced by the recent writings of its advocates, that the clergy of the Established Church in Ireland, could have ever sought support for their temporal possessions in the law of Moses. It is true, notwithstanding the confidence of our adversaries, that no church can claim a right to tithes by virtue of its succession to the ancient priesthood, when the ancient priesthood itself has not been transmitted by inheritance. But if the Protestants should

insist on the derivative nature and constructive immortality of the priesthood of Aaron—they at least cannot be deemed the lawful heirs of its privileges. The term of fifteen hundred years is a frightful chasm in the chain of succession. During the darkness of that interval, every record is lost that could connect the Establishment with the dissolution of the Levitical law, and since it is a peculiar feature in English jurisprudence to reject prescription and invalidate possession, of which the title is defective, it would be wisdom in the friends of the Established Church, not to insist too strongly on the analogies between the Jewish Church and their own.

I should be cautious in occupying your time, or tiring your patience with polemical controversy. However, you might be inclined to smile, on hearing that the champion of the Establishment, instead of deriving the right to tithes from the possession of the old religion, with which they were accompanied, ingeniously supposes the tithes to have been the medium through which the true religion was diverted from its original course, and conveyed to the Protestant Establishment. Such an argument must bring full conviction to every mind that looks upon the possession of tithes as the essence of the priesthood. If, together with the transfer of the tithes, the adoption of the changes prescribed at the Reformation, was sufficient to identify the Protestant with the Catholic religion, then the re-adoption of more material changes, which a more liberal parliament might prescribe, would be sufficient for an identical succession, provided still those changes were conveyed through the channel of the tithes. And if, perchance, the parliament should propose such changes as would scarcely have an article of the Christian religion, still accompanying them with tithes, doubtless its identity as a *constitutional incorporation*, would still be preserved. And thus, provided the tithes are preserved, they will prove a remedy against the errors and dangers of innovation. While the tithes are incorporated with the constitution of the Church, there is, to use our author's phrase, a *vis medicatrix* about them, which would immediately throw off the poison of the rankest error, or convert it to the nutriment of sound doctrine; and thus Mahometanism itself, passed through the alembic of the tithe system, would be immediately purged to all its grossness, and assimilated by the continued identity of a legal corporation, with Christianity itself.

If ridicule could be indulged with propriety, on so grave and solemn a subject, there is nothing calculated to excite it more than the ludicrous attempts of the advocates of the Establishment to reconcile their obsequiousness to the omnipotence of the legislature, with the immutability of their religion. If the doctrine of the Establishment be not defensible, but on the grounds of

its legal adoption, let it enjoy all the authority which it can derive from such a source. Let its abettors at once avow the tenet that the legislature can controul the speculative belief of the subject, and not expend any superfluous argument in showing its conformity with Revelation. If, however, abandoning the ground of its connexion with the Catholic Church, whose tenets no legislature can controul, they derive its origin entirely from the legislature, then we may be permitted, without the imputation of impiety, to enquire into the political benefits of such an institution.

In England, where the majority of the people are Protestant, the Establishment may be useful. In Ireland, it is hostile to the interest of its inhabitants. This difference may be easily traced to the different circumstances of both countries. Whatever may be the natural tendency of the Protestant religion to a latitude of belief ultimately fatal to the best interests of society, while those great principles on which it reposes, are respected, its stability is upheld; and those by whom they are inculcated, confer a political benefit. Hence the Protestant clergy have in England a natural and constitutional right to the tithes, since they are the real, as well as the constitutional ministers of religious instruction.—Here the case is different; the instruction of which the people stand in need, is imparted by the Catholic clergy. With Protestant ministers they hold no communion; and hence, as no spiritual benefit is conferred on one hand, there is no obligation of paying tithes on the other, save what the civil law imposes. Since, then, there is no natural claim to tithes arising from the interchange of reciprocal duties, and relations beyond what the law has established, it follows that the law can annul an obligation which is founded on no higher principle.

It is therefore an useless waste of time, to prove that parsons have a legal title to their tithes; it is a position that is not controverted; but it is contended that they have only a legal claim. Little, therefore, will be effected by the advocates of the system, unless they demonstrate that these rights lie deeper than mere legal enactments, and that they cannot be overturned, without digging up some of those foundations which legislators themselves are taught to revere, and on which all the superstructure of civil law is erected. But instead of finding a claim to tithes connected with those sacred principles; such a claim is at variance with them all. The Protestant clergy of Ireland may insist that tithes are a portion of their rights; but these are rights, to use the language of Mr. Burke, which are the most odious of all wrongs, and which, as soon as they degenerate into wrongs, the legislature may abolish. Whether the legal rights of the Irish Protestant clergy are among those wrongs, the wisdom of parliament will eventually decide. For certain it is that they are

held by virtue of no other authority. It is true that the legal possession of tithes was transferred to the Protestant ministers from the Catholic priesthood. But since the discharge of these duties, and the ministry of that instruction on which the natural right to tithes was originally founded, did not accompany this transfer, hence its sole validity was in the will of parliament, which can be equally exercised in a second, as a will, as in a first arrangement of those possessions.

But the Establishment has now become conscious of its strength, and though in its infancy it acknowledged the competence of the power that erected, and the omnipotence of the hand that enriched it, it assumes a haughty tone, and defies annihilation. The Establishment of the Church of England is a work of human contrivance, growing with the progress of mind, and gradually partaking of all the improvements of the times. Its artificers ought therefore to practise a lesson of respectful moderation, lest by aspiring to an independence of the power to which it owed its origin, they should give a proof of their folly instead of an argument of their wisdom ; and by despising, in an evil hour, the omnipotence of parliament, they should provoke its vengeance to suspend their daring undertaking, and scatter the workmen in confusion over the earth.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, 1823.

SIR—If the Church be a corporation—and that it is, is confessed by its warmest supporters—the admission is not favourable to its perpetuity. While the corporation lasts, its members, it is true, are invested with a constructive immortality ; but this fiction of the law protects the individuals only while the corporation lasts, without guarding the body itself from dissolution. Such is expressly the doctrine of Blackstone, on whose authority “Declan” would fain rest the immobility of the Establishment.*

* See Blackstone, lib. i, cap. 18, sec. 485.

If the Church be a civil corporation, framed after the model and adapted to the analogies of similar institutions, we may safely conclude that it has already arrived to its meridian. Corporations, at best, were but comparative benefits—they grew out of a disastrous and turbulent state of society—and were the first nurseries in which the seeds of industry and freedom were reared. The charters which were wrung by the infant republics of Italy from the distress or fears of the German Emperors, were the first parchments on which the name of liberty was inscribed, and must be still deemed valuable on account of the blessings which they transmitted. But this very liberty soon degenerated into an abuse, by being converted into an odious system of monopoly, in which but few were allowed to participate. Thus, while the benefits of industry were exclusively engaged by a few corporate towns, the body of the people languished in indigence, and the contrast of their vassalage with the freedom of their more favoured neighbours, only aggravated still more the misery of their situation: amidst the power of royalty and the liberty of corporate bodies, the people were placed, subject to whatever was vexatious in the one, without enjoying any of the prerogatives of the other. However, in the conflict of those opposite powers, the people at length became the gainers, and the very excess of corporate influence and wealth became slowly productive of the redemption of the people. While these cities abused their wealth in purchasing from a king's distress a further monopoly, he often neutralized the deed, by extending similar immunities to other cities. And thus the embankments of corporate monopoly were gradually levelled, and freedom, “like the waters of the sea, flowed over the nations of Europe, blotting out in its progress every vestige of servitude.”

Hence, what was first a blessing becomes itself an evil, when fenced in by an intolerant system. While it works the good for which it was established, it is suffered to stand; but when age and the vices incident to human institutions gradually produce decay, it is then consigned to dissolution. If the end of the corporate establishment of the Church be to convey instruction to the mass of the people, and bring about their conversion, experience ascertains whether that end has been accomplished.

And if it be to cement an union between England and Ireland, we are taught by the clearest reason that an union cannot be effected between extremes by a medium which has not a sympathy with both. Now, instead of the Establishment being such a connecting medium between the countries, it is calculated to keep them asunder; and, doubtless, they should approach with stronger affinities by the removal of the intermediate body, with which one cannot associate. Happily, I have before removed

any possible suspicion of being unfavourable to a regal connexion between England and Ireland. And, therefore, in asserting that the Establishment is not necessary for such a purpose, it will not be understood that I should wish to sever that connexion; on the contrary, my motto would be that of the poet—

No wound in fight can either singly bear,
For both alike must every fortune share.

While I thus combat the weakness of those arguments on which the advocates of the Establishment would fain rest it, let me not be numbered among those rash theorists who, without regard to the urgency of circumstances, would instantly subvert a long-established system. With such theorists I have no concern, conscious that their immature conceptions would be often more dangerous in their execution than inveterate abuses. Instead of advancing anything disrespectful to the Government or legislature of the country, my design has been to expose the presumption of those who would fain place any portion of society beyond the reach of legislative interference. In the enactments which the wisdom of parliament will pass, the Catholics will acquiesce; nor shall they refuse, while the State requires it, to contribute to the support of its public functionaries. But they feel it an anomaly to be under any natural obligation of supporting a body of men, on the presumption of religious relations which do not mutually exist between them; and, therefore, the only principle that can actuate them, is a respect for established order. As the ministers of the Established Church are officers who are paid, because they are supposed to perform certain duties, to grant them annual pensions out of the Exchequer would remove much discontent, and answer all the ends of distributive justice.

The only objection to such a mode is the corporate nature of the Establishment; but such an objection can have no weight unless in the supposition that such bodies, whether they answer the end for which they were incorporated or not, are liable to no change, and bid defiance to dissolution.

Among those who feel but little gratitude for the civil or religious advantages which the Establishment has conferred, "Declan" cannot surely be numbered. Were we to adopt his devout sentiments, we should believe that the Church of England was one of the greatest blessings that ever was conferred on man. At the mention of her name, he breaks forth into an ecstacy of jubilee; and the rapturous enthusiasm with which he turns towards England, reminds one of the fervour with which the exiles of Babylon sighed their devotions to Sion. What a pity that any impediment would check the impetuosity of soul,

with which he seems to be borne from this land of bondage towards that delightful country that leads to heaven ! But a dignified situation in the Court of Assuerus would perhaps reconcile him a little longer to his sojournment, and cheer the despondence of his captivity.

It is, then, unnecessary to dwell on the obvious reasons that attach many individuals to the Establishment. While it possesses wealth and patronage to lavish on its adherents, it will not want the aid of those who may mistake the splendor of its honours for the splendour of its evidences. If the mind should hesitate between opposite motives of belief, the weight of the tithe system may have some influence in deciding its fluctuation. Instead of wondering, then, at the conduct of those who desert the religion of their birth, to enlist themselves under its banners, it is a matter of surprise that greater numbers are not attracted to its service. Yet the small number of apostates is a circumstance which, amidst all our afflictions, must reflect credit on the steady faith of the people of Ireland. They want not incentives. The present condition of the Establishment in Ireland holds out the strongest temptations to apostacy, where, to be enlisted, according to the strong language of Tertullian, is to be distinguished. Excellence is relative, and borrows much of its lustre from contrast ; and it is remarkable, that some of those who are put forward as the best champions of the Established Church, are men who, had they remained in its bosom, would have acquired but little eminence in their own. I am not, therefore, surprised that his Lordship of L——n should have recommended the encouragement to apostacy, in order to renovate the decaying vigour of the Establishment, by the infusion of fresh spirit from the Catholic Church. But let me assure his Lordship that such a declaration betrays a secret consciousness of the necessity of some aid beyond what the Establishment can bestow ; and were his Lordship to adopt the advice of "Hierophilus," he would beg leave to suggest to him the impolicy of such a measure. Between the Establishment and those who, from selfish motives, are drawn over to her support, there exists no sincere and cordial sympathy : there is always a secret distrust operating in either quarter, and hence an affectation of zeal that is not felt, on the part of those who fly to their enemies, lest they should share the fate of David, who, after sojourning a while among the Philistines, through an apprehension of Saul, was banished from their camp. Let not, then, the Establishment hope for cordial aid from those who are to be stimulated by venal motives. The necessity of recurring to the service of mercenaries, is always a sure symptom of the decay of native virtue ; and his Lordship will not, I trust, fail to meditate on the sage reflection of Montesquieu, that the confiding the defence of

the empire to the unsteady faith of mercenaries was one of the most powerful causes that accelerated the downfal of Rome.*

It is now insinuated by its redoubted champions, that without the stimulus of its ample emoluments and gorgeous honours, few would be found to devote themselves to the labours of theology. Such an admission is a proof of the mercenary spirit I have alluded to. Alas! the age of chivalry is gone; the unbought grace of life and cheap defence of nations are no more!! And to the generous assertors of the purity of her faith, have succeeded a crowd of calculating champions, who measure their exertions by the prospect of their rewards. That disinterested virtue—that lofty stoicism which worshipped the doctrine of the Establishment, on account of its own native beauty, is now relaxed; and we are arrived, at length, at the disastrous reign of a selfish philosophy, which makes virtue itself a subject of voluptuous calculation.

Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam
Præmia si tollas? †

While, therefore, the benefits of the Protestant Establishment are eulogised by those by whom they are exclusively possessed, we are ready to make large allowances for the exaggerations which gratitude inspires. That it should be commended by those who have been taught from their infancy to associate it with whatever is venerable in their religion, cannot excite our wonder; but that it should have subdued all the prejudices of early impressions, is a circumstance that may be viewed under different complexions. To those who have been in the habit of traducing the religion of Ireland, such conduct may appear the result of religious conviction; and no doubt they hail the accession of every such member as a new triumph of their principles. On those, however, who study the human heart, and behold what inducements are held out by one religion to flatter its propensities, different will be the impression. For me, I will not now undertake to weigh the relative motives of preference or rejection which are suggested by both religions. It is sufficient for me to know that there is often a venal praise which is anything but evidence of a sincere and cordial preference. An Irish member of the Protestant Establishment may, therefore, exhaust his rhetoric in his eulogy of the Church of England, while some may entertain a secret suspicion that the priest speaks not from himself, but that the gold of Philip, or its expectation, has inspired the responses of the oracle.

* Sur le Grandeur et la Decadence de l'Empire Romain, chap. xviii, page 134.

† Take its rewards, its worldly props, away,
And virtue's doomed to languish and decay.

To prove the moderation of the proprietors of Church lands, we are triumphantly directed to the striking contrast between the real value of their estates, and the sum at which they are let by their ecclesiastical possessors. And thus it is insinuated that this vast difference is entirely in favour of the people. The disingenuous fallacy of such a statement is calculated to mislead but few individuals. Those to whom the lands are let by the bishops are not the immediate tenants of the soil. The exorbitant fines which are exacted for a renewal of leases are an equivalent for the moderate terms on which the lands are set by the bishop; and the necessity of indemnity for these fines, that are as frequent as the successive appointments, makes the condition of the humbler tiller of the soil intolerable. In the enormous fortunes that are amassed by those ecclesiastics, the reader may perceive the benefits that are derived to the humble tenantry. It has been often insinuated that the Catholic clergy look with an evil eye on the temporalities of the Protestants, and that their hostility proceeds from a hope of one day participating in the spoil. Those, perhaps, who saw themselves ejected from the temporalities which they long possessed, and which were transmitted by a title as sacred, at least, as that by which they are held by their present proprietors, might naturally enough have cast a longing eye after their possessions, and cherished some lingering hope of restoration. But that generation has long since passed away: like the descendants of those who were stripped of their patrimonial estates, and who have long since acquiesced in the transfer of the law, the priesthood of Ireland have relinquished every personal claim to the possession of the church lands. They have, in retaining their doctrine, succeeded to the best and most valuable portion of the inheritance of their predecessors; nor should they ever covet the temporalities of the Establishment, lest they should share the fate of the unfortunate Giezi, and lest, by succeeding to Naaman's wealth, they should inherit Naaman's leprosy.*

HIEROPHILOS.

* Kings, book iv, chapter v.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, APRIL, 1823.

SIR—Having thus dwelt at some length on a subject which has already occupied, and is still likely to engage, the attention of the legislature, I shall pass to another of vast importance, which has a close connexion with the question of Emancipation. Although the Irish people are represented as indolent and inactive, this disposition, as far as it exists, arises less from want of industry than the want of an object on which it may be usefully employed. It is a received maxim that the best artist can do nothing without a subject on which to exercise his skill. And thus the energies of the people of Ireland, from want of means to excite, or materials on which to exercise, their industry, are doomed to languish in inactivity, unless when stimulated by mischievous projects. Had some of the superfluous wealth of the sister country, which is often lent for the purpose of exciting foreign revolutions, been expended to encourage the arts of peace in Ireland, the capitalists would be amply repaid by the profits which they might derive from such speculations. The English nation is justly said to be the wealthiest nation in the world; but wealth, as Lord Bacon remarks, is like manure, which must be spread, in order to be productive. Of what advantage, then, is it to us that it should be in English banks, or, if diffused, spread among foreign countries with whose prosperity we have but little connexion?

As an apology for these capitalists, it is generally observed, that the unsettled state of the country, and the restless character of its inhabitants, deter them from embarking their money in any large manufacturing concern. While the country is suffered to remain in her present anomalous condition—her peace frequently violated—her people systematically divided—her religion a pretence for exclusion—and her natural resources paralyzed by the operation of a spirit of commercial monopoly—the same apology will be repeated. But by the diffusion of equal laws, these obstacles would soon give way. Much of the causes of the discontent which agitates the country would be removed. These scenes of intestine discord and sanguinary warfare that are protracted and embittered by the rancour of religious bigotry, would yield to a more tolerant and pacific temper. A union in affection and interest would be the result of union of laws; and thus that great measure would remove the obstacles that are now

set to the prosperity of our people; and which, while that measure is retarded, it is impossible to remove. Thus, Sir, it is evident what a clear connexion exists between the emancipation of the Irish Catholics, and the full attainment of those other political advantages of which we stand so much in need. At present, instead of any encouragement being held out to the working our mines, or establishing manufactures, these objects would be instantly checked lest the trade of England should be injured. We have coal mines in abundance, and others still more valuable, but no capital to work them; or, should the attempt be made, the jealousy of the merchants of the sister country would render it abortive, by giving a premium for discontinuing the work.

While the mineral wealth of our country lies concealed in mines for want of proper encouragement to work them, the rich and solid ore of her intellect has been equally neglected. The analogy between her natural and moral energies cannot escape observation; and the minds of her inhabitants, like the hidden riches of her mountains, have been hitherto buried without a labourer to extract, or an artist to refine, the solid bullion. It will not be understood that I wish to disparage the intellectual faculties of a people which no species of persecution could entirely subdue. No, their vigour was bound up in fetters—their elasticity was kept down by an intolerable burden, and, without the wickedness that deserved the punishment, they exhibited all the vigour of the fabled giants, whose strength was observed to heave off the incumbent mountains that were successively piled upon them, to crush their mighty energies.

With regard to the question of the ignorance of the Irish, they have been the most injured people that ever existed. The cruellest means which the malignant ingenuity of man could devise, were resorted to, for the oppression of the human mind, and yet the injury was aggravated by insult, in reproaching us with our ignorance. Not only were all the benefits of political power and civil freedom wrested from the Catholics—not only was their religion proscribed as a superstitious impiety—but what was unheard-of before, the common unalienable blessings of knowledge were interdicted, and the terrors of persecution, not content with bodily inflictions, reached the mind itself and blocked up all the avenues of knowledge. Doomed to all the misery which a sanguinary policy could inflict, they were even refused the consolations of that learning which soothes adversity, and denied that kind interchange of mutual sympathy which lightens another's woe, by sharing half its burden. Thus were we left for ages consigned to darkness and pining in intellectual solitude, while a participation of that light which heaven grants to all, was made a crime against the government of the land. You

know, Sir, how often has the reproach of rebellion been cast upon the people of this country. Yes, Sir, in their very thirst for literature they became rebels;* and if ever the reproach was honourable, it was in asserting, at the peril of their lives, their imprescriptible rights to knowledge which God has given to every intellect, and which the tyranny of man cannot take away.

What then must be our opinion of the justice of those who are perpetually upbraiding us with our ignorance, without adverting to the cause by which it was inflicted; and who mix up their insults with insinuations of the harshest nature against the characters of our clergy, by whom, whatever of learning still lingered in the country, was fostered and diffused? They were the ministers of that knowledge which instructeth unto salvation, and had it not been for their exertions, the peasantry of Ireland would have exhibited a spectacle of moral degradation to which the philosopher would for ever turn, in calculating to what degree the operation of mischievous laws can debase the faculties of the human mind.

It is not then true that the peasantry are plunged in religious ignorance to that degree with which they have been reproached, or which the untoward circumstances in which they have been placed, would warrant a stranger to conjecture. It is true, an extensive system of well-ordered education is wanting; but there are other remedies of still more pressing necessity. If we credit the views of those who gave the most patient attention to the condition of society in every stage, and reasoned most profoundly on its wants and perfection, we will conclude that the wants of the physical man must be provided for, before he aspires to the attainment, or can derive benefit from the possession, of intellectual knowledge. Literary information is a secondary want. On an extensive scale, it is the offspring of opulence and refinement: on the most limited plan, it requires that degree of comfort which supposes that the most craving of our lawful demands are first satisfied. Now, that the Irish peasant is not in that state of comfort which enables him to profit of the advantages of education, is a fact of melancholy notoriety. There is, it is observed, a degree of depression below which a people cannot sink. That the Irish have sunk to that melancholy point may be clear, from the circumstance of the famine which, in the midst of plenty, would have swept away its population, had it not been seasonably arrested. What was then felt over the entire land is only what is partially experienced in different parts of the country; and it is a fact that no nutriment but the potato saves a great portion of the population from more frequently experiencing the same calamity.

* See Brown's Penal Laws, chap. vi, page 225, who quotes the Statutes of William and Mary.

Let those, then, who affect such a zeal for the amelioration of the condition of our people, labour to bestow those advantages which must be the foundation of any improvement which education can confer. Let it not be understood that I should withhold its blessings: no, but I should say with the Redeemer to them who were so punctual in smaller duties, and so careless of the first: “Let those things be done, and leave not the other things undone.”

While Ireland, then, is suffering by the incessant recurrence of those evils by which she is periodically afflicted, and the legislature is employed in bringing out to public view some of the latent causes of her distemper, we are still amused with the ludicrous exhibition of societies gravely proffering us the Bible as the chief remedy for our misfortunes. Such imposition on the pious credulity of the English people might have been endured before they became acquainted with the real sources of our wrongs. Then we might have been exhibited as men instinctively savage, and our religion held up in the colours of an odious superstition. But though the charge of ignorance might have been just, it was not generous. If we were ignorant, is it not because the avenues to knowledge were closed against us; and if we were doomed to walk darkling and alone, it is because we were not suffered to cross the forbidden boundaries of knowledge, or to tread those fields of intellectual light* which reflect a brighter sky, and where we breathe a purer atmosphere. If the resiliency of native genius occasionally heaved off the intolerable weight, still there was a limit beyond which it could not rise, and the fatal stone again recoiled, prostrating the unhappy individual to the ground, who strove in vain to roll it to the summit.

Though it might be policy to extend the blessings of education, it is not wise to make our ignorance a subject of national reproach. When our people were most sunk in barbarism, could they not have thus replied to the revilers of their ignorance and their creed:—“Refrain from your invectives against our ignorance; the exposure of its cause will not reflect much credit on your policy or your religion. If the other nations of Europe had thus reproached us, the reproach might have been easily endured: we would then attempt to wipe it away; or, if obliged to submit to the imputation, we should at least endeavour to mitigate its poignancy by tracing our ignorance to its cause. But that we should be tauntingly upbraided with ignorance by those who stript us of our knowledge, must excite feelings of a generous indignation. If you wish to explore the sources of our ignorance, consult the penal enactments of your statute books,

* Iargior, hic compos æther et lumine vestit
Purpureo.—VIRGIL.

and you may trace it to a system of banishment and proscription. After having consigned us to this state, why condemn the labour of your own hands? After having sown the dragon's teeth, why complain of their natural harvest? To have been doomed to ignorance and barbarism is enough. Aggravate not the evil by the bitterness of contumely, and do not continue to impute to us as crimes the evils and misfortunes which yourselves have inflicted. If the light of knowledge be unfavourable to the Catholic religion, why the attempt that has been made to extinguish that light which would have revealed its deformity; or if you relied on the superior beauty of your own system, why again deprive us of that knowledge by which its beauty would have been discovered?"

Such might have been the language of our people in former times. If now a different policy is pursued, there are grounds to suspect the motives of some of those who are most active in the work of education. Though motives may be artfully disguised, public declarations are often a sound criterion of men's principles. To show that the views of the Kildare-street Society, to which so large a grant of the public money is annually made, are hostile to our religion, will appear by a reference to the transactions of its last annual meeting. The secretary distinctly stated that the plan adopted by the society met the concurrence of men of every religious creed, Catholics as well as Protestants, of every denomination of Dissenters. With the exception of the observations that grew out of the Duke of Leinster's statement in parliament, which his Grace's character can well afford to sustain, the report of the secretary was calculated to convey an impression that the society was beneficial in its operation. Nay, he laboured to make it appear that they possessed the confidence of the Catholics of Ireland. But this impression was soon effaced by the sincere disclosure of the next speaker, who declared that the peasantry of Ireland were resolved to profit of education in defiance of their pastors, and to examine by the light of their own reason the religion in which they were educated! Such a distinct avowal from an authorized member of the society, in the midst of a public meeting, and remaining uncontradicted, conveyed the hostile dispositions of the society to the religion of Ireland. Here is the fundamental principle of the Protestant religion openly avowed, that the peasantry are not only to read the Bible, but to examine by its contents the truth of their religion, and the legitimacy of that authority which they had hitherto obeyed.

If the statement of the secretary, setting forth the cordial concurrence of the Catholics and their clergy was true, what becomes of the declaration which insinuated their hostility. If the gentleman to whom I allude was incapable of insinuating a

calumny, and that the children, in going to the schools, go in defiance of the clergy, it must appear that the designs of the society are hostile to the Catholic religion, unless we suppose that it feels a warmer zeal for the purity of the Catholic faith than that which is felt by its own teachers. And if, in fine, the children cannot partake of the benefits or evils of those schools, without first disregarding the authority of their pastors, we know enough of the reverence of the Irish people for their priesthood to conclude that their effects are not widely extended.

The truth is, Sir, some Catholic masters are employed—some one or two agents are well paid and ostentatiously mentioned, as exhibiting proofs of the liberality of the society, in the same manner that the names of one or two Catholic commissioners* have been mentioned in parliament by the Irish secretary, to prove that places are not monopolized by Protestants!! A few clergymen, probably placed in circumstances which appear to them to render the general regulations of the Society innoxious, have obtained a portion of their funds. In favour of some of those, or perhaps of all, the general regulations have been purposely relaxed by some of the agents, in order that they might use the example of those as an argument against the general repugnance which the system has met with. In some of the schools the Bible is suffered to be a dead letter in the desks, except when the Catholic pastor reads for the children a portion of his own selection. I am far from condemning such a tolerant principle; but what must be condemned is, the insidious motive with which these partial relaxations are made, in order to draw from them an argument by which the public might be persuaded that there is inconsistency among the Catholics, and that the society is answering the ends of its institution.

HIEROPHILOS.

* See the late debate on Mr. Grattan's motion.

LETTER XXX.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, MAY, 1823.

SIR—It was the intention of the legislature, that the grant of £14,000, made to the Kildare-street Society, should be principally expended on the education of the Catholic poor. In the number of Protestant establishments richly endowed for the purposes of education, suitable provision was already made for persons professing any branch of the Protestant religions. Now, it appears from the report itself that the relation of those educated by the Kildare-street Society to the gross population is only as one to an hundred and twenty-one, in the largest Catholic districts of Ireland—I mean the southern and western provinces. As the number of clergy who have applied for pecuniary aid is small, it may be presumed that the greater number educated are Protestants, and therefore that of the Catholics no more than one out of five hundred of the gross population derives any benefit from the funds of that society. The average relation of one to five hundred may still be overrating the number of Catholics educated, especially when we reflect that it is in the north, amidst a Protestant population, that the society has principally thriven, and that in that province there are dioceses in which not one Catholic child enters its schools. What then becomes of the immense mass over which the spirit of these evangelists never moved, or who is it administers that instruction which teaches them obedience to the laws, and lights the way to heaven?

From the report, it appears that out of all the clergy of Ireland, only forty-six have applied for aid to the society, some of whom have been refused, because they would not comply with its conditions. To allow thirty pounds to each individual would be probably exceeding the measure of their aid. But as such a calculation is unimportant, whatever might have been the sum granted, the entire would not probably exceed more than the twentieth part of the entire funds of the society. The data I have given are furnished by their own reports. The inference is founded on fair and probable calculation. Whence it appears that the benevolent views of the legislature are actually defeated, and that the number of Catholics who partake of the fruits of the public money is small in comparison to the mass of those who

are, by the bigotry of the system, excluded from its advantages. Among the motions that are made in parliament to ascertain the extent to which education is carried among the people, it might be useful if a motion* were submitted to the house for an inquiry into the number of schools that have been established solely by the exertions of the Catholic clergy and laity, and supported entirely by their joint contributions. This, Sir, is a practical proposal; it will bring before the public the comparative effects of the Catholic clergy and the Bible Societies in the work of education, and show what credit is due to those who so often insinuate that whatever of instruction is imparted to the people is mainly due to their own exclusive exertions. It will also demonstrate an important fact, that if the schools erected by the Catholics are not still more numerous, the circumstance arises from the want of ability, rather than the want of inclination. It would also appear that a system of education more profitable to the people than that which is offered by the Kildare-street Society, is practicable on a less expensive scale; and that, therefore, a portion of the money which is given to that society would be productive of more benefit if it were vested in a committee, acting with the concurrence of the Catholic clergy.

The object of this society, if we are to credit their professions, is to produce harmony, and banish religious distinctions. If by religious distinctions they mean those perpetual collisions that arise among different classes of society, on the score of religious intolerance, they are taking the most effectual means of protracting such distinctions, in consequence of the violence they are offering to the consciences of Catholics, by insisting on conditions to which they know they will not accede. But if by religious distinctions they mean those strong and discriminating features which point out truth from error, it is in vain for them to hope that they shall secretly undermine a religion which has mocked the efforts of violence. No, Sir, it would be a disastrous day for the repose of the British empire that Catholics would lay aside their religious distinctions, and fling all their doctrines into the hideous mass of errors of which Bible Societies are composed, thus realizing the fanciful supposition of Solon, of collecting all the ills and blessings of life into one common fund, in order that each might draw out an equal proportion.

The diffusion of knowledge among the peasantry is confessedly a benefit of which they stand in need, provided it is administered with a subordinate reference to their religion. Those who labour to discover something to reprehend, will find in the best and wisest system matter for misrepresentation. It is to the opera-

* Although such an inquiry is not immediately connected with the duties of the officers of the crown, yet it is one on which they could be supplied with information.

tion of such a spirit we may trace the distorted views in which the conduct of the Catholic Church has been represented regarding the circulation of the inspired writings. I will not, Sir, prolong your attention in showing how zealously she has laboured in every age to propagate scriptural knowledge, by citing the constitutions of her pontiffs and the canons of her councils. Her ecclesiastical writers of every age contain the most cogent exhortations to the people to the study of the sacred volume. Nay, in every cathedral church provision was made for persons whose exclusive duty it was to read and expound the Scriptures to the faithful. But really the calumny of withholding the Scriptures for the sinister purpose of keeping the people in ignorance, is deserving of other feelings rather than a serious refutation. The subject has been already pressed on the present writer in the shape of argument and ridicule by a zealous champion of the Bible. But the ground became at length too narrow for argument, since the controversy does not really turn on the diffusion of Scriptural knowledge. No, Sir, it is not with the principle of spreading religious and Scriptural information that Catholics are disposed to quarrel, but with the mode and spirit in which Bible Societies are conducted.

The insinuations of the despotism of the Catholic Church that are conveyed at those Bible meetings, are as insulting as the imputations on our loyalty and religion that are still preserved in our oaths of allegiance. Both are equally founded on a spirit of hostility which will not yield to conviction. But though the Catholic Church venerated the Scriptures more than the sectaries, she never will descend to capitulate with those who, in defiance of the express words of the Bible, which they would fain revere, have renounced her lawful authority. Mr. Canning must feel the justness of this line of conduct which she pursues. Although the British constitution breathes the spirit of freedom, its guardians will never take their lessons of liberty from radical reformers, nor desert their high station to compromise with those whose clamorous and invidious panegyrics on freedom mean nothing more than to accuse the government of tyranny.

However, as long as the distribution of the Bible continues to be a lucrative traffic, it will not cease to attract a crowd of votaries who expect to subsist on the Gospel. It is, perhaps, one of the most signal instances of the astonishing improvements of the human mind, and of its rapid advances to perfection, to behold what a number of missionaries may now be enlisted in the service of religion, without those impediments of discipline and study which were so many drag-chains on the zeal of our ancestors. While the vigour of their youth was wasted in laboriously collecting what they were afterwards to communicate, a more compendious method has been adopted of late, which enables the

libertine and the infidel to become ministers of the Gospel, without imposing on those the necessity of believing its tenets or practising its morality. They are all become Apollos, mighty in the Scriptures, nor do they require the aid of Priscilla or Aquila to expound to them more diligently the way of the Lord.* But if the picture of the vice and ignorance of the Irish people which is exhibited by those Gospellers were correct, a stronger accusation could not be preferred against the indolence of the Establishment. Could a greater libel be pronounced on that body, than to assert, that notwithstanding the immense revenues which they are annually exhausting, nothing was done for the regeneration of the people until the rise of the Bible Societies? Either then in their anxiety to applaud their own labours, they must exaggerate the defects of the Irish character, or they demonstrate that the wealth of the Established clergy has had only the effect of enervating their zeal and plunging them into indolence.

Without denying the necessity or undervaluing the advantages of education, there are evils of a more pressing and physical nature which, indeed, may be mitigated by the consoling ministry of the Catholic priests, but which all the Bibles that have issued from the press of their societies cannot cure—the rack-rents of their landlords—the rigour of the agents of absentees—the severity of ecclesiastics who, unlike the Levites of old, exact the tenths of their substance, without any spiritual compensation; and more than all, the cold and hunger that arise from the want of food and raiment, are evils which I am sure would not cease to afflict our peasantry, though they could recite the entire of the Bible to the mysteries of the Apocalypse. The condition of the Irish peasant is wretched beyond description. The frequency of its exposure has had the effect of almost stifling every thing like sympathy for his lot. Accustomed to the uniform contemplation of his misery, many have grown so indifferent as to despair of any relief, and a long and familiar acquaintance with privations of every kind has rendered himself almost callous to their endurance. The parliament is told that Ireland is in a peaceable state: let them not, however, mistake the peace of Ireland for the repose of happiness and order. It is not that state of tranquillity enjoyed under the reign of Solomon, and described by the inspired writer under the smiling image of “each one dwelling without fear under his vine, and under his fig tree.”†

HIEROPHILOS.

* Acts of the Apostles, xviii.

† III. Kings, iv.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, MAY, 1823.

Non tumultus non quies, quale magni metus et magna iræ silentium est.

TACITUS.

SIR—The intervals of peace which Ireland enjoys are the troubled and boding silence of Tacitus, which succeeds the violence of discontent after it has subsided into the sullenness of despair. The Irish peasant is not in a condition in which human beings can be contented. His squalid looks, but dimly lighted by a natural gaiety, which no suffering can utterly extinguish, and a frame sinking under the weight of his afflictions, reveal the ruin of a strong and vigorous constitution, shattered by violence before the slow decay of years was suffered to come upon it. It is no wonder, since he enjoys no respite from toil, which is the common inheritance of all. Others may repair the exhaustion of their labour, but to him the time of rest is only a transition to misery, since he is often doomed to waste his remaining strength by receiving the seeds of debility and disease during the fatal moments of repose.*

While our peasantry are thus abandoned to a complication of misfortunes, aggravated still more by the bitterness of insult, some of our Irish members labour to mislead the parliament on the real state of the people, and others, in the fulness of their benevolence, labour to protect animals from cruelty. This is surely a praise-worthy disposition; but while animals are thus made the objects of legislative enactments, the sufferings of rational creatures ought not to be neglected. Benevolence is a virtue, but that of the member for Galway is of the heroic caste, since it far exceeds the standard fixed by the ancient poet—

Homo sum, et humanum nihil a me alienum puto,

and, after providing for human misery in every form, takes in the whole range of animal creation. Others attend most punctually the Bible Societies of London, as if to expiate the evils to which they consign the people of Ireland by whining some pathetic common-place over their spiritual blindness. My Lord

* See Reid's Travels in Ireland, in the year 1822, in which the benevolent writer records anecdotes of Irish sufferings, which, in general description, might appear to be exaggeration.

L——n has caught the evangelical epidemic, and Saul aspires to be numbered among the prophets of Israel. Really, Sir, these biblical exhibitions are no less than ludicrous. To give a dramatic effect to the representations of the authors, and to stimulate the drowsy attention of their hearers, some pious anecdotes must be seasonably introduced to illustrate the miraculous efficacy of the Bible. While they deplore the fate of those whose understandings are corrupted by the Arabian Nights, they exemplify the justness of their own observations, and show that their intellects are not yet recovered from the magical influence of early impressions. An anecdote gravely told by one of the speakers at the last meeting of the Bristol society, of a man who was saved from suicide by touching a Bible which happened to be in his pocket while he sought the instrument of death, seems to be an easy adoption of the story of Aladin, who having plunged into a river in despair, was rescued by the contact of his ring with a stone, which immediately evoked to his deliverance his tutelary genius.

The evils of this country are not to be traced to biblical ignorance ; or, if so, whence the dark catalogue of crimes that stains the calendar of England ? It has been calculated, and the coincidence is worthy of remark, that crime has multiplied in that country in proportion to the diffusion of evangelical fanaticism. Let then those benevolent Englishmen who labour for the conversion of our country, endeavour to eradicate the unnatural sins condemned by the Apostle, which abound in their own. Let them endeavour to restore unity to the shattered frame of their national faith, and purge its worship of those fanatic forms of error by which the great are often duped, and which would disgrace the superstition of Hindostan.

Like ancient Rome, England glories in her piety, because she extends to every sectary the privilege of citizenship ; and because, with the exception of the true faith, she excludes no form of error from her worship. In the language of Osee, “ according to the multitude of her fruit she hath multiplied altars.” And in the words of another prophet,* “ according to the number of her streets she hath set up altars of confusion.” While, therefore, the advocates of the Bible indulge all the latitude of belief that leads to infidelity, and under the specious garb of devotion, solicit the peasantry to a participation of their own errors, I have heard of some who, on perceiving the contrast between their lives and their professions, apply to them the language of the Apostle—“ There shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition ; and many shall follow their riotousness, through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken

* Jeremias, xi.

of. *And through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you, alluring unstable souls, having their hearts exercised with covetousness, children of malediction ; leaving the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam of Bosor, who loved the wages of iniquity. For, speaking proud words of vanity, they allure those who for a little while escape ; such as converse in error, promising them liberty, while they themselves are the slaves of corruption.”** The justness of the application of this passage to the Bible Societies, I shall leave the reader to determine. But it shows, at least, that the very book which is proffered for the instruction of the people may be easily converted by them into an instrument to use against those Societies, in exposing the hypocrisy of their pretensions.

While the British Bible Societies boast of their success in enlightening the darkness of Pagan nations, it is surprising how fruitless their efforts have proved in their own. Let it not be disguised—their object is proselytism ; and though they do not succeed to the extent of their hopes, it is not owing to the want of zeal and perseverance. The most sinister artifices are resorted to, to accomplish this unworthy purpose. In the neighbourhood of Raphoe, it happened that a number of Catholic children who attended a Bible school were all seduced to church on a certain day, in defiance of solemn engagements, and when an explanation was demanded, the reply was, that this scene was merely intended for edification !! Should the Catholic children be therefore persuaded to renounce the religion of their fathers, by frequenting the conventicles of the sectaries, no harm is intended, since it is all intended for edification. This one instance I have cited from among others of a similar nature, rather to illustrate a general principle, than as a solitary fact from which to deduce a general inference. Yet, notwithstanding their efforts, they have made but few converts in this country. They are, therefore, obliged to appeal to distant regions for evidence of their success. At one meeting of the Bible Societies we have an account of the progress of the missionaries in the interior of Africa, as far as the mountains of Mauritania. At another, we are gratified with the wondrous relations of their labours in Iceland, and assured that the pious evangelists, with a zeal unchilled by the northern climate, will succeed in penetrating towards the pole. A third announces the joyous tidings that some flourishing kingdom beyond the Ganges has borne fresh attestations to the Gospel, and swelled the triumphs of the Societies. Thus they prudently fix the scene of their operations in distant countries, where they may boast of imaginary con-

* II. Peter, ii.

quests, and still escape detection, like the famous Benjamin of Tudela, who places in an Eastern country, far beyond the reach of historical knowledge, a flourishing colony of Jews, where the descendants of Judah still sway the sceptre over their obedient brethren, awaiting with patient hope the coming of the Messiah.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE GEORGE CANNING.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, MAY, 1823.

SIR—Having thus taken a patient review of the state of Ireland, and the condition of its inhabitants, I cannot dissemble my conviction that the great source of its misfortunes, is the malignant character of its laws. In the discussion of this comprehensive subject, I have not forgotten those minor topics of partial grievance which have engaged so much of the attention of writers on the affairs of Ireland. The ignorance of the people, though much exaggerated, is unquestionably the effect of her bad laws.* Their poverty may be traced to the same source.

From the spirit of foreign commercial monopoly, and the corporate regulations that shut out Catholics from a fair competition in trade, and the learned professions, it is clear that they cannot obtain the rewards of their talents or their industry, and that therefore, the great mass of the people is doomed by the spirit of bad laws, to unavoidable degradation. Nay, of the offices that are accessible to Catholics, how few are obtained by individuals of that body, though they might compete with their calumniators in the moral or intellectual qualities that fit men for the discharge of exalted duties? To remove the invidious imputation of partiality in the distribution of those offices, much stress has been laid, in parliament, on the qualifications necessary for filling them. From such an observation, it would appear that it required great talent, and a long course of intellectual discipline to fit those functionaries for their elevated station. If so, what can convey a keener insult to the feelings of Catholics than to declare that certain offices are open to their exertions,

* See Brown's Historical Account of the Laws against the Catholics, chap. vi, page 225, who quotes the Act 9, William III, chap. i.

yet, at the same time, to close the Universities against them, and deny them an opportunity of developing their talents to such a degree as would enable them to obtain such situations. You tell them such a dignity is within their reach, yet you deprive them of the means to obtain it. It is embittering exclusion with contumely, and mocking them with hopes which cannot be realized. But, Sir, even this apology cannot be adduced to justify the exclusion of the Catholics. To become a Commissioner of Excise, or Stamp Duties, a Clerk of the Crown, or a Clerk of the Peace, or a Magistrate, under the recent Acts of Parliament, does not require any extraordinary reach of understanding beyond what generally falls to the lot of mortals. The process of preparation may require some patient attention to the routine details of office, in which no duty occurs which the most ordinary and mechanical mind could not perform. As for the long list of other situations which are chiefly monopolized by Protestants, though open to Catholics, the qualifications for filling them are not difficult. A contempt for the mass of the people united to an earnest wish for perpetuating their servitude; an ardent devotion to the Constitution, while it protects their own monopoly; a sincere hatred for one religion, and a hypocritical zeal for another, of both of which they are equally ignorant; a hollow reverence for the Bible, which they pretend to read, while they leave the burden of its precepts to others; a bodily vigour that can sustain the fatiguing duties of celebrating frequent and protracted feasts in honor of the ascendancy, and occasionally supply the slow and lenient vengeance of the law, by summary inflictions.—Such are the high endowments often found in the candidates for offices from which Catholics are excluded; and if such continue to be the qualifications for preferment, there is no honest or independent man that would not say with the Roman poet—

Horum
Semper ego optarem pauperrimus esse bonorum.*

Whatever crimes then proceed from the ignorance and poverty of the people, may be traced to the bad laws which produced them. The double burden imposed by the support of two bodies of ecclesiastics, the one active and efficient, and the other abandoning their flocks to Biblical fanatics, had its origin in the same laws. For in fine, there are few of the evils of Ireland, independent of those which are common to every country, that have not been generated by the same cause, and that do not partake of its malignant qualities. Against the removal of such an abundant source of misery, only one objection is eternally started—the danger of the constitution. That this danger is now imaginary, or

* From such benefits I should deem myself happy to be excluded.

rather affected, I have fully proved, by showing that the causes which first suggested the ideas of danger, have long since disappeared. When the exclusion of a portion of the people from a share in the civil rights of the State is not necessary for the safety of the whole, such exclusion I have shown to be contrary to the laws of justice, and the authority of the civilians whom England reveres; and finally, by a reference to the unsteady opinions of the first champions of the Establishment, it appears that a stronger faith in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity is necessary for the sickly morality of the English nation; and that a large infusion of the sound principles of Catholics, instead of endangering its existence, would finally prove the salvation of the constitution.

Against arguments so cogent, what one solid reason can be assigned for protracting the concession of the Catholic claims? The imputed intemperance of our orators, or the occasional discontents of our peasantry. Such motives might consistently enough operate upon the feelings of little individuals, who, invested with the brief and transient authority of a day, consult their revenge rather than their wisdom. But I cannot believe that such narrow considerations could sway the councils of the greatest empire upon earth. It would be a libel on the majesty of the British Senate to insinuate that it could be moved from the straight course of justice by which it should be guided, in obedience to those prejudices which it is destined to controul. It is in vain, then, to use the discontent of individuals who must cease to be men, in order to cease to be discontented. It cannot excite surprise, that the Catholics, conscious of the justice of their cause, should give vent to their disappointment in strong and vigorous language. It is in vain, therefore, we will be told, that the indiscretion of the Catholics has retarded the progress of their cause, since it would be to say, that the angry passions which should float beneath it, have reached the elevation of British justice, and turned it out of its orbit. It is therefore to no purpose to tell the Catholics that Mr. O'Connell and his fellow-agitators are violent. Yes, Mr. O'Connell is violent, and those who quarrel with his violence, quarrel with the laws of nature. Retaining in its course, the vigour which it gathered in its descent from its own native mountains, the flood of his eloquence rolls in a strong and impetuous current, becoming louder among the rocks and rifts that oppose it in its progress, until at length it disengages itself, and then rushes through every obstacle with accumulated force: but if you wish to lessen its roar, or abate its violence, remove the rocks, clear away the obstructions, and then it will expand into a smoother and more majestic volume; nor shall it ever subside into the dull repose of many a brawling stream that sparkled through opposition, until, like Pactolus, it poured its placid wave over the golden sands of the treasury.

As we do not therefore rest the merits of our claims on partial considerations, we trust that no feelings of a partial or individual nature will operate against the concession of that justice which we demand as British subjects. That justice is on our side, I have demonstrated; and no winding policy should be suffered to divert it from its majestic course.

To illustrate more clearly the justice of our cause, let us reverse for a moment, the relative condition of Catholics and Protestants; and suppose that the interests of six millions of Protestants were sacrificed to the pride and intolerance of half a million of Catholics: would not the empire ring with the loud and reiterated complaints of injustice? But no; the Protestants, instead of bending to unavailing complaint, would assert with their swords the common inheritance of freedom.

Those who are conscious that their principles are the best stay of Government, are excluded from its benefits; while those whose allegiance is only precarious and conditional, are loaded with its choicest favours. The obedience which Catholics render to the Government, has its high origin in heaven. But reflect, Sir, that they whose principle of obedience is so sublime, expect to see the Government reflecting in the equal distribution of its laws, the wisdom and benevolence of the Divinity, from whom their obedience is derived. There are reciprocal relations that bind Sovereigns and subjects to each other, and which are still subordinate to those which bind both to the Almighty; who, if he commands obedience on the one hand, commands justice, and wisdom, and benevolence on the other. Such, Sir, is the powerful influence of Christianity, which, by teaching Princes their obligations to the people, has given stability to their thrones, and so mitigated the monarchies of Europe, as to form a striking contrast with Asiatic despotism. Such is the doctrine which the Ministers of the Gospel conveyed to the ears of Kings, in every period of the Church. Such was the doctrine by which the Bishop of Milan humbled the greatest Prince that ever swayed the sceptre of the Roman Empire, into a public penitent, in the porch of the temple; and such were the lessons of clemency which Bossuet addressed to Louis XIV, amidst the very career of his conquests. In a government deemed arbitrary, Massillon spoke to the court in language which might be deemed sufficiently bold for the meridian of England. "*C'est pour les peuples tout seuls que le trône lui même est élevé. En un mot, les princes ne sont pour ainsi dire que les hommes du peuple.*"* As we have not the powerful interposition of such holy and eloquent men to protect us, hence the necessity of the shield of the laws. The Protestants of this country are protected by equal laws; the

* Petit Carême.

Catholics of France were secure in the interposition of the Church. Alas ! we are deprived of the benefit of the one, without ever experiencing any thing but severity, from the other. Yes, Sir, the observation of a celebrated historian, that "seldom were the banners of the Church, displayed for the rights of the people," may be justly applied to that of England ; whereas, if extended to the Catholic Church, it is amply refuted by the examples I have quoted. Whenever our complaints are conveyed to the legislature, we are repulsed in no quarter with so little mercy as from the Episcopal benches ; and with one solitary exception, the venerable and illustrious Bishop of Norwich, those who ought to breathe the mild spirit of the Gospel, have been the most inexorable advocates of rigour and exclusion. As we cannot therefore turn to the Church, we again implore the protection of equal laws. And in the name of that God, whose image a wise government ought to be, we solicit the restoration of our rights in return for the strong, and steady, and uncompromising allegiance, which the terrors of persecution could not shake.

In concluding this letter, apology is unnecessary, since I have been only discharging a duty which I owed to my religion and to my country. It is not merely in compliment to your talents as a senator that I have taken the liberty of addressing it to you ; since I considered you in the higher relation of a member of the Government, and feeling, of course, a conscientious responsibility for your advice in directing its councils. In conformity with the view which I have stated in the commencement of my letter, I have chiefly insisted on the necessity of Catholic Emancipation, considering every other question only in a subordinate reference to this national measure. The legislature may, of course, devise some partial relief for the grievances of Ireland ; but without that which has been insisted on, it will be only perpetuating its own labours, which will be accumulating with the progress of time. Without this great measure of Catholic Emancipation then, you will toil in vain ; since, without the total repeal of the Penal Laws, the vigorous root of the malignant Upas will still remain, ready to shoot forth with fresh activity into ranker luxuriance, darkening the land by its shadow, and wasting, by its deadly influence, the moral energies of the people.

HIEROPHILOS.

LETTER XXXIII.

FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOP OF MARONIA,
TO
THE PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

BALLINA, OCTOBER, 1826.

You, Lord Archbishop,
Whose see is by a civil peace maintained ;
Whose beard, the silver hand of Peace hath touch'd ;
Whose white investments figure Innocence,
The Dove, and very blessed Spirit of Peace :
Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself
Out of the speech of Peace, that bears such grace,
Into the harsh and boisterous tongue of War ?

BUT, my Lord, the profane charms of poetry may but ill suit that severe and puritannical taste, which, I am told, is mixed up with your Grace's character. You are fonder, no doubt, of the perusal of the Scriptures : if so, the counsel of Saint Paul may not have escaped you—"That those who rule well should be esteemed worthy of double honour." Some time has now elapsed since your Grace's charge at Tuam first attracted the attention of the present writer, under another signature ; and the honour which has been reserved for me, of addressing you once more on a similar Charge in Killala, will, doubtless, be interpreted by you (conscious of your own deserts), as that double homage, which the excellence of your episcopal government has extorted.

An invidious rumour has gone abroad, that you and your colleagues feel a secret dislike to the titles of Protestant bishops. It must be a calumny, circulated for the purpose of giving the laity also a disrelish for the epithet. What!—a prelate to be ashamed of the distinctive mark of that Church to which he belongs. No bishop of the Catholic Church is angry that "Catholic" should be appended to his episcopal title ; nor shall I easily believe that a Protestant bishop is altogether so simple in his taste, as to wish to be stripped of the peculiar badge which characterizes his own creed. Was it ever known that any chief was ashamed to wear the colours of his followers ? It was the boast of those who, by a figure of rhetoric known to your Grace, are called "Reformers," to disclaim any connexion with the Catholic Church, and to protest against its errors. A feeling of gratitude towards our benefactors has been always a mark of a generous mind. You are not, I am sure, destitute of that virtue ;

and it is to give you an opportunity of exercising it, that I have subjoined the epithet “Protestant” to your title, in order to keep alive, by a perpetual memento, your obligation to the founders of the Protestant Church, who gave you an opportunity of being seated on an episcopal throne, which, without a schismatical divergence from the old Catholic line, you never would have ascended.

Do you imagine that the priests who ministered at the altar of Bethel blushed at the recollection of the schism of Jeroboam? I think they rather referred to it with secret satisfaction; and, like those who now adore a mysterious Providence, for having turned a monarch’s lust into an instrument of reformation, the pious priests of Bethel, “who were not of the sons of Levi,” blessed, no doubt, the licentiousness of the latter days of Solomon, which had been the occasion of transferring to themselves the treasures of the priesthood.

However, on maturer reflection, I am not surprised that the epithet “Protestant” gives you pain. It is not only divested of the venerable associations of antiquity, but forces, by way of contrast, the disagreeable idea of a Catholic bishop. This, my Lord, in the next analysis of your feelings, you will discover to be the secret cause of your uneasiness. Yes; had there been no Catholic bishop, the name of Protestant bishop would not be unmusical to your ears: since, then, the public attention might not be pointed to the origin of your pretensions, you might hope, in the process of time, to merge the Protestant in the name of a Catholic bishop, and thus give an hereditary colour to your claims—like the emperors who, no matter how they gained the purple, adopted the name of Cæsar, to throw an air of legitimacy over the deficiency of their original title.

I am not, therefore, surprised, that the name of Protestant bishop is so annoying. It does not require a deep insight into human nature, to account for the uneasy feeling. Had the episcopacy been an inheritance which could be lawfully partitioned among rival claimants, then, however reluctantly, you might be reconciled to have an associate of your throne. But, with all the dislike which I can well conceive must be felt for theology by a Protestant bishop, you must still be sufficiently versed in that tasteless science to know that the episcopacy of the Church of Christ, like its faith, its baptism, and its founder, is one and undivided. So thought St. Cyprian—so thought St. Augustine, who identified the unity of the church with the unity of the episcopacy. But those venerable names are, probably, beyond the reach of your theological labours. In the epochs of Protestant chronology, the age of those Fathers is sufficiently remote to be ranked among the fabulous times. The bright vista of the genuine history of the church closes with that splendid pillar, Matthew Parker. Beyond that boundary of orthodox as well as

of historic light, all is idolatry and darkness, and its annals fit only to be explored by the obscure diligence of credulous antiquarians. In speaking thus of your want of acquaintance with the early church, I am far from meaning disrespect. It rather makes us revere the loftier sources of your intelligence. The young aspirant after the honours of the church beholds how seldom they are reached through the rugged path of science. He finds that a lever, wielded by some friendly and more powerful hand, is the instrument by which some heavy bodies are lifted to an elevation, to which their own *vis inertiae* could never enable them to toil. Human knowledge then becomes unnecessary. For well may they dispense with the aid of learning, who, we must believe, are “taught by the Lord,” since they can gravely assure us that they are admitted into a familiar converse with heaven.

Without fatiguing you, then, by any laborious references to the primitive Fathers, I shall appeal only to the inspiration of your own heart, and inquire whether its jealousy of every thing Catholic does not attest the unity of the priesthood. The very idea of a Catholic church in your neighbourhood frightens you—the name of a Catholic bishop also appals you—and from every ruin of the Catholic temples that are profusely strewn over our country, the shade of the ancient religion rises before your imagination, to reproach you with the novelty of your own. I am not surprised at the fury with which those venerable temples were defaced—nay, demolished, by the first founders of your church; I am rather surprised that they did not labour more to obliterate every vestige of them from the land. It would have been in accordance with the conduct of every apostate. “And Jeroboam said in his heart, now shall the kingdom return to the house of David, if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem.”* And, therefore, he built altars in Bethel and in Dan, which were just as necessary as some modern temples perched on the “high place,” to attract the attention of travellers. Yes; the temple of Jerusalem was the most obnoxious object to the deserters of the ancient creed. Nay, their hate extended to the God who was worshipped there; and in the dark picture which the author of “Athalie” sketches of the soul of Mathan, the apostate priest of Baal, every other apostate of future ages shall discover a true image of the workings of his own.

Ce temple l'importe, et son impiété
Vaudroit anéantir le Dieu qu'il a quitté.†

The vehemence with which you poured forth your zeal against the Catholic Church has not surprised me. It was only the

* III. Kings, xii, 26, 27.

† Racine has so powerfully portrayed this apostate, that the entire passage from which those lines are taken may well be recommended to the perusal of the reader.

natural force of a current long checked by artificial obstructions, and struggling for its freedom. The attention that was already directed to your Charge in Tuam, made you cautious in that quarter, lest some secret enemy should lurk in the church, and reveal to the world the overflowings of that charity for Catholics which you were anxious should not transpire beyond your own flock. Had you gone to the southward, you justly feared that the imperturbable Peter Daly would roll back the flood of your holy indignation on yourself. It must still find vent, and, doubtless, you exulted in the prospect of discharging it with impunity on the devoted heads of the Catholics of Killala. It was a delicious anticipation ; and how you must have chid the tardy hours until they brought back the triennial visitation, which was to disburden you of the collected weight of all your pastoral solicitudes. Impatient of delay, you hasten to the scene so anxiously wished for, and strive, by your ardent example, to rouse the harmless zeal of the good natured Dr. Verschoyle, who, careless of controversy and fanaticism, seems to acquiesce in the literal sense of the beatitudes—though he may reject it on the eucharist—content if his meekness is rewarded with “the possession of the land.” I shall not detain you by the dull repetition of your invectives against the errors, and superstitions, and damnable doctrines of the Catholic Church. Damnable doctrines of the Catholic Church !! Did your Grace condescend to inform your auditory of the period at which they arose, or of the council by which they were condemned ; or did you supply any clue of chronological data to disengage them from the labyrinth in which your recondite labours must have involved them. There is, my Lord, wonderful force of persuasion in the wealth of the Establishment ; and the darkest mind of the most ignorant of your auditors finds his conviction greatly enlightened by the splendours of its honours. We must allow their due efficacy to these causes in producing external decorum : still I imagine that the painter of physiognomy could not wish for a richer scene for the exercise of his art, than to contemplate the struggles between the seriousness and suppressed laughter that take place on such occasions ; nor can I help recalling the observation of Cicero, who wondered how the Tuscan Haruspices could meet together, and preserve the artificial solemnity of their demeanor.

The damnable doctrines of the Catholic Church !! Yes, there are some of its doctrines which, in the eyes of a certain class of people, must ever wear those odious features. It teaches the necessity of penance for past sins ; and, doubtless, of all its damnable doctrines this is the most appalling. I know it thus encroaches on the dominion of the subject, since it may consign to rigorous austerities those who are assured that their sins are

already covered with the white robe of justification. The doctrine of penance has worse effects, since it not only makes war on the flesh, but presumptuously interferes with the vocation of heaven, by shutting out from the sanctuary persons to whom the spirit bears testimony that they are not only justified, but placed on the very pinnacle of sanctity. It is true that illustrious sinners have become illustrious saints. The grace of justification is often sudden and overpowering. But, aware that the sorrow, of which there is no external sign, may be reasonably distrusted, the Catholic Church requires a long discipline of virtue in her candidates; lest the ungodly might whisper their profane suspicions in the sincerity of a conversion and a zeal, which happen exactly to coincide with the attainment of ecclesiastical honours.

But, rather than involve them in the maze of Catholic heresies, why not, like the venerable founder of the Asmonean dynasty,* encourage your children to a zeal for the law, by pointing out to them the bright models of their fathers. You are aware that the example of the great founders of empire or of religion is one of the most powerful incentives to virtue and renown. Let me, then, conjure you never to forget, in your future charges, the glorious models of your predecessors. They are too rich a theme for panegyric ever to be exhausted; nor could the dullest common-place of an episcopal charge ever strip them of that veneration which their virtues have thrown around them. Tell them, then, of the sanctity of the life and doctrine of Luther, who, like his Delphic predecessor, inspired by the gold or wine of Philip (how curious the coincidence of names—the one of Hesse, the other of Macedon), proclaimed from his spiritual tripod that the primeval innocence of the plurality of wives was again restored!! And lest he might be considered, like the Pharisees, to impose burdens upon others, which he would not lighten by his little finger, he complied as edifyingly as Mahomet himself with the law of lust which he promulgated, by releasing himself and his consort from the superstitious vows of the cloister. Paint to them next the disastrous visage of Calvin—the faithful image of the mind which could extract out of the volume of love and mercy, nought but the dogmas of reprobation and despair—and close his portrait by a touching allusion to the tragic story of Servetus, reserving the climax of your praise for that act in which you will represent him as a hero sacrificing his private affections to the stern source of public duty, and, like Agamemnon, striving to render the Divinity propitious by the blood of a human victim.

Oh! and forget not Zuinglius, the last, but not the least renowned, of the triumvirate. Talk to them of his frequent

* I. Machabees, chapter ii.

illapses of the spirit, and define, what mocked his own penetration to define, the ambiguous physiognomy of the nocturnal visitor with which he was periodically favoured. Lead them back—for, probably, they do not know it—to the spiritual origin of their present curious notions about the eucharist; and, since you may not like the Roman Martyrology, give them a glimpse of the select and goodly company of the blessed which, with a more poetical licence than Dante himself, he assorts together in his paradise of the Reformation:—“And there you will see (writing to Francis I. on the joys of heaven) the two Adams, the redeemed and the redeemer; and Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and Joshua, and Gideon, and David, and St. Peter, and St. Paul, and Hercules, and Theseus, and Antigonus, and Numa, and the Catos, and the Scipios.” I am only surprised that he did not put Henry VIII. of England among the number; and if, like Nero, in the “*Pharsalia*” of Lucan, there was any danger of his pulling down,* by his weight, the side of the heavens in which he was placed, he might, if it were not an anachronism, place Elizabeth, his truly congenial daughter, on the opposite side, and thus preserve the balance of the sphere.

From the precious specimen of the revelations of the profligate preacher of Zurich, the reader may form a pretty correct judgment of the nature of the mysterious apparition from which he drew them, and guess whether it was the divine spirit of Patmos, or the muse of Southey’s “*Vision of Judgment*,” that opened the heavens to his view. But the subject is too sacred for irony or ridicule. What! class the patriarchs of the Old and the apostles of the New Testament with Cato the Censor, who gravely invited his fellow-citizens to share his marriage bed—with Theseus, the public robber—with Numa, the founder of idolatry—and (my hand trembles in transcribing the audacious blasphemy) to huddle the REDEEMER of the world in the promiscuous apotheosis of the impure and drunken divinities of Olympus!!

Such are the models which you must next propose to the imitation of your clergy. In the delineation of their characters, fling aside all the drapery with which their admirers for three centuries have decorated them. It is only by stripping them of those tawdry ornaments, and exhibiting them to the world as they originally stood, that they can make a due impression. As for the smaller groups of Reformers, who were incapable of displaying the energy of the originals, it would be uninteresting to enumerate them all. I will not require of you to draw out into bold relief the character of Cranmer, or his associates, since they seem to shrink from the gaze of criticism. No; like the

* *Ætheris immensi partem si presseris unam sentiet axis onus.*

LUCANI Pharsalia.

painter who showed his consummate art by casting a veil over one of his figures, because he despaired of painting the variety of shades that floated across its features, you, too, would rather throw a veil over Cranmer's character, than attempt to sketch the confused succession of his religious and political creeds, which, after all, are indescribable. I will not require of you to dwell on the national disasters which accompanied the establishment of your little ecclesiastical colony in this country, lest, like the Trojan chief, you should be melted into all the tenderness of tears at their recital. These are topics sacred to silence and oblivion. The darkness of night should cover them; nor ought you again to expose them to public view, lest the occupants of benefices, on contrasting their possessions with the violence from which they sprung, should experience something of the feeling of Faulkenbridge, who, while he gloried in the strength which he derived from Richard *Cœur de Lion*, was abashed by a parent's shame, with which the inheritance was associated.

Should you feel somewhat mortified by this letter, you will find its vindication in your Grace's wanton and intemperate aggression. It is really lamentable, that those who ought to labour together for the public good, should waste their mutual strength in theological contention. To what a miserable condition is our country doomed, when they who would entirely devote themselves to promote its peace, and propagate good will among mankind, must be forced to repel attacks upon its religion, made by individuals who ought to feel a peculiar tenderness in provoking an attack upon their own? If the country is torn by religious discord, put your hand to your breast, and declare to whose account should its wounds be laid. Who are the people that are keeping a body of strolling auxiliaries in pay, to prop the declining cause of the Establishment, by pouring their vapid abuse on the Catholic Church? Take care, my Lord, lest these venal auxiliaries should not, like the barbarians employed in the Roman service, turn, at length, upon their masters, and seize the possessions of the Church which they are hired to defend. The necessity of employing them—I am not inclined to superstition—is really ominous. Dismiss them, therefore, from your service in time; calculate no longer on assailing the Catholic Church with impunity. Should you push too far the insolence of a temporary triumph, a Scipio may be found to thunder at your gates. The tide that ran for three centuries with Protestant prejudice has nearly spent its force, and the troubled surface of society must become more calm and level. The calumnies of Protestant polemics shall, like those of the Arians of old, be only remembered to awaken pity for the misfortunes of the age that indulged them; and it is well if the religious prejudices, with which they are loaded, do not sink,

with the tracts of the ecclesiastical Dunciads, some historical works, the buoyancy of whose fine spirit would have borne them to the most distant posterity. From the effects of your intemperance, your colleagues will, I trust, learn a wise forbearance ; and should your Grace ever repeat your triennial visitation, and be disposed to indulge in a feast of triumph against a religion, to the service of which the church in which you spoke was once consecrated, doubtless the present sketch, which you will not easily forget, will make you apprehend lest some mysterious hand should draw more fully the character and destiny of your Church on the walls of the Cathedral of Killala.*

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XXXIV.

ON THE NEW REFORMATION IN CAVAN.

BALLINA, JANUARY, 1827.

IN one of the last numbers of the *Evening Post*, I observed a series of resolutions relative to the apostacies at Cavan, and bearing strong reference to the late document which was laid before the public, by some of the Catholic bishops. That the agents of proselytism should not derive much satisfaction from the publication of the frauds that were resorted to in the unhallowed work, is quite natural ; and I am therefore, willing to make allowance for the warmth of their feelings, when the light of public exposure broke in on mortified vanity and hypocritical pretensions to religion. I did, however, imagine, that prudence would have prompted the suppression of those feelings—and that the ministers of fanaticism would have availed themselves of the opportunity afforded, by passing events, of withdrawing, if not with dignity, at least with some colourable pretext, from public observation. Yes, I did hope, that the carts which were exhibited in Cavan, and which happened if we are to credit ancient writers,

* Not many years elapsed when this prophetic warning of the hand-writing on the wall was fulfilled, and with nine other Protestant sees, its candlestick was taken from the cathedral of Killala.

to be the first clumsy platforms of the histrionic art, would have disappeared, when a more magnificent theatre, exhibiting the sorrows of royalty, rose to the public view—and that the individuals who “fretted their little hour” on this rustic stage, would have respectfully retired before the tragic train of war, and the mourning of courts, and the death of princes, these mighty events that cast their shadows over a vast extent of society, and still for a season, the petty contentions of mankind.

The resolutions alluded to, consist of vague assertions, without containing a single fact, that would impeach the credit of the statements to which the bishops gave the attestation of their names. But lest the unwary might be led into such a belief by the very circumstance of their being ostentatiously put forth, though the credit which the public attaches to our character may not require a contradiction, still it may be useful to declare once more that the statement of the bishops is beyond the reach of refutation. The part which calls forth the most indignant zeal of those gentlemen is that in which, it seems, they are represented as “disgusted at those fanatical exhibitions by which good-will is impaired, and the peace of society endangered.” Now, in the name of the other prelates, I beg leave to assure them that the statement did not involve the gentlemen who adopted the resolution in the guilt or imputation of such a crime. It charged the “liberal and enlightened Protestants alone with the crime of feeling disgust” at the diminution of charity, and the danger to the public peace, of which the exhibitions were productive. Whether these are consequences with which such scenes are fraught, subsequent events have fully revealed, since it appears from the public journals that the peace has been frequently broken between the neophytes of the Protestant creed, and followers of the ancient religion. Assuredly, we never charged the framers of the resolutions with feeling disgust at such transactions. If such be the happy temperament of their souls as to harmonize with such scenes of strife and discord, they may enjoy the luxury of their feelings without being taxed by the Catholic bishops with the heinous offence of deplored the existence of charity and good-will among mankind.

Our expression confined this disgust to every “liberal and enlightened Protestant.” How far precisely this qualification may extend in Cavan, we are not aware; it appears that its application is extremely limited. But sure we are, and it is an assertion in which the public will acquiesce, that every enlightened and liberal Protestant must feel disgust or indignation at the scenes of fraud and violence that have been acted in that country, where, according to depositions laid before us, some of which were offered to the magistrates to be confirmed on oath, individuals were tempted to apostacy by bribery and corruption—

where the highways were covered with carts, conveying to the strong citadel of the Reformation, a precious cargo of vagrants, who were allured by the Jewish rewards of the new religion, and who were principally recommended to its favours from their habitual disregard of their own—where one man was threatened with death for attempting to rescue a sister of fourteen years from the hands of her persecutors, and another was obliged, like Judith, to steal by night into the camp of her enemies, and to use a similar artifice, without, however, the shedding of blood, to save her sister from the danger to which she was exposed—where a disciple of the new school, instructed by the practice, if not the precepts, of Cranmer, strives to appease the scruples of the converts, by telling them to abjure, with their hearts, the apostacy which their lips had spoken—where, in spite of all those lenitives, a sense of remorse forced some of the communicants, it is hard to find a fit expression, to treat with manifest indignity the sacrament which their conscience loathed—where others, instead of deriving from the spiritual food the strength of Elias, found that it had the effect of producing debility, from the terrors which a consciousness of hypocrisy had inspired, and where they are dragged in this state to hear fresh invectives against their religion, while they cry in vain for the consolation of its ministers; where—(I shall be pardoned for reflections suggested solely by the evidence before me)—the texts of the Royal Prophet, on justification, are blasphemously applied by profligates, while they cover with a robe or dress the victims of their licentiousness, and heal with the grace of reformation the wounds they have inflicted—where, in fine, fanatical females apply the parable of the marriage feast, to justify the force that is resorted to in carrying vagrants from the high ways; and where—if they are told that they may abuse the liberty of “prophecying,” and reminded that “women are to keep silence in the Churches,” they instantly fall into paroxysms, like those to which Mahomet was subject, and like the same impostor, who, artfully turning a natural disease into an instrument of proselytism, brought a fresh revelation out of every trance, awake with the infallible assurance that the apostle, who knew well “that some preach Christ out of envy and contention, and not sincerely,” had interdicted females the functions of the ministry, because he was jealous of the superior eloquence of the sex !!

There is not a member of the preceding paragraph that has not reference to some particular evidence. Nay, some of the individuals whose testimonies it embodies, were prepared to repeat their evidence on Sunday, in the public chapel, before an immense congregation. But though they remained in town for some days to evince their sincerity, and came to the chapel for the purpose, we thought it more prudent not to agitate the minds of the

people by any detail of those odious particulars. And yet, the public is informed by the framers of the Cavan resolutions, that they do not believe that bribery or fraud were the instruments of proselytism. Such no doubt may be their belief—but there is a belief which obeys instead of controlling the bias of our inclinations. There is, if we are to believe the Scriptures, a faith which rejects the “knowledge of God’s ways.” The Jews who gave bribes to the soldiers, believed no doubt, nay, published their belief, that the apostles had imposed upon the people by the story of the resurrection.

And though I am far from impeaching the motives, or arraigning the impartiality of magistrates who were doubtless swayed by a sense of their duty; yet it may be imagined that in refusing the affidavit, they might have some apprehension, lest their pious belief in the purity of the means that were resorted to in the propagation of the Protestant religion, might have been shaken by the rude and stubborn evidence of those sworn depositions.

It is denied that there was any obstruction to our going to the chapel, and yet confessed, that a Methodist preacher had planted himself at the gates, to greet, I presume, our approach, and not to disturb our deliberations! It happened, however, that the itinerant fanatic was saluted by a rustic divine, who both engaged in a sturdy disputation. It was, I am told, a rich scene, and those who are acquainted with the picture drawn by Le Sage of the powerful lungs, and fierce gesticulations of the Irish disputants of Salamanca, would absolve the ingenious writer from any unfriendly caricature of our national character. While the Methodist preacher was abandoned to such an adversary, the leaders meditated a richer prey, calculating, no doubt, that they would easily scatter the flock, could they but once achieve the flight of the shepherds. They accordingly send a controversial challenge to the prelates—and the disdain with which the communication of the fanatics was treated, inflicted a deadly wound on their pride. The challenge is called respectful, and surely it is the intellect of those individuals alone, that could associate such ideas.

Let us suppose that the Protestant Primate, accompanied by a few other bishops, found it necessary to repair to the diocese of Kilmore, on business connected with the faith or discipline of the Protestant Church—that two or three of those laymen repair to the spot “who are the cankers of a calm world and long peace,” and who, from their bad success in their nautical professions, think themselves qualified to guide the vessel of the Church on the same principle that a Scotchman, named John M‘Cree, mentioned by Sheridan, fancied he must have had a wonderful vocation for tragedy, since he could make no hand of

comedy. Let us suppose that those accompanied by a few more who might have gone through a mock form of ordination, had challenged the prelates to a polemical debate, professing that in tendering such a challenge, they were only anxious for the investigation of truth. I know not how the prelates would have relished such a proposal, or whether the insult of such a communication would have been atoned for in their minds, by any hollow professions of respect which might have been occasionally spread through the letter.

There is, it may be remarked, a disparity in the cases. There is surely some disparity, since in the one case, an appeal to Scripture, before the tribunal of individual reason, would be conformable to the principles by which the Protestant prelates hold the tenure of their faith, and could not be declined without a departure from that covenant on which the Protestant Church was originally founded. They might rebuke, it is true, the insolence of the froward children who would presume to arraign the authority of their parent. They might—but the rebuke would recal the memory of an older and more venerable, and more authorative church, reproaching with the like schism and disobedience, the authors of the *Reformation*, and it would realize the observation of the wise man, that the disobedience of a son to a parent, is sure to be avenged by the rebellion of more unnatural children.

Not so the Catholic bishops. Their refusal of such a discussion could recal no act of disobedience by which they forfeited that authority with which the apostle commands his disciples to preach, and which has descended to them by hereditary succession, “knowing of whom they learn,” what “is committed to them,” and anxious “to commend the same to faithful men who shall be set to teach others.” “For, they enquire of former generations, and search diligently into the memory of the fathers, following the advice of the Lord to the prophet,—they stand on the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, which is the good way, and walk in it.” It is not to be imagined, that those who have continued to tread each others footsteps, from the time of the Redeemer, in the same old uniform path, would go out of their way to meet every straggler. Is it to be imagined that his Grace, Doctor Curtis, the Catholic Primate of all Ireland, the venerable successor of St. Patrick, would so forget the “dignity of his age, and his ancient years, and the inbred honor of his grey head,” as to fling the sacred deposit of faith, which has been entrusted to him, into the public streets, and then scramble for a share of it, with a parcel of individuals who are anxious for the inheritance only, that they may scatter it to the winds of heaven. These ideas are not offered by way of apology, for declining such a contest—that they have been always the sen-

timents of the present writer, will appear from a resolution entered into long before our journey to Cavan, by the clergy of Killala, and in which, with the rest of the meeting, he expressed his acquiescence.

That the unauthorized teachers, who go about tendering challenges to the Catholic bishops, express another feature of the picture which the apostle draws of the impostors of future times, “speaking swelling words of vanity,” that if they are anxious to signalize their theological prowess in an episcopal contest—there are other prelates whose religion is more recent, and, perhaps, more vulnerable; but that for any of the Catholic bishops to descend from his apostolical seat to compete with such fanatics, would betray no less folly than for the monarch of these realms to parley with any pretender to his throne; and that as well might the rights and features of England’s legitimate heir have been formerly recognized in the wandering impostor, Perkin Warbeck, as the character of Christ’s genuine followers be discovered in those errant orators, who pretend to the exclusive inheritance of Christ’s kingdom.

Lest, however, it should be imagined that we shrink from that grave and deliberate discussion, which would be likely to be productive of any advantages, should his present Majesty, adopting the policy of Honorius, command the bishops of that Church of which he is the head, to meet the Catholic bishops in conference, such as was held at Carthage, in the time of St. Augustine, between the Catholic and Donatist bishops, for the purpose of restoring peace to the Church; I have very little doubt of the disposition of the Catholic prelates of the present day, to follow the example of their predecessors on that occasion. With no less alacrity would they unfold the arguments of their faith, could they calculate on a reciprocal disposition to follow the light of conviction, and with no less sincerity would they welcome into the unity of the Church of Christ, those who were a long time straying from its bosom. But I had almost forgotten that the schism of the Donatists was comparatively recent; that it was not on that account so difficult to be healed, since time had not yet confirmed its inveteracy; that they were not strongly held to their opinions by those temporal ties which it is difficult to sunder without a wrench of the human feelings; and that the errors of their system had not struck such deep root as to wind themselves round every object of ambition—nay, to be intertwined with the very texture of the civil polity.

Doubtless, the courtly prelates of the Establishment would scarcely venture to stake the valuable possession of their faith on the issue of such a conference. Truth is a fine theme for declamation; and the reformed faith is a specious phrase to those who are amused by unmeaning sounds. But though the beauty

of truth may be heightened by panegyric, still I suspect that among those who are most lavish of its praise, there is but little of that generous stoicism which would embrace it without some temporal dowry. It requires a steadier eye than many are blessed with to view with equal indifference two churches—(I confess the inaccuracy of the phrase), one of which is clouded by poverty, and the other dazzling with the splendour of its honours ; and it requires a steadier hand than all possess evenly to poise the scales of controversy, while the gold of the sanctuary, heavier than the sword of Brennus, would be found to cast the trembling balance on one side.

What ! should the possessors of the princely revenues of the Church established by law, meet the bishops of a religion which the State has disowned ? Were the conference to turn on their claims or titles to such possessions, doubtless they ought to regard it as an illegitimate intrusion on their rights, and treat it with the same disdain with which the Catholic prelates treated the proposed conference, regarding their spiritual privileges. The question turns not upon titles or temporalities, but the purity of the Christian religion of which such possessions are no criterion. If the orthodoxy of a church were to be measured by the gorgeous establishment of its ministers, doubtless, the Church of England would be the purest and most orthodox portion of the Church of Christ. But history has taught us, that heretical conventicles sometimes found favour in the sight of kings. If, for example, such a conference had been proposed between St. Athanasius and the Catholic bishops on one side, and George of Cappadocia, and the other Arian bishops on the other, whom imperial favour seated on their thrones, the flatterers of courts, and the friends of ascendancy would have been indignant at any comparison between the orthodoxy of two classes, the one of whom owed their elevation to the will of Constantine, and the other was acknowledged bishop by the Church which the law proscribed. Yet with a few years, George and Eusebius, and their associates, passed away, confounded with the preceding sectaries, while Athanasius—the superstitious, the heterodox, and the idolatrous Athanasius (for even then, the Catholics were accused of idolatry, for worshiping the Son of God by the professors of the pure, and scriptural, and reformed creed of Arianism), Athanasius emerged from the cloud of all those errors, and is revered as an orthodox bishop, even by those who charge the Catholic bishops now with a similar idolatry.

Strange as such conduct may appear, it is not difficult to account for it. These ancient Catholics cannot now interfere with the temporal interests of others. The grave has long since closed upon them ; and, since their errors are become harmless, there is no danger in the admission of their orthodoxy. Hence,

their faith may be praised, nay, their sepulchres may be whitened. But as for their successors, they unfortunately inherit the same superstition and idolatry which made the others obnoxious during life, and must therefore pay the forfeit of their errors. They are idolatrous in the respect with which they worship the Constitution ; they are impious in endeavouring to share in the infinite value of Christ's atonement, by virtue and good works ; they are infidels, because they deny the infallibility of contradictory creeds, and those who kindly undertake the purgation of their faith by the ordeal of temporal penalties, fancy they may atone for any severity towards the children, by praising the religion, and building the monuments of their ancestors.

Before I conclude this letter, I must do the agents of proselytism at Cavan, the justice to acknowledge they have been the benefactors of religion in the diocese of Kilmore, and should be entitled to the thanks of the Catholics, were it not that their lofty and disinterested virtue disdains the idea of merit of any kind : even the subordinate merit of co-operating with the grace of God. We shall not, therefore, distress their humility by the acknowledgment of our obligations ; since, with all their frauds, and bribery, and corruption, they were but passive instruments which the plastic hand of the Almighty moulded to his own wise purposes.

But the Reformation still continues. If it has not been entirely arrested, it cannot be denied that its career has been considerably checked ; and many of those who strove to feed their intellects with the husks of error, are returning again to be filled with that truth which satisfies every craving, and which is to be found alone in the home of their father which they abandoned. We did not expect to extinguish the Reformation, since we did not expect to pluck the passions out of the human heart, or to defeat the predictions of the apostle. St. Paul has said, "There must be heresies, that they also who are reproved may be manifest among you ;" and this manifestation has contributed to the purity of the Church. What ! heresy become an instrument of the Reformation of the Church. Yes, like an acid that disengages substances that hitherto were blended—heresy has a similar effect in disengaging error from the pure doctrines with which it was mixed, and *manifesting* by the process of depuration its deformity to the world. Hence, the heresies of which St. Paul speaks, have been but an uniform process of reformation in the Church, opening channels to convey away those impure errors that might infect its "living waters," by resting on its bosom. Such was the first scriptural "reformation" of Simon, which brought out of the Church, those who believed that he was the Trinity ; and that he devolved a portion of his triple prerogatives on Helen, who was at once the partner of his revelations

and his vices. Such was the scriptural "reformation" of Menander, "who, creeping into houses, led captive silly women, laden with sins," because he promised them that his baptism would be a charm against death, converting them into so many Hebes, blooming with eternal youth and immortality. Such was the pure and scriptural "reformation" of Marcion, who restored health and soundness to the body that remained, by carrying with him the corrupt and imputed members that would infect the entire, by mixing with the purity of the Christian religion, the superstitions of Zoroaster. Such was the scriptural "reformation" of Arius, who *manifested* to the faithful, all those whose reason could not comprehend the mysterious divinity of the word. Such was the pure "reformation" of Nestorius, who purged the Church of all those whose piety and reason were equally shocked at the unscriptural doctrine of calling the Son of Mary, the Son of God. Such was the pure and holy "reformation" of the Gnostics, who carried off from defiling the Church, those who indulged in an indiscriminate concubinage, because they believed marriage to be abominable. Such, not to pursue further, the dark and fleeting errors of the more ancient reformers, was the "reformation" of Huss, who separated from the Church, and *manifested* those who measured the authority of princes and of pontiffs, by the degree of grace with which they were invested; thus, converting every Christian into a Brutus, who, since grace—the only title of legitimacy—is always invisible, would be constantly ridding the world of its rulers, who would all become synonymous with the tyrants of the earth. Such was the scriptural "reformation" of Luther, who purged the Church of all those who believed that, by good works "they were offering an affront to the spirit of grace." Such, the "reformation" of Calvin, who *manifested* by separating them, those who believed that by no immorality could they forfeit the gift of justification; and thus gave an unchecked rein to the indulgence of their vices. Such was the "reformation" wrought in England under Henry, through the instrumentality of Cranmer and his corrupt associates, *manifesting* those who were the slaves of the vilest passions; and such, in fine, was the kindred "reformation" of Cavan, of which the agents, like another Menander, "were leading captive silly women laden with sins," and illustrating the lessons of immorality which were taught by every such preceding "reformation."

It is by those outlets of heresy, carrying off all the peccant humors by which the health of the Church would be endangered, it is often reformed. The errors that would have brooded on its surface are removed and set apart by the working of that spirit which first moved over the abyss, and divided the confines of light from the shore of darkness. This conflict between truth and error—between vice and virtue—shall not cease; it was

shadowed in the adverse principles of Ormuyd and Ahriman, feigned in the Persian theology, and is realized in the incessant warfare with which the Catholic Church keeps aloof from its confines, those agents of darkness who would extinguish the light, and disturb the order of its peaceful dominions. Let then, the sectaries continue to boast of those reformations of which they are such sad examples, being the channels through which the Church is relieved, and purified from every species of complaint.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA,

LETTER XXXV.

BALLINA, 1827.

IN the last number of the *Quarterly Review*, just published, an article has appeared, purporting to be "A Review of the Report of the Commissioners of Education regarding the College of Maynooth." The title which the article bears is but a thin and awkward disguise, by which the author would fain conceal the treachery of his purpose.

Though called a review on the College of Maynooth, it is nothing else than a political manœuvre, artfully contrived, in the present posture of our affairs, to prejudice the Catholic question. Long and frequent use had now worn out the ancient topics of accusation and reproach. The dispensing and deposing power of the Popes, together with the Councils of Constance and of Lateran, were so often drawled before the public, through the stupid medium of some journals, or the more stupid speeches of certain members of parliament, that no reasoning could stimulate the palled and sated appetite of the public to relish their repetition.

Something, however, must be done ; and since the old ingredients have lost their powers to charm, a new one, quite fresh from the College of Maynooth, is flung into the political cauldron, over which it is not difficult to descry a solemn spectral form, exercising his nocturnal vigils, and preparing, with all the art of the sorcerers in Shakspeare, the materials of his composition, that he may fuddle the heads of all who may partake of the magic potion. The author could not disguise his identity or his fears. The priests and forty-shilling freeholders are continually disturbing his imagination and repose. They have already nearly annihilated his political existence ; and if the countenance be an index of the sadness of his heart, "a vision of the night has more than once whispered through the veins of his ears," that at the next election the priests and freeholders shall achieve its utter extinction.

The author, I am told, is an adept in chemistry as well as statistics ; and fancying, no doubt, that, passing through the alembic of his mind, they should derive fresh qualities from their admixture with the new ingredient, he has again introduced the dispensations of oaths and vows, and the illimitable

authorities of Popes and Councils—not forgetting what the British monarch has to fear from the disciples of Ignatius—and concluding by warning all loyal Protestants against the spirit that animates the breasts and writings of “J. K. L.” and “Hierophilos”!! One quality, indeed, is discernible in the composition—the singular confusion with which the materials are huddled together. It is only right, however, to disengage them, that the public may perceive the pure malignity of a writer, who, like the bee of Trebizon, extracts but poison from the flower on which all others gather sweets, and labours to communicate the same poison to every subject which he touches.

In a letter already addressed to the public, through the *Morning Chronicle*, I have vindicated the College of Maynooth from some of the attacks which are again renewed by the *Quarterly Review*. The *Courier* was, probably, content with the reply; and hence his forbearance in pressing the same charges. The reviewer is quite offended at the austere and gloomy character of the College discipline. I believe him sincere. No doubt his heart would mutiny against the moral restraints which the Gospel and the Catholic religion impose. With all their affectation of reverence for Scripture, the lofty counsels of the Redeemer were never the favourite maxims of the Reformers. He is, indeed, pleased to add, that were the students trained according to his notions, we should be blessed with a more *tolerant* priesthood.* What a pity that a small infusion from the reviewer’s enchanted draught is not poured into their education; then we should have a more tolerant Catholic priesthood. Yes; we should have a priesthood tolerant of every error in belief, and of every folly in practice—tolerant of the vices of the great, and of the sufferings with which the poor are afflicted—tolerant of the making of freeholders without a freehold, and of the perjuries to which the peasantry were forced by their landlords—whilst truth, and justice, and humanity should be the only things that could never experience their amiable toleration.

Not to dwell longer on the discipline of Maynooth, I shall next direct the reader’s attention to its doctrines, as far as they regard the authority of Councils and of Popes, commencing with the dispensing power, which is the most formidable in the mind of the reviewer, as it haunts his fancy through the entire of his lucubration. On this subject he charitably insinuates that Dr. MacHale is of opinion, that almost every possible case comes within the compass of the Pope’s power of dispensation.† Yet, Dr. MacHale distinctly states—“But if these are paramount obligations, founded on natural law or the divine law, and which are clearly impressed upon every mind, then we never entertain

* *Review*, page 460.

† *Review*, page 480.

the question of dispensation, because we know that neither bishop nor Pope, nor any power on earth, whatever utility could be derived to the Church, can attempt to release a person from an oath confirming those obligations.”* I shall forbear any comment on the reviewer’s statement. The reader may form his opinion of his regard to truth and candour. Lest the single expression of his opinion should not be sufficient, to Dr. MacHale is put the following interrogatories:—“ If a person took an oath, the fulfilment of which would be injurious to the temporal interests of the Church, would that be held so far to militate against the utility of the Church as to be a sufficient cause for dissolving the obligation of it ? ” To which he replies—“ It would not be a sufficient cause ; because the temporal interests of the Church is a matter of secondary importance, compared to the obligation of an oath, which binds us to the Almighty.”† And, again (for the edifying patience of the commissioners could endure the endless repetition of the same questions and replies)—“ Were a prince to be considered as great a benefactor of the Church as Constantine was, she could not grant him a dispensation that would absolve him from an oath or vow, which ratified, by calling God to witness, a previously subsisting obligation.”‡

After the evidence with which parliament was already furnished regarding the Catholic doctrine, concerning the dispensing power of the Popes, one would imagine that the commissioners might forbear from trying the temper of their witnesses on a doctrine which is attested by proofs the most unequivocal—the conduct of seven millions of people. “ Catholics cannot define, forsooth,” observes the reviewer, “ the cases to which the dispensing power may be applied.”§ Are not those cases as definable—nay, as tangible, as the barriers that shut out Catholics from the British constitution ? Are not the oaths which would fit them for offices of honour and emolument, oaths from whose obligation the Pope could not absolve them ? Had the Catholics of Ireland shown more pliancy on the subject of oaths—had they, like Cranmer, the detestable duplicity of protesting in a corner against the oath which he was publicly to swear—had they the courage to encounter the scruples which the late Lord Londonderry and others confessed they felt in taking the oaths which qualified them for place, the reviewer would not be insulting them with the imputation of doctrines which he knows they do not hold. To what do the Protestants of Ireland owe their ascendancy, but to the reverence of the Catholics for their oaths ? And, had that one fence been removed by the all-powerful influence of the Roman Pontiff, the

* Appendix to the Report of the Commissioners, page 284.

† Appendix, page 285. ‡ Appendix, page 287.

§ Review, page 481.

influx of Catholic members and Catholic talent into places of trust and emolument would sink their present occupants to their original obscurity.

The reviewer, not content with imputing such opinions to Dr. MacHale, in direct opposition to the language of his own evidence, insinuates (for he affects to fear a libel, should he openly declare it) that he availed himself of this doctrine, in publishing the letters of "Hierophilos." With regard to a libel, I can solemnly assure him, that he shall never be prosecuted on a charge the truth of which he is able to substantiate. We have no apprehension that he should publish the truth to the world; and we pledge ourselves that we shall never shield our characters behind a doctrine, as convenient as constitutional, that truth is a libel. But though he may publish the truth with impunity, his falsehoods must not go without exposure. Dr. MacHale never took an oath to the observance of the statutes of the College, nor was such an oath ever tendered to him to be taken. Yet, on a falsehood of his own invention, this dastardly writer imputes to him the violation of an oath which had no existence save in the reviewer's mind.

By a real or affected aberration of intellect, the writer here confounds the College of Maynooth with Trinity College. In the statutes of that University there is a form of oath prescribed to the Fellows, by which they bind themselves to their observance. I shall not say nor insinuate that this oath was always administered to the Fellows of the College, since it would involve an imputation, which I should not cast upon any individual or body of men without evidence, which the reviewer did not give himself the trouble of acquiring respecting the College of Maynooth. Among the statutes there is one rather of a Popish nature, prohibiting the Fellows from marrying, under the penalty of expulsion. Waving, however, the question about the oath, which was not probably annexed to the original statutes, the statute to which I have just alluded has been frequently violated—I will not say by archbishops and bishops, for I am kindly accused by the reviewer of believing that the Protestant bishops are only laymen; but, comparing the age of some of the children of the high dignitaries of the Establishment with the period of their Fellowship, it will be found that some of their children were born unto them whilst in the University; and, to avoid any other supposition, which a respect for those individuals should forbid us to entertain, we must suppose that those children were born in wedlock, and, of course, in violation of the statute of the College. Yet, against this long-continued violation of statutes—which, I suppose, is now at an end—not a whisper is heard from the hypocrites, who loudly clamour against the publication of letters, because the author did not mention a circum-

stance which every body knew, to the President of the College. Perhaps, the reviewing sages are of opinion with Luther, that the law against marriage is a law against nature, and from which every individual has a right to look for a dispensation. And, probably, they are of opinion, that it is more in accordance with the spirit of academic institutions to engage in furtive marriages than to indulge in the pursuits of literature and illustrate the truths of religion.

But Dr. MacHale, in his evidence, observes the reviewer, admits and justifies every expression of his writings. He thanks him for the candid acknowledgment. Yes, his motto is never to put to paper a single line which he should wish to erase; and the Bishop shrinks not from the adoption of the earlier opinions of the Professor of Maynooth. He protests, however, against the turn given to those opinions by the reviewer, since the truth itself would appear ugly through so distorting a medium. According to the *Review*, he gives no titles to our prelates. On the contrary, he has, with unsparing profusion, heaped on them the titles of Lordships and of Graces, well knowing that those are titles which his Majesty can confer at pleasure. If he has doubted of their episcopal character, as it is understood in a theological sense, the reviewer, he trusts, will compassionate his involuntary scepticism, unless he demonstrates that his Majesty is also the source from which an episcopal character is derived.

A question is put by one of the commissioners to Dr. MacHale, regarding his inward and unpublished opinions, which would appear revolting to the advocates of the inquisition at Madrid or at Rome. Yet this advocate of freedom wonders why Doctor MacHale should not reveal his whole mind, instead of checking such unwarrantable interrogatories, by remarking, "that the question regarded interior sentiments, and that human tribunals only judge of external actions and opinions." This reply, which was but a gentle and just reproof to the petulance of delegated office, is made a text for much invidious and mysterious commentary! It was not reluctantly extorted, since the commissioners are aware that, to consult their own dignity, they found it necessary to erase the next reply, which reminded them that they outstepped the limits of their jurisdiction, in questioning him about sentiments contained in his subsequent productions. Strange insolence of man! to be indignant at the reverence which Catholics feel for the most venerable authority upon earth, and yet, with his brief portion of secondary trust, to attempt to exercise an inquisitorial power of ransacking the human heart, which the first authority on earth would not assume.

It would be impossible in the short compass of a letter fully to expose the manifest inconsistencies of the *Review*. In three subsequent pages he lays down three positions regarding the four

propositions, termed the Gallican Liberties :—“The second insists on the supremacy of General Councils over Popes.”* “The doctrine respecting Councils, taught by the Professors of Maynooth, is, we think, that Councils are superior to the Pope.”† “We have, consequently, been surprised to find that the policy of that (the Irish) Church has uniformly tended to support the Transalpine Doctrines.”‡ Spirit of the Stagyrite! are the laws of reasoning, as well as religion, subjected to the new reformation? What a profound specimen of logic, to draw from a proposition which forms the extreme point of the Gallican liberties, the opposite conclusion of Transalpine doctrines!! To Doctor MacHale, in his evidence on this subject, the reviewer gives the merit of being fair and explicit. If, then, his testimony was fair, what must we think of the reviewer, who charges the College with the inculcation of Transalpine doctrines, since Doctor MacHale declares, “that, aloof from the influence of those motives that might have swayed the Continental schools, the College of Maynooth, content with following the straight line of defined doctrine, adopted neither the Cisalpine nor the Transalpine opinions?”

But the writer had an evident object in view, since he wished to frighten his readers again with the ghost of John Huss, as well as the terrors of the Vatican. The death of the Bohemian martyr would not appear sufficiently tragical were it not brought about by the influence of the chief authority in the Catholic Church. And hence his view, in speaking of this subject, to exalt the power of General Councils. But, again, when he introduces the Roman Pontiffs shaking the world with their spiritual thunders, the controlling authority of Councils utterly disappears, and the Pope is left alone to rule the world by his mere arbitrary fiat. But such artifices have lost their force. The days of the Dueignans and the Lethbridges are gone by; and should Leslie Foster, who would fill up the worthy triumvirate, attempt in parliament the wretched pantomime of exhibiting the spectre of John Huss upon the stage, the nerves of a Brougham or a Burdett would remain unmoved, or, rather, they should be shaken with laughter at his ludicrous attempts to rouse such strange apparitions by his oratorical galvanism.

The efforts of any other orator shall be equally unavailing to excite any apprehension of the Pope, “that harmless old man,” to use a phrase of Burke’s, “whose name brings such terror to the minds of old and young children.” Occupied in the temporal government of his own territories, as well as the spiritual concerns of the whole Church, he leaves the care of their dominions to their respective sovereigns. But, according to the

* *Review*, page 471.

† *Review*, page 473.

‡ *Review*, page 472.

sapient remarks of the reviewer, his temporal power may not be *dead*, but *dormant*. If so, the improvements of centuries should be again annihilated, and the human mind recast in another mould, before that *dormant* power shall again revive; unless, indeed, we suppose that, like the Giant Malagisa, in the “Orlando,” who was conjured into a deep slumber, the Magog of the Seven Hills has been charmed into a similar repose, where he sleeps in quiet, until the time fixed by the destinies shall arrive, when a chosen champion of Ireland, and who must be a member of the Catholic Association, shall repair to Rome, and, with three touches of his wand, awaken the sleeping giant to the consciousness of life and the exercise of universal empire.

Such, Sir, are the leading topics that have been discussed by this learned reviewer, who is so well skilled in theological science as to talk of Catholics believing in the *inspiration* of General Councils! If I have dwelt more at length on the subject of “Hierophilos,” you will not be surprised, since the writer deems it so important as almost to merit a separate review. With regard to the President and Professors of the College of Maynooth, I hope, with Mr. O’Connell, that the *Review* shall have the effect of attracting public attention to their evidence, in the Report of the Commissioners, where it shall appear full, consistent, and satisfactory, and such as to reflect the highest credit on their characters and their acquirements. The College of Maynooth was made to pass through an ordeal which few such institutions could sustain, and its reputation, far from suffering by its heat, has come out more burnished by its activity.

I have not stopped for the present to canvass the legitimate claims of the reviewers to the high office of censorship which they assumed. I, too, shall, probably, soon take another opportunity of “reviewing the reviewers,” and showing that, like other mock personages, much of their importance is derived from the histrionic illusion that hides their real dimensions, whilst they appear on the public stage wielding the sceptre of criticism, and promulgating their decrees on science and on literature.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO LORD BEXLEY.

BALLINA, NOVEMBER, 1828.

MY LORD—These are strange times ; nor is it the least strange of the features, which characterize them to see with what recklessness of their dignity the peers of the realm are rushing into print, and becoming ambitious candidates of ridicule. Heretofore they seemed to have adopted the Persian maxim of investing themselves with reverence, by keeping aloof from the ranks of the people. If they were not great men, the secret of their littleness was only known to their valet de chambre ; nor did they rashly exhibit themselves abroad, if they did not possess those hardy qualities which are proof against public collisions. Rely on it, my Lord, the people take delight in those exhibitions of Aristocratic intellect, as it gives them an opportunity of measuring the relative distance between it and their own. *The Morning Chronicle*, which conveyed to me Lord Bexley's letter, contained another of William Cobbett's on the opposite side, and surely no reader has failed to remark how the puny production of the peer shrinks before the strong and simple energy of the man of the people. With the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Kenyon, your Lordship fills up the triumvirate of literature. Lords Farnham, and Lorton, and Winchilsea are doubtless panting for the honour of digesting in plates of brass, the laws of the Constitution. Lords Wicklow and Roden must contribute their share to the labour, nor shall they cease to associate to their body all the writing peers of the land, until they complete the number of Decemvirs—a combination equally ominous to the liberties of the country.

It is difficult to compress within appropriate limits the refutation of your address, since, with a lofty disregard of all the unities of time and place, and persons, your Lordship's excursive fancy ranged over every topic that could minister to the prejudices of the public mind.

The Catholic Association is the first object that provokes your rage. I am not surprised. It is too mighty an object to escape notice, and it is every day assuming a more imposing attitude, and larger dimensions. To annihilate or dissolve such a formidable body, is the problem by which the great council of the nation

has been singularly perplexed. There are only two ways—force or conciliation. The first has been already tried, as if to read a lecture of wisdom to the advocates of coercion. But scarce was it dissolved, when its sullen and mutinous elements again rushed to the same centre, and constituted another association, which has exceeded the former, as well in the closer compactness of all its parts, as in the more extensive sphere of its attraction. Force can have no other effect than that of binding the members of the association more firmly together. It is only the warmth of legislative favour alone that can so dissolve them as to defy their future coalition.

The college of Maynooth next comes in for the honour of your enmity. The classification shows that your mind is not utterly destitute of arrangement, as the Catholic clergy are strenuous advocates for the final pacification of the country. But what is the amount of the offending of the college? Why, truly that it continues to teach the unchangeable doctrines of the Catholic Church! The great political sin of its professors consists in this, that a sense of gratitude for a sum of money, which is but a paltry pittance in the Government expenditure, has not so subdued their minds, as to make them traitors to the rights and religion of the Catholic people. In becoming members of the college of Maynooth, its students never convenanted to surrender the pure faith of their fathers. Indeed your Lordship does not mean to insinuate that the college grant should be withheld on account of the report of the Commissioners of Education. Surely we ought to thank you for such a sentiment; nor are we sorry that Mr. Vansittart is no longer the dispenser of the public treasury.

It is not from a compliment to the Catholic people, the Government has ever granted money for Catholic purposes. It is from policy—and it is to this policy we shall be indebted for the continuance of such grants, if not for their augmentation. It is not the interest of Government to throw back the peasantry into the ignorance from which they are rescued by the labours of the Catholic clergy. It is not the interest of Government to let those passions loose upon society which are restrained by the controul of the Catholic priesthood. It is wiser, as well as more economical to expend a few thousand pounds upon the men who are keeping the people quiet, than millions upon those who are striving to inflame them with a religious and political frenzy. And, my Lord, I assert without fear of contradiction, that the Maynooth grant does more in the moral improvement of Ireland, than the enormous mass of money which is swallowed up by the Army, the Church Establishment, and the countless Bible and Vice-Suppressing societies all together.

But still the people of England are taxed to the amount of

nine or ten thousand pounds a year, for the purpose of maintaining professors to teach the Roman Catholics of Ireland, that in some cases a priest, in others, a bishop, and in all the Pope, can release them from their sins, their vows, their oaths! And then you add, or rather premise, such is the doctrine laid down in the class book of the college. But why, my Lord, did you not descend to inform the honest freeholders of Kent, under what circumstances, and with what qualifications, could such a power be legitimately exercised. No, it did not suit your purpose. It was enough if your Lordship could frighten John Bull into a horror for popery, by an ugly phantom of your own creation. Could your Lordship not lay before them the following sentence of the report* alluded to in your address, and which is extracted from a Catholic prayer-book, now before me, entitled "True Piety?"—"It is a fundamental truth in our religion, that no power on earth can license men to lie, to forswear, or perjure themselves, to massacre their neighbours, or destroy their native country, in pretence of promoting the Catholic cause or religion. Furthermore, all pardons or dispensations granted or pretended to be granted, in order to any such ends or designs, could have no other validity or effect than to add sacrilege and blasphemy to the above-mentioned crimes." Here is an extract from a popular and an extensively read prayer-book, compiled by one of the most venerable prelates of the Irish Church, and approved by the adoption of the rest; and yet, instead of exhibiting it to enlighten the ignorance, and conciliate the good will of the English people, you draw some dark and imperfect outlines of your own, leaving the rest to be filled up by their furious prejudices. Why not put in juxtaposition our doctrine on oaths with that of Sanderson, a Protestant professor in the University of Oxford, and afterwards bishop of Lincoln? No, the resemblance between both would disabuse the men of Kent of their errors, and make them conclude that they were imposed upon by the interested views of lords who labour to divide the people in order to profit by their dissensions. The Catholics of these times are still doomed to the same savage treatment which was inflicted on the Catholics in the time of Tacitus. Now, through the calumnies of their enemies, as then through the fury of their persecutors, they must be clothed in the skins of wild beasts; now, as well as then, must they be covered with pitch, not only to blacken them before the public, but to make them fit objects for the brand to be flung at; and now, as well as then, must they be exhibited with this hideous caricature, in order to be hunted down by the public execration.

Of all the topics of reproach which are urged by Protestants

against Catholics, none has surprised me more than that regarding oaths and dispensations. Is it because numbers swear a religion to be damnable and idolatrous, of which they never studied an iota, we must give them credit for a most sensitive reverence for oaths ? Be assured of it, my Lord, that of those who intrepidly swear to the idolatry of the Catholic religion, there are some who would curse with a similar oath the thirty-nine articles, if the orthodox loaves and fishes of the mosque of Mahomet were to reward the seasonable change in their religious convictions. You are not ignorant how little of religion animated the great actors in what is called the Reformation. Your Lordship is not ignorant with what dexterity they accommodated their fluctuating creeds to the incessant shifting of the political fortunes of England ; and how the same persons were prepared with the same lips to bless as orthodox, or to stigmatize as heretical, the same identical opinions. While the Catholics of Ireland have cheerfully submitted to the slow tortures of a political ordeal, on account of the reverence which they feel for an oath, no doubt some of the lookers on were as much surprised at the prodigy of their fortitude or their folly, as the Carthaginians, who secretly mocked the sufferings of Regulus. To sound, then, this mysterious subject to the bottom, the apprehension is not that the Catholics feel no reverence for an oath ; but the apprehension of the Brunswickers, and the borough-mongers, and the monopolists of all classes, is lest the Catholics should lose that reverence, and thus share in the spoil from which they are excluded. There is, then, a sentiment which may be appropriately added to those which are already so loudly toasted amidst the Orange orgies, and which, no doubt, will be rapturously cheered by every loyal supporter of the Protestant constitution !!

May all the Papists of Ireland continue to be as much the dupes to their reverence for an oath, as were their Popish ancestors !

But though such a sentiment might be echoed by the hypocrites who turn religion into an instrument of faction, it will not be relished by that sound portion of the Protestant community, who can view the most hard-hearted selfishness lurking under the guise of a regard for the constitution. The people of England are beginning to be sensible how often they have been imposed upon by such hollow pretensions. As liberty was often the stalking-horse of the little tyrants of Greece, religious liberty is become the stalking-horse of the aristocratical faction of Britain. But the eyes of the people are almost opened to these delusions. They know how the unprincipled Somerset could erect palaces out of the ruins of churches, under pretence of abolishing every vestige of idolatry ;—they know how Henry kept a succession of concubines, while the people were persuaded

that all this was done in order to protect the purity of the Levitical law against the abominations of the Scarlet Lady of Rome ;—they know how their ancestors were burdened with poor rates, while the Lords, who were frightening them with the terrors of Popery, were, at the same time, pocketing the wealth of the monasteries. They know all this, nor will they suffer themselves to be cajoled any longer by saintly Lords, who would burthen them with fresh imposts, whilst they amuse them with the shadow of a constitution, of which they reserve the benefits to themselves.

Another article of impeachment against the Catholics of Ireland is, that Dr. Crotty justified the Council of Constance in the execution of John Huss, and that Dr. MacHale wrote a series of letters against the Protestant Establishment. I am at a loss to know why the Catholics of Ireland should suffer for such high misdemeanors. But Dr. Crotty holds his place, though guilty, by his sanction of the sentence, of the murder of John Huss ; and Dr. MacHale, instead of being removed from the College, as he deserved, for daring to attack the majesty of the Established Church, was rewarded with a bishopric. Why, really, those letters contained the very milk of human kindness, compared to the burning lava which has been since poured upon the devoted heads of the parsons and the Establishment. Instead, therefore, of censure, I ought to have been thanked for the charity of my forbearance. But the great crime was, that the professor of theology was attacking the Established Church behind the masked battery of “ Hierophilos.” In vindication, he must say, that none of those masked assaults were half so serious as those which were avowed with his name ; and, again, that the signature of “ Hierophilos” became like a German mask, which is worn by known personages, in order to avoid the inconvenience of recognition. A Rev. Mr. Philpot, or the Quarterly Reviewer, pretends not to understand any distinction between a real and an assumed signature. Perhaps, I may furnish them with an appropriate illustration. The Fellows of Trinity College were forbidden to marry under the pain of expulsion. However, they interpreted Genesis like Luther, and defied the laws of the College. Were they removed ? No ; because no lady assumed the name of the Fellow to whom she was allied. It was a matter of notoriety that such a one was the wife of such a Fellow ; but he eluded the requisition of the law, on account of her anonymous, or, rather, heteronymous, appellation. Until of late this serious and important statute was constantly violated. With your Lordship, I will ask, were these Fellows expelled ? And, with your Lordship, I shall answer—No. But one of them was raised to a bishopric, to insult the faith and exasperate the feelings of millions, who are taxed to minister to the pride, and

pomp, and luxury of men, who, under the blasphemed name of the God of peace are shaking the country by their political fanaticism.

To conclude this letter, I admit with your Lordship that the question is—whether the Catholics are equally entitled with the Protestants to all the benefits of the constitution? On this one point, then, we come to close issue. For me, though nurtured in the schools of arbitrary and Popish doctrines, I have learned that no human authority has a right to control the dictates of conscience, or to punish, by penal enactments, religious sentiments, which war not with our obligations to the state. These are the sentiments I have been taught, and these are the sentiments by which our fitness for civil offices ought to be estimated. We are not to be judged by the criterion fixed by your Lordship, namely, the doctrines that were considered hostile to the Government—doctrines that are considered hostile!! We must protest against this criterion, whilst it is left to every monopolising peer to fix its fluctuating meaning.

Your Lordship, no doubt, would *consider* the Pope's purely spiritual supremacy an hostile doctrine. The Duke of Newcastle would *consider* the belief of the real presence a most formidable tenet. The invocation of saints would make Lord Lorton *consider* that we were invoking legions from heaven to dispossess him of his estates; and, in short, every principle of the Roman Catholics would be *considered* dangerous, whilst it was known that the monopoly of the few was to be shared among the many.

It is high time that the empyries in politics should resign their trade, and that Ireland should be at length subjected to a process that will restore her to soundness and to strength. Without Emancipation, she will be feeble, and a burden to the empire. Not that Emancipation will heal all her evils—assuredly no. It is only the first step in the process of her regeneration. Other measures for her relief must follow in due course, until some powerful minister, backed by the co-operation of the entire country, shall arise, and apply his Herculean strength to the purging and re-forming of the Establishiment.

In the meantime, Emancipation must be obtained. It must be generously given, in order to be thankfully received. It is not to be encumbered with any conditions that may be considered as nets for the religion of the people. The people of England are jealous of their civil and religious liberty. The Catholics of Ireland are equally jealous of theirs. Your Lordship talks of concordats, and introduces the different states of Europe. There is no necessity for such a remote reference. England wants strength; Ireland requires tranquillity. Let the negotiation be, therefore, carried on with a view to their mutual

political advantages, without any insidious attempts on the religion of either. The Catholic religion can be made a useful ally to the State; but it is only when its profession is unshackled, and its ministers are beyond the reach of any sinister political control.

I have the honour to be, your Lordship's obedient servant.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE PROTESTANT ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

BALLINA, FEBRUARY 10, 1830.

MY LORD—It appears from the public prints that your Grace has been lately exercising your pastoral zeal, in writing to your clergy, to carry on a mission among the Roman Catholics; and if the copy of the circular be genuine, it is a production that evinces no ordinary spirit. It was fondly imagined that a benevolent legislature had succeeded in stilling the angry spirit of controversy by which the land was so long shaken, and the appearance of the olive branch was hailed as a presage of mutual conciliation. But, whilst the Government brings peace, your Grace seems to imagine that the sword is a more befitting badge for the ministers of religion; and hence you seize once more your theological trumpet, to arouse the sentinels of Israel to vigilance and war.

At any time the letter to which I allude would be considered the production of a mind under the most potent preternatural influences. At present, and with all the difficulties that stare the Establishment in the face, it exhibits the calmest indifference to all earthly consideration. There is no alloy of worldly prudence about your zeal; no cold calculations of the dangers to which the Church is exposed can chill the ardour of your charity. No; whilst the Establishment is now deliberately weighed in the

balance, and the other prelates are watching the legislature with trembling anxiety for what may come to pass ;—whilst Lord Mountcashel, with a warning voice, is turning the public attention to the decayed state of the walls, and wishes to exchange some vain and gilded decorations for Doric pillars, to sustain the tottering edifice ;—whilst Sir John Newport is giving notice that he will submit this important subject to the wisdom of the assembled senate of the empire ;—whilst the pressure of tithes and church-rates is the theme of every theorist, of whatever creed, who reasons on the national distress ;—whilst the Protestant Bishop of Ferns frankly owns that, without the rich harvest of its temporalities, no minister of talent would think it worth while to labour in the vineyard of the Lord ;—whilst, in short, all are under the conviction that the public would be benefitted by a more general distribution of the wealth that is confined in the temple ;—whilst, thus, the temporalities of the Church are the only portion of it in which its friends as well as its foes confess they feel an interest, your Grace is happily free from any disquietude on this subject. No such sordid cares can reach the elevation on which your spiritual abstractions have fixed you. Your heart has no griefs but for the spiritual blindness of the poor Catholics ; and were the Establishment tomorrow shorn of all temporal honours, your Grace would, no doubt, be overwhelmed with joy, could you but extend to the benighted Catholics its spiritual consolations !

But, my Lord, perhaps I do you wrong in thus attributing to you an utter indifference to the world, which might only suit one of the anchorites of old, and to which the sober and sensible spirit of the Protestant religion deems it no merit to aspire. Others of more rational and practical views will be disposed to correct the mistake into which I have fallen, and will probably perceive the deepest craft lurking under the simple guise of religious enthusiasm. Yes ; the Earl of Mountcashel has attracted universal attention to the gorgeous temporalities of the Church, as well as to the enormous disproportion by which they are applied.

Hence your Grace's polemical missive, sent forth at this seasonable juncture as a decoy to divert the public from the substantial game that has been started, to follow in the pursuit of shadowy phantoms. Such artifices will, however, no longer do. Your brand has been flung too late—the pile has been extinguished ere your torch has reached it—and its materials, once so fiery and inflammatory, have lost their qualities of combustion. You may now send forth your missionaries to set Catholics and Protestants against each other. The Catholics and Protestants are too much alive to their own interest to be the victims of such delusion. There was a time when every

town had its missionary menageries—when some controversial curiosity was imported from afar, and carried round the kingdom to amuse the old women of either sex, who thronged together to feast their ears with a foreign dialect, and their eyes with a strange apparition. There was a time when the most ignorant mountebank who raved against Popery could fix the public attention. But the spell that bound the hearers has been at length broken—the film that fascinated their eyes has at length been rubbed off. No illusions of stage effect can blind men any longer to the folly and the mischief of such exhibitions, and so completely palled is the people's taste by their repetition, that if a public advertisement were to announce that your Grace himself, at the head of your missionaries, were to appear striding in stately pomp to the theological theatre, I question whether you could command a sufficient audience to laugh at the solemn mockery.

Making full allowance for the readiness with which your clergy are disposed to obey your Grace's orders, I doubt not but they would prefer staying at home, to take care of their tithes, and their wives and children, rather than risk all the odium of a controversial crusade. They know it is sufficiently burdensome to Catholics to pay them the tenth portion of the fruits of their industry; nor should they like to aggravate the burden by additional reproaches on their religion. Let them, however, go forth; and in putting the two religions in juxtaposition, let them not fail, in addressing the Catholics—who are often without a church to shelter them—to exhibit the blessings of the Law Church, which piously transferred to the wives and daughters of its ministers that wealth which the old Church of Christ had superstitiously expended in the repair and erection of churches, as well as the relief of the poor. Let them go to some of the parishes of your Grace's diocese, in which snug churches have been raised at the expense of an exclusively Catholic population, and let them persuade that population of the advantage of a perpetual church cess entailed on them, for the purpose of providing salaries for a clerk and sexton—perhaps the only relics of the orthodox faith in the whole parish, and who are still deemed so valuable as to require a golden anchorage to keep them from being drifted away to Popery. Let them, on meeting large flocks kneeling before the divine mysteries, with their ample foreheads bared to all the rain and winds of heaven, invite them to fill their own little conventicles, where, in spite of the threatened woes of Ezekiel,* their elbows may repose on cushions, and their devotions may be warmed by the comfortable effusions of a stove. But, my Lord, the parsons

* Ezekiel, xiii, 18.

will not thus expose themselves to the bitter irony of a people, perhaps more famed than any other for an exhaustless strain of sarcastic intelligence ; they will not, for their own sakes, be marked exceptions to the good sense that is pervading all classes of society. There is now no further controversy about the purity of the Protestant Church ; it is all turning on the permanence of its temporalities. All are now agreed that the Establishment is a political machine originally framed by political artificers, since kept together for political motives, and which, like every other machine, as soon as the expense of keeping it in repair shall overbalance its benefits, must be abandoned to a quiet and natural decay.

On this topic there is no room for further disputation, now that a controversy altogether of a different kind has started up in the country ; which is the most effectual method of promoting the prosperity of Ireland, and of uniting more closely all classes of the long-distracted people. Who shall be foremost in exploring its resources ?—in giving vigour to its trade ?—in opening new avenues of industry ?—and consigning to merited contempt all the leaden lore of malignant bigotry by which the minds of the people were so long poisoned ? Yes ; the apostles of discord must at length retire. There is now a rivalry of benevolence—an emulation in labouring for the public good—a contention for advancing a nation's happiness, which all the arts of narrow-minded individuals will not be able to suspend. There is, in short, a great anxiety to bury, by recent acts of kindness, the memory of ancient strife ; and a flow of mutual good feeling, silently working through the country, which all the *odium theologicum* poured forth from your Grace's episcopal vial shall not be able to embitter.

I am your Grace's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL GREY.

BALLINA, APRIL, 29, 1831.

MY LORD—To save the lives of the people is, we are told, a first principle in legislation. If so, and it is unnecessary to refer to ethical jurists for its truth, I need no apology for drawing your Lordship's attention to the melancholy subject of this letter. The office of Prime Minister, which you hold, affords to the humblest of his Majesty's subjects the privilege of some obtrusion on that time which public functionaries have covenanted to devote to public duty. At once the dispenser of the favours of the crown to the people, and the organ of the prayers of the people to the crown, you must naturally wish for that information which may enable your Lordship to discharge the important duties to both, which your high but painful office imposes on you.

Occupied as is your Lordship's mind at this moment, in bringing to a consummation the great measures of Reform, I should forbear the introduction of any other topic which was capable of delay. Instead of embarrassing, it should be the study of every friend to order to aid ministers in carrying a measure, which, if crowned with success, shall reflect the highest lustre on those who had the wisdom to devise, and the courage to achieve, a project so fraught with national good. So unaccustomed has Ireland been to favours, that she hails with more enthusiasm than any other portion of the empire, the prospect of Reform which she is so sparingly to share; and I cannot but feel a pride in the reflection, that her representatives were and shall be among the most efficient in smoothing the progress of a question which the foes of the nation's happiness have striven in vain to retard.

But important as the question of Reform is, the distress that now afflicts, and the famine that menaces, some portions of this country, are still more imperative topics. Reform itself might be adjourned, with safety, for a short time, whereas should the lives of his Majesty's subjects become the victims of starvation, it is a loss which no ulterior measures can retrieve. It is, my Lord, my painful duty to communicate through you to his Majesty's government, that already some lives have become the victims of

this calamity. On last week, having visited a distant parish of this diocese, I learned the afflicting news, that contagion, the effect of want, prevailed to a great extent; that, in one instance, the father, mother, and three children were stretched on the same bed, without a morsel of nourishment, or a penny to procure it, or a human being to go in quest of relief, but as it was administered by the casual visits of some charitable neighbours; and that the first intimation the father received of the death of his wife, was from the lips of the suckling babe being besmeared with the blood, which, instead of milk, it extracted from the breast of its deceased mother! I shall not add a word of comment to a tale of which the simple reality cannot be read without horror. It was a case of fever, to be sure; but it was a fever brought on by want of food, and raiment, and cleanliness, and the other usual appendages of utter destitution.

There are in the same parish, in the union of Crossmolina, at this moment, one hundred and twenty families, who know not how they may be saved from a similar fate. As early as last January, they had an appalling presentiment of the doom which awaited them. Some of them sent a petition to parliament, stating that not only their cattle and oats, but even their last potato was seized for rent; nay, that some of them were locked up on Sunday, and interdicted the consolations of religion by their merciless landlord. Those families are at this moment without cattle, without corn, without a potato, without a penny of money, or any chance of wages; and I met some of them this day who—and respectable gentlemen confirmed the statement—were not able to purchase a day's provisions sold at a reduced price. Other places are nearly in a similar state. It will not, therefore, excite your Lordship's surprise if I should draw your attention to a large suffering portion of his Majesty's people. I should rather incur the deepest self-reproach were I to defer it longer—nay, I deem it more necessary to urge it in the present crisis, lest the condition of the people should be forgotten in the enthusiasm of reform, or the tumults of an election; since the more fervent the joy inspired by the measure, the greater the danger, lest the cries of distant distress should be drowned amidst the peals of the national rejoicing.

The starving people of Mayo shall not, I trust, receive the chilling consolation, proffered by your predecessors in office last year—that the landlords ought to look to their tenantry. If, my Lord, the word *ought* should be sufficient to convey relief—if the repeated inculcation of the moral duties which should bind landlord and tenant were adequate to enforce their observance—we might be spared the mutual necessity, I of penning, or your Lordship of perusing this painful communication. If all acted under the impression that the cries of the poor who reap the

fields, and are defrauded of their labour, “enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth,” the legislator might be spared the toil of inquiring into the condition, or of providing for the wants of the lowlier classes.

A parliamentary exhortation to the landlords to provide for their tenantry might have been well fitted for those feudal times, when the tenant held towards his landlord the humiliating quality of serf or subject, and the landlord was invested with the absolute disposal of his destinies. When the crown was unable to controul the ruthless baron, who sported with the lives of the miserable villains of the soil, then an appeal to their piety or their fear might come with a good grace from any individual, who could awe—by the terrors of religion, or the sword—the man, who, trusting solely to his might, broke through the feeble restraints of law. But the tenants of the present times are free subjects, under a constitution in which landlords and tenants should equally share. If, therefore, the one are found deficient in the obligations they owe to the other, let me respectfully suggest it is the duty of the legislature to interfere. An exhortation, therefore, to the landlords to look to their tenantry, while the law enables them utterly to abandon them, is only a mockery of the public woe. The smallest tax upon their property to relieve the pauperism which their rapacity is creating, would bring more tenderness to the hearts of some landed proprietors, than the homilies of all the episcopal bench could inspire. If, indeed, the Irish absentees formed a military corps under the noble Duke of Wellington, then a nod, or the exhibition of his mace, might be sufficient to discipline them into mercy, without any fatiguing expiation on the moral virtues. But whilst they are permitted to pauperize the people, and then to throw the load of their support on the charity of others, without putting a finger to lighten the burden, they should hear a lecture on the duties of landlords in the same tone of feeling that one reads the sublime theories of the far-famed squire on the responsibility of a governor.

I am told, my Lord, that the Government is unwilling to make any grant of public money in this crisis, lest it should be converted into a precedent for similar future applications. I cannot believe that such a motive could sway its resolves. What, refuse to rescue thousands from the jaws of death, lest they should be afflicted again with the like calamity? It has already relieved, with a large amount of taxes, wrung from this country, and in more instances than one, the starving inhabitants of other nations. It will not, I trust, suffer the reproach to be entailed on it, that it has turned a deaf ear to the dying entreaties of its own. And such will be the reproach, if before many days it does not interfere to relieve them.

I shall not, however, dissemble, that again and again the legislature will be importuned with similar appeals, until it lays the knife to the root of the evil, by a process of severe and unsparing legislation. There must be some deep-seated source from which such overflowings of calamity are constantly issuing, and which must be fearlessly approached, if the government are anxious to dry up the fatal fountain.

Though there has been this year a partial failure in the crops, it is not to the scarcity of provisions alone that the present want is owing. No; while I am writing this letter, the town of Ballina, in which three hundred families are crying out for food, is busy with the bustle of corn traders, and the public roads are covered with the crowded conveyances of its exports. It may, then excite your Lordship's wonder, as it has lately that of an agent from government, that the people should be starving while the markets are stocked with provisions. This is the very anomaly of which we complain. This is the master-spring which, if not closed, will not fail to show itself in the repeated recurrence of similar calamities. What avails it to the poor man, whose crop and cattle are seized, if potatoes are sold for three or four pence a stone, where he cannot bring one article to market, or find work or wages to purchase them? And to exemplify still more this difficulty of procuring the price of food, it was stated by two highly respectable gentlemen of the central committee of Castlebar, that an humble farmer offered in vain seven cows for 1 cwt. of meal. Often are the cows of the poor auctioned for ten shillings a head, to pay rent, and then, when his potatoes are seized to supply the remainder, where there is no trade or manufactures, he is left without resource. The extinction of our linen trade is attested by the numbers of females, whose cheerful and virtuous industry was once supported by the varied process of preparing flax, and who are now seen digging in the fields for want of any domestic manufacture. Nay, it is not unusual to meet young females, not exceeding fourteen years of age, assisting their aged parents to break stones on the public roads, and still deeming themselves fortunate to find such casual means of support to save them from misery.

The presumption of there being no starvation while corn is exported, is a fallacy which was refuted in the memorable year of Twenty-Two. What is there to prevent the people from starving, if they have no law to keep as much as will appease hunger, and if the proprietors have no heart to feel for their misery? Yes, though the potato crop has partially failed, and may fail again, the oats, the standard by which landlord and tenant regulate their contracts, must, under circumstances of scarcity at home, be exported. Ask any poor man on what means does he calculate for his rent. His ready reply is, the harvest of oats. What for the tithes?

The oats. What for the county cess? The oats. What for the vestry cess? The oats. In short, the oats is the ready resource of all the vexatious train of demands that come upon him. So that the liver of the tortured giant was not assailed with half the vulture pounces to which the poor man's crop of oats is subject, with this melancholy difference, that the latter has no renascent virtue to satisfy their craving demands.

It happens, however, as during the last years, that the peasantry are eased from some of the lesser burdens, when they are unable to support them all. Thus, magistrates have kindly refused presentments, when they found the people unable to pay them their rents. Vestry cesses too have been watched with a becoming jealousy, as they were found to interfere with the paramount claims of the landlord. The poor man's crop is considerably guarded by the landlord for himself, who, after scaring away the petty vultures that hovered round the stack-yard, pounces upon the whole, and calls rapacity protection.

I have not only admitted the quantity of our exports, but I have shown that the exports, as the peasantry are now circumstanced, must continue in the midst of starvation. You perceive, my Lord, how well the Irish peasant might be apostrophized in the memorable words by which the Roman poet characterized the labours of the team, while they plough and rear a crop in which they are forbidden to share. Yes, such is now the state of things, that the oats are generally guarded by a keeper until it is shipped off to swell the boasted quantity of our exports.

It is amusing to hear political economists deduce from such exports proofs of our prosperity. In seasons like this, the greater the quantity of corn shipped off, the wider the destitution that is caused. The greater the quantity of exports, the greater the quantity of luxuries that are imported for their price. Hence, the quantity of imports only furnishes evidence of the numbers of people that are consigned to hunger, in consequence of the deprivation of the necessaries which are exported in exchange for the luxuries of life. I am far from undervaluing the blessings of well regulated commerce, or the refinements in society of which it is productive. But were it not better for the people of Ireland that all the vineyards of France and Portugal were blasted for ever, and that all the teas of China had sunk in the late earthquake, if they cannot be imported without the total exportation of that corn, which afforded a vigorous nourishment to the older race of peasantry, but realises to the present the fabled apples of Tantalus, which they are forbidden to touch, until it enables some absentee to swell the receipts of the gambling-house, and then proudly to refer to Ireland's exports as a proof of her prosperity !!

I am not surprised at the unfeeling indifference with which such absentees treat the interests of their tenantry—nay, at the confidence with which they speak of distress with which they have neither sympathy nor acquaintance. I think it was Lord Brougham lately remarked, that such is man's insensibility to every thing but the present, that what is to occur in six days is looked upon sometimes as if it were never to happen. There is much philosophy in the remark. If people are indifferent to what is near, it may well account for the insensibility of some folk to an after retribution. The thought, however, appears to me to be as applicable to distance of place as to futurity of time. We are but little affected with the relation of evils which we do not witness. The late fires in Kent excited more interest in England than all the horrors of a distant war; and the tale of millions perishing by an earthquake in the East, is heard with as much indifference as if they never existed. Yet it will be confessed that all these evils are not the less real because they are not seen, nor does their distance from others mitigate the pains of the sufferers. It is only on this principle that I can account for the indifference of the Irish proprietors in London. The wretchedness here is too remote to strike their senses, which, without recurring to the philosophy of Locke, are, after all, the proper organs to convey a due impression of external objects. The gilded saloons of London are not the appropriate lecture halls for studying the wretchedness of an Irish cabin; the assorted raggedness of the raiment of its hapless inmates is but ill represented in the varied embroidery of fashion; faces sparkling with mirth are not the fittest mirror for reflecting the sunken eye and gaunt visage of despair; a taste palled with the satiety of feasts and revels cannot well judge of the acuteness of the pangs of hunger; nor is it surprising if the sharp but distant cries of distress can find no room in ears that are habitually filled with the voluptuous tones of the lute and the violin. But it requires a heart as well as eyes to be affected with the wants of others. There are individuals who, after using every expedient to guard their houses from the unwelcome intrusion of human wretchedness, and their eyes against its contemplation, would affect to doubt amidst the companions of their festivity, if any were dying of starvation. I am not surprised. If the rich voluptuary were to be the historian of the unpitied miseries of Lazarus, we never would have been favoured with that instructive record. The unfeeling rich man is not, therefore, the fittest deponent of the depth or extent of human calamity, since the glutton who refused the crumbs, would deny the existence of an evil, which he could not avow without revealing his own cruelty.

But rather than fatigue your Lordship or the public by the perusal of too long a letter, I shall, shortly, I fear, return to the

subject again. Not many days shall elapse, if prompt relief is not afforded, until I resume the painful topic. In this letter I have endeavoured to press upon your Lordship my conviction, that nothing but the protection of Government can save thousands of the people of Mayo from the horrors of famine. In the next I shall endeavour to demonstrate, that, unless the source of the misery is checked by some vigorous legislative provisions, it will come again and again, and be fraught at each returning visit with some new accumulation.

In the meantime, I have the honor to be, your Lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL GREY.

BALLINA, MAY 20, 1831.

MY LORD—This letter has been somewhat delayed, on account of the bustle of the late elections. During that busy event, which called forth all the energies of the nation, every other interest was comparatively suspended. I, therefore, deferred my promised communication, lest the cause of the poor should suffer through the unseasonableness of the appeal—conscious that even they could not be heard amidst the fierce contention which public virtue was waging with the old spirit of corruption. I must now, however, congratulate your lordship, as well as the empire, on the successful issue of the great struggle. The peaceful triumphs achieved by the people over their intestine foes have no parallel in the splendid annals of their foreign conquests. But a few days ago all the elements of society were stirred, and every human being that moved therein felt the sacred impulse that was communicated from the throne. Even the huge and drowsy corporate drones, in whom ease and luxury seemed to have suspended every capability of action, were roused to a temporary excitement by the terrors of political

extinction. They have, however, quietly relapsed into their former fat slumbers, without the danger of ever again annoying his Majesty or the people by a noxious resuscitation. Already every trace of the agitation has disappeared. Not a ripple is seen on the surface of society—every heart is high with hope—and the eyes of all are eagerly anticipating the gladsome vision of the venerable ark of the constitution relieved from its rotten and leaky planks, and refitted with sound timbers, majestically moving over the bosom of the waters.

In my last letter I stated a few facts, by which the public might be enabled to ascertain the fallacy of their views who wish to draw conclusions against our distress from the quantity of our exports. I attempted to show that, whether distressed or prosperous, our exports must continue in the present system; nay, that for want of any other branch of trade or industry, whereby to meet the rents, the exports of corn are generally in the inverse ratio of our prosperity. To such extent is the rage for exportation carried, that the tenantry are systematically left without seed for the future culture of the soil, until bought again at a usurious price; and some landlords have adopted the summary process of the Indian, who cuts down the tree to arrive at once at all its produce.

Is such a desolating system to be left without some legislative controul? Are tenants not only to be abandoned to all the capricious exactions of a cruel landlord, but, what is worse, must the neighbouring people continue to sustain the burden of that pauperism which they had no share in inflicting? In vain will it be advanced that the landlord has his rights, with which the law cannot interfere. The tenant, too, has his rights, derived from a higher and a holier source—"The labourer is worthy of his hire." Were the proprietor to farm his own estate, he would, surely, be liable to all the inflictions of a bad season; and were the present tenant to till his ground in the capacity of a hired labourer, or even of a slave, he would be permitted to eat of the fruit of his labour, nor would his employer abandon him to starvation.

Is the condition of the free tenant to be continued worse than that of the hired labourer or the slave? Is a British subject to continue to live in a state of precarious existence, to which the Negro would not be doomed by the Indian planter? Yes; a precarious existence, entirely depending on the degree of benevolence the proprietor may possess, as well as on the bounty of the public. Even in the bad theology which sprung from oriental despotism, the malignant principle was not suffered to exert all his influence, without the check of a beneficent being with which he was associated. It is not, surely, under a constitution that boasts the blessings of freedom, the blighting prin-

ciple is to find no corrective; so that the poor people are to be thrown on the world, without house, without food, without money, or means to procure it by any employment, merely because they could not controul the times and seasons, and multiply the harvest, or discover the art of making gold by the philosopher's stone. But cruelty recoils upon him who practises it; and the fields of some of those proprietors, untenanted and untilled, are now abandoned to desolation.

In the present state of society, any landlord who is cursed with a cruel heart, and a head that cannot calculate its real interests, is restrained by no law from indulging his wasting propensities. Were he obliged to relieve, in some shape, the poverty of which his excesses might be productive, the avarice of the member of society would prove an antidote against the rapacity of the proprietor, and the consciousness that he should support every pauper he would make, would prove a salutary restraint to his desolating career. The neighbouring parishes would not be inundated as now with the flood of wretched men that is sometimes let loose upon them by those whose hearts appear to be steeled against every feeling of remorse, as well as every impulse of humanity.

Were the instances of harsh treatment but few—such as might be gleaned by an industrious observer from amidst the mass of general content—I should not obtrude those letters on your Lordship's or the public attention. If the general aspect of society were such as to cause pleasure in the observer, I should not admire one who would look for the shades in the back-ground, rather than dwell upon the scenes of uniform happiness. But, unfortunately, distress, and hunger, and squalid wretchedness, form the general picture, which is scarcely relieved by any view of comfort; yet the people are industrious, and the land, even in this bad season, has been sufficiently productive.

Hence, the statement, which I must repeat, that the present calamity, however awful, is not temporary, but that it will annually break forth, unless arrested by strong legislative restraints. The declaration will not, I trust, have the effect of stopping the hand of charity; and it will not be said, why attempt to stem a torrent which is destined to run its regular course of ruin every year? It is in order that it may be checked I give this warning. It is to spare us the shame, and the public the annoyance, of these annual eleemosynary applications, that I respectfully, but earnestly, solicit the attention of the Government to the condition and the prospects of the suffering poor.

If the land were let and leased to the tenantry for an equitable rent—if they were relieved from the arrears accu-

mulated in bad seasons—if the seed furnished by landlords to preserve their land from waste, were, as it would in many cases appear to the public, a gratuitous donation—then it might be hoped that the distress would pass away with the season that produced it, and that the tenantry, with the energy of their labour applied to a prolific soil, might soon be placed in a comfortable condition. But the reverse of all these suppositions would be a more exact description of their state. Many of the estates in this country are now subject to the same rents for which they were let during the years immediately preceding the conclusion of the war. I need not advert to the immense depreciation in stock and produce between the two periods. I shall only remark, that if a proprietor knew then the value of his land—a knowledge in which it must be confessed, whatever might be his other acquirements, an Irish landlord is seldom found deficient—on what principle of equity or justice can he now demand for an article triple its real value? If, in the covenant between landlord and tenant, the latter was allowed but a fair remuneration for his labour, when cattle, and linen, and produce bore a certain price, is it not clear that he is allowed no remuneration, if he is still charged the same rent, whilst all the product of his industry has sunk more than three or four-fold in the value? The more familiar are these truths, the more they illustrate my position, that while things continue in such a state as that no industry can meet the rent with its arrears, it is impossible that the people would not be at the mercy of the proprietors, and, by consequence, when the proprietors are merciless, exposed, even amidst plenty, to starvation.

I am well aware of the usual apology that is advanced for the proprietors. Their lands, it is said, are so encumbered by annuities, mortgages, and marriage settlements, that some of them cannot afford to lower their rents, or, what is synonymous, to let their tenantry keep and eat of the fruit of their labour. In the first place, this apology for cruelty and injustice is not near as extensive as it is assumed. Because it is applicable to some gentlemen, it is taken up as a convenient defence by others, to shield their grinding extortions behind the plea of an imperious necessity.

There are many considerable properties in this district free from any heavy charges. Yet, I know the condition of the tenantry to be but little affected by an exemption from such claims; nay, some landlords, who, in addition to a large unencumbered rental, possess a large share of funded property, are as oppressive as those whose estates are subject to incumbrances. And, even during the last summer, there were among the wealthiest of that class—and there may be this year—indivi-

duals who refused a shilling to mitigate the horrors of a general famine. Some law must wring from the reluctant gripe of such persons what a heart incapable of pity forbids them to bestow. Instead of being like stagnant pools, that swallow all the rains and dews of heaven, while the waste around them appears parched and sickly, they should be formed into useful reservoirs, with legislative sluices and outlets, in order that, in seasons of drought, they should discharge their redundant waters, to give health and fertility to the country.

But, supposing the settlements to which I have alluded, is it equitable that the few should not consent to retrench any of the superfluities, in order that the many should be left something of the necessaries, of life? Must the people of whole villages starve, lest some foreign member of the proprietor's family should contract in the least the circle of his follies; or lest a dowager should pluck a feather from her head-dress, or a jewel from those ornaments which the grave decorum of age should suggest to lay aside? Are the dissipation and extravagance of the war times, like an original sin, to be entailed upon the peasantry alone, and their children, and to be expiated only by those who had no share in the guilt? What, then, becomes of the moral axiom, that those who partake of the benefit should also share in the burden? These, my Lord, are serious considerations. In spite of all that pride and selfishness may suggest to the contrary, the "*salus populi suprema lex*" will remain an incontrovertible proposition. Annuitants, mortgagees, and fund-holders have, doubtless, their rights; not so extensive, however, as to supersede the existence of the labouring classes. Will it be asserted that they are like the sanguinary idols of old, whose appetites cannot be appeased but by the immolation of human sacrifices? While regard is had to all other interests, those of the agriculturist alone should not be neglected. If the other officers of society are to be supported, surely the labouring classes alone are not to be consigned to ruin, by whom you, and I, and annuitants, and mortgagees, and fund-holders, and all other functionaries are ultimately supported? Else we have not been rightly taught that agriculture is the foundation of public prosperity; and the error of Ptolemy has misled the ancients in political as well as astronomical science, in supposing the land to be the basis of the social system, while the moderns have discovered the funds to be the immoveable centre round which agriculture and its obedient interests must revolve.

From this first position of being subject to rents which they are unable to pay, follows the second—namely, of arrears continually accumulating. A prosperous year might have hitherto enabled the tenant to liquidate a portion of the debt; but he has seldom been enabled to cancel it all. Hence, instead of receipts

in full, many of the acknowledgments of the tenantry are eternally on account—a practice which, without any intentional fraud, exposes to mistakes productive of the most serious inconveniences. The years 1817 and 1822 were such disastrous seasons that, instead of being able to pay the rents, the tenantry contracted additional debts by provisions furnished in some instances by their landlords. The intermediate seasons were employed in paying up some of the arrears; so that, like the quarter's revenue, with regard to the national debt, the poor tenant estimates the past half year, not by the quantity of wealth which it might have brought, but by the condition in which it placed him with regard to his arrears. Thus, every year they hang over him, discouraging his hopes and depressing his energies. In a prosperous season he may strive more frequently to steep his cares, unfortunately, in intoxicating beverage, despairing of his lot—or renew his tattered raiment—or, what may be deemed a mighty effort of successful industry, to re-place the milch cow that was seized and auctioned in the preceding season; but as for any increase in his fortune, or any additional comfort in his home, or any accession to his household furniture, these are advantages to which he is forbidden to aspire. A genial season may, like the seventh year in Judea, crown his labours with a double harvest; but he is not destined, like that happy people, to enjoy a jubilee, which may give him any release from the arrears of rack-rents, or any respite from his toils.

This second misfortune that affects the tenantry, naturally leads to the third—namely, that in their efforts to meet rents and arrears, as well as taxes, to which their means are unequal, they are of late years generally left without seed to cultivate the soil. This last, an effect produced by the rents and arrears, becomes in its turn an additional cause to aggravate their burden. To this last fact, too, I appeal—a fact now too familiar and notorious to be controverted—as a standing proof of the total inequality between the rents of land and its produce. It may be well, however, to show a little more minutely how this circumstance operates on the poor tenant in diminishing his resources.

In the course of last spring the tenantry of Tyrawley were, for the most part, without seed oats, being obliged to dispose of their entire crop the preceding winter, to meet rents and taxes. Many of them were then furnished by their landlords, or their agents or sub-agents, and sometimes by other corn factors, with seed, at ten shillings a cwt., on credit until the next autumn or winter. When that time came, they were obliged to thresh and sell their oats at five shillings a cwt., so that, for whatever quantity they got, they were obliged to dispose of a double portion

of their crop, which amounts to cent. per cent. of usury. Again, this very spring they were reduced to the same condition. In many cases the proprietors come to their relief, and in others the tenantry have not even that dear-bought consolation. I call it dear; because next winter, should they survive this season, it will be exacted in many cases with a rigorous usury, amounting to an hundred-fold.

Some proprietors are praised for expending some thousand pounds on their tenantry. If it be a gratuity—as the public is, in some instances, led to believe—the people owe much thankfulness. If it be all according to the following plan, the public will estimate the value of the obligation. An absentee, who draws many thousands from Mayo, relieves the tenantry on the estates, and makes use of the agents for that purpose. The agents purchase corn and potatoes, assemble the tenantry, and put them through a long process of swearing regarding the extent and nature of their distress. They then give them corn, at ten shillings per cwt., on credit, until winter, though they were obliged to sell their own oats last winter at five; not, however, until they exact another oath, that they will not sow that seed in any other soil but their own, and that they shall pay the price laid on it, whatever day it shall be demanded. On hearing such a statement, I was naturally incredulous; until in the presence of two gentlemen, I questioned some four or five of the tenantry, who all affirmed that it was on such conditions they received the oats and potatoes!

Now, this absentee is a person confessedly of great benevolence. Yet what is the value of the loan of seed conferred on the people on the estates? To oblige them—probably, as many have done last winter—to sell two measures, in order to pay for one of seed which they bought. If this is done without the knowledge of the kind-hearted absentee, it only demonstrates the evils which necessarily result from that system. If done with the knowledge of that person, it is no theme for panegyric. Yet, such is the wretchedness to which the tenantry all over the country are reduced, that they are glad to get seed and provisions on any terms—not from any want of forecast of the consequences—they are well aware of it; but, amidst the cravings of want, they become, like the savage, reckless of the future, provided they are rescued from the present necessity.

Add, then, this additional burden of usurious contracts—now a matter of course—to the annual amount of arrears to which the tenant is already subject, and it is not difficult to perceive how it must press still more heavily upon him. The consequence is, no harvest can save him from starvation, provided the landlord

pushes his claims to the extent to which the law entitles him. Hitherto, the rigour of the law was seldom enforced regarding potatoes. There was a tacit covenant, generally respected, that while the landlord had the oats for his rent, the tenant had the potatoes for his family. But that sacred covenant has been lately violated in various instances. Example is contagious, when it is favourable to self-interest. As some, then, have commenced to seize the potatoes, what assurance have the tenantry that others will not follow their example? If so, no abundance can shield the poor from starvation, as long as they have to struggle against a load of rent, disproportioned to the produce, accumulated by arrears, and aggravated still more by yearly accessions from usurious contracts. You may, therefore, perceive, my Lord, why I have stated that this evil was not temporary. Subscriptions may be raised for the relief of the poor; committees may be formed, and provisions distributed. Far from undervaluing, I must applaud and support such benevolent measures. They are, however, but temporary checks, which will not at all prevent the recurrence of the evil. Nay, what is this huckstering of seed between landlords and tenants? Under the guise of humanity, an usurious traffic is exercised on the labour of the latter, and the prolific seed of future calamity is perpetuated.

In the present awful crisis, I feel infinitely obliged to the generous citizens of Dublin who have come forward to our relief, though they have so many charities of their own; and I implore them, as they value human lives, to continue their pious labours. In the name of the distressed districts in the West, where men are seen digging out the slit potato-seeds recently put down, I must return my thanks to the people of England, adjuring them, in like manner, to persevere in their work of mercy.

But while I thus express thanks for individual benevolence, I must express my conviction, that it is a reproach to any Government, that a hardy and industrious people should be thrown so often into the humiliating attitude of mendicants for food. I owe it to the public to tell, that, unless Government interfere largely, no private benevolence can avert famine; and that, unless some radical means be adopted, this moral malaria will continue its annual ravages. I have patiently, and, I trust, satisfactorily, stated my reasons. However abundant the next season may prove, the crop will be seized before the produce reaches a high price, and will not be sufficient to satisfy all the claims upon it. If it be bad, the condition of the tenant will be worse; so that, in either alternative, he is doomed to the fate so well expressed in the following lines, which, like those of Goldsmith, contrasting the solid strength of the peasantry with the

shadowy and evanescent honours of a peerage, shall never lose their freshness by any frequency of application:—

In vain kind seasons swell the teeming grain,
Soft showers distil, and suns grow warm in vain ;
With tears the swain his frustrate labour yields,
And famished dies amidst his ripened fields.

Such is the first but melancholy likeness between the above picture and the condition of the peasantry of Mayo, that one would be almost inclined to adopt the ancient opinion of believing a fact under the influence of a prescient inspiration. Had the eloquent writer of these lines been himself an eye-witness of the famine amidst plenty, he could not use words more appropriate, than those in which he described the condition of the serfs under the feudal and unfeeling despots of ancient times. From my heart I deplore the justness of the application. It will, however, continue, unless the Government take the people under their more immediate protection. On the means which appear to me the most effectual in arresting this evil, I propose to offer some remarks in another letter.

I have the honour to remain your Lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XL.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL GREY.

BALLINA, JULY, 9, 1831.

MY LORD—In the late interview which we had the honor of having with your Lordship, it was suggested that however pressing was the present famine, the object of our mission would be frustrated unless some legislative measures were adopted to guard against its recurrence in seasons of general plenty.

Never did I feel the necessity of adopting such a suggestion so much as since my return to this unhappy land. I had some anticipations of the scenes I should witness, and strove to arm myself with sufficient resolution to encounter them. But the reality far surpasses my most gloomy misbodings.

It is some days since I arrived here, and lest I should be imposed on by exaggerated reports, I was resolved, as far as opportunity could allow me, to bring the state of the poor within my own personal observation. I went into their wretched cabins and found instances of many families, who, during several alternate days, had not tasted a morsel of food. The testimony of their neighbours was ready to confirm their distressing tale: a more unequivocal evidence could be read in their pallid and emaciated countenances.

I will not, however, dwell upon such evidence of hunger and famine. It has been already laid before the public by the attestations of strangers, whom sympathy brought to visit and compassionate our distress. Among those witnesses I refer your Lordship to a letter published in the *Evening Post* of the 23d of June, which describes the feeble frames and faltering limbs of the wretched victims of starvation, in terms which were evidently caught from the contemplation of the sad reality. But why refer to any evidence, when the blood of those who lately exposed themselves to the musketry of soldiers, rather than die by the slow tortures of hunger, proclaims aloud the dreadful effects of starvation?

It has been rumoured that the agent of the Government here, laboured to convey an impression that the distress was neither so deep or extensive as it was stated. I could not credit such a report. I knew that any agent must have had a heart as well as eyes; and, therefore, he could not deny the workings of the awful

visitation, unless he had extinguished the light of the one and the feelings of the other.

I perceived, however, at the last meeting of the Mayo committee, that those rumours were unfounded. He came forward to supply the deficiency between the funds in their hands and the calculated amount of the necessary supplies of the week. It might appear to some, that he was rigorous in insisting that certain provisions sent by the Sackville-street committee, should be merged in the common stock provisions for the famishing people. In that instance I must applaud his conduct. It was conformable to the pledge given to us, that the government would aid the public exertions, and, provided that pledge is fully redeemed, we shall be satisfied. During the three next weeks, when famine shall be rapidly rising to its climax, the demands upon the government must be on a far more extended scale. All the past benevolence of the public would be abortive, unless the people are supplied with provisions during this distressing interval. It is like a gulf between the present and the coming year, in which thousands must perish unless conducted through by the assistance of government.

Your Lordship may judge of my inability to devote the least attention to any ulterior measures, when I assure you, that it was with difficulty I could snatch from the pressure of distress, and the clamours of mendicants, a brief interval to pen this melancholy document. Yes, the state of society is now completely unhinged. Domestic industry is neglected. The public roads are covered with thousands toiling from morning until night, for the wretched pittance of six or seven pence worth of meal for an entire family. While the men are thus working, the women and children are constantly lining the public ways, and thronging round the depots of the local committees, preventing each other's accommodation by the pressure of hunger; harrassing the feelings of the distributors by their complaints, and invading the public ear as they return in the evening, by blessings or imprecations, according as they had the good or bad fortune to be relieved or neglected. It was only yesterday evening I met a group of those unfortunate individuals, many of whom, after watching a whole day, returned home bitterly disappointed.

There was one in particular whose moans as well as fainting appearance, attracted my attention: a feeble woman with a child on her breast, who came to get a meal for a family of seven little children. She left them in the morning without breaking her own or their fast; and she was now tottering home, a distance of three miles, with her little bag empty, and wildly asking those around her how she could meet the cries of her famishing children. She literally reminded me of the words of the prophet, "The little ones look for bread, and there was none to break it." And

had I not afforded her the means of relief, I doubt, from her appearance, whether she would not have perished on the way.

Some interested persons may exclaim, there are in the accounts from Mayo, instances of exaggeration. That there are cases of exaggeration, nay, of fraud, I shall not hesitate to avow. But they are the unavoidable result of the evil. The cases of exaggeration, however, are but few, and the frauds are petty. If then, some hard-hearted and dishonest individuals may be able, by false statements, to filch a little of the charity provisions, is that a reason why hundreds of thousands should be suffered to perish? The precautions taken by the central committee of Mayo, are such as that I should defy the most practised jobber in the land, to do much in that way. The allocations to the distressed districts are all made in provisions. The members contract with the merchants after receiving proposals, and then orders for their respective shares are given on the merchants to the local committees.

Whatever, therefore, might be the disposition, there are sufficient precautions against the execution of any serious frauds. An undeserving object may sometimes intercept a few quarts of meal. Some of the local committees may occasionally exercise their small patronage in promoting some poor gentleman to the stewardship of the public works, and allow him six-pence or a shilling a day extra, in order to prevent the dignity of his caste from being tainted by a community of office with less genteel mendicants. But such things are only the nibblings of a mouse compared to the more lordly spoliation of which the report (true or false I know not), of 1822 almost frightened the English people from a second exertion of benevolence.

To that generous people I must express our obligations, and I shall do many of them the justice to say that it is owing to their ignorance of our state they do not exert themselves as much to prevent famine by a system of sound legislation, as they do by their purse to mitigate its horrors.

I should fear to contemplate once more the recurrence of a similar scene. I should fear it for the sake of the people, the government, and, above all, the interests of morality and religion. The invasion of a hostile power is not more dreadful in its consequences than that of famine, especially amidst plenty. It is a species of revolution, of which the effects are long felt. It comes with a scorching effect on the moral virtues of the people, and the traces of the searing bolt appear long and deeply furrowed in their character. The inhabitants of entire districts literally loosened from the soil, and flocking like vultures wherever the hope of food may lead them—numbers of aged and infirm objects starving in their homes, deprived of the usual solace of charity on account of the committees, and defrauded by their

feebleness and their delicacy of that resource, while more sturdy and shameless beggars sometimes intercept the public bounty—complaints of partiality against those who sacrifice their health, nay, life itself, in the daily distributions, and murmurs of ingratitude from the worthless few, mingled with the more general expression of thankfulness and benediction—landlords who were deaf and blind and callous to the wants of their tenantry, while they alone were called on to relieve them, becoming suddenly and miraculously sensitive to their destitution, while they hope to remove it by the charity of others—the lofty feeling that could not brook eleemosynary aid now so impaired, if not utterly broken down, as to depress a proud and high-minded peasantry into a mass of mendicants—an improvident hope of relief in similar cases, and consequent relaxation of industry—a sullen and indignant hate towards their petty oppressors, for having stript them first of their substance, and next of their shame, and a spirit of political cabal, unknown to their more simple-minded as well as better-conditioned predecessors—those are but a few of the necessary consequences of famine in a fertile land—a foe which, if suffered again to ravage Ireland, will utterly demoralize the people, and destroy those virtues of which the wreck that yet remains could still, in the hands of an able statesman, form the foundation of one of the noblest social edifices that could be exhibited in any country.

I have the honor to be your Lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE EARL GREY.

BALLINA, AUGUST 8, 1831.

MY LORD—We are at length arrived at that extreme point of depression from which, if we are to credit the lessons of philosophy and experience, there must be a gradual reflux to a more prosperous state. Our comfort, then, is in the wretchedness of our condition. Our melancholy consolation is drawn from the very depths of the misery into which we are plunged. Misfortune itself is relative; and a comparison with the more abject state of others has proved, in cases of poignant suffering, no slight mitigation. But the Irish, and especially the wretched people of Mayo, are denied the miserable solace that could be derived from so unenviable a source.

Often has it been said that the lot of our countrymen is without a parallel in the history of the globe. The very frequency of the assertion has rendered people indifferent to the force of its truth; and the pictures that were hitherto drawn of our misery, have been put, by those who could not witness it, to the account of the fancy, or the feelings of those who were interested in its exaggeration. No longer, however, is this wretchedness problematical. It is now attested by the confession of all classes. Persons who cannot agree on any other topic have been forced to a melancholy coincidence of opinion on the frightful distress of the people; and the multitudes who have lately emigrated from our shores are spreading among their kindred beyond the Atlantic the tale of our misfortunes.

Now, making a fair deduction from the statements which may be supposed to have been over-charged from political excitement, allow me coolly and calmly to consider whether any other country on earth can exhibit such an anomaly. To confine myself to that point to which those letters more immediately refer:—Are the people of any other country, similarly circumstanced, doomed to the horrors of periodical starvation? I shall not now dwell upon the painful particulars of the ordeal through which the people have passed; it is now, thank God, nearly over, and our future business will be to endeavour to guard against its recurrence.

Had the late famine sprung solely from those deep natural causes over which human foresight had no controul, those letters

should have ceased with the calamity in which they originated. To require the Government or the legislature to stay the mighty march of the elements, would be just as reasonable as for the inhabitants of Sicily to call upon their king to close for ever the crater of Mount *Ætna*. Yet, many who have talked and written about Ireland have been so taunted by her plunderers, as if they were transferring upon man the unavoidable dispensations of Providence.

But, my Lord, it is impossible to disguise the fact. There is a marked difference between the famines in Ireland and the similar visitations that come upon other countries. The sugar planter of the West Indies may behold the whole labours of a year swept away; no one, however, can mistake the workings of the hurricane and the storm. The sirocco may blast the harvests of the south; but the pious husbandman cannot repine at a calamity which no Government could ward off. The east of Europe may be deluged by early rains and the inundation of its rivers; and if a famine should follow, the inhabitants have, at least, one comfort, that the elements were sent them as precursors to warn them of its approach. But in Ireland, and in Ireland alone, is the evil dissociated from the influence of natural causes. Witness the last awful visitation. Did it not come upon many with such celerity, that if relief had been longer delayed, thousands would have perished? Were not some of the landlords, who were latterly among the most importunate in soliciting relief, among those who denied its existence? Were not some of the individuals who announced the evil at a distance, treated with the contempt and hatred heaped upon the prophets, whose predictions of woe were never acknowledged but amidst the appalling reality of the suffering by which they were verified?

In the event, however, of a general calamity, which should blight the crop or sweep away the harvest, such serious doubts of distress could not have been entertained. Its traces would have been too deep and visible to be contested. Why, then, was the distress so long disputed, until the sudden approaches of death, in some instances, put a stop to the vain debate? It is because with a few exceptions along the sea-coast, there was no striking natural cause to which to trace it, and man was naturally unwilling to plead guilty to the work of his own hands. I shall not deny that the potato crop was short. But whilst our oats were exported in vast quantities from the distressed districts, it is still incontestible that, far from labouring under a scarcity of food, ours was a famine in the midst of plenty. Nay, were not the provisions with which the people were fed, mostly the growth of their own soil, and supplied, after the double expense of freight and insurance?

If, then, the distress sprung more from political than natural causes, it is the duty of a wise statesman to take precautions against its return. These precautions are the more necessary, since it would be hopeless to expect that similar relief should be granted in similar circumstances. The English will no longer come forward with the same promptitude ; the Government would, probably, be more tardy than before ; the contributions of our own poor countrymen could not again be expected. Nay ; could it be hoped that all those resources could be again made available, the same disposition would not exist to call them forth. Nor is it a wonder. The clergy are called upon to preach to their flocks obedience to the laws, and resignation under misfortune. But, surely, it is too much to require of them to be undertaking missions to another country, and appealing to a distant people, at the risk of vast personal inconvenience, to save their flocks from starvation. And for what purpose ? Merely to protect the herds, or the sheep, or secure the rack-rents of some unfeeling man, who may refuse a farthing to his starving tenantry. No ; the clergy will continue to preach a respect for property, but they certainly will not throw their persons between it and hunger. Things will be allowed to take their natural course, and come to a crisis, rather than that the clergy should, by eleemosynary missions, labour to heave off a load of misery which must descend the year after, and crush in its fall all the efforts that were made to avert it.

Many are the remedies propounded for our misfortunes. The specifics vary as the theories about the seat of the disease. Some ascribe all the evil to the Government—others to the people. Like other complicated effects, it might be shared—though not in equal proportions—with both. When I reflect on the effects of good government in far less generous natures, I must confess that many of the people's vices are traceable to the influence of bad laws. If Government, then, has such an influence on the prosperity of a country, and the character of its people, it is a mockery to contemplate any improvement in either without a serious reference to the Government and the legislature.

To talk, therefore, of the best measures of improvement, without the skill and energy of Government to direct them, would be like talking of passive instruments, without a superior artist to wield them. Give me the will, the sincere and efficient will, on the part of the Government, to improve Ireland, and we ask no more. The sincere volition of a mighty agent cannot remain dormant and inactive ; and if Ireland remains yet a wilderness, it is because the Government never effectually willed its cultivation. Let but Government will it, and the remotest of its colonies are speedily improved. Its settlement in the Indies,

as well as those in Canada, bear the vigorous impressions of its institutions, and distance itself is annihilated in the rapidity by which its spirit is conveyed. Let but the Government issue its fiat, Canada is traversed by canals for the circulation of trade, whilst the Shannon, undisturbed by machinery or commerce, is suffered to roll in silence its unprofitable waters through the land—an emblem, as it were, of the dull and sullen repose of its inhabitants.

In this very session of parliament hundreds of thousands of pounds have been voted to forward the internal commerce of Canada. Is it more important than Ireland to the strength and security of the empire? But we are told the Government feels a deep solicitude for the prosperity of Ireland, and the ministers are taxing their ingenuity to devise measures for improving the condition of its people. I trust this is the case. One measure only—and that rather of a negative than a positive character—will be to me a test of their sincerity. But to smooth all the avenues for improvement on the part of the people, is, it must be confessed, an important consideration. Without their being properly disposed for the plastic hand of Government to mould them to its high purpose, the best efforts of the most enlightened Government could not be crowned with adequate success. Before I then point to the single measure, by which every honest man will determine the sincerity of the Government to improve Ireland, it is only just that I should satisfy those, who put all the misfortunes of the people to a perverseness of disposition, which all the influence of philosophy cannot cure. After a patient hearing of the different plaintiffs against the people, the most serious counts that are pressed by their accusers are a disposition to early marriages, as well as a propensity to vegetate on a root which, on account of the facility with which it is raised, destroys the springs of industry, and dulls that spirit of enterprise which is always quickened by artificial wants and enjoyments. These are the radical effects which, it is said, vitiate our people, and which, as long as they continue, must defy the efforts of the most benevolent legislature.

I shall treat those two points with the utmost brevity and candour. In adverting to early marriages and a superabundant population, I shall not stop, for the present, to direct a legislator's attention to where the hive may conveniently dispose of its colonies. The half a million of waste lands in Mayo alone might check the fears of Malthus himself on the subject of a superabundant people. Nor shall I avail myself, with the dexterous ingenuity of a polemic, of the extraordinary shifting of controversy, and bring a Protestant parson of the nineteenth to refute his predecessors of the sixteenth century, who complained that the Catholic Church, by the encouragement

of monkish institutions, was an enemy to all Governments by diminishing the population. No, my Lord, I shall not now press this view of the subject. I shall only remark, that we shall endeavour to dissuade the poor people from the practise of early marriage, when we find it recommended by the morality of those who inveigh so bitterly against it. The people, however, are not yet refined into the licentiousness of believing that they are but the ephemeral animals of a day, destined to minister to the profligacy of those who "glory in their shame," and who strive to conceal the want of common understanding, with which nature cursed them, under the mystified jargon of political economy. The sorrows of the world are but little to them compared to their virtue; and that virtue the weaker portion of them are anxious to guard at any hazard from the prowlers that beset them, by flying, at an early age, into the sanctuary of marriage.

In the justice of the other accusation brought against my countrymen, namely, their immoderate use of potatoes, I freely acquiesce. Nay, for the comfort of those who disrelish the precarious root, I pledge myself that I shall discourage its exclusive use. To commence immediately would, I fear, be a useless experiment; since, in the next month of September, all the corn yards will, probably, be converted into so many stations, in which armed keepers will be placed, to guard the oats from being tasted by the tenantry. But though the advice may not be reduced to practice this season, the public mind will be gradually prepared for its reception. As it is now confessed that the precariousness of the potato crop is one of the principal causes of famine, whoever wishes to stop the disastrous effect must labour to check the cause, and, therefore, discourage the universal and exclusive use of potatoes. Let, therefore, the people henceforward consume bread, and export the potatoes to pay rents, and tithes, and taxes. And if the English are not satisfied with the potatoes, the Irish, by being obliged to keep them, will be spared the necessity of again appealing to their aid against starvation. I cannot hope, with Henry IV., that every peasant here will have his pullet; I cannot believe, with another king, that every cottage would be rendered comfortable by the possession of a dumb Bible. But while I am anxious to make its spirit the inmate of every family, I hope to see the day when they shall eat in plenty and in thankfulness of the bread which was produced by the sweat of their brow and the labour of their own hands.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 5, 1831.

SIR—Not many days have elapsed since a distinguished individual of my body was obliged to throw his shield over a member of the Upper House, to protect him from the outrage of a ludicrous personification. It is no wonder if the same histrionic spirit should be equally busy with the House of Commons, and gather some strength in its descent to a worthy baronet from the loftier pinnacles of the peerage. With the privileges of the honourable house I have neither the right or the inclination to interfere. No one admires more than I do the wisdom of the law which protects the property and character of those who devote their lives to the toils and anxieties of legislation. Far, therefore, from indulging the profane wish of canvassing the free discussion of the house, I must, in common with every British subject, revere it as a sanctuary, where every member finds a refuge for his fortune and his fame.

But the reports of petitions and speeches that go abroad must be deemed legitimate topics of animadversion. It is in reference to such reports I take the liberty of addressing myself to you, Sir, and to solicit the public attention to the subject of the College of Maynooth, and the Catholic clergy of Ireland.

It appears from some of these reports, that petitions have been recently presented to the House of Commons, praying for the withdrawal of the annual pittance that is allowed to that establishment. It is not difficult to trace the source from which such petitions have sprung. The fomenters of religious discord, finding that the imposture of their Education Societies was at length unmasked, and exposed to merited scorn—perceiving that the growing spirit and intelligence of the people could no longer endure the mockery of being amused with proffers of education, which always ended in disappointment—have, like ingenious tacticians, had recourse to the last desperate experiment of warfare, and endeavoured to defend their own system by a seasonable diversion on their foes. Thanks, however, to the Government, the artifice has failed. The Kildare-street Society is at length defunct, and the spirit of rancorous bigotry which it nursed and propagated is, I sincerely trust, extinct for ever. It is, there-

fore, vain for the advocates of the Kildare-street Society to expect a compromise from the friends of the College. That society being attacked by the united and simultaneous hostility of an entire nation, the representatives of Ireland could consent to no condition but that of absolute capitulation. As the stratagem proved unsuccessful, the enemies of the College will, I trust, instead of pushing on a siege which must end in their own discomfiture, consent to retire peaceably from its walls.

Such, however, is the waywardness with which the rules of logic are wielded by some individuals, that I have no doubt but it will be urged, that because the Kildare-street Society has been dissolved, the grant ought to be withdrawn from the College of Maynooth. What! compare objects as wide as the poles asunder? Because, then, you dissolve a society which literally tantalized the people, by presenting to them the draught of knowledge, and again snatching it away—a society which was an instrument of proselytism, and the covert ally of religious persecution—a society which was set up as a screen between the Protestant Establishment in Ireland and the public, in order to hide from that public the dereliction of duty of which most of the clergy were guilty, who were pledged to keep schools in consideration of their benefices—a society, in short, which insulted the religion of the people, in return for the taxes which they gave for its support—does it follow that you ought to annihilate an establishment for the education of those ministers of religion who alone possess the confidence of the people, and keep a secure hold of their affections, who kindly minister to all their wants, and lighten, by a sincere and cordial sympathy, the load of those afflictions which they are unable to remove? Who, in fine, (for abler panegyrists in the House of Commons show the necessity of dwelling on their deserts,) illustrate the most exalted heroism of charity in laying down their lives for their flocks, as some have done, to the writer's sad recollection, in their attempts to stay the progress of famine and disease? Is it because you put a stop to the progress of fanaticism, you must also check the efforts of those who are the promoters of public peace; and because you dispense with the aid of individuals who have been stirring up the angry elements of society, you must also dismiss those who have been throwing oil over the troubled waters?

But as the benevolent exertions of the clergy cannot be contravened even by their enemies, I shall briefly advert to the other grounds on which they are wont to be assailed. There are many who give them credit for a kindness of heart, without appreciating much the attributes of the understanding; and willingly acknowledge the extent of their labours, without the trouble of inquiry concerning their literary attainments.

The first and most prominent accusation against them is, that

they are generally selected from the humbler classes of the people. Waiving, for a moment, its truth or falsehood, I rejoice in the objection. Ireland has been, for a series of years, sinking fast from a comparative prosperity—her manufactures, the source of domestic comfort, annihilated—her commerce, except in the exportation of the necessities of life, decayed—her wealthy farmers, who once enjoyed comfort, reduced to the condition of the lower classes, not only by exorbitant rents and jury taxes, but by the support of the paupers who are created by this oppressive system—in short, the vast space that is filled up by the intermediate gradations of society becoming daily void, and leaving a dreary waste to mark almost but two opposite regions of society—it is made a subject of reproach that the clergy are selected from the one, and a poverty of which they are guiltless (for in modern ethics it is a crime) is imputed to them by those who have the chief share in its infliction. No, we have not in Ireland, as in England, the graduated scale or intermediate orders so nearly approaching that they touch each other, making society, to use a fine idea of Sheridan's, one single slope, gladdening the eye which reposes on it, with the commingling variety of its shades, and beguiling the ascent to its very summit, without diminishing its elevation. Society in Ireland is, in general, like its scenery, either the depths of the valley, naturally rich without cultivation, or the heights of the mountain, barren as they are lofty, and frowning, by their savage ruggedness, on those who presume to approach them. But who are they that thus reproach the priesthood of Ireland with being selected from the humbler classes? Are they individuals whose escutcheons are emblazoned with the glories of ancient chivalry? No, they are, in general, the children of haughty churchmen, who fatten upon the misery which they created, and, when rendered plethoric, by sucking an undue share of the nourishment of the body, they turn round to reproach the poor members with their emaciation. How must Mr. Sadler rejoice at such an argument in favour of the Poor laws! Will not Mr. O'Connell triumphantly exclaim, that unless the government adopts effectual measures to check the pauperism and advance the prosperity of Ireland, he must, in justice to his country, agitate the repeal of the Union? If the wealth which is abused by the Protestant establishment in Ireland, were expended according to the original intention of its donors, in supporting the poor, and spreading the blessings of education, ecclesiastics rendered insolent by unmerited wealth should not now be casting a reproach on the descendants of the plundered, nor should Maynooth be coming, like an annual mendicant, before the house, soliciting the continuance of its bounty. The objection only shows the necessity of re-applying church property according to its original intention. It will not

be necessary for me to combat the position of the Irish Secretary. Waiving the right of parliament, which he controverts, I shall adopt his own principle, namely, that it should be applied according to the intention of those who gave it ; and provided he ascends a step higher in his historical inquiries, we shall arrive at the same conclusion. Little did the petitioners against Maynooth imagine they were throwing themselves into the arms of their foes ; little did they think that they were only strengthening the arguments of the agitators who were complaining of the inequality with which the affairs of Ireland were hitherto managed. They only prove that the Pactolus of the treasury has flowed but scantily amongst the Catholics of Ireland, and that even that little always passed through the process of a Protestant filtration. They may begin to imagine that it was wiser to be silent on such a topic than to draw public attention to the anomaly of the richest church and the poorest people on earth. Their avarice may check their hostility, and beholding the monster of Poor Laws which lies in wait to devour their wealth, they may repent having gone so far, and may begin to retrace their footsteps.

But in what nation is the charge of poverty preferred ? In one which boasts of its Christianity—which pretends to admire the austere laws of Sparta and of Rome—nay, which practically inspires much of their wholesome spirit into its own institutions. In walking over the vaults of Westminster Abbey, whose are the ashes on which we tread with most veneration ? In listening to the eloquence of the House of Commons, do we cease to admire the majestic current until we undertake a voyage to explore the source from which it flows ? Is it not to preserve it from subsiding into a stagnant pool, which would retain nought but the feculence of its former spirit, that the peerage is kept agitated with the fresh infusion of plebeian blood by which it is occasionally enriched ? There are, to be sure, some lofty stems of the aristocracy so rooted in ancient virtue, that it passes to them like a family inheritance, preserving their dignity and property from decay. But, with the exception of Shrewsbury, and a few such others, whose shields still recall the fields of Cressy or of Poictiers, who are the lords that gather round them most of the public admiration ? Let a stranger but visit the House of Peers, and will he not easily recognize among its twinkling lights such lamps as that of Plunket still shedding the broad and brilliant radiance which they were wont to cast when fed by a free and unalloyed atmosphere among the people ?

I have purposely dwelt upon this point less with a view to vindicate the clergy from a charge which, if true, would redound to their honour, than to show that if there is aught of culpability in it, it entirely recoils on their accusers. Still it is not true that the clergy are taken from those low classes with whom low

vices are generally associated. No: they are the children of that valuable portion of the people, who, equally aloof from the contagion of the extremes of society, support themselves by the industry of their farms, preferring a virtuous industry to the arts by which many make fortunes, and whom the pressure of the times is gradually sinking into that level which threatens to inundate Ireland with one uniform mass of pauperism. Twenty or thirty pounds a year, the average of the money expended on their education, is a proof that they belong to the more decent class of farmers. Their education in Maynooth is partly defrayed by Government, it is true; but whether one partakes of the Government bounty in college, or receives its charity at home, in the shape of a sinecure pension, is substantially the same; nor do I see why the one who is enabled to go to the university, by the aid of such a pension, should cast a reproach on the gratuitous education of the other.

Next, the clergy of Maynooth are ignorant, and hostile to the institutions of the country. If they were ignorant, the reproach would not have been so frequently made by their enemies. It is because they are not ignorant, and because they have displayed a fund of knowledge, which has at once astonished and annoyed the bigots of the land, that they have earned their lasting and immitigable enmity. Had such charges been preferred before they met their adversaries in many a theological encounter, they might, indeed, impose upon the public credulity. But that they should be now repeated, after the many signal victories of the Catholic clergy, which proclaim their refutation, bespeaks an insolent effrontery in slander which no evidence can shame. But they are not conversant with the Bible. And what is the proof of this assertion? Because, forsooth, the Bibles are sold at a bookseller's price in the College of Maynooth. Yet every student is obliged to purchase one at his entrance into the house. It is true, indeed, that the trustees have no fund by which the price of the sacred volume may be so cheapened as to be thrown upon the highways. They do not send forth an issue of thousands of volumes, to be afterwards pawned in piles upon the broker's shop for the vilest commodities, and then vauntingly proclaim the circulation of the Bible. No: the book is treated with the reverence due to the sacred source from which it came, and read with an attention due to its sublime and mysterious communications. Ignorance is a word of vague and indefinite import. An individual may be ignorant of many things highly valued by the world, and still be profoundly versed in its duty. Again, one may be a flippant master of the fashionable frivolities of life, and still be very ignorant of his obligations. A wise philosopher has said that ignorance, or rather *nesciency* of many things, is great knowledge. According to that meaning of the

word the Catholic clergy are ignorant. They know not the laws by which balls and masquerades are regulated—they are ignorant how to wind through the labyrinths of a waltz, nor do they understand the mysteries of annuities and renewal fines, by which the value of Church livings may be raised, without alarming the vigilance of Hume and his economical colleagues. But for a knowledge of their duty, I solemnly pledge myself—I say it not in the spirit of vaunting, but in the sincerity of my soul—that I shall find twenty Catholic curates in Ireland whose annual stipend exceeds not thirty pounds, who, in the judgment of any impartial jury, will display more classical information, more mathematical science, more extensive biblical knowledge, a more profound acquaintance with moral theology, as well as the canons and history of the Church, than the whole bench of Protestant bishops of that country put together. And perhaps the reader may be inclined to suspend his scepticism regarding this assertion on hearing my reasons.

In the College of Maynooth the students are disciplined into their extensive knowledge by a long and laborious process of study. As their duties in after life impose upon them the necessity of correct information regarding the various and complicated obligations of those who have recourse to them for spiritual advice, they are obliged to consult those profound masters of science who may guide them in their important decisions. Not so in the Protestant Church. Its ministers are not at all troubled on this score. They may in a short space of time pass into the Church from the bustle of a secular profession. Some verses in the Greek Testament, a few chapters in Burnet's Thirty-nine Articles (a perplexed and stupid treatise), and a clear and distinct intonation of the divine service, are, if I am correctly informed, often the only trials of a sufficient qualification. As the days, then, of inspiration and of miracles are supposed to be gone by, it cannot be presumption to estimate, in general, one's acquaintance with any science in proportion to the assiduity with which it is cultivated. But the Catholic clergy write no books. No, because their precious time is more valuably employed than if devoted to literature. The time of building is not the season for its decorations. The warfare of the martyrs and the confessors was succeeded by the literary reign of the doctors, who recorded their triumphs. It is thus with the Catholic clergy in Ireland. They were hitherto engaged in repairing the ruins of their Church, and defending the faith of the people; and, like the Hebrew priests, after their return from captivity, employed with the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other, to repulse the assailants by whom the work was occasionally interrupted. But now that the edifice is secured, and that the enemy have suspended their hostility, some individuals of finer taste, though

not greater merit, may be found to clothe its walls with Corinthian shafts, and entwine the graces of an appropriate foliage round their capitals.

In fine, the clergy educated at Maynooth are hostile to the institutions of the country; nor is their demeanour so meek or conciliating as that of their continental predecessors. I am rejoiced that their enemies are at length beginning to do justice to the pious and enlightened priesthood which so long preserved the faith in Ireland. It is not the first time that men have erected mausoleums to the memories of the martyrs whom they persecuted when alive. When Maynooth did not exist, the continental clergy were sure to return to this country with foreign disaffection; and now, when that venerable body is gradually retiring from the scene, they are panegyrized by their enemies, as if they thought they could injure Maynooth by the contrast. The truth is, whether the priests are educated in Rome, or Paris, or Maynooth, they are hated by a party whose sole cause of hate is that they are educated at all; and the particular reasons that are assigned now against one place, and again against another, remind me of the logic of the rapacious animal, who, as he accosted in turn his weaker brethren, affected to conceal, by a variety of arguments, the one great reason why he possessed himself of the entire spoil.

As to their hostility to the institutions of the country, here is the crown of their offending. Had they never raised their voice, or wielded their pen in asserting the rights or religion of their country—if they would not challenge the praise of the bigots, they would, I am sure, at least experience the forbearance of their silence. But they have proved themselves hostile to the institutions of the country, and let it not be disguised, it is for this hostility they are assailed. But what are the institutions to which they are hostile? Is it to the House of Commons, or its ancient or imprescriptible rights? No; well do they revere it as the sanctuary of freedom. Is it the House of Lords? No; they look upon the peerage as a firm and necessary bulwark round the throne. Is their hostility, then, directed against the Monarchy? No; they regard it as the key-stone which strengthens and completes the work of the constitution. Nay, they are reproached for their reverence for kings. And whatever may be the popularity of our beloved monarch with the rest of his subjects, there are no churches in the empire from which the pious aspirations for his long life and reign ascend with greater fervour than from the Catholic chapels, though not borne on the lofty tones of the trumpet or the organ.

What, then, are the institutions to which the Catholic clergy are hostile? Enormous taxes to erect churches where there are no Protestants to attend them; tithes and vestry cesses, and

grand jury jobbing, and the long train of local tyranny and paltry litigation by which those payments are enforced; Hibernian and Kildare-street Societies, but with the extinction of the latter their hostility, too, is at an end. Such are the excrescences that have grown out of the system, and if they be miscalled the institutions of the country, I hope the clergy of Ireland will always remain hostile to such institutions.

To conclude, Sir, the Catholic clergy took a prominent share in the formation of the Catholic Association, and in the collection of the Catholic rent, which were the two great instruments by which our freedom was achieved. They enrolled themselves among those who combated for a participation in the constitution, and cheered the exertions of Mr. O'Connell in behalf of his oppressed countrymen. Though the bigots of the empire were defeated by Emancipation, still it was a measure which, while it enlarged the sphere of civil and religious liberty, gave fresh accession of strength to the Government. Instead, therefore, of being exposed to obloquy for their conduct on that occasion, they are entitled to the gratitude of the empire. They have proved that they are not the slaves of arbitrary power they were represented, and that they can aspire to and enjoy the blessings of a tempered freedom. The Catholic clergy of Ireland shall persevere in the same steady course, attached from principle to the order which is inseparable from good government, and interested from duty, as well as affection, in promoting, by every means in their power, the welfare of the people. A few bigots may represent them as factious. They know how to make allowances for those whom nature never blessed with intellects, and who had the misfortune to suffer whatever of intellect they had to be irretrievably perverted. But while they indulge in no feeling but that of pity for such men, they hail the moral reformation that has already overspread the land. They have no dread henceforward to be assailed in any theatre, even in the House of Commons. I do not allude to the Catholic members there, who have the information, and, what is more valuable, the energy to rebuke any wanton aspersions on their creed—I allude to the noble and generous spirit that animates the Protestant members in general—that pervades the whole assembly—that is gradually restoring some individuals from the terrors under which they laboured; and, in fine, after scaring the ghosts of ancient intolerance from the house, is converting it into what it ought to be—a temple of purely legislative deliberation. The press, too, is active in propagating the same spirit of an enlightened respect for adverse opinions. With such opportunities of defence, the clergy, far from fearing any attack, may gladly court inquiry, conscious that justice shall ultimately triumph. They are not at all impugned nor angry at being accused of hostility to the insti-

tutions of the country, since it is a reproach they share in common with their beloved monarch, and the most illustrious characters in the land. Equally foes to factious violence and arbitrary power, they will pursue a firm, a steady, and constitutional course in the assertion of their rights, and prove that liberty is never less likely to lead astray than when it is lit by the coals that are kept kindled in the sanctuary.

I have the honour to be your very obedient humble servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLIII.

THE CORONATION OF WILLIAM IV., KING OF ENGLAND.

CANTERBURY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1831.

Na tréig Loidcē ceictair dīb,
Seic ir oīan an aīdīnī,
Túrzac fíli-eóna ir e rīn
Síl-eóla Dé aili na dāīnīb.

Tadg Mac Daile.

Forsake not ever, or the love or fear
Of him who rules the universal sphere.
The fear of God on man impressed with force,
Of all true wisdom is the first great source.

It may appear strange to the English reader that a letter from one of the most celebrated cities in the kingdom should be prefaced by an extract from the native literature of Ireland. To the general scholar, however, familiar with the language of both countries, nothing can appear more natural than this reference to the venerable Celtic tongue, suggested by the very name of the ancient capital of Kent. Etymologists, it is true, sometimes push their principles too far, and, by the excess of refinement, throw discredit on the antiquities, which they are desirous to illustrate. But here there is a question, not of affinity between

words, by reason of derivation, but of their very identity, and it requires no exercise of ingenuity to discover that Canterbury is the same as the chief city of *Леан-тіре*, the headland—or Can-tire. The names of many of the rivers, promontories, and mountains in England and Wales, as well as in Ireland, reveal their descent from the same common origin, whence it appears that the Irish and Cimbrian dialects are still vigorous branches of the Celtic stem, which had spread not only throughout those islands, but also through a large portion of Europe.

It is, however, more on account of the value of the precepts it contains than of the language in which they are delivered, I quote from one of the most instructive poems that has survived the wreck of our literature. It is a treatise on good government, composed by an eminent hereditary bard of the family, for the instruction of one of the princes of Thomond, in the sixteenth century, from which the preceding lines are extracted, as apposite to those duties which are imposed upon a king, by virtue of his coronation. The original is found in the first volume of the Transactions of the Gaelic Society, with English and Latin versions. The eloquent writer of “Telemachus,” which was composed for the instruction of a prince, could not deliver wiser counsels on the duties of government; and the coincidence between the recent coronation and the subject of the poem has, along with the Celtic name of this city, determined the selection of the passage prefixed to this letter.

On the 8th of this month, Westminster Abbey was made the theatre of one of those magnificent pageants, which it has so often exhibited, in the coronation of the monarch of England. On that festival another link has been added to the royal chain which stretches beyond the period of the Norman conquest, and the same venerable pile witnesses the brilliant inauguration of one king, soon after the remains of another had been deposited within its walls. It afforded to the thoughtful an impressive lesson of the rapidity with which the world shifts its successive scenes of joy and of sorrow. It recalled the beautiful and expressive language of one of the most gifted of that class with whose monuments the vaults of Westminster Abbey are strewn :

“ Welcome comes rejoicing, and Farewell goes out sighing ;”

and never, perhaps, did the splendour of the world appear more deceitful and evanescent than when it thus reached the nearness of the tombs in which the new crowned monarch—the object of all this pomp—was soon to be gathered to his predecessors in this vast mausoleum of Edward the Confessor.

To take a part in this splendid ceremonial, and do homage to their king, were assembled on the occasion the choicest of the ancient peers of the realm. Though surrounded with a splen-

dour not unbefitting the monarch of a great kingdom, it was far from offending the spectators with that gorgeous and extravagant display which attended, it is said, the coronation of the preceding monarch, on which such a vast portion of the people's treasure was so criminally expended. As in the time of the eighth Henry, a ceremonial anciently carried on to impress the people with reverence, was diverted from its sacred purpose to minister to the boundless vanity of the king; and the unfeeling extravagance with which their reigns were ushered in, might be deemed an appropriate augury of the heartless cruelty, with which their subjects were afterwards treated.

Brilliant as was the ceremonial of the coronation, it was nothing more than a mere worldly pageant, devoid of any of that reverential feeling which religion inspires, and calculated only to amuse the votaries of fashion. Of coronets and of heraldic emblems there was a varied profusion; with the lustre of diamonds and brilliants the eye might be dazzled into a painful sensation; peers and high-born dames seemed to vie with each other in the splendour and variety of their ornaments; and yet, with all the solemn effect lent to the scene by the "Majesty of the place," with its lengthened aisles, its lofty vaults, its magic fretwork, and its prismatic lights, there was wanting that which alone could inspire the soul with ecstasy. Yes, religion was not there; and wearing much of its semblance, the pageant was far less imposing than a mere theatrical exhibition, having no pretensions to religion. The temple was there, it is true; but it was the shell of which the soul, that once gave it animation and glory, was departed, and were the spirit of its sainted founder to come on earth, he could not find in its mutilated liturgy a vestige of the holy sacrifice for the celebration of which it was erected. The coronation took place on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, but far from being fixed on by design, the coincidence, probably, was not adverted to but by few in that assembly.

There was a large portion of the subjects of the new monarch who could feel an additional interest in the ceremony taking place on a feast of the Blessed Virgin. But they were far away, and familiarized, by long ill-usage, to a feeling almost of indifference, to the coronations of Westminster Abbey. Dire experience had taught them that, hitherto, every new reign, with scarcely an exception, instead of being a harbinger of hope, was but the prognostic of fresh political and religious misfortunes. They found that the foreign and heartless flatterers who surrounded every newly enthroned sovereign, practised well the lesson of the advisers of Roboam,* counselling him to scourge

* 3 Kings, xii, 11.

his new subjects with scorpions. This was all the change which the Catholics of Ireland had experienced for centuries from the change of masters—the aggravations of a lot sufficiently calamitous, into one still more intolerable. Nor will their fate be such as they have a right to expect, until religion again takes her seat in that sanctuary from which it was forcibly detrued, and until every such coronation is surrounded, too, by the rank and chivalry of Catholic Ireland—proud of their duties of legislating at home, for the interests of their own land, and proud of doing homage to their crowned Sovereigns in Westminster Abbey.

The Irish traditions respecting the “*Tlaoí Sál*,” or stone of fate, on which the sovereigns are seated, during the ceremony of crowning, may be deemed the effusions of fancy. Perhaps so, but if fanciful, they are as old as the genuine and rigorous historical traditions of other countries. To smile at all such national traditions as fanciful, has become the fashion of those writers who would efface all the noble memories of the past, and hopes of the future, and, at the same time, worship all that is loathsome in the licentiousness, the despotism, and the cruelty of the age in which they lived. It is not to the sneers of such materialists all that is lofty in national recollections, and all that is holy and consoling in religion, should be resigned. I am not, at the same time, about engaging in any antiquarian contest about the origin or the extraordinary migrations of this throne of “destiny.” I shall not prolong this letter into a dissertation about the time of its importation into Ireland by the “*Tuatha Dé Danaan*,” or its transit into Scotland, and its comparatively brief sojourn there, or its final and fixed position in the chair of Westminster Abbey, where it appears “fated” to remain. If so, the monarchs of England have nothing to fear from a legislature fixed in Ireland, and the traditions of our country, instead of filling them with alarm, are calculated to inspire confidence in the fixedness of their thrones. The tradition associates the circumstance of the coronation on that stone with the monarchy of Ireland. While the English, then, keep possession of this “fatal” emblem of royalty—which, no doubt, they are jealous to retain—they can, with impunity, indulge us with the restoration of an Irish parliament, and with an entire and undisturbed belief in our old cherished traditions.

There is, no doubt, one attribute, the loss of which may suggest to the lovers of legitimacy, some reasonable doubt of the present race of English kings, being lineally descended from the ancient monarchs of Ireland, and that circumstance is the sullen and uniform silence of this stone, which, for many preceding ages, used to send forth a joyous sound at the auspicious recurrence of every rightful coronation. However, the English people will not let go the stone for this undutiful omission of the “stone of

destiny" to recognise the legitimate occupants of the throne, lest, like the celebrated Palladium of Troy, the fortunes of their empire should be found to recede with its departure.

There is, I must own, no small danger in the continuance of this ominous silence, and henceforward the "*Liās Fāil*" must, at every succeeding coronation, fulfil its lofty "destiny." Never should a monarch be seated on the throne of a kingdom amidst a still and uninterrupted silence. Never should the diadem be placed on his head, without being respectfully reminded of his solemn duties. Never should the sceptre of empire be placed in his hands, without the awful sound of justice and mercy, which he is bound to administer, issuing from the sanctuary in which he is seated, and going forth in pealing accents among the people. This was the sound which the celebrated "*Liās Fāil*" was wont to issue, and which has been, like other ancient emblems, much disfigured by fable. It is this sound which should go forth at the coronation of every sovereign, and if, through fear or flattery, the ministers of the monarch are mute respecting this salutary instruction, hence the danger which our traditions ascribe to the silence of the stone.

In all the recorded covenants between kings and their people, this duty of justice on one side was found to be correlative with that of fealty and obedience on the other. This mutual promise was exacted and given, when the ancient soldiers raised their chief on their shields, and he promised to preserve inviolate their customs and their immunities. These correlative obligations have been freely and eloquently enforced in the ancient poem in which Cormac, one of the greatest of our monarchs, gives instructions on government to his son. This precious document is an illustration of that hidden but natural meaning of which the celebrated story of the "stone of fate" is susceptible. The same duty of justice descended to the Christian kings, and the same warning sound, in enforcing its observance, went forth with energy and effect at the recurrence of every royal coronation.

It is only in the Catholic church a true idea of the obligations of royalty may be found. How beautifully they are set forth in the admonition which the consecrating prelate gives to the monarch to be crowned :—"Thou shalt defend from all oppressions, widows, orphans, the poor and the feeble." And again :—"Thou shalt exhibit due reverence to the prelates, nor shall you trample on their ecclesiastical liberties." At the recent coronation those duties were but carelessly inculcated. There was a time, however, when they were conveyed to monarchs' ears with zeal and fervour. Of the ecclesiastical liberties which it is the duty of monarchs to protect, and of bishops to assert, if violated, but little is now heard save in the ceremony of consecration. Not so when Thomas á Becket opposed, with evangelical intre-

pidity, the guilty aggressions of Henry II. on the sacred immunities of the church. To this holy martyr are the people of those realms indebted for interposing between the rights of the clergy and the lawless encroachments of a powerful monarch; and every christian bishop, who wishes to be animated in the discharge of his sacred duties, will do well to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLIV.

PARIS, SEPTEMBER 21, 1831.

THE fatal tidings of the fall of Warsaw had, a few hours before our arrival, reached the French capital. Nothing could be better calculated than this untoward event to exhibit, in their proper light, the fluctuating feelings of the Parisian population. Every glance was filled with defiance—every expression was conveyed in a tone of reproach; their gestures were fierce and menacing, and the recent revolution of July, as yet fresh in every recollection, inspired a general apprehension that the city was about witnessing the recurrence of a similar tragedy. Intense sympathy for the sufferings of the unhappy Poles, and unmeasured indignation at the tyranny to which that brave people were sacrificed, were, during a few days, the exclusive and absorbing theme of conversation. Yet, after a few days, the feeling seemed to evaporate; it was succeeded by a brief interval of sullenness, but even this silence did not last long. The elastic levity of the French character suddenly rose above the pressure of a distant disaster. New pursuits and new amusements effaced, if not the remembrance, at least any painful impressions of this sad event, and, ere a week elapsed, a tide of tumultuous feelings, which had nigh threatened the city with destruction, had almost gradually ebbed away.

A few days' observation during such a stirring crisis, gave me a greater insight into that characteristic rapidity with which the French, or I should more correctly say, the Parisians, rush into such extremes. They are obviously the children of impulse,

easily susceptible of the worst as of the best impressions, and hence their chequered history, filled with deeds of the most fearful atrocity, as well as of the most hallowed renown. Far from being surprised that the sufferings of Poland should engage the sympathies of the French people, the wonder should be that any European nation should be indifferent to the fate of a people to whom all are indebted for the continuance of the blessings of Christianity and civilization. Yes, when the Turks and Cossacks overran the rest of Europe, Poland was the country that opposed a barrier to their barbarous inundation, and the name of John Sobieski, who so often led his brave countrymen to victory, should be pronounced with reverential gratitude to the most distant generations.

The Poles, then, have a claim of sympathy for their unhappy lot upon all the lovers of religion and of freedom. And I trust the day is not distant when the same peaceful and legal process that has been adopted in Ireland under the great master of bloodless revolutions, shall restore Poland, without a crime, to the rank of a nation. As yet France would not be a fitting agent or ally in the achievement of such a redemption. Its spirit of chivalry, if not gone, is as yet half extinguished. Those who could so desecrate the temples of the Almighty as to appropriate them to the honour of those whose licentiousness and crimes deserved public infamy, are not the proper instruments for restoring the fallen glories of such a faithful nation as Poland. Nothing can be more painful to the eye of a Christian than the Pagan motto "*Aux grandes hommes la patrie reconnaissante*," figuring on the front of a church erected to proclaim glory to God and peace to mankind. The ancient Pantheon in Rome has been dedicated to the honour of the sainted martyrs. It was reserved for the impiety of Paris to transform the beautiful church of St. Geneviève into a Pantheon for honouring the impure spirits of profligate infidels, whose works, after achieving the ruin of society in their own country, carry with them a similar demoralization wherever they are imported.

It must, however, be confessed, that public virtue and morals were much decayed through the contagious example of royal vices, before the rise and profession of this philosophical infidelity. Whilst the valour of the French armies was extending the conquests of Louis XIV. abroad, the disorderly life of the monarch and many of his courtiers was undermining the morality of the people at home. He affected not even the decency to disguise his vices ; he seemed to have braved public opinion as well as the reproaches of conscience, and the visitor of the ancient city of Versailles is shown, as some of its most curious monuments, the chapel of the "great monarch," and the scenes of his illicit amours, in sight of each other. Such examples of public im-

morality must have descended with fearful rapidity and weight among the less elevated classes. Bourdaloue, and Bossuet, and Maisillon, might have thundered against vice and profligacy—Boileau and Molière might have pointed against them the polished shafts of ridicule and satire—the reign of literature and of the arts seemed at that period to vie with that of the French arms, yet, under all this brilliant surface, public virtue received a wound from the royal example, from which it did not recover until the destruction of that very throne by whose occupants it was inflicted.

The ecclesiastical quarrels, which were fomented and embittered by political cabals, contributed, unfortunately, too, to prepare a reception for writings unfavourable to religion. France, as well as every other portion of the Church in Christendom, had its immunities or liberties. Those sacred privileges were secured to the rulers of the church, by canons and by customs, against the caprices or despotism of the secular power. At the period to which I allude, those sacred liberties were attempted to be wrested from their original destination, and the flatterers of the monarch would fain find, in the liberties of the Gallican church, a plea for fresh encroachments on those ancient immunities of its Bishops. Hence the most zealous advocates of those liberties, understood in their modern acceptation, were, and some of them no doubt unconsciously, the most successful advocates of the slavery of the church. This intestine strife had long rankled in the heart of the nation. It assumed a variety of phases, and was carried on under a great variety of colours. Jesuits and Jansenists occupy a prominent portion of the history of that period, but amidst the contending combatants it is not difficult to descry that the leading principle by which they were severally animated, was either the untrammelled freedom of the church on one side, or its complete subjection to the secular power on the other. The Jansenists, who braved the thunders of the church, were generally the favourites of the court. The Jesuits defended not the fictitious, but the real liberties of the church, and earned in return, the hostility of many of the courts of Europe. In this intestine strife between those who fought or pretended to fight under the banners of the church, its influence was gradually weakened, and the public mind in some measure disposed for the reception of those poisonous opinions by which it was subsequently saturated.

What has been the fruit of those opinions is yet but too visible in the capital of this great kingdom. They have been looking for freedom, and found the worst species of servitude. Nothing can be more grating to the ear, as well as more painful to one's religious feelings than the sound of hammers and such like instruments, breaking on the repose and solemnity of the Sabbath-

day. Yet such is the din you are doomed to hear from some of the workshops of Paris on Sunday, and such is the monument of servitude that attests the reign of their boasted freedom. The Almighty, in instituting the Sabbath, secured to the serf a grateful respite from the severity of his toil; the church, following up the same merciful spirit, enlarged the privilege, by the institution of her sacred festivals. The votaries of philosophy—the followers of those delusions which wore the name of liberty, have flung away the shield with which the Catholic church would fain protect them, and have accordingly plunged themselves into the most abject servitude. Still I do not despair of the religious resuscitation of France. The Catholic faith is still active, notwithstanding the many and even recent persecutions it has endured. The Archbishop's palace is still a wreck since the days of July; his library has been flung, by the fury of the revolutionists, into the river. Some of the Catholic clergy are constrained to disguise themselves in a secular dress, reminding me of the similar costume worn by some of the priests of Ireland until a recent period—the remnant of the persecution through which they passed. Still in Notre-Dame, St. Roch, and several of the other churches, the Catholic worship is carried on with great solemnity, and the seed of the divine Word cast by zealous preachers, is crowned with a consoling harvest. Zeal for the freedom of instruction, and emancipation from the despotism of the University is rapidly springing up among the clergy and people. This is the last strong-hold of infidelity and intolerance. Until the tyranny over faith and conscience exercised by the University is utterly abolished, a strong barrier will exist against the restoration of the ancient religion. Symptoms of impatience under this intolerable yoke are already discernible. The clergy and christian brothers are imbuing the young minds of the growing generation with a strong leaven of the Catholic faith, and when they succeed in destroying the unhallowed monopoly in education which the University has laboured to usurp, the Catholic church will resume once more its peaceful dominion over the entire of the French people.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLV.

GENEVA, OCTOBER 5, 1831.

IT is difficult to determine whether St. Denis on the one side of Paris, or Fontainbleau on the other, is most calculated to impress the instructive lesson of the instability of human greatness. The royal sepulchres of the one, in which the ashes of the long line of the French monarchs repose, naturally inspire reflections on the fleeting tenure with which the most dazzling dignities are held. And I have no doubt that the philosophic fury which at the close of the last century waged war on those venerable monuments of the dead, had less for its object any enmity to the memory of the kings there interred, than to that holy religion which can draw instruction from every object, and can furnish out of the mausoleums of fallen ambition the most touching lessons of humility. But why should Fontainbleau, a residence for royal relaxation and amusement, read the same saddening lesson as the Benedictine cemetery in which the remains of the French kings are deposited? Because it remains a monument of the pride and of the fall of the most powerful man that ever swayed the imperial sceptre of France. It was in the palace of Fontainbleau Napoleon kept captive the successor of St. Peter. It was here he heaped on him the most humiliating indignities. The insolence of his imperial keeper, and the heroic patience of Pius, are minutely detailed in the admirable Memoirs of Cardinal Pacha, the companion of his captivity. History does not record a more striking or instructive coincidence between guilt and punishment, than that in the same apartment in which the Emperor, like another Oseas, lifted his hand against the Lord's anointed, he was afterwards, by a just retribution of Providence, constrained to sign with the same hand the sentence of his imperial abdication.

In beauty of scenery, in variety of landscape, in the freshness of its verdure, and in the magic rapidity with which wood, and lake, and mountain, alternately break upon your view in Ireland, the "great nation," as it is flatteringly called by the devotion of its children, could challenge no comparison with our own. However, though the views of the country are less cheering, its inhabitants, compared with those of Ireland, enjoy far more freely the blessings of their tame, but fertile soil. Instead of the lofty walls that here frown upon you, rendering the domains of the proprietors inaccessible to the very eye of the traveller, bristling with terrors, like the ramparts of a garrisoned town, the bound-

less fields of France are seen without visible fence or mearing, teeming with vine and corn, unviolated by any trespass from legal or agrarian plunder, and affording in this apparently undefended condition a pledge of the tender and affectionate relations that bind the proprietors and tillers of the soil as members of the same family. The sacred inheritance of the rights of the cultivators of the soil was not cancelled by the fury of the French Revolution. The Christian traditions of humanity and mercy were not obliterated. Under the false guise of freedom, it is true that the cruel authors of the Revolution would have substituted the most revolting servitude. But the genius of Catholicity and freedom rose after the revolutionary frenzy had subsided, and there was no ascendancy party distinct from the great body of the people, animated by religious and national hate, to keep in thraldom the native children of the soil.

To an Irish Ecclesiastic the city of Auxerre had peculiar attractions. It was here, under its sainted Pontiff, Germanus, that St. Patrick first imbibed those holy lessons that fitted him, under the divine grace, to be the Apostle of Ireland. I must confess I felt the force of the inspired passage: "We have worshipped in the place where his steps have trodden," on reflecting that it was to this city St. Patrick betook himself for instruction to qualify himself for that mission to which he was invited by the memorable vision from the Diocese of Killala. Next to Auxerre, Dijon, the capital of Burgundy, and the birth-place of Bossuet, deserved and attracted my attention. But here, notwithstanding some noble churches, the spire of one of which is seen shooting to the clouds, I regretted to find in another church, still converted into a stable, the deep and unsightly furrows of the French revolution.

Had the Jura mountains occupied any other position, they would have been deemed a range of striking elevation. But the effect produced by their view, is impaired in a comparison with the Alps, by the proximity of which they are overshadowed. Had it been intended to produce an effect by suddenness, one of the most powerful means to excite great sensations, no contrivance could have been fitter for such a purpose than the abrupt turn from the road beyond the French frontiers, through which an immediate view of those stupendous mountains is unexpectedly let in on the surprised beholder. I shall not easily forget,—to describe it would be difficult—the sensation I felt at the first glance of the distant Alps, belted, as it were, with a blue fringe, their summits covered with snow, and leaving the imagination to guess how far they were hidden in the clouds, whilst from under

* The village bearing the name of *Foçoill*, but little varied from the ancient name *Focluč*, found in St. Patrick's biography, is yet to be seen on the west of Killala, not far from the Bay of Kilcummin.

the azure zone I have just mentioned, an immense sheet of sparkling whiteness overspread the valley, casting a transient illusion over the entire of the scene by which we were surrounded. We descended along the road, winding in spiral turns through the mountain, with unusual rapidity: the hazy gauze which, a few moments before, floated beneath us, began to disappear in thin and shadowy fleeces, and revealed, in partial glimpses, the bosom of the Leman lake, together with the verdant valley of the Jex, leaving us in doubt which most to admire, the magic of the first illusion, or the reality by which it was succeeded. As we passed on, we beheld to our right the chateau, in which once resided the philosopher or the fool of Ferney, and arrived, towards evening, in the celebrated city of Geneva.

The political vicissitudes of this city, successively belonging to Savoy, Switzerland, and France, and again restored to the Helvetic Confederation, are but an appropriate counterpart of its more disastrous, religious revolutions. It was early a favourite retreat of those turbulent children, who sought to shake off the authority of the church; and it soon gave evidence to the world that a soil saturated with the seeds of heresy, was the most propitious ground for infidelity to thrive. It was here Calvin preached religious liberty to the citizens, and the lessons which he taught were soon illustrated by the fires in which he sought to extinguish the opinions of Servetus, who but improved on the license and infidelity of his teachers. In the lapse of time the revolting theology of Calvin yielded to the more fascinating infidelity of Rousseau, the indigenous produce of the soil of Geneva. But as if its own native growth was not sufficient to infect this region, it was doomed to receive fresh accessions of a kindred impiety, from France and England. Near both extremities of the Leman lake, are yet to be seen the houses in which the fellow-labourers of Rousseau resided, the one at Ferney, and the other at Lausanne. In the hall of Ferney, a picture representing the author of the *Henriade* receiving a laurel crown from Apollo, designed by the poet himself, is unquestionably one of the saddest monuments of human vanity and weakness on record. A far more rational and interesting memorial of Gibbon is found in his library at Lausane; soon, as I was informed, to be brought to England, and forming one of the rarest and most select private collections, in Europe. The bower in which the historian wrote the last lines of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, shaded with its blooming acacias, is still in tolerable preservation.

The ill-omened conjunction of talent and impiety which the neighbourhood of Geneva has exhibited in the lives and writings of these so-called philosophers, has lent an unenviable celebrity to the place. It did not escape the notice of Lord Byron, and

probably it was the magnificent scenery by which he was surrounded, when Mont Blanc could be seen from the bosom of the lake, lifting its snowy top over the tributary range of hills that lines its margin, that suggested to him the comparison between those writers and the ancient giants piling Pelion upon Ossa to storm Olympus, and wage war upon heaven.

Long, however, before the birth of these men, the seeds of religious anarchy were cast in those regions. Little more than a hundred years before, the associate of Luther raised the standard of revolt in Geneva, the city of Constance witnessed an assembled council of the Ecclesiastics of Christendom, for the purpose of annihilating the spectacle of a Papal triumvirate, which, in defiance of right and usage, sprang up from the scandal of the times. Again but a few years elapsed, when the seditious and schismatical doctrine which some had drawn from those decrees of the Council of Constance, which only the necessity of a solitary case could warrant, was practically attempted to be enforced at Bazle by the turbulent bishops who sought to depose Eugenius, the legitimate Pope. In the person of one of the Dukes of Savoy, they set up a Papal pretender in his stead. The memory of this fatal schism is still attested by the monument of the abdicated Pontiff, in one of the churches of Lausane, where, stripped of the inappropriate name of Felix, which he had usurped, his remains now repose, under the more humble title of Amady, Duke of Savoy.

But amid those saddening memorials of infidelity, of heresy, and schism, that are scattered over Switzerland, there are more numerous and enduring monuments of the piety of the Catholic Church. It is cheering to an Irishman to find the ancient fame of his own land for sanctity and learning attested even in those Alpine regions. The city of St. Gall perpetuates the name and memory of one of those holy and illustrious men, whom Ireland sent forth in the days of its splendour, to dissipate the spiritual darkness that covered a large portion of the continent. Well have the people whom they instructed, proved their gratitude. The name and veneration of St. Gall will be imperishable as the Alps. Almost every where, the zeal and labours of St. Francis of Sales, are the theme of the people's devout gratitude, and many interesting anecdotes of his life, mingle in their conversations. The darkness of infidelity and the revolutionary storm which followed, obscured for a time, it is true, the memories of such holy men, and defaced, if not levelled, the religious monuments which they erected. But as the tempest has passed over, the fruits of their piety again begin to revive. Though Geneva has been the cradle of Calvinism, the service of the Catholic church is such, as to inspire much consolation. It was here I first observed a holy and benevolent practice—a memorial of the

ancient Agape—baskets of bread blessed at the offertory and then distributed among the poorer classes of the congregation, that those who came from afar to refresh themselves with the bread of life, might not, on their return, be exposed to the danger of famishing on the way. The Catholic Church may encounter opposition. Its doctrines may be checked by masses of error interposed to arrest its progress. Still, in despite of all obstacles, it will not fail to force its way, and, like the rapid current of the Rhone that is said to sweep through the Leman lake without mixing with its waters, the pure stream of Catholic doctrine will rush through every opposing medium, and come out as from its source, unmixed and undiluted with any of the earthly qualities of the flood, which it may be destined to traverse.*

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLVI.

THE VALE OF CHAMOUNIE, OCTOBER 8, 1831.

HAD I been assured that Doctor Johnson had travelled through the cantons of Switzerland, or Savoy, as he had through the islands of Scotland, I should have conjectured that the story of Rasselas had been first suggested by a visit to the delightful valley of Chamounie,—not that the resemblance could have consisted in the climate or the scenery; for no two objects could be more dissimilar in their physical features than the historical vale, girt with mountains radiant with eternal snows, and the fanciful one to which I have alluded, blooming with perpetual verdure, and breathing all the soft and voluptuous fragrance of an oriental atmosphere. The resemblance would consist in that happiness with which the author of the tale associated the creation of his fancy, and which is found to a greater extent amidst the rugged realities of those mountains, than in such artificial enjoyments, as were imagined for securing the happiness of the captive prince, of the secluded valley of Abyssinia.

* This real or fanciful phenomenon, occasioned by the rapidity of the Rhone, is thus described by Ammianus Marcellinus:—“A Poeninis Alphibus effusiore copia fountium Rhodanus fluens et proclivi impetu ad planiora degrediens, paludi sese ingurgitat nomine Lemano, eamque intermeans, nusquam aquis miscetur externis.”—*Historiæ Romanæ Scriptores*, tom. 2. p. 430. Geneva, 1653.

Perhaps there was not in Europe a happier portion of the human race than the primitive inhabitants of the Vale of Chammounie, previous to the visit of Pocock, whose name is still associated with one of the caverns on the confines of the “Sea of Ice,” and at the foot of the Snowy Mountain. So much for the benefits of intercourse, and the fruits of civilization. No doubt much advantage may be derived from well-regulated social intercourse, by which the remotest districts may be considerably improved. But such intercourse has often its alloy; and better were it for districts and for countries to be left in the enjoyment of an artless simplicity, sufficiently provided with necessary comforts, than by the sudden influx of foreign tastes, to be also made the victims of their concomitant vices. The primitive and patriarchal manners of the inhabitants of this valley, have, it is said, been injured by the incessant intercourse with strangers. If so, their original constitution must have been unusually sound, for, notwithstanding the continual stream of tourists, that has been flowing into this valley since its discovery in the last century, they are still a people, who, for pastoral innocence and piety, may well be held up as patterns for the peasantry in any part of Europe.

It was amusing to witness the overtures for ascending to the summit of Mont Blanc, between my more adventurous companions and an experienced guide, who about seven times in his life, had essayed the perilous journey. To do him justice, he appeared as disinterested as he was enterprising; for though he shrunk not from the task when importuned by romantic travellers, he generally dissuaded them from the hazardous experiment. A regular convoy of pioneers would have been necessary for the expedition—some to carry food, others covering for the night, while reposing on a couch of snow—one party laden with ladders to scale the craggy rocks—and another with planks to throw across the frightful fissures that yawned beneath. For me the description was enough: I was not so romantic as to wish to encounter the reality, with no other prospect, save that of arriving, after much danger and fatigue, at the summit of a mountain from which you must descend with a precipitate retreat, lest your lungs should suffer from the effusion of blood, caused from a painful respiration, in such an attenuated atmosphere. We were content with the less glorious, but more safe ascent of the subordinate ridge that leads to the Cave of Pocock, on the margin of the “Mere de Glace,” or icy strait—a singular curiosity—which, instead of presenting one smooth and continuous surface, is furrowed into a strange variety of the most fantastic forms.

Having taken an early opportunity of visiting the parish clergyman, whose influence was attested by the regularity of his flock, I found his little study quite in keeping with the simple

piety of his character. The books on the table were the *Imitation of Christ*, St. Chrysostom on the Priesthood, and a copy of the sacred Scriptures. They were but few, but nothing could be more judicious than the selection. His study was not encumbered either by journals or periodicals. The subjects discussed in such ephemeral productions, did not seem to possess much interest, for this good and humble clergyman. This apparent indifference to every species of secular science or political knowledge, will, no doubt, according to the various tastes of my readers, be made the theme of reproach or of admiration. The latter was the feeling in which I was inclined to indulge, and I could not help wishing that it were the happy lot of the entire Catholic priesthood, to be equally beyond the reach of the disturbing influences of the world.

But if this secluded pastor never mingled in civil or political concerns, let it be recollected that it was his happy destiny, to be placed in circumstances that released him from the painful necessity. No alien missionary prowled among his flock, to make a prey of their simplicity, or to bribe them from the faith of their fathers, with portions of that treasure which had been accumulated for the sustainment and propagation of that faith, and not for its destruction. No ruins of demolished cottages were to be seen strewn over his parish, attesting the unfeeling ferocity of proprietors, who had sent their inmates from the scenes that were dear to their childhood, in order to let the grounds out for pasturage, or to more rapacious tenants. He had not witnessed the victims of a political despotism now dragged to one tribunal to make oath that they possessed a franchise for which their conscience smote them, and again to another, where they were forced to turn this imaginary franchise, into an engine for the destruction or abridgment of their own liberties. Those are reflections that are seldom made by those who are so ready to arraign the political interference of the priesthood of Ireland. They either do not recollect, or industriously disguise the anomalous state of society that has forced them to take a part with their helpless and persecuted flocks, to shield them from oppression. When these political evils are completely redressed—when, instead of a mockery, the Irish Catholics shall enjoy the reality of a franchise—when religion shall be free, and education protected—when they shall have achieved their complete independence of an alien Church and an alien legislature—then, and not until then, may an Irish Catholic clergyman enjoy the peace, and pursue the ascetic life of the pastor of Chamounie.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLVII.

MILAN, OCTOBER 16, 1831.

IT is no wonder that the people of Savoy and Switzerland should bear the impress of their Alpine scenery—in their repose, gentle as their peaceful vallies, and in their excitement, stormy, as the tempestuous magnificence of their mountains. And even in the exhibition of those striking contrasts, the peasantry are still true to nature, for seldom is the tranquil solitude of those sequestered regions disturbed by the hurricane, than the habitual innocence of its inhabitants is invaded by the strife of the destructive passions. Life generally glides on, in a smooth and placid current: like the disastrous fall of the avalanches, it is only occasionally its peace is deeply furrowed, by the terrible inflictions of revenge. It is in traversing the celebrated “Tete Noir,” one of the finest passes in the Alps, between Chamounie and Martigny, you perceive this coincidence between the physical features of the country and the character of its people. I have not seen the stupendous summits of those “eternal hills,” girt with the winter’s clouds, and shaken with its storms: they were calculated to inspire awe even in their repose; nor could the most indifferent passenger contemplate their lofty pinnacles, again and again outtopped by higher elevations, crowned with pines, of which the verdure was hidden by wreaths of snow, without feeling a livelier sense of the Omnipotent Spirit that sustained them. On the mind strongly musing amidst this wilderness of sublimities, the chiming of the bells suspended from the necks of the numerous herds, broke like a musical hymn, reminding me of the beautiful apostrophe in our Litany, bidding beast, and rock, and mountain, to praise the Lord, and converting them into so many vehicles to elevate the soul to heaven.

The road over the Simplon, atones for much of the destructive effects of the ambition of Napoleon. If he was impelled to the enterprise by vanity, it was a vanity which is seldom directed to so useful a purpose. Others have erected statues, or pyramids, to perpetuate their fame. It was reserved for Napoleon to inscribe his achievements upon the Alpine rocks, and to make his mausoleum as lofty and as durable as its mountains. Both sides of the Alps, but especially that facing Italy, cannot fail to impress the passenger with the boldness of the man who could conceive and achieve a project fraught with such difficulties. Rocks, mountains, torrents, precipices, were all arrayed in opposition, proclaiming the impracticability of the work, and all

were conquered by his genius. The columns that are seen lying by the road to Milan, destined to complete his triumphal arch, have been made the frequent theme of real or affected pathos, as illustrative of the vanity of human ambition. However, the memory of Napoleon required not the frail memorial of a triumphal arch for its commemoration, nor of a gallery for his busts, whilst the magnificent torrent of Frizinone, bounding along its stupendous gallery, frets as it trembles under the far more triumphal arch, with which he spanned its indignant waters.

The Simplon, as well as the Great St. Bernard, attests the dominion of the Catholic religion, showing that no place, however frightful or repulsive, is inaccessible to its benevolent influence. Here, too, is a place of refuge reared and fostered by the same spirit that climbed the icy steeps of St. Bernard; and here, too, many a straying traveller, rescued from a grave of snow, could tell the merciful deeds of the inmates of those asylums. On descending from those chilly heights, you were enjoying in a short time the delicious climate of another hemisphere. The soil of Italy is scarcely touched when all the cheering influences, for which it is famed, are felt. On arriving at the small city of Domo D'Ossola in the evening, our first visit was to the cathedral, and surely it was delightful to hear one of the finest concerts imaginable—the Litanies of our Lady of Lorretto, alternately entoned by thousands of the youth of the city, who, after the labour of the day, pealed forth in voices full of taste and melody, their ardent devotion to the Queen of Heaven.

To the withering spirit of Calvin, which blighted the fruits of Catholic piety on the northern side of the Alps, this scene, so redolent of all that is beautiful in our holy religion, no doubt would appear offensive. Nay, more, something of that feeling which the savage fanaticism of John Knox brought in all its baleful integrity into Scotland, has found its way into our own country, and infected, in some degree, the more susceptible portion of its population. Not only does the sacred emblem of our redemption meet the eye, and challenge the reverence of the passengers along the Italian roads, but you meet likewise tasteful oratories, where the image of the Blessed Virgin is painted in fresco, to which the peasantry, by uniformly uncovering their heads, show a becoming veneration. This devout practice has called forth not only the ridicule of Protestants, but it has been treated by some Catholics in a tone of feeble apology, if not worse, rather than in one of manly vindication. This shows the latent influence of mixed religious impressions on their early minds, of which they are unconscious. Some of those Catholics are sincere in their belief—nay, devout in the practice of their religion. They venerate the mother of God, and would be shocked at the impiety that would deny the efficacy of her inter-

cession. They would bow to the image of their crucified Redeemer, and would pity the ignorance or the bad faith of those, who would accuse them of idolatry, for an act having reference to him, whose image thus recalled a grateful feeling, for the blessings of our redemption. Yet I have known persons affecting a pity for the too ceremonious piety of the Italians, forgetting the inspired canticle of her who prophetically announced that she would be honoured of all nations, and forgetting, too, that if the relative honour paid to the mother, through her image, is wrong, it would be difficult to free the superior reverence paid to the image of the Son from a similar inconsistency. It is the intercourse with persons of a different creed—it is the atmosphere which we breathe, somewhat tainted with this mixture, that occasions this surprise in the Catholics of the more northern parts, when visiting the south of Europe. If this sickly feeling has stolen over some of the best, when early intercourse with infidelity was rare, it is not difficult to imagine the dangers to faith and morals which must beset the young and thoughtless, if unhappily the day should ever arrive, when the best fences of both would be thrown down by an unhallowed system of promiscuous education.

Notwithstanding the wealth, and splendour, and historic renown of Milan, its cathedral forms the pride and glory of the city. It is in the vicinity of the Alps such a magnificent temple has its appropriate site—the one displaying nature in all its majesty, and the other exhibiting over the arts the sovereignty of religion.

It is a curious circumstance, that in Italy is to be found the finest specimen of a style of architecture, entirely foreign to its classic soil. The German style had found its way beyond the mountains with the dominion of its German masters. From the days in which Sempronius had associated his fame with one of the Alps which we just traversed, modified into the name of Simplon, the plains of Lombardy were the battle-field on which it was sought to arrest the tide of Teutonic barbarism, which continued to roll over the fair regions of Italy. Milan might be deemed the gate that guarded those defiles, and it was to be expected that it should bear the deep impressions of those struggles, between the hostile nations. In its very cathedral you behold the proofs of a border city, alternately swayed by strange and varied influences. Its mixed and fantastic architecture has been arraigned with a pedantry of criticism, in which the laws of nature and the facts of history, were overlooked or forgotten. Conquered by foreigners, with remittent gleams of domestic independence, the cathedral is a mirror of its political destinies—the uniform power of the Germans in its Gothic, pointed roofs and arches; the dominion of Spain in the profusion of its Moorish

or Arabesque ornaments ; the indignant genius of Italy revolting against Gothic rule, reclaiming its own influence in the erection of the façade of the Grecian order, and so influencing the entire work, that the sterner features of the Northern style, were softened and assimilated to the graces of the native architecture. It is a delightful temple. One knows not which to admire most, the vastness of the structure, or the variety of its details—the richness of the materials, or their tasteful and elaborate decorations. The principal events of the inspired writings, as well as those regarding the illustrious saints and martyrs of the Church, are represented in the stained panels of the pointed windows, or in basso relieves along the walls. The exterior furnishes a subject of untiring admiration, shooting forth a forest of marble minarets of the same materials as the church, all laden with statues of saints, and glittering in the sun of heaven.

To the credit of Napoleon, this celebrated church is much indebted to his munificence, for its completion. But the virtues of St. Charles Borromeo are those to the commemoration of which, it is specially devoted. The vast charities and self-denial of the holy archbishop have employed the zeal of rival pencils in their delineation. In one place he is represented distributing to the poor of the city, in one single day, the vast sum of forty-two thousand crowns. And again, in imitation of his Divine Master, he is represented in a procession humbling himself for the sins of his people, in order to stay the dreadful plague, with which Milan was scourged, by the Divine vengeance. A special oratory, or chapel, has been erected underneath, all covered with silver, where the remains of the saint repose, in a chrystal sarcophagus. Here I had twice the happiness to offer up the holy sacrifice of the Mass. I viewed his colossal statue at Arona, in the attitude of bestowing his benevolence on the land and people, of the place of his nativity. But the works and virtues of the illustrious Archbishop of Milan, did not exclusively belong to any locality. His praise is in all the churches. But along the mountains of Savoy and Switzerland, his memory is particularly cherished, together with that of St. Francis of Sales ; and their virtues, like the flowers of those vallies, breathe still the freshness of their fragrance, unsullied and untouched by the noisome breath of the world.

The political subjection of Milan to the dominion of Austria, has been often the theme of sincere or hypocritical commisseration. The cursory reflections already made, on the mixed and capricious style of the architecture of the cathedral, show that this submission to foreign rule, is nothing new to this celebrated city. Nor is this yoke, however mortifying to the spirit of native independence, so heavy, as far as regards the social condition of the people, as the exaggerated pictures of a certain

class of writers would lead us to imagine. Seldom is the delegated power of a distant sovereignty, better administered than in Milan. The opulence of the city, the flourishing state of its trade, the magnificent style of the higher, and the comfort of the lower classes, together with the contentment and cheerfulness of all, attest that the representations of Austrian tyranny with which we are often amused, are the effusions of interested traducers, rather than the genuine opinions of the people. That the inhabitants of Lombardy should prefer a native government, conducted on the principles of justice, is natural. But that they are so impatient of the Austrian yoke, as easily to be seduced into wild and Eutopian schemes of a federal Italian government, to be formed by cruel and licentious anarchists, is at variance with truth. When those indignant invectives against foreign despotism are traced to their source, it is singular to find that they generally come from a quarter, where they should be spared, with more propriety. Some of your English tourists, and great Irish absentees, occasionally strive to conciliate the good will of the Milanese, by loud declamation on the evils of foreign despotism. Native independence and native legislation are their favourite themes, forgetful of the miseries, which the want of its own legislature inflicts upon Ireland. Lombardy exhibits not the starvation of its inhabitants, amidst the exportation of its corn, as did Ireland this summer. Its nobles and its proprietors abstract not the amount of its produce to Vienna, as those of Ireland habitually squandered the rents of their estates in London. The cries of matrons and of children, banished for ever from the demolished cottages where they first breathed life, are not music, such as an Italian ear could endure. And often those who inflict or connive at such cruelties, are they, who are loudest in their hollow eulogies of constitutional freedom, and in their equally hollow condemnation of arbitrary government. The people of Lombardy, have had better instructions in their rights and duties, than those itinerant propagators of sedition. Some of them are not wanting in shrewdly observing that they should apply their lessons of benevolence to Ireland, so near home, before they should thus expend them on a distant country. They are not insensible to the blessings of good government. They know as well as their prouder visitors, the just rights of the people, as well as the duties of the monarch. The claims of the poor can never be disregarded where one archbishop, in the person of St. Charles Boromeo, devoted his ample revenues and life to their support; nor can the monarch ever claim exemption from the duties of humanity and justice, where another, in the person of St. Ambrose, excluded from the sanctuary, Theodosius, the guilty master of the Roman world.

JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLVIII.

BOLOGNA, OCTOBER 20, 1831.

IF Rome were not the great centre which attracts the generality of European travellers, with a speed that seems to accelerate as they advance, the intermediate cities of Italy would be well worth loitering among them for a longer time, than is generally bestowed on their varied treasures of sculpture, painting, and literature. In the commencement, one feels more than regret in being, as if torn away from an intellectual feast, which he was only beginning to enjoy. But you are soon reconciled to the change, finding that every city furnishes fresh, and perhaps, more interesting objects of curiosity, filling the mind with an uninterrupted succession of historical incidents, and familiarizing the taste to models of excellence, until it becomes gradually assimilated to the surrounding objects, ceasing to wonder at those master pieces of art, which, when first seen, are sure to call forth all the excitement of a young admiration. Every city, nay, every town, has its magnificent temples, its colleges, its museums, its galleries, its annals, and monuments of every kind ; and can boast of poets, or painters, or historians, whose fame may have spread, far beyond the place of their nativity. There is not a region over the entire surface of Italy, that is not redolent of historic renown ; nor a river you traverse, from the Rubicon to the majestic "Father of floods," which does not roll with it, a succession of classic recollections.

In crossing the flat, but fertile fields of Lombardy, you are filled with cheerful emotions, in witnessing the comfort of the inhabitants. You are prepared for relishing the refinement of the arts, when you feel, that the first essential foundation of the physical comforts, of the people is laid. Smiling fields and gladsome faces, exhibiting a delightful sympathy between man and the rest of the creation, meet you as you go along ; nor are your feelings harrowed with those pictures of a once happy tenantry, evicted from the homesteads of their fathers, which rush upon your mind on your approach towards Mantua, drawn from the terrible realities of civil war, but which the poet did not imagine would be realized as in Ireland, in the midst of social tranquillity. Long viewed through the transparent medium of the Italian poets, the Po cannot first be seen without more than ordinary curiosity ; it appeared still more beautiful towards the close of the evening, as the moon shone upon its peaceful surface, giving a more distinct relief to the neighbouring ridge of the

Appenines. Of Placentia and Parma, contiguous cities, the latter is now the chief, both being within the dominions of the widow of Napoleon. The brilliant colouring of Corregio is still as fresh on the roof of the ducal palace, as when it was left unfinished by the hand of death, an emblem of the unfading fame, which Parma derives from having given birth to this celebrated painter. The neighbouring city of Reggio recalls the memory of Ariosto, whom Italy admires as the creator of the romantic school of poetry, in which he had many admirers, and some imitators. Again, the city of Modena challenges the homage of every lover of truth and antiquity, as the birth-place of Muratori, whose accurate and laborious diligence leads you, by the help of dates and monuments, through the labyrinth of the middle ages. His is a name, which deserves the veneration of every scholar, and there are few who ever pushed their researches into the remote dimness of antiquity, that will not readily acknowledge, that they found a guiding light, in the writings of Muratori.

Bologna has been distinguished as one of those cities, which contributed earliest to the restoration of learning. Its University always enjoyed a distinguished reputation, and was one of the most frequented in Europe. At a recent period the chair of Greek was won, by the successful competition of Clotilda Tambroni. Many great historical events are associated with this city. Here the Emperor Charles the Fifth was crowned. The beautiful white altar, adorned with basso relievos, illustrative of the principal events of the life of St. Dominick, is one of the finest monuments in the city, and which does honour to the memory of Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara. The University library, laboratory, and museum, are well worthy the ancient reputation of the city. That of anatomy, is particularly rich in the varied specimens of the human species, together with the diseases to which human nature is subject. The monuments of fools and monsters, with which it abounds, are sadly calculated to lower the vanity of man. But Bologna may well boast of one man, the immortal Lambertini, who, not only from the eminence of his station, but the extent and variety of his acquirements, stands out towards the middle of the last century, as one of the most conspicuous characters in Europe. Born in Bologna, reared in its University, the young mind of Lambertini was so thoroughly imbued with classical learning, that in his old age he could recite whole passages of Virgil, from which the graver studies of his profession, had debarred him for many years. With an intellect of vast capacity and untiring application, he grasped the whole circle of theology, ecclesiastical history, and canon law; and when translated from the Archiepiscopal See of Bologna to the throne of St. Peter, he continued for a long Pontificate, to pour upon the Christian world an uninterrupted

flood of Catholic knowledge; conveying the orthodox doctrines of the Church, in language not unworthy of Leo, one of the best imitators, of the ancient eloquence of Rome.

To study such men, and to contemplate their enduring monuments, in the beneficent influence which their virtues and their writings spread around them, has been the chief object of my brief pilgrimage. And it must be particularly consoling to an Irishman, in treading over such sacred ground, to find, even in the classic soil of Italy, the monuments of Irish wisdom and Irish virtue, among the most towering of those, which yet challenge the people's veneration. Here, embosomed in the depths of the Appenines, stands the venerable monastery of Bobio, erected at the close of the sixth century by Columbanus. Educated at Bangor, his breast burned with an ardent zeal to carry the glad tidings of the Gospel to the Continent, then torn by the dreadful contentions of intestine faction, and foreign wars, that raged, throughout the falling Empire. The life and labours of Columbanus, his frustrate efforts to reform the licentious court of Theodoric, and his banishment from Luxien, procured by the implacable vengeance of Brunechilde, his royal mother, form an instructive and interesting episode in the ecclesiastical history of that period. Sighing for that solitude and repose which was the ambition of his life, and from which he had been sacrilegiously extruded, he crossed the Alps, and found the secure asylum which he sought from the liberality of Agilulph, King of the Lombards, in the midst of the Appenines.

When a barbarous and oppressive code had reduced Ireland to a similar state of anarchy and ignorance, as followed in the track of the invasions that desolated the Roman empire, it was cheering to us amidst those disasters, to refer to those illustrious men who went forth to shed over this chaos, the blessings of light and order. Though our colleges were destroyed, and our temples levelled with the ground, still as long as such high and holy recollections were cherished, they were the harbingers of a hope, that our country would again resume its character for sanctity and learning, among the nations of Europe. Of this soothing hope the Scotch sought to despoil us, and Dempster, availing himself of the name of Scotia, which Ireland anciently bore, and which was not applied to Caledonia, or Albany, till a more recent period, endeavoured by the most shameful act of literary piracy, to rob us of the rich treasure, of our sanctity and literature. The clumsy imposture could not escape immediate exposure, and accordingly it excited mingled feelings of indignation and scorn. For some time it was considered deserving of the seriousness of refutation. Its best and simplest refutation is found in the comparatively recent appropriation to Scotland, of the name of Scotia, which Ireland anciently and exclusively bore.

So clear, however, and incontestible are the claims of Ireland to Columbanus, and the host of holy men whom it sent forth in the period of its peaceful enjoyment of literature, that the continental writers, invariably pointing to our country, scarcely ever condescend to notice the foolish pretensions of Scotland. Thus Muratori expressly names Ireland as the native country of Columbanus, and guided solely by that love of truth* which distinguished this historian, characterizes him as a most celebrated abbot, and an eminent servant of God, who was most illustrious for his holy life and miracles.

JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XLIX.

FIESOLE, OCTOBER 29, 1831.

Finibus occidius describitur optima tellus,
Nomine et antiquis Scotia dicta libris.
Insula dives opum, geminarum vestis, et auri,
Commoda corporibus. are, sole solo.

In qua Scotorum gentes habitare merentur,
Inclyta gens hominum milite, pace, fide.

Donatur.

Տյալ, ու ուր ալսին, Տուշա, ուր բար-մալէ,
Տա այս ա Յ-օյլ, ո ալի տալտ' ու շրունե բալէ
Ար բալալ ա Յ-օյլ, Յար բօր ա բրելի, այ չինէ,
Տօ շար' օ խառ ոյլ տօլի լուր բար մալ լ.
Տա անտ ծե բայիսր, քօլու, Յար ծե օլի,
Եսր բօր ծե ելծ լսամալ, բայրոյօծ մօլի.
* * * * *Ար սպիր այտ Տօշան, շրյէ 'բ-բալ յօմած տալի
Ցուր բալ, ու Յ-օյլ, ո բրոցալ, ցուր եալ չալ.

SUCH is the elegant and correct description, which a holy bishop of this place, has, about a thousand years since, left us of the land of his nativity. Then, as now, the beautiful stream of the Arno watered the delightful valley which he contemplated from

* Appunto a questo re de Longobardi (Aègilolfo), recorse circa i tempi Correnti San Columbano, abate celebratissimo, nato in Irlanda, fondatore nella Borgogna del monastero di Luxevisl e d'altri monasteri, &c. &c.—Annali d'Italia, tom. iv, parte I, page 37.

the neighbouring hills of Fiesole; then, as now, Florence was seen as one of the fairest cities with which the Italian soil was adorned; then, as now, the luxuriant verdure of the vine and olive, the cloudless sky, and the warm atmosphere, attested the incomparable beauty of the land of Tuscany. Yet, notwithstanding the charms and variety of the scene, the “untravelled mind of Donagha turns to the land and people of the far West,” and in a strain of poetry, not unworthy of a more classic age, records his fervent admiration of the fertility of the one and the virtues of the other. The lines of this eminent man have since, by the frequency of their application, become familiar to every reader of the annals of Ireland—a proof that they were a faithful picture of the country and its inhabitants. And though ten disastrous centuries have rolled over it, since the happy period, when the sainted exile of Fiesole, sung the fertility of its soil and the fidelity of its people, Ireland and the Irish, are still true to the description of their ardent and eloquent panegyrist. When the above lines were written, the English language was utterly unknown in Ireland. I have, therefore, rendered them in the language in which their learned author wrote and spoke, ere he left the shores of his own country. They may be but feeble transcripts of the historic truth and classic beauty of his own lines; but still they are faithful transcripts, and it is a source of elevated feeling to think that the language in which the Bishop of Fiesole was wont to describe the beautiful features of Ireland, and the lofty virtue of its people, has, like them, survived the most destructive efforts for its annihilation. Before I returned to Florence, I discharged with pleasure a duty, which the faith and humility of the Saint besought in his beautiful epitaph from the passing traveller, of offering up a prayer for his eternal repose.*

Whether you consider the charms of the scenery—the deliciousness of the climate—the magnificence of its churches—the sumptuousness of its palaces—the refinement of its society—or the treasures of art and history which time has accumulated in the archives and galleries of Florence—this celebrated city will not be deemed undeserving of the praise of its enthusiastic encomiasts. The exquisite collection of gems, statues, and paintings, in the royal gallery, as well as in the churches, has long challenged and obtained admiration, as containing specimens of the first masters of ancient or modern times. It happens, however, that many, who can view with real or affected enthusiasm those intimate collections of statuary and painting, are utterly indifferent

* *Parce, Viator adis, quisquis pro munere Christi
Te modo non pigeat cernere busta mea
Atque precare Deum, residet qui culmine cœli,
Ut mihi concedat regna beata sua.*

to the benevolent claims which the living members of society have upon them. There are frequent instances of persons studying, with all the diligence of connoisseurs, the fine proportions and majestic symmetry of the human form, affecting to feel the inspiration of the hand that could fashion to life the stone or canvass ; and yet who can look without pity or compassion on those living temples, that are actually animated with the spirit, with which the Almighty artist has informed them.

It is not the legitimate study of the arts I censure ; it is the extravagant and unfeeling hypocrisy of some of their pretended admirers, I condemn. They are the offspring of virtue, of genius, and of freedom ; and hence they have never thriven with such success as under the encouragement and cultivation of the Catholic Church. Charity, patriotism, devotion—every domestic virtue that can endear—every public quality that can exalt—every religious sacrifice that can consecrate the human character—are the models that are found and brought to the utmost perfection in the Catholic Church, and, hence, where the best models are most abundant, those arts must naturally flourish that are employed in their imitation. Give me such a man as the author of the “*Mores Catholici*,” to give, in the artless and unlaboured simplicity of his own language, the impressions made by the contemplation of those creations of the chisel or the pencil, which are scattered in such profusion through his elegant and instructive writings. It is he, or such a one, who could understand the spirit in which the Church hung the walls of her temples with paintings, or adorned their aisles with statues, and convey to the reader more than volumes of elaborate dissertation or hollow sentimentality, could convey. He crossed the threshold of every temple in the spirit in which it was reared ; he viewed every piece of Scripture or ecclesiastical history in relation to the religious reality from which it was fashioned ; in short, he contemplated the whole circle of the arts—its painting, its poetry, its architecture, its sculpture—as many vivid transcripts of the virtues, which religion inspires, fosters, rears ; and, hence, through the medium of his writings ; pictures, statues, churches, basso reliefos, become inspired with life, and animated teachers of that faith and that morality, which they were called forth to support and to adorn.

It must be confessed, however, that the practice of introducing sepulchral monuments into churches, does not appear to be regulated in some places, with sufficient discrimination. This incongruity struck me in Florence, particularly in the Church della Croce, where, as you ascend towards the altar, you meet, on the right hand, the mausoleums of Michael Angelo, Dante, Alfieri, and Machiaveli, with Galileo on the left—a goodly group, no doubt, but which might be more appropriately lined than

along the walls of a Catholic Church. It would seem as if you were in a cemetery in which painting, poesy, history, and astronomy wept over their choicest ornaments. A statue of Galileo, with his telescope, would be appropriately placed in the vestibule of an observatory; one of Alfieri would be a fitting ornament for a theatre; those of Michael Angelo and Dante would grace any collection placed in a temple—such as the tribune of the Royal Gallery—dedicated to the arts: But a Catholic would not regret the absence of the cenotaph of Machiavelli from the precincts of the church; while the busts of all, would be judiciously placed over the cornice of a library. From the inscription on the tomb of Dante, “Ter frustra conatum,” it seems that this tribute to the Father of Italian Poetry was thrice attempted in vain, and that his countrymen had, at last, succeeded by the splendour of the tardy monument, to make some atonement, to the neglected memory of departed genius.

The chapel of the Medici now in progress of completion, promises to be, in the beauty of its entire embellishment, one of the principal ornaments of Florence. It is as creditable to the city, as it is to the memory of the illustrious family, to whom it is raised. Nothing can be more fit than that the arts should be enlisted in the grateful perpetuation of the names of those who, like the Medici, laboured so zealously and successfully in their revival. The activity with which the work is carried on, does honour to the taste and wisdom of the reigning family. It affords a specimen of the kind interest they take, not only in those measures that affect the immediate welfare of their subjects, but in making the capital of their small but happy dominions, worthy of the visits and the sojourn of strangers. There are few foreigners, whatever may be their religious or political prejudices on their arrival, who will not depart with regret from the territories of the Duke of Tuscany. There is more of that happiness, which political writers have anxiously sought, to be found among the people of Tuscany, than perhaps is to be found under any of those theoretic forms of government, which they have so ingeniously and elaborately imagined. It affords a proof that good government is not so difficult a science, when there is the will to govern wisely; and that all the checks and balances, that clog, and embarrass, and often impede, the actions of governments, have been in some instances but the contrivances of men who laboured for their own selfish and tyrannical ends to pervert government from its simple object—the welfare of the community. Such safeguards have been, and must continue, to be set up against the capricious will of arbitrary and dangerous despots. But they are frequently found securer engines for oppression than protection; and when there is in the monarch or the minister, the

disposition to crush and to oppress, the most sacred constitutional powers are easily made available to make inroads from behind them, on the liberty and happiness of the people. The Tuscan government is not urged on by a lust of conquest, to invade the territories of its neighbours, and to weigh down its own subjects by a load of heavy taxation. An incessant and inexorable requisition of their industry and toil, does not crush the young and unripe powers of the rising generation, or cast a cloud over their natural gaiety. No; a moderate and rational exercise of industry, seconds the bounty of Providence in the cultivation of a propitious soil; and the people indulge within moderate bounds their innocent amusements, whilst they celebrate with joyous gratitude the solemn festivals of religion. Those may provoke the censure of those Puritanical moles, who know no nobler destiny or higher enjoyment for man, than to be continually delving in the earth, striving to amass a fortune. The people of Florence and its vicinity forget not, that the interests of society itself are but secondary and subsidiary to the eternal interests of man. It is this conviction, that accounts for that constant cheerfulness, that characterises a well governed Catholic population. You find the spirit of religion pervading the rustic sports of the people, and presiding over the more refined fetes of the elevated classes; it gives a softened and more charming tone to social intercourse, and approximates without injury those classes which the pride or wealth of the world would keep otherwise asunder. To civilize, to refine, to exalt, the arts have undoubtedly contributed their share; but he who explores more deeply the cause to which those happy effects can be most distinctly traced, will not fail to find in the influence of the Catholic religion, the most inspiring source of the superior moral refinement of the people of Tuscany.

Besides those eminent men, of whom Florence may boast, who have advanced every art, and enlarged the boundaries of every science, this beautiful city has contributed its contingent to that still loftier and more spiritual class, with whom Providence in its mercy favours cities and states, to teach, by word and by example, the science of salvation. One of the noble family of Corsini had been placed in the episcopal see of Fiesole, the successor of the virtues of Donagha, as he was of his episcopal throne. The name of Mary Magdeline of Pazzi is a high one in the annals of female heroism, and has been looked up to, as an encouraging beacon to guide the slippery steps of youth through the paths of virtue. But it is St. Antoninus, who flourished towards the middle of the fifteenth century, who has challenged most the reverential homage of the people. While he was Archbishop of Florence, the celebrated General Council for a re-union between the Greek and Latin Churches was held in that city, and, like St. Athanasius at

the Council of Nice, he was one of the most distinguished of its illustrious Fathers. He pressed with zeal and success the counsels of peace and union. But, alas ! the hollow reconciliation was not lasting, and, what was still more deplorable, symptoms were even then appearing of the frightful and inveterate schism, which broke out early in the ensuing century, and which has since developed its malignant influence in many of the nations of Europe. Soon after the close of the council, a frightful pestilence broke out in Florence. The good archbishop was indefatigable in his exertions to mitigate its horrors. It was then, as usually happens, the heroic zeal and charity of St. Antoninus were conspicuous ; and the extent of his learning, the ardour of his zeal, and the untiring and incessant warfare which, by the most perfect self-denial, he carried on against the world and himself, have given him a just title to be recognised, as one of the best and holiest benefactors of his country and his age.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER L.

SIENNA, NOVEMBER 6, 1831.

IT is not the fame or antiquity of Sienna among the ancient cities of Etruria, so much as the associations with which it is intertwined, that prompts me to bestow on it particular attention. Situate in the heart of Italy, and enjoying all the advantages of that favoured soil and climate, it could not but be ranked among those cities which the arts of Italy had raised into early renown. Accordingly, Sienna held at an early period, and still holds, an elevated place amidst its classic territories. Its magnificent cathedral, though not comparable to that of Milan, is like it in the Gothic style of building, standing as an isolated exception to the many models of Greek and Roman architecture by which it is surrounded. In its rich and varied pavement, the people are enabled to read the instructive incidents of the Old Testament, and the entablature round the interior of the Church is adorned with a consecutive series of the busts and names of the Popes,

exhibiting in subordinate contrast, the names of the few anti-Popes, who, at different periods disturbed, by their ambition, the peace of the Catholic Church.

To the catalogue of the successors of St. Peter, this city furnished a fair proportion, nor were they the least distinguished of that exalted series. To the sympathy and support which St. Thomas of Canterbury received from Alexander III., a native of Sienna, we are indebted for the noble assertion of the liberties of the Catholic Church, for which the illustrious martyr stands out so prominently in its history. The seventh Roman Pontiff of the same name, and of the same city, has been one of the most untiring opponents of Jansenism, and one of the most successful in unravelling the tangled web of theological sophistry, in which they laboured to involve their insidious errors. Pius II., the celebrated Piccolominy, was also a native of the territory of Sienna. The active part which he—Æneas Sylvius, took in the Council of Bazil, in opposition to Eugenius IV., the then reigning Pontiff, is familiar to the readers of ecclesiastical history. The dangerous and schismatical tendency of the proceedings of that body, he afterwards solemnly condemned, contrasting the ardour of youth with the experience of a riper age, and drawing an emphatic distinction between the *opinions* of Æneas and the *doctrines* of Pius.*

Yet, from the daughter of an humble dyer, has Sienna derived more glory than from the most distinguished of its children. It is scarcely necessary to name St. Catherine of Sienna, one of the most remarkable persons of the age in which she lived. Born to no ample inheritance or noble title of this world, she cultivated with the utmost assiduity the divine graces with which she was favoured, and became one of the chief lights of her age. Though she disliked the tumult of society, and sought in solitude an uninterrupted intercourse with her God, yet she sometimes mixed in the busy scenes of life, with a view to establish peace between contending parties. Her counsel and mediation were often solicited by the Potentates of Europe, and Petrarch himself, notwithstanding all the literary celebrity which encircled his name, did not exercise such extensive influence among his contemporaries as St. Catherine of Sienna. He long sought, and sought in vain, by the eloquence of his writings, as well as his personal remonstrance, to prevail on the Popes to return from Avignon to Rome, to heal the disorders in the city as well as in the Church, occasioned by their long absence. St. Catherine undertook a journey to Avignon for the same purpose, and succeeded in inducing Gregory XI., to return. Of the disastrous schism that soon followed, the seeds were sown in Avignon, and on the

* “Æneam respite, Pium recipite,” was his own expression.

death of Gregory, they produced their natural harvest. No one felt more poignant grief at that lamentable schism than this eminent saint, and none laboured more earnestly to bring about a union. This she did not live to see accomplished. The birth-place of such a distinguished servant of God I proposed to visit, and was much gratified on finding myself in her cell, now a church, which was the scene of her visions and her miracles. Here was an humble virgin studiously shunning the world and trampling on all its maxims, and yet an oracle in her day to those to whom the destinies of churches and kingdoms were entrusted. She was a living illustration of the power of mind over the material elements of the world, especially when that mind becomes, by co-operating with his grace, an obedient instrument of the will of the Almighty.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LI.

ROME, NOVEMBER 10, 1831.

Χαῖρε μοι Ρώμα, Θρησκευτηρὶς ἄρχος
Χριστομιτραὶ δαιφρων ἄνασσα
Σεμνὸν α ναιειστ επι γην ὅλυμπον
Αἰεν αγρυππον.

ERINNA.*

Hail Rome, with golden trophies crowned,
Valor's own child, revered, renowned,
Majestic Queen, to thee 'tis given
On earth to hold the sway of heaven.

My pilgrimage is at length accomplished. I have reached the shrine of the Apostles. One of the first and fondest wishes of my life is gratified. Seated on the summit of Mount Palatine, the cradle and the grave of the Roman empire, the vastest and most varied picture that ever was held up to human contemplation, lies before me. What a panorama revolving before the historic eye! Whether you regard the time through which it stretches, the space over which it extends, the groups which crowd it, or the pencils which lent it their shade and colouring, it is and will remain, to the end of time, without example. From the first

* Quoted from Lipsius "De Magnitudine Romana."

faint twilight of history and fable, through which you descry the indistinct images of the twin founders, to Gregory XVI., who now occupies the Pontifical throne, what a continuous series of wonders passes in review before the pilgrim of Mount Palatine. From the banks of the Tiber, the canvass spreads over the seven hills, to the Sabine mountains. Then it gradually expands as you descend, exhibiting, with every epoch, the widening conquests of the imperial city, until the name and manners of Rome are diffused over the earth. What a succession of mighty names crowd upon the view through this immense vista ! What a number of nations, renowned in ancient and modern story, fix your attention as they pass ! Tuscans, Greeks, Goths, Franks, Germans, Sarmatians, and Britons occupy, in turn, a large space of this moving picture. Philosophers, heroes, and consuls, on the one hand ; Saints, Martyrs, and Pontiffs on the other—as if vying with each other in prodigies of prowess, and the extent of their empire. And, though in the vast representation there is many a dreary blank, wanting the finish of master artists, there are many more to relieve the dull vacuity, and animated with the classic pens of a Livy, a Tacitus, a Virgil, a Vida, a Petrarch, and a Tasso, whose touch would have illustrated a less interesting subject.

And why not introduce my pilgrimage to the mistress of the Roman world, by a reference to those immortal masters of Latin and Italian literature ? Why select a passage from a Greek writer rather than from one of the natives who have, with such appropriate eloquence, celebrated the praises of Rome ? It is not from any preference of the Greek writers ; but the name of Rome is Greek, and it is in that language alone, that we can discover its genuine signification. It is synonomous with strength, and like the eternal city, seemed to be prophetic of its enduring power. In this interpretation I am far from being fanciful. It is the opinion of some of the most learned antiquarians, such as Donatus and Grenovius, that the Latins had built a city on the hill on which I am now seated, called "Valentia," and which was changed by Evander, on his arrival, into the corresponding appellation of Rome.

"Quæ modo Roma sonat, fuit ante Valentia dicta."

But whether derived from Romulus, or imposed by Evander, the name was an auspicious presage of the future glories of the city. In this significant name, as well as the prediction that it would be eternal, when it was yet but in its infancy, there is a mysterious coincidence between the profane and sacred writings. In the image which exhibited to Daniel the successive empires of the world, the part which represented that of Rome was com-

posed of iron. How appropriately, then, was the name of “strength,” or Rome, or Valentia, applied to a city whose iron dominion shook the feeble empires of the East, until it rose upon their ruins. And though it yielded in turn, it was not to any earthly sway, but to a mysterious power which grew up in its own bosom, and which ensured to it, that eternity, which those who first promised it, could not understand.

It is, then, no wonder that the very name of Rome should inspire such a lively interest. It is no wonder that, at the mention of it, the mind should be filled with such a train of classic as well as sacred associations. Its charms are traced to childhood, and precede the period of our literary education. With the exception of those sacred names of religion which are ever pronounced with reverence, there is no other so generally known, so often repeated, or which has so much claims to the interest of the human heart. It is lisped in our infancy—it mingles itself with our earliest instruction—and awakens ideas of affection or of terror among every people. Ere I touched those fountains of an eloquent literature, with which Rome has enriched the world, its name was impressed, with an affectionate reverence, on my soul. Ere I read those travellers who attempt to describe what they had not heart to feel, my mind was imbued with the traditions of those pilgrims, who trod a soil which was worthy of their foot-steps. Yes; the Christian catechism anticipated the perusal of the classics. The ancient pilgrims took precedence of modern tourists, and it was with such ground notions, unspoiled by any colouring of recent daubers, I brought my mind to catch its own impressions, from the contemplation of the eternal city. Such feelings may be called enthusiastic; but if Rome is not capable of inspiring such enthusiasm, it is in vain its ancient ruins or modern glories are explored. Hence it is called by the most intellectual of modern poets the “city of the soul”—a phrase which shows a congeniality of mind with those thoughts and recollections, which Rome alone could inspire.

Let it not, however, be imagined that I come prepared to praise, without discrimination, whatever presents itself in this delightful region. It shall have the full benefit of a mind that has long poised the adverse opinions, by which its excellence or its faults have been praised or censured. The modern Romans, if at all descended from the ancients, have their blood so diluted by foreign mixtures, that no sensible person can think of flattering the present race, by his admiration of the ancients. And should any of the benefits of the Catholic religion be placed to their account, they are benefits which they share with many other countries, which shall not be assumed without reason, nor held up to admiration without shewing their claims to preference.

Rome having been destined to become the seat of a vast empire, the Palatine Hill would seem as naturally fated to be its centre. With the Capitoline Hill towards the west—the Quirinal stretching to the north—the Esquiline and Viminal bordering it on the east—and again Mount Cœlius and Aventine encompassing it to the south—it would appear as if this circle of tributary hills were formed to own, and to protect, the sovereignty of Mount Palatine. Accordingly, we find that it was here the Arcadians, with their King, Evander, first fixed their residence.* It was chosen by Romulus, as the seat of his rising colony, and though, in the process of time, the capital became famous for the superb temples of the gods, and the trophies of heroes, yet it never was the residence of the kings or of the Cæsars. Through every vicissitude of revolutions and of war, Mount Palatine retained its imperial pre-eminence. What wonder, then, that the foot of every traveller should tread with reverence over this huge mausoleum of departed power. At the western base of this hill, where now stands the Convent of St. Theodore, the cradle which saved the twin brothers, was first supposed to be deposited. More to the south stood the modest mansion of Augustus, who laboured to reconcile the Romans to the loss of liberty, by affecting the simple habits of a Roman citizen. It was only, however, in the reign of Nero that the vast pile, called a palace, was erected, which stretched to the Esquiline Hill, and of which the awful ruins that still remain, reveal the ancient magnificence. This monument of the pride and extravagance of the imperial monster is described by Suetonius.† Before the vestibule stood a colossal statue of Nero, one hundred and twenty feet in height. The centre was occupied by an extensive sheet of water resembling a sea, and surrounded by a series of edifices all adorned with porticoes. Its roofs were covered with gold; its saloons furnished with tables of ivory. This stupendous fabric, towards the erection of which the empire was ransacked of its treasures, was soon stripped of its ornaments, to be transferred to the decoration of other buildings. Yet though ages of plunder and dilapidation have passed over it, the massive arches of brick that still remain, justify the description of Suetonius, who compares its ample compartments to so many cities. Next to the Colosseum, or the Amphitheatre of Titus, whose ample walls are towering before me, there is no other monument which impresses us with such an idea of the gigantic resources which the Roman Emperors could command.

* *Æneas urbe et sociis et classe relicta
Sceptra Palatini, sedemque petit Evandri.*

VIRGIL, *Eneid*, ix.

† “*Historiæ Romanæ Scriptores*,” tome 2, page 60; Geneva, 1653.

After a long contemplation of the ruins of Mount Palatine, and a free indulgence of the varied recollections which they awakened, I resolved to return home to the Irish College. Having passed through the plantations, to use an idea purely English, of Mr. Mills, who purchased a portion of this hill, I could not but remark what an incongruous ornament, his gravelled walks and trimmed hedges, formed over this royal cemetery. They might be seen with pleasure in England, where all around was in keeping with such artificial elegance. The Farnese gardens that are stretched along them, with their overgrown weeds and lofty cypresses, harmonize better with the melancholy spirit of the place. As I descended towards the arch of Titus, I met one of those religious, with whom Rome abounds, and whose costume strikes with such peculiarity, on one's first arrival on the Continent. His body was wrapped in a coarse brown tunic ; a portion of the same garment, in the form of a hood, was thrown over his forehead ; and a pair of plain sandals, secured by straps, was the only covering for the feet of this person. He seemed absorbed in deep meditation. The subject of his thoughts was, probably, the Redeemer's Passion, which was represented in a series of paintings near our place of meeting, known by the name of Stations of the Cross. I soon discovered, he belonged to a religious community of St. Bonaventure, who have a small Convent on the summit of Mount Palatine. We are told by Dionysius Halicarnassus, that a temple dedicated to Victory was placed on the summit of this hill, and that, in his time, the Romans offered their worship at its shrine. The temple of Victory still consecrates the spot. The walls of the profane shrine may have crumbled ; but in the little Church of St. Bonaventure, the temple of Victory still remains. The faith, of which Christ says, that it conquers the world, finds over this tomb of Paganism, a temple and worshippers. And, however lowly the garb of those religious may appear, there is no lover of morality or social happiness that would not glory in the change that witnesses the votaries of purity residing on the ruins of a palace, of which the builder was one of the greatest monsters of the human race, and from which he often issued to the Circus, to disgust and appal whatever remained of ancient virtue by his infamy and crimes. Such were the reflections, that closed my first visit, among the ancient ruins of Rome.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LII

ROME, NOVEMBER 12, 1831.

Aurea Tarpeia ponet Capitolia rupe,
Et junget nostro templorum columna cœlo
Silius Italicus.

From Tarpeias' rock, the lofty fanes shall rise,
Whose golden roofs shall reach the vaulted skies.

HAVING first stopped in the centre to contemplate the cradle of the Roman empire, I next turned my attention to the Capitol, the chief as well as the earliest inhabited of its tributary hills, and which, in the glory of its associations, might rival the fame of Mount Palatine. On mounting the steep ascent that leads to the summit, one naturally meditates on the varied triumphal processions that swept along the same line, from the early time of Tarquinus Priscus, to deposit in the temple of Jupiter, the collected spoils of a vanquished world. From the human skull, that was dug up by the workmen, during the excavation of the foundations of the temple, was drawn a presage of the future eminence of the place. The elliptical form of its summit, has furnished fanciful writers with another proof of its distinction, resembling, as it does, the configuration of the earth, of which it was to be the Capitol. The statues that meet your eye, on approaching the lofty platform, are well adapted to recall the memory of its ancient splendours, some of them representing the persons of the early emperors, and more the trophies of the captive chiefs, that were borne by Trajan and Marcus Antoninus, on their return from their eastern conquests.

To the anxiety of successive Pontiffs for the embellishment of the city, are we indebted for the appropriate position of those statues, that have been raised from the ruins of ancient Rome. To Paul III. of the Farnesian family, who contributed much to adorn other parts of the city, is due the praise of erecting the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, breathing so much of life and energy, that Michael Angelo is said to have stepped out of the way, as if fearful of being trodden down by the animal. Besides other Popes, Benedict XIV. has been one of the most munificent contributors to the riches of the capitol, under whose pontificate, some of the finest specimens of ancient sculpture, have been transferred to it, from the celebrated villa of Adrian.

Inferior only to that of the Vatican, the portals of its museum are open not only to the humblest of their own people, but to strangers from every region of the earth. Familiar with the finest models, all classes are embued with a discriminating taste, and not only do they feel a becoming sense of their own value, from the equity of those laws that make no jealous distinction of classes, opening to all, those sanctuaries of art and science; but this early intimacy with genius, produces many successful imitators of the works, which they admire.

Many an hour is devoted with pleasure, as well as advantage, by strangers as well as the Roman citizens, to the contemplation of those chiselled and painted monuments of gods, of heroes, of emperors, and other interesting objects with which the museum of the capitol abounds. The dying gladiator, alone, displaying a courage unsubdued amidst the agonies of death, might well repay one's entrance into this treasury of the arts, and the bronze wolf, with the twin founders of the city still exhibiting the stroke of the lightning, could not fail to awaken recollections, which youth had associated, with the mistress of the Roman world.

But you cannot long loiter on the summit, or walk around its base, without meeting monuments far more interesting than those which its Pagan antiquity recalls. How different now the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, or the prison of Servius Tullius, from what they appear in classic story. In the huge and gloomy prison of Servius Tullius, Jugurtha met a fate which he is said by his historians, to have earned. Here, too, Cataline, with his congenial band of cruel conspirators against every virtue, were cast into chains, and all, but their guilty chief, paid the forfeit of their treason. And here, in fine, according to an ancient tradition, was immured the person of the Prince of the Apostles, and the fountain is still visible, filled with living water, which gushed forth, to enable him to baptize his converted keeper. In being thus cast into the same prisons to which the worst felons were doomed, we see but another illustration of the blind caprice and wicked injustice, with which, as in the case of his Divine Master, the world dispenses its punishments and rewards.

Among the numerous temples that adorned, or disfigured, every hill and plain of ancient Rome, the magnificent temple of Jupiter Capitolinus rose from one of the loftiest peaks of the imperial citadel; commenced under the kings, but of which the completion was, in the language of Tacitus, reserved for the epoch of its freedom, adorned with porticos, of which some of the columns were rifled from vanquished Athens, while its roof and massive portals glittered with gold, which tributary provinces had supplied. This temple was successively destroyed;—first in the civil wars of Sylla and Marius, and again under Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, who contended for the imperial sceptre. Under Vespas-

sian, who succeeded to the throne, it was restored to all its pristine majesty ; and again, after a similar casualty, it rose with fresh beauty under Domitian, his degenerate son.

Though the foundations of the temple of Jupiter were not laid for several years after his death, yet, from the day on which Romulus hung on the lofty oak on the summit of the capitol, the spoils of his vanquished enemies, it seemed destined, down to the era of Constantine, to be the goal of the imperial triumphs. The number, the pomp, and the ceremonies of those public ovations, together with the great events with which they were associated, the nations that were subdued, and the generals who vanquished them, form some of the most brilliant episodes, in the narrative of the Roman writers.

Some of the most conspicuous names in antiquity pass in review before us, and nothing which power and wealth and patriotism could accomplish, is wanting to give effect to those tributes of acknowledgment which were awarded by Rome, to those successful warriors, who had extended its conquests. From the Campus Martius, near the banks of the Tiber, the solemn procession winds its way in a circuitous direction, to give an opportunity for the full display of the public arrangements and the popular enthusiasm. The civic authorities are marshalled in their municipal robes—the victorious legions move in the procession—the music of well-trained military bands gives animation to the scene—while the victor, the object of the public rejoicing, is carried on a gorgeous chariot ; and monarchs, such as Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, shorn of their diadems and of their sceptres, swell the pomp of his triumph, until he arrives at the magnificent temple, where he deposits all his spoils. Yet what an illusion was all this triumphal pageant : it scarcely required the repeated warnings of the slave, to remind the victor not to be intoxicated with vanity.

Notwithstanding the veneration with which centuries of conquest had encircled it, the majesty of the Temple of Jupiter, was obliged to yield at length to the sacred dominion of the cross ; and from a spot so long defiled with the impure rites of Paganism, are daily ascending the grateful orisons of the humble monks of St. Francis. Far different are the themes for reflection which the surrounding objects would suggest to the English or to the Irish as they descend from the summit of Ara Cœli, and contemplate the first of the triumphal arches that rises towards its base. The arch of Severus, recalls to the former the conquest of Britain, and he may indulge in alternate feelings of humiliation or of pride, when he reflects on the former state of his country, then a miserable and barbarous province of that empire, of which the spot on which he stands was the capital, and contrasts it with its now flourishing condition, embracing

provinces and islands of which the Romans had no knowledge. Again to the Irish Catholic, it will be a source of consolation to reflect that neither the armies of Severus or of any of the Roman conquerors who subdued Britain, ever penetrated into Ireland; and that it is to its position, beyond the pale of the Roman yoke, it was indebted for the undisturbed enjoyment of that early civilization, which it received from the East, and which, ever since, makes its records and antiquities so important in unravelling the perplexed history of other European nations. Though the Roman eagle which soared over the wilds of Caledonia, never essayed his flight into our Western Island, the Irish Catholic will acknowledge, as he walks from the arch of Severus, the connexion of the destinies of his country, with the two other triumphal arches which he meets on passing the Forum and the Via Sacra towards the Palatine. Those are the arches of Titus and of Constantine: the former, with its entablature, representing the precious furniture of the Jewish temple, standing as a perpetual monument of the ruin of that structure, and of the dispersion of the Jewish people; the other, with the sacred symbols of the cross, attesting the victories which, under its sacred tutelage, was won by Constantine over Maxentius and the other enemies of the Christian name. With the objects of those triumphal monuments, the Irish Catholic feels delight in acknowledging his sympathy. With what appropriate coincidence they stand, without an intervening similar trophy, as kindred monuments of the ruin of one religion, and the rise and triumph of another! To the Roman banners when adorned with the cross, Ireland bowed in meek and holy subjection, and has, with a fidelity unexampled in the history of nations, clung to that spiritual dominion, which stretches where her temporal sway was never recognized, and knows no limits but the boundaries of the habitable globe.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LIII.

ROME, NOVEMBER 20, 1831.

“Ita geminata Urbe, ut Sabinis aliquid daretur, Quirites a Curibus appellati.”—**TITUS LIVIUS.**

FROM the junction of the Sabines with the Romans, the hill of the Quirinal first derived its name and population. Until then, it bore the significant name of “Agon,” expressive of the contested games which were exhibited on its summit, and, though it since assumed the names of the Quirinal, and Monte Cavallo, its first appellation is that which appears prophetic of its contests and its triumphs. Its position I have already adverted to—stretching north of the Capitol, with the Esquiline to the east, and the Valley of the Campus Martius to the west, watered by the Tiber. From the fabled apotheosis of the founder of the city, to the present day—a period of near twenty-six centuries—the Quirinal has been a conspicuous theatre of varied conquests. During the reign of Paganism, it held but a subordinate rank to the Capitol or Mount Palatine; but, with the progress of Christianity, it has risen to a pre-eminence over the majesty of both. The exquisite piece of sculpture, from which it derives its present name of Monte Cavallo, has exercised the ingenuity of antiquarians, who are equally divided as to the artists, by whom they were executed, and the objects, of which they are the representations. Their excellence is attested by the names of Phidias and Praxiteles, to whom they are ascribed; but, as the former flourished in the time of Pericles, he could not design any object belonging to the more recent reign of Alexander.

From the Pillar of Trojan, which marks the ancient confines, between the Forum and the Quirinal, to the distant gate, called Porta Pia this region exhibited varied trophies of the renovating spirit of the Catholic Church. The ancient Pontifical palace of Lateran, has been exchanged for the more healthy habitation of Monte Cavallo, and, accordingly, the Pope’s residence alternates between it and the Vatican. Round this centre, a number of sumptuous and appropriate edifices has successively arisen, and gradually extended over the gardens of Sallust and Lucullus, so much celebrated for there luxuriant splendour, during the declining days of the Commonwealth. Of those, one of the most interesting, is the edifice in which the conclave assembles in latter times. An assembly, on whose choice many depend the

wise government of the Christian fold, cannot but be an object of pious curiosity to every Catholic; and the canons, which guide the Cardinals during their deliberative seclusion, are fraught with wisdom, and mark the solicitude of the Church, in its endeavours to secure for the faithful the blessings of a good pastor. That the disinterested spirit which distinguished the earlier elections of the Roman Pontiff, has never departed from the Roman See, is consolingly attested, by the virtues and energies of the latest Pontiffs. For their taste, in ornamenting the city, not less than for their zeal, in defending the interests of religion, have those successors of Peter been eminently distinguished. Before the troubles, which clouded the close of the reign of Pius VI., every portion of the city exhibited proofs of his anxiety for its decoration, and none more than the Quirinal and its environs. Perhaps Europe does not exhibit a finer prospect, than that which presents itself to the eye, at the intersection of the two great streets—the one leading to the Porta Pia, and the other to St. Mary Major—with their three Egyptian obelisks, two of them placed, by Pius VI., in their present position, and evincing that the victory of the Catholic Church over Paganism was not for the destruction of the arts, but for their preservation. Not less interesting, the four beautiful fountains, that are gushing forth, at the corners of the intersected streets, commanding this prospect—emblems of the pure and permanent doctrine of Rome, and, like the four streams of Paradise, diffusing itself over the four quarters of the world.

In the most summary and compendious notice of the Quirinal, and its environs, it would be almost unpardonable to pass over the celebrated Aurora of Guido, painted in fresco, on the ceiling of one of the Saloons of the Rospigliosi Palace. The design was suggested by the beautiful lines of Virgil, representing the morning chasing away the darkness of night, followed by the sun, mounted on his fiery chariot, and diffusing in his career the noon-day splendour. But though the idea was suggested by the Poet, the inimitable Painter made the picture all his own. It was a subject of all others congenial to his feelings and his taste. Not only the admirers of Guido Reni, but those who were jealous of his fame, confessed that, in tracing the finest features of the human countenance, his pencil was unsurpassed, and had scarcely a rival. Than his group, representing the hours, nothing can be found superior, not even among the daughters of Niobe—one of the pieces of sculpture he is said to have made his model; and well do the graces of this picture justify the eulogy of Passeri, cited by Lanzi, that he gave to his creations the “countenances of Paradise.” *

* “Lanzi Storia Pittorica,” vol. IV., page 122.

Among the many churches and religious edifices, that adorn this region of the city, I cannot omit the little Church of St. Andrew, the Noviciate for the Jesuits. It is not for the purpose of directing attention to the majesty of St. Peter's, by reminding the reader, that it equals all the compartments of this Noviciate, in the vastness of its dimensions. But it is rather to stimulate his piety, by the example of the young and holy Stanislaus, whose statue, reclined on his bed, with the crucifix in one hand, and the rosary in the other, strikes you with such an impression of the reality, that you fancy the Saint is just peacefully resigning his soul, in the arms of Jesus, and his Blessed Mother. It is impossible to contemplate this scene, without feeling the influence of that divine religion, which so subdues, even in youth, every attachment to the world, as to give to the human form the features of an inhabitant of heaven. Here, too—not far from the Pontifical Palace—is the Church of our Blessed Lady of Victories, so called, to commemorate the many signal victories that were wrought over Christendom, through the fervent prayers of the faithful to the Mother of God. Such was the celebrated naval victory of Lepanto, where the proud armaments of the Turks were scattered over the main, of which the tidings, before they could be carried by human messenger, were revealed to St. Pius.

Whether the name of Agon, by which the Quirinal was originally called, be significant of a contest, or an eminence, as some etymologists imagine, it has well illustrated either one or the other meaning. In the passive fortitude of its Popes, who have triumphed over the persecutors of the Church, it well deserved the name of the Hill of Combats, and of Triumphs. If the Church be likened, by our Redeemer, to a city on the mountain-top, conspicuous from afar, the Quirinal has shared in the fulfilment of the figure, by fixing on the heroism of its recent Pontiffs the eyes and veneration of mankind. It was from the portals of its palace that Pius VII. was led into exile, by the commands of Napoleon. A picture in the Pio-Clementine Gallery, in the Vatican, represents, in minute detail, the circumstances of this banishment. But the grief of the city, and of Christendom, was, ere the lapse of many years, turned into joy, when the same Pontiff was again seen returning, in triumph, from his captivity, saluted by the enthusiastic welcome of his devoted people, who recognized, in the event, another proof of the promises of its Divine Founder, that the gates of hell should never prevail against this Church, which had Peter for its foundation.

JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LIV.

ROME, DECEMBER 3rd, 1831.

“Roma interim crescit Alba ruinis: duplicatur civium numerus: Cœlius ad-
ditur urbi mons: et quo frequentius habitaretur eam sedem Tullus regiæ capit
ibique deinde habitavit.”—**TITUS LIVIUS.**

THE ruin of Alba Longa embraced Mount Cœlius within the circumference of Rome. Thus it gradually extended its “pomerum” or its precincts, with its conquests, until the seven hills were included within its walls. The destruction of Alba Longa, to which Rome was indebted for this accession to its territories, and this augmentation of its inhabitants, is one of the most tragic narratives, as well as the most pathetically told, with which the Roman history abounds. Nothing can be more graphic than the picture, with which we are presented, of the desolation of that ancient city: you fancy you hear the crash of the falling houses, and the shrieks of mothers and children clinging to the thresholds from which they are rudely torn, nor could I ever hear of the many scenes of terrible eviction which so frequently take place in Ireland, in consequence of the unfeeling cruelty of landlords, without being often reminded, from the similarity of the circumstances, of the vivid description with which the Roman historian paints the sufferings of the banished inhabitants of Alba Longa.

Various and interesting are the ancient ruins and modern structures that are spread over Mount Cœlius, from the colossal pile of the amphitheatre of Titus, to the church of St. John of Lateran; the amphitheatre may be deemed a providential monument which the conqueror of Jerusalem was permitted to erect in this city, as a permanent attestation to the truth of the Christian Religion. It is not more extraordinary in the vastness of its plan, and the singular combination of all the orders of architecture by which it is adorned at each ascending story, than in its mysterious designation, standing, after the decay of ages, the violence of barbarians and the plunder of citizens, an enduring and irrefutable proof of the truth of the prophecies of the Christian Religion, as well as of the most stupendous miracles, by which its early and struggling stages were illustrated. The Jewish nation has been swept away in the tide of conquest: of its temple, once the wonder of the world, not a stone remains to tell of its ancient glories. The scattered and indestructible fragments of the Jewish people, are a social anomaly in the records of the human race, and for which those prophecies alone

offer to the inquirer any satisfactory explanation ; but those fragments are still too loose to make any impression on a sceptical understanding. Here, however, in this huge amphitheatre, the work of the outcasts of this ungrateful nation, is found genuine evidence, which cannot be gainsayed, of the coincidence between sacred prophecy and profane history, and which is sure to bring conviction, in proportion as the circumstances of that coincidence are minutely examined.

Here too the faith and fortitude of the early Christians were tried on a conspicuous theatre, whilst an assemblage composed of near an hundred thousand persons, panting for the effusion of blood, were witnesses of their sufferings and their triumphs. The blood so profusely spilt, soon became the seed of martyrs, and those who came to sate their cruel appetites with the slaughter of gladiators and of Christians, could not but acknowledge the supernatural virtue which signalized such martyrs as Saint Ignatius, whom the wild beasts, more humane than the spectators, refused to devour or to harm. It is no wonder if recent writers have been loud in the execration of that pillage, which rifled this unexampled monument, not only of the pillars which clothed, but of the massive blocks which composed its external walls. The relatives of the Pontiffs of the houses of Farnese and Barberini have been praised as protectors of the arts, and liberal contributors to the embellishment of Rome. Had they opened new quarries, and erected their palaces out of fresh materials, they might indeed have been entitled to a share of the praise of which they seem to have been ambitious. But to have erected palaces out of the demolished ruins of the Colosseum, appears to be a species of sacrilege, if not against religion, at least against the arts, for which all their splendid patronage of poets and painters cannot atone. I am not insensible to the merits of those houses : some of the Cardinals of the Barberini family showed a peculiar interest in the preservation of religion in Ireland, at a period when the fidelity of its children required sympathy and support. Yet nought should excuse or palliate the plunder of the Colosseum.

The Barberini and the Farnese palaces, however splendid, cease not to depose against the barbarous taste of those by whom they were erected, and though Peter of Cortona exhausted all his skill in exalting the glories of Urban VIII., and the kindred Caracci have covered the walls and roofs of the Farnese palace with the exquisite productions of their pencils, I should indulge a wish similar to that of Saint Augustin,* desiring to witness the triumph of ancient Rome ; and rather resign all the fawns and satyrs and other fanciful pictures with which those

* Expressed in the following words " Tullum perorantem, Paulum prædicantem, Romam triumphantem."

palaces abound, nay, the palaces themselves, than see Rome and religion deprived of one ornament belonging to the Colosseum. It is fortunate this work of devastation and barbarism has been checked. Religion has extended its protection over its venerable walls, the cross is seen rising from the centre of the area on which its early and devoted followers profusely shed their blood; and I have listened more than once to those humble preachers, who give instructions, on a spot which speaks itself with a force and energy that need not the aid of human eloquence.

The mansion, once the residence, and now the convent, of St. Gregory, is another interesting monument by which Mount Cœlius is adorned. Living in one of the most disastrous epochs in the Roman history, this Holy Pontiff has, by his piety, his munificence, his zeal and his learning, earned the veneration of the Catholic Church. No English traveller, at least, should leave unvisited the monument of this illustrious Pontiff, to whom his nation was once so much indebted. The princely fortunes which he enjoyed in Sicily and Rome, were all expended in the service of the poor, and in the mitigation of the famine and pestilence, with which the people of Rome were scourged at that particular period. Though his time was so much occupied in ministering to the comforts of the indigent, in correspondence with distant bishops, as well as in negotiations with the Emperors of the east, and the Lombard Kings, he astonishes us by his learned and pious commentaries upon some of the most abstruse and mysterious portions of the inspired writings. It was to St. Gregory and other such Pontiffs that Rome is indebted for its very existence: were it not for their pious and patriotic solicitude for the interests of their flock and the safety of the city, long since would it have presented the same sightless spectacle of ruin as the neighbouring baths of Caracalla.

The ruins of those celebrated baths of the cruel son of Severus, while they reveal a melancholy monument of Roman greatness, should challenge the gratitude of every generous mind towards the Popes, without whose beneficent influence the very site of the city would now be a problem. Thrice in the space of a century and a half was the imperial city taken and plundered by merciless barbarians. Alaric, king of the Goths, Genseric, king of the Vandals, and again a Gothic monarch, Totila, successively stormed Rome, and rifled it of its most precious treasures. Within the same brief period, were it not for the interposition of the eloquent Leo, it would have endured from the furious Attila, king of the Huns, a similar or more destructive calamity. Portions of the city walls were levelled in these disastrous sieges; the aqueducts that supplied the baths were broken; the statues with which the public squares were adorned, were buried in the rubbish of the smoking ruins; and, such was the desolation of the city after the sack of

the inexorable Totila, that not a human being or a vestige of life appeared there for the space of forty days. Such it would have lain “with darkness and desolation on its dew for ever,” had not the good pastor again gathered his scattered sheep, and, like another Zorababel, encouraged them to raise the walls which the enemy had demolished, and to restore a city, which had become the seat of a religion more powerful than its lost empire. But half a century elapsed from the last of those disasters to the reign of Gregory, and it is no wonder if the evils which then had accumulated, had continued to be deeply felt to his time.

We are informed both by Tacitus and Suetonius, that it was the wish of Tiberius, that for its primitive name of the Celian, that of the Augustine Hill should be substituted. Whether it was called by that name we have now no historical certainty ; but its loftiest portion, that on which the church of St. John of Lateran is erected, has acquired a pre-eminence far more characteristic of power and veneration, than it would have acquired from the destined name of Augustus. The palace anciently belonging to the distinguished family of the Laterans, was conferred on Pope Sylvester by the pious generosity of Constantine. Here too he erected a magnificent church, in honour of Saint John the Evangelist, and in the vicinity of the place where he came out unhurt from the cauldron of oil, into which he was flung, before he was banished to the scene of his Revelations at Patmos. It was by the Asinarian gate in this neighbourhood that Totila entered when he took and rifled Rome ; and we may presume, that equally, if not more than any other quarter, it had suffered from the sacrilegious rapacity of this ruthless barbarian. The Lateran palace continued to be the Pontifical residence, and the church of St. John of Lateran “the mother and mistress of all churches.” From this parent church, the subject children of the universe should naturally draw the pure waters of religion ; and accordingly, from the time that the east ceased to be the scene of those General Councils, which the errors of its early heresiarchs had rendered necessary, Lateran became the natural centre for those great councils of the west, which had so often assembled in the middle ages, to preserve the faith and civilization of Christendom. Within the space of one century, the church of Lateran witnessed four of those ecclesiastical assemblies. As an instance of the veneration of the Irish church for the centre of Apostolical unity, the third of the councils of Lateran, held under the third Alexander, was attended, besides four other Irish bishops, by Lawrence, Archbishop of Dublin, and Cathal or Cahal, Archbishop of Tuam. Had it not been for those and the similar assemblies that were held during those disastrous times, we should have been bereft of many of the religious and social blessings we now enjoy. The Manicheans of Toulouse would have spread their blasphemies

and immorality, from the south of France to the neighbouring provinces, and the Moors of Spain would not have been confined to that peninsula, in boasting the extent of their dominion in Europe.

With the interesting details of the architectural monuments of St. John of Lateran, it is not my intention to occupy the reader; they would be quite unsuited to the nature of those summary and comprehensive sketches. The obelisk of Sixtus Quintius, that great Pontiff, who, during a comparatively brief reign, added so much to the splendour of Rome; the labours of Benedict XIV., a Pope of congenial magnificence of mind; the wooden altar used by St. Peter, and now reserved for the exclusive use of his successors; the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, preserved in this sanctuary of religion, together with the sacred table of the Last Supper—those, and the porphyry sarcophagus of Saint Andrew Corsini, one of the successors of Donatus, to whom I alluded in my letter from Fiesole, are topics which, instead of being stretched into an amplified form, must be folded up into the brief compass of mere historical allusion. On the confines of Mount Cœlius, is also to be seen the beautiful church of the Cross, erected by St. Helen, in which she deposited the portion of that sacred relic of our redemption, which she discovered among the ruins of Jerusalem. In the immediate vicinity were the celebrated, or infamous, Varian gardens, where Heliogabalus practised scenes of infamy, which, however coarsely told by Lampridius, he also assures us, he had laboured to disguise under the veil of general language, lest delicacy should recoil from the description. Over the spot where the wood of the cross was buried, a statue of Venus had been erected by her Pagan worshippers. A similar idol is said to have stood on the site to which the pious empress had transferred the sacred instrument of man's salvation; nay, more, this place received the name of "ancient hope," from a temple which it is thought was built there; the ancient Romans having indiscriminately raised fanes to the virtuous or the vicious affections. Like the unknown god to whom the Athenians consecrated a temple, this unknown "hope" to which the Romans paid religious homage, was at length made manifest, and mysteriously realised in the magnificent temple raised by Helen on the spot, in honour of that cross, long looked forward to by the patriarchs, and which has been, since it was consecrated by our Redeemer's blood, the "hope" and consolation of the exiled children of mankind.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LV.

ROME, DECEMBER 7, 1831.

FROM the indistinctness of their confines, the kindred hills of the Esquiline and Viminal, may be classed together without separation. Over this eastern region of the ancient city, some of its most stupendous monuments are spread. Such are the celebrated baths of Titus, and such the aqueducts of Claudius and Nero, conveying into the bosom of the city, the distant waters of the Sabine Mountains. The baths of Titus, on the Esquiline, have ever been considered among the most interesting ruins of ancient Rome, yielding only to the Colosseum, a work of which the glory has been shared by his father, Vespasian. The baths for ablution, the area for recreation, the places allotted for reading, for declamation, and gymnastic exercises, with every other accommodation which health and refinement could require, bespeak the vast resources, which the masters of the Roman world could then command.

During latter times the saloons of the baths of Titus have furnished modern painters with models of the choicest interior decoration. It was here Raphael found the ground-work of the celebrated cartoons, with which he enriched the walls of the Vatican. Those who were jealous of the fame of that eminent painter, have not failed to accuse him, of closing up the saloons from which he copied his ornaments, in order that he might escape the imputation of borrowing them from the ancients. However, the best and most generous critics absolved him from having recourse to so discreditable a scheme, to exalt a reputation which required no such artifice.

But there is on the Esquiline, a far nobler monument than the baths of Titus, containing specimens of painting and of sculpture not unworthy of the masters whom the munificence of the Popes had encouraged. It is the Liberian Church, or that of our Blessed Lady ad Nives, names expressive of the miraculous incidents that led to its erection. It is, however, more generally known by the name of Maria Maggiore, in consequence of its far surpassing, in the majesty of its decorations, as well as the amplitude of its area, the numerous other churches which the piety of Rome has dedicated to the Mother of God. To a wealthy citizen of the name of John, the Blessed Virgin appeared in a vision, signifying her wish to have a church erected on the Esquiline, its dimensions extending over the same space, which he would find covered with snow. The Pope was favoured with a

similar vision ; the coincidence of both was confirmed by the fall of snow as announced ; the temple rose in obedience to the miraculous manifestation ; and, besides, the intrinsic beauty of the church, sustained by magnificent Ionic columns, adorned with exquisite entablature, it has been enriched with the successive contributions of some of the greatest Popes to whom the entire of the city was so much indebted. The chapels of Sixtus and of Paul, the fifth of their respective names, on the opposite sides of the great nave, rank among the finest specimens of pious and elegant taste ; nor has a late Pontiff, Leo XII., forgotten this cherished church, having enriched it with a magnificent baptistry of porphyry. Were it not for the renovating spirit of the Catholic religion, the beautiful pillars of white marble, that at once adorn and sustain the church of St. Mary Maggiore, would have lain buried amidst the rubbish of a ruined city, neither animating the rivalry of the artist, nor guiding the path of the historian. They were once, it is conjectured, appropriated to the service of Juno. They are now, like the spoils of Egypt, transferred to the temple of the Mother of God. It is a delightful reflection to think that the arts, which were so long dishonored in ministering to senseless idols, or mischievous mortals, have been, by the fostering care of the Catholic Church, restored to their native dignity. While the statues of such imperial monsters as Tiberius, and Caligula, and Nero, and Domitian, and Commodus, were cast down after their deaths, by the decrees of the same obsequious senates, who, during their lives, had strewed the city with these monuments of their servility and baseness, the gilded statue of an humble and secluded Virgin, who lived in the time of Augustus, in a distant and despised portion of the empire, is seen now to overtop the lofty edifices of Rome, drawing towards it the profound veneration of its inhabitants. Yes, her own prediction of being honored by all nations has been long since realized. She was promised as the chosen instrument, that would establish by the Incarnation of her Divine Lord, the dominion of "peace" all over the world. A temple had been erected to "peace" by Constantine, which has long since shared the fate of similar edifices. A pillar of that temple with its Corinthian capital has been preserved, and, by an auspicious coincidence, has been placed in front of this magnificent temple, raised to the Mother of mercy and of "peace," surmounted by her statue of gilt bronze—an emblem of the homage and veneration which she receives from the nations of the world.

On the very eastern confines of the ancient city, stands the venerable church of St. Lawrence, the celebrated Deacon, whose heroic sufferings and death, form one of the most interesting episodes in ecclesiastical story. No traveller or pilgrim could visit the "eternal city," without likewise visiting a spot which is

consecrated by the memory of one of the most illustrious in the entire catalogue of its numerous martyrs. The admirers of Pagan fortitude, may dwell with rapture on the many trophies which were won by the primitive patriots of Rome. They may quote the devotion of a Curtius, leaping into the lake; the courage of a Scevola, flinging his hand into the fire; or the inexorable fidelity of a Regulus, returning to Carthage with the certainty of the exquisite tortures he was fated to endure. Yet those and similar instances of extraordinary fortitude, with which the Roman history abounds, cannot bear a comparison with the calm and tranquil patience, with which this holy servant of God bore the slow tortures of the gridiron. Far from shrinking from death, he courted it with a longing impatience of the fulfilment of his desires. "Whither dost thou go, holy priest without thy deacon?" was the ardent language in which he congratulated Pope Xytus on the certainty of his crown, and expressed the zealous repining of his devout soul in not being associated with his martyrdom. "Three days, and you shall follow me," replied the Holy Pontiff. The announcement filled the young deacon with joy. The short interval was passed in distributing the charities of the Church among the poor, and laying up a treasure in heaven. Disappointment at the treasure, for which he panted, being thus taken from him, filled his persecutor with rage, and, accordingly, the victim was laid on a gridiron to be roasted on a slow fire. The martyr smiled at his tormentors; the fierceness of the fire which was applied to his flesh, was subdued by the stronger flames of divine love with which his soul was enkindled; his countenance beamed with a cheerfulness and a joy, which heaven alone could bestow; and, in the tranquillity of his death, St. Lawrence has left an example that has since sustained thousands of Christians, amidst the slow sufferings of the world. This church is ranked among the seven, to the visit of which the Popes have annexed a plenary indulgence. Under the canopy of the great altar, the bodies of the saint, and of St. Stephen, the first martyr, repose, united in sepulture as they were in the office of deacon, and in the glory of martyrdom. Near, are likewise the instruments of their martyrdom, the stones which were showered on the one, and the gridiron that bore the mangled body of the other. Next to the great Churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles, none could be more deserving of honor than that of St. Lawrence, whose name has shed such glory on the annals of the "Eternal City."

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LVI.

ROME, DECEMBER 14, 1831.

“Traxerat aversos Cacus in autra feros,
Cacus aventinæ timor atque infamia sylvæ.”—OVIDIUS FASTI.

OF the seven celebrated hills of Rome, Mount Aventine longest retained its wild and primitive form, adopting but slowly the revolutions of civilization. Over no other of the seven hills have the charms of poetry and fiction been thrown with such profusion, and in no other spot have they been so long associated in the faithful imagination. Its summit has been the favourite home of fawns and satyrs; over the waters, at its base, were constantly hovering vultures, the messengers of evil or of auspicious valicinatio; and the youthful fancy, fed with the glowing images of Ovid and of Virgil, could scarce divest itself of the terror of the sylvan robber, who despoiled the neighbouring flocks, until his fraud was tracked by the vigilance and checked by the courage of Hercules. Although it was walled in at an early period by Ancus Martius, it was only at a considerably later period it became a densely inhabited portion of the city. The inauspicious augury of Remus, and the more inauspicious death by which it was soon followed, exercised their influence on the minds of the earlier inhabitants of the city, and consigned Mount Aventine to comparative solitude and desolation. Still it formed a portion of Rome, completing the seventh of those celebrated hills on which the mistress of the world was proudly seated.

En hujus nate, auspiciis illa inclyta Roma,
Imperium tenenis animos equabit Olympo,
Septemque uno sibi muro circumdabit arces.

However, the wild freaks of the fawns and satyrs have since disappeared; screams of ominous birds no longer disturb its confines, and the fears of Cacus, and the traditions of the monster, have long since given way to more humanizing influences and sacred recollections.

The superstition which had defiled the other regions of Rome found a still more congenial soil in the remote recesses of Mount Aventine. Temples in honor of Juno, Minerva, Diana, and other deities, crowded a spot which appeared to be set apart for the worship of impure idols. With the dominion of Christianity, however, it shared the auspicious revolution of the rest of Rome; and the fallen pillars of those deserted fanes have been since appropriated to the churches, which have been erected in honor of St. Alexius and St. Sabina. The life of the former is one of the

most touching in all ecclesiastical history. When the glory of the empire was sinking under the degenerate son of Theodosius, Alexius aspired to the honors of a kingdom more lasting than that of the Roman empire. After contracting marriage with a lady of rank, he left his father's house on a distant pilgrimage. He at length returned, after an absence of seventeen years, and remained in his father's house, in the capacity of a servant, unwilling to claim the respectful attention which a son would be sure to receive. His death revealed the mysterious sanctity which his humility had so long hidden. His interment was honored with becoming homage: his father's home was converted into a church, to honor his memory, and within the porch, one of the first objects that meets your eye, is a statue of the saint in the position he occupied when living, reposing under the stairs, where he usually slept—a monument at once of his humility, as well as of the extraordinary honor, which the Church bestows on the meek and humble virtues of the Gospel.

On descending from Mount Aventine, the road conducts you to the ruins of the church of St. Paul, now being repaired, and again to the more distant church of the same apostle, known by the name of that of the Three Fountains. If necessity were the only reason to sway the Roman Pontiff, he would not have encountered the cost of the repair, or almost the re-erection, of this celebrated basilick. A city having already near four hundred, some magnificent, and all beautiful churches, could well dispense with the additional one of St. Paul, especially when we reflect that its site was beyond the walls, almost a tenantless solitude. But a loftier feeling than that of necessity inspired Leo, on hearing of its disastrous destruction by fire, to issue instant orders for its restoration. From the time of its erection by Constantine, the basilick of St. Paul suffered many vicissitudes of decay, delapidation, and of repair; and its protection was an object of solicitude to many eminent Pontiffs. It stood on the desert, near the banks of the Tiber, a glorious attestation to the truth and permanence of the holy religion, in honor of which it first arose; and while the waters that rolled by, but typified the transient passions that played their fleeting hour on the stage, this venerable temple stood an enduring monument of the immobility and firmness of the Catholic Religion. It was, then, to transmit to future ages this great trophy of its retrospective triumphs, that the repairs of this temple were undertaken; and with the zeal and energy that prompted the commencement of the work, it no doubt will soon be achieved.

Farther to the south-west is the church of the Three Fountains, which, as an ancient and pious tradition records, gushed forth on the decollation of the apostle. On the severance of the head from the body, it is said to have made three springs, and

from each spot on which it fell, there gushed forth a fountain of running water. The tradition is surely not more wonderful than the inspired narrative of the lightning, which prostrated him on the earth on his way to Damascus, subduing the ravenous wolf into one of the most zealous guardians of the fold. It is not more wonderful than that temples should arise, on the circus of Nero, to the chiefs of that sect, which, in his time, was so hated and despised, that they were clothed with the skins of wild beasts, hunted through the streets, and tortured with burning faggots, in order to light up the darkness of the city. In the conversion and subsequent life of St. Paul, the preternatural agency of heaven was visible, nor is it incredible that the gushing forth of fountains of water should mark the death of the pure vessel of election, whose doctrine, derived by a mysterious and miraculous communication from the bosom of the Almighty, has ever since been pouring its living influence over the regions of the earth.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER XVII.

FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN.
ROME, 1831.

UNWILLING to interrupt the series of observations suggested by the contemplation of the seven hills of the ancient city, I have not as yet made any reference to the Vatican. Yet no part of Rome possesses stronger claims on the affections of the Christian. It was not one of the seven hills on which the city was seated, yet it is the object which generally challenges the first visit from the piety of the pilgrim or the curiosity of the mere traveller. I was scarcely an hour arrived, when I hastened to St. Peter's, to offer up my cold and imperfect prayers in unison with the incense of prayer and sacrifice, that is daily ascending from that magnificent and holy temple, to the throne of the Almighty. Its precincts were worthy of the majesty of the temple. The obelisk in front proclaimed the homage of the conquered arts and wealth of Paganism to the spirit of Catholicity; its refreshing fountains, continually playing in the sun-beams, were an emblem of its pure and perennial doctrine flowing from the shrine of the apostles; and its curved colonnades, stretching out on either side,

most significantly represented the ardent and affectionate eagerness with which the Catholic Church greets her children, and cherishes them in her bosom. No sooner did I cross the threshold of the church than I felt, what others are said to feel, the illusion of its folded perspective. As I advanced, it appeared to be gradually unrolled, adjusting the harmonious position and size of the surrounding objects, until I stood under the stupendous dome, of which I had just seen the original model in the Pantheon : the one reposing on the earth, the masterpiece of Pagan temples ; and the other resting on lofty pillars, penetrating to the heavens —the wondrous trophy of the Christian artist, by whose skill and energy it was raised.

Though the capital is rich in works of art, ancient and modern, it is distanced in competition by the splendour of the Vatican. To the church of St. Peter was it first indebted for the varied aggregate of unrivalled treasures, which have been gradually gathered round it. The residence of the Popes, transferred from the palace of Lateran, led to the erection of its palaces, its galleries, and magnificent saloons, in which were deposited the relics of ancient art, disinterred by the zeal of antiquarians, encouraged and animated by the munificent patronage of its Pontiffs. Poets and sculptors studied with assiduity those elegant models, and laboured to rival their excellence by similar creations of their own. The relation that Rome holds to the world, collecting within its precincts more of historical and classical monuments than are spread over the earth, the Vatican museum may be said to hold to Rome, condensing within its sanctuaries such a rare variety of exquisite treasures as might be said to rival, it not in number, at least in value, all the other collections of this city. Without neglecting them, it is no wonder if my visits to the Vatican were more frequent than to any of the other churches or palaces of Rome ; nor is it until after repeated visits, that you can find a clue through the labyrinths of their apartments, and become familiar with those masterpieces, which must be frequently seen in order to be duly valued.

When traversing the saloon of the relics of ancient monuments, with its cinerary urns and antiquated inscriptions, such as might give occupation for years to a Mabillon or a Muratori, you fancy you are walking through some ancient necropolis ; and I felt—to avail myself of an anticipated incident—as I afterwards felt when walking over the subterraneous city of Pompeii, that, of names once renowned, and of achievements that conferred cotemporary fame, not a memorial now remained but a mis-shapen fragment of marble, of which the orthography might puzzle the most practised decipherer of the earlier forms of the characters of Tuscany or Rome. Yet even those fragments have their value.

It was partly by their aid (because a stone recorded every event), that such light has been thrown over the early history of the city ; and I have often lamented, that in Ireland, where it may be now done with safety, more attention is not paid to the recording of national events, in the more durable materials of monuments of stone. From the excavations that are occasionally carried on in the city and neighbourhood, those monuments are multiplying fast, and, notwithstanding the vast apartments of the Vatican, are requiring more extensive and appropriate accommodation.

To the four successive Popes, bearing the names of Clement and Pius, the Vatican is justly indebted for its extension ; and their names are in a special manner associated with its magnificent museum. Accordingly, the saloons bearing their names, and appropriated to the representation of the chief events of their reigns, stretch out (such is the fate of all history), and occupy a larger space as you come down. Still, whether the apartments be small or spacious, these objects, whether of painting or of sculpture, will always attract particular attention, which have already secured the suffrages of mankind. Such, amidst the monuments of ancient sculpture, are the Nile with its attendant Nereids ; the Laocoön, writhing in inexpressible agony amidst the coiling and venomous embraces of the serpent ; and, in fine, the Apollo, that may be admired but cannot be rivalled, combining all the energy of the one sex, with the graces of the other, and appropriately fixed in one the farthest niches of the museum, as an object for attracting fresh admiration. Such, among the paintings, are the immortal frescoes of Raphael, still displaying the chief events of the inspired history on the ceilings of the galleries of the Vatican. Such the other chambers, appropriated by Julius II. exclusively to his pencil, and known by his name. Such, too, his fanciful Arabesques, borrowed from the baths of Titus, with which the walls of the galleries are decorated ; and such, in fine, the awful picture, or rather group of pictures, of Michael Angelo, in the Sixtine Chapel, portraying—a boldness from which a less daring spirit would have shrunk—the terrible scene of the last judgment, of the reality of which an idea may be formed, when its empty and shadowy representation cannot be contemplated without awe.

No doubt the peculiar circumstances of time and solemnity under which this singular picture is contemplated, impart to it an additional effect. The chapel opens on the first Sunday of Advent—the day peculiarly consecrated to the commemoration of the Last Judgment. During the four Sundays of that penitential season, solemn mass is celebrated within the walls of the chapel, on which this awful scene is delineated, and at which the Pope attends, together with the Cardinals, robed in their

penitential attire. Without indulging in the language of exaggeration, it is an assembly such as seldom can be witnessed. You have a meeting composed of men eminent for piety, or science, or age, or long and arduous habits of business, and often conspicuous for a combination of all these qualities; and if the ancient Gaul was tempted to stroke the beard of one of the Roman senators, to try whether the god-like assembly was composed of mortals, none need fear the imputation of that awe which ignorance or barbarism inspires, in pronouncing the senate of the Roman cardinals, the most venerable and majestic assembly in the world.

The magnificent ceremonies of Christmas-day formed an appropriate close for the preceding functions of Advent. At an early hour in the morning I went to St. Peter's, and had the great consolation of celebrating three Masses in the subterranean chapel over the tomb of the Apostles. Afterwards I attended at the solemn Mass sung by his Holiness. At nine o'clock, the cardinals, with their appropriate trains, together with the bishops, prelates, and clergy, were to be seen crossing the nave from the sacristy to a chapel on the right hand, near the great entrance-door from which the procession commenced. At this time the scene became animated by the crowds that were thronging to be present at the august sacrifice: the bustle, however, was hushed on their entrance; for, though some on moving up the nave seemed in the attitude of conversation, not a whisper was heard in the distance, and their little figures seemed to disappear, as they spread in various directions, to procure the most convenient view of the ceremonies. Still the city continued to pour in its fresh multitudes, yet the crowds were comparatively unnoticed in its vastness.

The nave was lined by two files of Swiss guards, whose singular equipment in arms and costume contributed to heighten the effect of the solemn scene. Behind the high altar a magnificent screen was erected, covering the tribune of the church, and leaving the intermediate space for the performance of the ceremonies. Against this screen, which was tastefully hung with richly embroidered scarlet, a platform was raised, ascended by seven steps, with a magnificent pontifical throne, elevated in the centre. Benches for the cardinals, bishops, and other ecclesiastics were tastefully fitted up on either side, and temporary galleries erected, for the accommodation of many of the immense congregation. After nine o'clock the procession began to move: first the different ecclesiastics in their respective robes; next the bishops, and then the cardinals, sweeping, in a lengthened and varied train, over the church, while the Roman Pontiff, seated on his throne, and borne aloft by the nobles of the city, formed a suitable close to the gorgeous spectacle. The liturgy was then sung with all the

power and harmonious variety of intonation, for which the Pope's choir is justly celebrated. The epistle and gospel were sung in the Greek and Latin tongues. The impressive solemnity with which the divine mysteries were celebrated fixed the attention; but when the sudden clangor of trumpets, mingling with the explosion of cannons from St. Angelo's, announced the elevation, the effect was truly electric, and there was not a heart, that was not a rebel to its own feelings, that was not prostrate in gratitude to adore that God, who then, as in Bethlehem, came under a mysterious form—a sacrifice of peace and of propitiation. Christmas-day has everywhere its peculiar claims to devotion. There are, from the humble huts in Ireland, as pure and precious orisons offered to the Almighty, as from any temple on the globe. There are hearts in which God kindles the sacrifice of his love, without any remote or intermediate incentives. There is, however, no other place which furnishes so much of fuel to enkindle the flames of devotion, as this temple. The august sacrifice of Melchisedeck offered on the anniversary of our Redeemer's birth, by one who exemplifies not only the rite but the person of the royal patriarch, in the circumstance of being at once a king and pontiff in a city which is the cemetery of ancient Paganism, and the centre of the Christian world; on the spot beneath which, with the kindred ashes of St. Paul, repose those of the Prince of the Apostles, whose spirit still animates and sustains his successors, realizing the promises of the divine founder of the Church, whilst they survive the shifting dynasties of the world—perpetuating the oblation of the sacrifice of love, and that under a dome whose lofty roof draws up the soul to heaven—these were circumstances calculated to awaken feelings which cannot be forgotten; whilst the vastness of the edifice reminds you, that it cannot be the temple of any one country that you are treading; but as you walk along, with the sanctuary still receding from before you, and view the tribunals of mercy, with their inscriptions in various languages, inviting Greek and Hebrew, you are struck with the hidden and mysterious immensity of the place—an emblem of Him to whom it is dedicated—and forced silently to exclaim, that this is no "other but the house of God," into which "the nations should be continually flowing from the four winds of heaven."

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LVIII.

ROME, MARCH 27, 1832.

THE first of my visits to manifest the homage of my dutiful reverence to the Holy Father, was a few days after my arrival. It was, to a Catholic bishop from Ireland, a visit fraught with consolation. Notwithstanding all the efforts, which an impious policy had recourse to, to sever our connexion with the chair of Peter, efforts far more ingenious in their cruelty than those of the earlier persecutions that hunted the Christians into the catacombs, it was a gladsome introduction to be presented to the good Father of the Faithful, and to receive at his feet the Apostolical benediction. He is worthy of the elevation to which he has been raised. Benevolence!—it is too weak a word;—affectionate charity beams in every feature of the good Pontiff, nor is there wanting that visible indication of a stern and unbending intrepidity* of character, which will not fail, whenever it may be necessary, to vindicate the dearest interests of religion.

The interval between Christmas and Easter was occupied in visiting the most conspicuous churches, galleries, colleges, and libraries of Rome, together with occasional excursions to the remarkable places in the vicinity, which history and fable have so much associated with the early fortunes of Rome. On the feast of the Epiphany, it was a rare and interesting spectacle to see priests from the different Eastern Churches, Armenians, Greeks, and Maronites, celebrating mass in their own peculiar rites, and in their own respective tongues. The Sunday within its octave, witnessed one of the most gratifying exhibitions, which any country could exhibit, the young students, to the number of about fifty, delivering compositions before the assembled dignitaries of Rome, in the varied languages of their respective countries. It was a scene which bore attestation to the Catholics of the faith of Rome, as well as to the union which links its most distant members, to see a number of young men, brought up in adverse national prejudices, and speaking from their infancy different languages, now assembled together, and moulded into one intellectual mass, animated by one spirit, and, like their predecessors of old, in the day of Pentecost, all understanding through their different dialects the voice and faith of Peter, conveyed

* His fortitude in supporting the illustrious Archbishop of Cologne against the persecuting policy of the King of Prussia, as well as his Apostolical rebuke of the atrocious tyranny of the Russian autocrat, justify this view of his character.

in one single language, is a continuance of the gift of tongues still perpetuated in the Church, and which cannot fail to make its impression on a reflecting and religious mind. In the evening, a large and selected society of some of the most distinguished strangers in Rome, as well as the natives, enjoyed the elegant and princely hospitality of the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda. On that occasion, Monseignore Mezophanti * addressed a large number of the guests in their respective European or oriental dialects, with ease, if not with elegance. His acquirements as a linguist are rare and extraordinary; Crassus and others acquired great celebrity for their ready talent in conversing with strangers in their own language: it is not, I am sure, any exaggerated praise to assert, that in variety of languages, or readiness in speaking them, they could not have reached the excellence of Mezophanti.

Among the numerous and richly assorted libraries with which Rome abounds, the Vatican is far the first in the number and variety of its volumes. It may be, therefore, easily inferred, that far beyond competition, it is the first in the world. Its majestic entrance is worthy of such a library, as well as of the celebrated Pope, Sixtus Quintus, who contributed so much to its literary treasures, as well as to the embellishment of its architecture. A magnificent picture, seen as you enter, exhibits Fontana, the architect, unfolding his plan to the Pontiff: then you behold on one side, a series of the most celebrated libraries in the world, and on the other, a succession of the General Councils, by which the faith of the Catholic Church was illustrated. This library has been generally entrusted to men of vast erudition, who were able to profit of its treasures, and again to return them with interest, enriching them with valuable productions of their own. Such was Assemani whose oriental researches conferred additional celebrity on the library of the Vatican. And such is the Monseignore Mai,† the present librarian, distinguished for his valuable literary labours in restoring manuscripts, which were thought to have been lost. His courtesy and kindness in affording the easiest access to this treasury of science and of literature, I feel much pleasure in acknowledging, for it earned a claim to my gratitude.

But, indeed, courtesy has been the characteristic quality of all the librarians in Rome, in affording to visitors every facility of study and research. Such I experienced at the great libraries of Ara Cœli, and the Minerva, and such too at St. Isidore's, and the Barberini library, in which documents and manuscripts connected with Irish history abound. To that of St. Isidore, my visits

* He has been since, and deservedly, honored with the purple.

† He, too, has been, as a reward of his merits, associated to the College of Cardinals.

were frequent, as I found there a number of Irish manuscripts. Besides, I loved to contemplate the portraits of celebrated Irish men which decorate its walls, especially those of two of the most illustrious men of their age and nation—Luke Wadding, the learned author of the Annals of the Franciscans, and Florence O'Mul Conry, Archbishop of Tuam, to whose zeal and labours we are indebted for the foundation of Louvain, and the education of many eminent men, who conferred honor on their country. When one thinks of the dark and difficult times in which those men lived, and the mighty things they achieved for their country and their religion, he feels confirmed still more in his holy faith, since they must have been endued with more than human fortitude, in achieving such great enterprises. I met but one solitary exception to this general disposition to accommodate, in the keepers of the literary establishments in the Eternal City. This exception was in the archives of the Vatican,—a department quite distinct from its library. It is an immense collection of documentary papers and instruments, bulls, letters, and rescripts from the earlier ages to the present time. I was anxious to look for some documents that would throw light upon our ecclesiastical history, and enable me to fill up some chasms in the succession of our bishops, during the persecutions. To my great surprise, delay succeeded to delay, in such manner as to make it evident that the keeper wished to deny me all access to the records which I sought. On animadverting on conduct which appeared to me so unaccountable, I found that the reverend gentleman was a pensioner of the British government, employed to send them such extracts of State papers, as would elucidate the public transactions connected with the history of England. Here, in this solitary instance, I found the perverse influence of British money, and drew my conclusion on the misfortune that would come over Ireland, if ever the government should succeed in pensioning the Catholic hierarchy. This man's sympathies, duties, feelings, seemed to be all absorbed by his gratitude for British money. To our oppressors, as far as he was concerned, the archives were open; to the Catholic victims of their persecution alone, they were inaccessible. However, a gentle hint that I would look for redress from the pontifical government, nay, that his conduct should be reported to the House of Commons, who might take this reverend pensioner to task, wrought in him a kinder tone of feeling, and procured for me a sullen and reluctant admittance. Amidst the huge mass of documents, I could not succeed in the object of my search. However, I lighted on many rare and curious letters, that well recompensed me for my loss. Among others, I was shown one of Mary Queen of Scots, written to the Pope in her own hand, on the day preceding her execution. It was a precious relic, which had the appearance of being discoloured by

tears. It is no wonder; such a letter could not be written or read without deep emotion. It led to a long train of thought on the chequered life and tragic death of a woman, of whom her age was not worthy. Nay, the bitter prejudices of her time, seem to have descended to posterity. There was no chivalry, then, in justice, to guard her life, nor chivalry in history to vindicate her fame. But time will avenge her wrongs, and I could cheerfully encounter more of the sullenness of the pensioned Marini, to have the gratification of reading such an autograph belonging to this illustrious and ill used Queen, whose misfortunes created a sympathy, which the misdeeds of the perfidious monarchs of her race, were not able to obliterate.

Not far from the Vatican, on the Janiculum, the southern brow of the same hill is a monument, which will fail not to tell the Irish travellers, of what their ancestors suffered from the offspring of Mary Stuart. The small church of St. Peter, designed by Bramante, and which reminds you of the temple of Vesta, on the banks of the Tiber, or of the Arno, at Tivoli, contains this melancholy monument. A slab of marble in the middle of the floor, with the names of O'Neil and O'Donnell, recalls to memory the flight of those noble cheiftans on a pretended conspiracy, set on foot to enable the ungrateful James to partition among a horde of English and Scottish Calvinists, their hereditary domains, together with six counties of the Province of Ulster. Few, whatever may be their opinions or feelings on the justice of those ancient quarrels, or the policy that dictated such cruel confiscations, could refuse a sigh or a tear to the memory of the gallant Tyrone, the hero of Bealanathbuide, who had sustained so long and so bravely the sinking fortunes of his country against the combined armies of Elizabeth. It was difficult to resist the rush of feeling which was called forth by the contemplation of the close of his career, as well as by the ingratitude of his own degenerate countrymen. Here, bowed down by misfortune, and blind through age and infirmity, this gallant warrior closed his life like another Belisarius, outlawed and attainted even by the suffrages of those Catholics, whom he saved from utter ruin, without their interposing one solitary vote for his protection. It is well that Christendom has a home for the fallen and the broken-hearted. It is well that there should be some healing asylum where one can find refuge from the ingratitude and perfidy of the world. That home has been, and shall ever be found in the city of the successors of St. Peter, and I closed this sad and soothing train of reflections, by offering up a heartfelt prayer for the devoted patriot, who, I trust, has found that lasting home, "where sorrow and grief shall be no more."

My excursions through Ostia, Albani, Frescati, and Tivoli, &c., during which I sojourned chiefly in the convents that are

scattered throughout those districts, afforded much of instructive and agreeable relaxation. The curiosities of those classic territories are as familiar, as the territories themselves are far famed, nor shall I occupy the reader's time by their repetition. The lives of the solitary anchorites of Camaldoli, would appear too tame a narrative to some who might relish, better, more varied and stirring scenes. Yet among those monks and such other recluses, is to be found a cheerfulness and lightness of heart to which the world is an utter stranger, and which it can never imagine to be the inhabitant of such abodes. There was one convent in particular, which I felt peculiar gratification in visiting—that of St. Benedict, at Subiaco. Here, near the brink of the Arno, and under a line of frowning rocks, parallel to the stream, is situated the monastery of the holy and celebrated founder of the Benedictines. Near, is another, dedicated to his sister, St. Scholastica. I spent some days in this holy retreat, enjoying the kind hospitality of the good abbot. In the chapel, partly formed out of the cave in which the saint lay concealed for three years, fed by an intimate friend, I offered up the sacrifice of the Mass. A beautiful marble statue of the saint under the rock, together with the leaves, bearing the impress of the serpent, by which he was so tempted, that he rolled himself amidst the thorns to extinguish the flames of concupiscence, still recal the memory of his early combats and his early triumphs.

I returned to Rome before Palm Sunday, remaining there during the ceremonies of Holy Week. It was a week that embodied more of the impressive lessons and practice of religion than many other weeks put together. Many visit Rome from afar, though unable to remain longer than during those few days, and well do they find their toil and piety rewarded. The solemn tones of the Miserere in the Sixtine Chapel, make them forget all their cares and fatigues, and transport the soul to heaven. The kind and charitable attention paid to the pilgrims, in the establishment set apart for that purpose, makes such an impression on strangers, that I have heard young Americans exclaim with wonder and delight, that if there was true religion in the world, it was to be found in the charity of Rome. The washing of the feet by the Holy Father, is another tender and affecting office, which fails not to exhibit, in the minds of the astonished spectators, the connexion between him and the founder of the Church, whose humility and charity he thus imitates. In my observations on Christmas day, I have already given some faint idea of the Pontifical Mass. The Pontifical Mass of Easter Sunday brings an additional ceremony of most imposing solemnity—the benediction from the balcony of St. Peter's: one cannot witness a more touching or magnificent ceremony. The Holy Father, accompanied by the cardinals, bishops, prelates,

and other ecclesiastics, who formed the procession, ascended to the centre of the balcony; the vast square was thronged with the moving multitudes below; doubtless, there were among them foreigners who differed in faith from the vast body of the people. The Pontiff lifted his arm, waved his hand in the form of a cross; no sooner did he pronounce the blessing, than all knelt, and, as if under the influence of the same mysterious spirit that subdued St. Paul, I think there was not one that was not prostrate to receive, through the person of his Vicar upon earth, the benediction of the Redeemer of the world.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LIX.

NAPLES, MAY 30, 1832.

AFTER coasting along the promontory of Circe and Gaieta, celebrated in the *Aeneid* and *Odyssey*, and stopping a short time at Fondi, to visit those venerable halls, whence St. Thomas diffused over Europe, and the entire Catholic Church, his learning and his fame, I arrived in the noisy city of Naples. It well deserves the name of a noisy city, compared to the grave solemnity of Rome; and, as you approach it, its incessant bustle breaks upon your ear, like the distant murmurs of an agitated sea. Its bay has been compared to that of Dublin. If beauty be sufficient to establish a likeness between two objects, the comparison would be just—both being remarkable for varied views of land and water, beyond many other bays in Europe. But in vain will you look, in the straighter outline and flatter surface of the city of Dublin, for the winding curvature and abrupt elevation, which give to Naples a great portion of its scenic effect; nor does the one, though beautiful in many respects, present the line of islands, or the conic peaks of Vesuvius, which form such striking and peculiar features in the bay of the other.

The churches are fine, but not as tastefully ornamented as those at Rome; nor is pulpit oratory at all to be compared to the style of Roman eloquence. In the former city, the auditory, however enlightened, might, probably, find the compositions on great public occasions, too florid and too elaborate. The finished compositions of Fosculo, his full voice and magnificent intonations, reminded you of the precepts on oratory, while they fixed your attention on the instructions of the preacher; and, though

a long interval has elapsed since his time, they reminded me of the sermons of the celebrated Father Segneri, in their exhaustless copiousness, and in the vast variety of illustrations, accumulated from profane as well as sacred sources. Some sermons I heard in Naples were of a far inferior description—a mixture of talk and recitative music, of varied interludes, of conversation and of pantomime, which seemed, to my taste, as it would to that of the Irish people, better suited to the theatre than to the pulpit. I am willing to make allowance for the peculiarity of national habits and feelings. I know that in popular addresses, whatever may be the nature of the subject, whether religious or political, the model of excellence in one country is not a standard for another ; but after making a due allowance for all the varieties of temperament or education, I am sure I am only speaking the sentiments of some of the most enlightened as well as pious of the clergy, in expressing a wish that the capricious manner of some of the Neapolitan preachers, were better regulated, and brought nearer to the dignified standard of Rome.

On the evening of the 1st of May, after visiting the subterranean ruins of Herculaneum, buried under the streets of Portici, we proceeded to ascend Vesuvius, and reached the hermitage at the base of its conical summit, exactly as the sun was going down. Having stopped there until twelve o'clock, we again resumed, with our mules, guides, and torches, the romantic excursion. The mules, however, we were obliged soon to abandon. After a toilsome ascent over a deep surface of pulverized lava, which, like sand, was constantly receding from under us, we reached the top, where we were suddenly struck with a vast surface of the burning mountain, that glared before us. We paused for some time to contemplate a scene, which not only made us think, but talk, with the utmost seriousness, of that fire which never goes out, and viewed the fountain from which issued this flood of lava, whose slow, and silent, and unceasing course, apparently presenting the same volume as it rolled by, exhibited also an emblem of the continuous sameness of those torments, of which the elements of the place naturally reminded us. We next steered our course to the crater towards the northern side, which was sending forth, at the intervals of every five or six minutes, masses of fiery smoke, which appeared still more terrific from the distance. Our way was over huge and broken masses of lava, through the openings of which we saw the fire beneath, whilst we felt its heat upon the surface; so that, by walking slow, the place became intolerable, and, by quickening our pace, we were in danger of falling into the burning fissures beneath, and having our feet torn by the sharp edges encountered in the fall. However, we went on, with fearless and steady steps, and advanced so near the mouth of the crater, that the red balls,

which it discharged, were shot to a greater distance than the spot on which we stood. Our protection from danger, as well as our apology for the guilt of rashness, lay in our being stationed on the sheltered side, whereas, if the wind suddenly veered, we should run the risk of being exposed to one of those fiery showers, that were blown to the opposite direction. For near an hour we looked on the awful scene, with feelings such as nothing but the sight of such a scene could inspire. The hollow rumblings of the cavern—the paler and less fiery body of smoke, exhibiting alternately black and yellow volumes, rising over the margin of the crater, as a harbinger of the livid and terrific sheets of light that succeeded—and then the sudden explosion of a mass of flame from its deepest recesses, attesting, by the loudness of its roar, as well as the tremendous height of its projecting power, the vengeful spirit of the volcano within:—these, and two sensible shocks of earthquake, which inspired even our guide with fear, and brought the fate of Pliny to my recollection, left such an impression on my mind, as to be fully content with one exhibition of the sublime terrors of Vesuvius. After ascending the highest peak, from which we witnessed the joyous sight of the rising sun over the dusky chain of the Abruzzi, which revealed to us once more the city of Naples, the bay that washed the base of the mountain, and the variety of olive, vine, and mulberry trees, to which it gave life and freshness—a prospect as fine as ever gladdened the eyes of mortals—we returned, rejoicing that we were no longer in the world of darkness, of earthquakes, and of terrors.

On Saturday, the 5th of May, was commemorated, the translation to the city, of the relics of St. Januarius. The anniversary is celebrated with unusual pomp and magnificence. At twelve o'clock the first procession commenced, during which the head of the Saint was carried to the church of St. Clare from the cathedral. The crowds were immense; thirty-five statues of saints, all of pure silver, and furnished with lighted tapers, were borne in the procession—flowers from the balconies were flung on the streets as we passed—and, at length, the precious relic, encased in a golden bust, and covered with a mitre set with precious brilliants, was laid by the aged and venerable archbishop on the gospel side of the altar. Again, about five o'clock in the evening, the blood of St. Januarius was carried amidst another procession, equally striking and imposing. The blood was laid on the epistle side, being contained in a small bottle, which was encased between two crystal plates, in the form of a remonstrance. The cardinal took this external covering by the handle, having no connexion with the blood contained in the vase, that lay between the crystals; nor, indeed, could it be supposed (the only possible supposition) that the old man's hand, even in case of contact, could impart heat to the mysterious

substance. He exhibited it to the by-standers, amongst the nearest of whom I was fortunately placed, and so solid was the substance within, that, after turning the vase two or three times, the same portion of it remained visibly unoccupied. About two minutes elapsed—the substance still remained consistent and adhesive, when gradually a redder border began to appear, showing that the liquefaction was commencing, and then, in less than two minutes more, it flowed, as it was turned, in every direction through the entire vase. During the rest of the octave, the miracle was repeated in the Church of St. Januarius. On Sunday morning I assisted, after saying Mass. The blood was in a state of liquefaction, even before it was presented to the head; it was not, therefore, so striking as on the preceding occasion. On Monday morning we attended again. There were some Protestants both from England and Ireland. The blood was presented in a state that satisfied all that it was completely solid, nay, immoveable, when the vase was turned. It remained so for a longer time than on Saturday. The Creed was recited by the priest who assisted, in which we joined; the liquefaction commenced, and so struck were all present, that some of the Protestants kissed the vase with the utmost reverence and devotion. I know not whether the scoffs of the impious and profane may not prevent them from following the impulse of their better feelings. As for me, I must confess, though sufficiently distrustful of the credulity with which popular rumours of miracles are sometimes received, I entertain no doubt whatever of the miracle of St. Januarius; nor can I conceive how any individual, who witnesses and examines it attentively, can reject it, without a secret scepticism in all miraculous interference.

The days following the festival of St. Januarius were agreeably spent in visiting the interesting curiosities of the city and neighbourhood. Baiæ, Cuma, Micenum, Lethe, Acheron, Avernum, the Stygian Lake, and the Grottos of the Sybil, were passed over with a circumstantial accuracy of observation, rendered pleasing by the recollection of the beautiful poetry, in which they were described. We saw the huge abutments which still remain, as the monuments of the madness of Caligula, who strove to unite Baiæ and Puzzuoli by a bridge—an enterprize which surpassed in extravagance the frantic project of Xerxes, to chain the Hellespont. Three young French gentlemen, who came out of the baths of Nero, almost ready to gasp, and covered with perspiration, showing an egg boiled, as the trophy of the experiment, deterred my companions from the dangerous adventure. After visiting the neighbouring islands of Ischia and Procida, so remarkable—the former, for its baths, and, the latter, for the antique and classical costume of its inhabitants, we returned again to the city of Naples.

In our visits to the magnificent museum of Naples, we were

assisted by the learned explanations of the well-known Canonico Iorio, to whom all its treasures were familiar, from the charred papyrus, disinterred at Pompeii, to the Farnesian Hercules. Pompeii it was impossible to traverse without melancholy. For, however the continual stream of travellers may dissipate the awful feelings inspired by the place—the deserted streets, the ruined temples, and the silent amphitheatre, contrasting with the animation which they once presented, force on the most thoughtless the most serious reflections. For me, I indulged in far sadder feelings than those inspired by pursuing Eneas's voyage through the regions of Cocytus and Acheron. In reality I know not what phantasy could have inspired Virgil, to have placed his Tartarus in one of the most delicious regions of the globe. The thought might well suit a moralist, who might wish to alarm the voluptuous inhabitants of Baiæ by the terrific fires, of which those of Vesuvius are but a phantom. But it is impossible to come out of Pompeii without feeling your spirits saddened by the contemplation of such an awful relic of divine wrath, which, like Sodom, may remind you not only of the vanity, but the wickedness, and, alas! the punishment of thousands, suddenly cut off in their thoughtless career.

After visiting Pompeii, on the one side, and Baiæ, on the other, we felt an anxiety to visit the ruins of Pestum, as well as the romantic city of Amalphi. The massive Doric pillars of two ancient temples still remain, rivalling the Parthenon in taste, and, probably, surpassing in antiquity the times of Pericles, since the period of their erection is so remote, that they were deemed ancient even in the infancy of Rome. After penetrating into those wild regions towards Calabria, as far as Pisciotta, we turned to Amalphi, which well rewarded us for the fatigues of the woods and mountains of Apulia. This celebrated city, situate along the Gulf of Salerno, commands as fine a prospect as any in Italy, and is, perhaps, one of the most romantic, in the beauties of its position, as well as in the associations of its fame. As you sail from Tarentum, you first catch a view of one half of the town, winding in a curve, which terminates in a peak, while, as you advance, you behold the female convent of St. Rose, placed upon the summit of the rock; again the ancient convent of the Capuchins, as if actually hanging between the air and water, with scarcely a visible foundation. A huge mass of rock hanging over it seemed every moment to threaten it with ruin, as if in revenge for invading its seclusion; and a Gothic tower, perched on the highest point of the peak, gives additional life to the prospect. Scarce do you turn this point, when the other half of Amalphi appears, embosomed in a similar crescent, exhibiting in the Church of Magdalene the ascending edifices, with green patches, like pendent terraces, between them, a still

more agreeable variety of outline than its other hemisphere. The Cathedral dedicated to St. Andrew contains the remains of the Apostle. The bishop appears to be a pious and apostolic man. The people seem full of genuine and simple devotion, beyond what I perceived in any other part of the Neapolitan territories. On the evening of Tuesday, the 22nd, we went to the Church of St. Magdalene, where we were much edified by the fervour of the people, who had commenced, as is customary here, the feast of Corpus Christi a month before the usual time. We left the city of Amalphi with regret, and stopped at Sorento, the birth-place of Tasso. If scenery and external circumstances ever had influence on the growing intellect, Tasso had before him a continual source, from which the richest inspirations of poetry could be drawn. Standing on the verge of a lofty rock, which projects into the water, the paternal mansion of the poet commanded a view of Vesuvius, on the right, with Naples further to the north and west ; opposite, the bay stretched before him, bounded by Procida, on one side, and the promontory of Micenum, with all the beauties of Baiæ on the other, while the whole of this magnificent prospect was seen every evening, lighted by the sun sinking into the bosom of the deep, as it was seen by us, and reflecting, in sudden alternations, all the fainter colours of the setting luminary. No wonder that, with such a scene before him, he could paint, with a magic pencil, the enchanted groves of Armida.

But beyond the commercial celebrity of Amalphi, or the poetical glories of Sorento, were the attractions which for me, at least, were found in Salerno, the resting place of Gregory VII. The fame of this eminent Pope has been long obscured by the thick masses of misrepresentation, with which Protestant writers have laboured to cover it. It has already commenced to emerge into the light of its original glory. Not one of the successors of St. Peter, of whom so many were eminent for their great virtues, has been a greater benefactor to mankind than this calumniated Pontiff. His life was an incessant warfare with vice of every description. His unconquerable vindication of virtue, and the rights of humanity, arrayed against him the most formidable combination of the licentious and the oppressive. Tyranny, simony, and profligacy, found in him an uncompromising avenger. Salerno has shared in the fame, which the feats and arms of Robert Guiscard had won in his wars with the Saracens. It has derived still more from the exile and death of St. Gregory ; and there is none who values the brightest virtues that can adorn the true patriot or the Christian Pontiff, can ever come near Salerno, without making a pious pilgrimage to the shrine of the great and holy Hildebrand.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LX.

ROME, AUGUST 20, 1832.

ON the 7th of June I left Naples, on my return to the "Eternal City." The fine Palace of Caserta, divided into four ample courts by the magnificent triple colonnade by which it was traversed, was, next to the Benedictine Convent on Monte Cassino, the object that appeared most deserving of attention. If splendour of architecture, as well as the immense sums of money expended on its erection, form just claims to admiration, the royal Palace of Caserta may well rank among the noblest palaces of Europe. For me it possessed a singular claim to veneration, in a fine picture of Ossian, represented blind, with the harp beside him. I was delighted that the fame of the son of Fion, and the emblem of our national music, were cherished on the southern shores of the Italian peninsula.

On the following morning I caught a view of the Convent of Monte Cassino, ascended, said Mass over the tomb of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, and passed the remainder of the day and following night within its hospitable walls, to which the appropriate motto over the porch, "Quisquis es, ingredere hospes," invited the passing stranger. In front of the church is a fine court, surrounded by arcades, through the centre of which you ascend by a flight of steps that conducts you to the portico, round which are ranged, in several large niches, some of the most illustrious Popes and Princes, who were either members or benefactors of the order. The remains of St. Benedict, and his sister Scholastica, repose under the grand altar; thirteen oil lamps are continually burning round their sepulchre. In the library, which is select and varied, is to be seen a large collection of Missals and Antiphonaries, exhibiting the most curious specimens of the taste and industry of the monks, in the elegant characters in which they transcribed, on parchment, the offices of the Church, adorning them with gilded letters and appropriate representations of its leading events.

The view of the neighbouring vallies was delightful, with their amphitheatre of mountains, some of them capped with snow, emblematic, as it were, of the purity and coldness of its cloistered inmates, amidst the trials of a voluptuous climate. As the evening fell, I heard, with no ordinary emotion, the piping of the shepherds tending their flocks on the neighbouring hills, which forcibly recalled all the images of pastoral simplicity and inno-

cence, with which our earlier years were familiarized, convincing me of the reality of that rural happiness, of which the Roman writers charmed us with the description. The sounds conveyed to me a deeper and more mysterious emotion than could be awakened even by classic recollections ; and the source of this saddening feeling was the contrast between those shepherds and the peasantry of my own country, from whom such strains were but seldom heard, though nurtured in the midst of scenery and recollections fraught with the most musical inspirations.

The interval between my return to Rome and the feast of Corpus Christi, I devoted to visiting such of the churches and palaces as I had not yet visited, as well as to more frequent visits to the Church of St. Peter, which, like all such sublime objects, is seen with new pleasure. The representation of the battle of Lipanto, on the ceiling of the Colonna Palace, in which a member of that distinguished family took so prominent a part, cannot fail to excite admiration mixed with piety, recalling, as it does, the delivery of Europe from the yoke of the haughty Mussulman, through the powerful intercession of the Mother of God.

On the feast of Corpus Christi the procession set out from the Sixtine Chapel, passed down the flight of steps leading from it through the centre of the semicircular portico, next along the line of houses to the left, under an awning supported by graceful shafts, round which wreaths of evergreen were entwined, and hung at the tops with tapestry, descending in graceful festoons. It then turned to the right along the houses bordering the Piazza, and entered the opposite side of the portico, along which it swept—one of the most magnificent spectacles imaginable, the foremost part having reached the grand door of St. Peter's before the Pontiff appeared out from the northern side of the portico, and enabling the eye to repose upon one unbroken circle of ecclesiastics, exhibiting every variety of colour and of costume, from the brown habit and ample tonsure of the Capuchin, to the embroidered copes and chausibles of the bishops and cardinals, and the dazzling triple crown of the Sovereign Pontiff. The immensity of the surrounding throng, of every grade and fashion, enlivened by a vast body of the military, added much to the brilliancy of this august procession. It was one worthy of the majesty of the occasion, and rich in deep and solemn reflections, to any who contrasted the days when the meek followers of Jesus, covered with the skins of wild beasts, were exposed to every indignity, nay, death itself, amidst the scoffs of insulting thousands, in the circus of Nero—this very spot, where thousands were now assembled, to proffer to their Redeemer, the homage of their heartfelt adoration.

On the festival of St. John the Baptist, the church of St. John of Lateran attracted the piety of the faithful. The Pope assisted

on the solemn occasion, and the procession with which the ceremonies were concluded in the evening, impressed on the spectators the majesty of “the mother and mistress of all the churches.” In the neighbourhood of a church—the nursing parent of the churches of the world—it was natural to look for those fruits of good works of which the Catholic faith has been so prolific. They are conspicuous in the magnificent hospital of St. John of Lateran, where the sick are tended with the most assiduous and tender charity. To sketch even the numberless charitable institutions with which Rome abounds, would require an ample volume. The wonder is, how funds are provided for the endowment and support of so many nurseries of mercy, under every variety of form. That of St. Michael is a monument of charity worthy the imitation of every Christian country. Not only are the sick attended with the utmost care, but an asylum is afforded to young and destitute females; and orphans, and other dependent children, are instructed in sculpture by the most eminent masters. Without encountering the dangers with which public theatres are generally encompassed, you may witness dramatic exhibitions of great excellence at this varied school of charity, science, and of the arts; and it is from nurseries such as these sprung some of those master minds who have acquired eminence in Rome, and spread their fame over Europe.

The month of August closes the brilliant series of those festivals which, from its opening in Advent, are spread over the ecclesiastical year. Accordingly, I prolonged my stay until then, having witnessed the fascinating illuminations of St. Peter’s, which exhibited different degrees of splendour, as if with the celerity of magic—no inappropriate emblem of its doctrine, which, unvaried in substance, exhibits fresh brilliancy through the medium of those great artists who place it in different positions.

On the first of July a convivial party, possessing no small interest, met together at the Irish College, including Count Montalambert, Monsieur de La Menais, and Monsieur L’Accordeur. Fortunately for Monsieur de La Menais, he was thus accompanied by two young friends, who loved him much, but loved truth and religion more. Though not sinking under the weight of years, Monsieur de La Menais appeared to be sinking under the pressure of far more crushing influences; but his companions appeared the very impersonations of Catholicity and freedom; and I am much mistaken if France will not have to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to the one and the other. Count Montalambert has been in Ireland, and his enthusiastic sympathy with the sufferings of the people affords a pledge of what he will achieve for the religious freedom of his own oppressed country.

On the first of August I said Mass in the church of St. Peter, at Vincula, at the altar dedicated to the chains which were mira-

culously connected, without any mark of being welded together. I was much gratified in having an opportunity to handle and reverence those sacred emblems of the sufferings and triumphs of the Apostle. On the fifth attended the feast of St. Maria ad Nives, in the church of St. Mary Major, where flowers, in imitation of the snow that fell on the site of the church to be erected, fell down in artificial showers.

Before the end of August accounts of the dreadful ravages of the cholera in Ireland reached Rome. Among the strange documents connected with this calamity was a letter, said to be addressed by Dr. Whately, the Protestant archbishop of Dublin, dissuading his clergy from exposing their lives, by attending the victims of this disease in their last moments. It struck me as a remarkable coincidence, that after perusing this extraordinary document, one of the first spectacles that attracted my attention was some of the order of St. Camillus de Lelis on their way to visit the sick in their last agony. It is scarcely credible, I reflected, that the document to which I have just alluded should come from the pen of any prelate professing Christianity; or if so, what wonder that a Church should wither and decay, of which the ministers could publish such cold and unfeeling recommendations. And yet here is a person who, it is seriously proposed, should form one of a body to whom the Catholics of Ireland should entrust the education of their children!! What a contrast! Here was a body, a portion of soldiers burning with such zeal and charity, that they were ready, for their brethren, to brave all the horrors of pestilence and death. But they formed but a small portion of those champions of the cross who are reared and disciplined for this spiritual warfare in the nurseries of Rome. If the faith of Rome is spoken of all over the world, its heroic charity and good works have been its companions, and well have the missionaries and martyrs of its faith and charity illustrated in the words of its Divine founder, that one cannot show greater love than to lay down his life for his brethren. On the 15th, the feast of the Assumption, the Holy Father favoured me with an interview before leaving the "Eternal City." In my own name, as well as in that of many of the bishops of Ireland, by whom I was requested to draw the attention of his Holiness to the subject, I represented to him the disastrous effects that would follow, if ever the Irish hierarchy should have the misfortune of being pensioned by the British government. His Holiness left me quite at ease on the subject, assuring me that he sympathized in our disinterested views, and further adding, that the safety and freedom of the Irish bishops were in their own hands, since he never would give his sanction to that, or any other such diplomatic measure which would be in opposition to the sentiments of the hierarchy of Ireland, so much

endeared to him by its heroic attachment to the Catholic faith. The Holy Father made me a present of a magnificent gold chalice of exquisite workmanship, which I shall not fail to preserve with due veneration, and hand down as a fresh pledge of the affection which he ceases not to manifest to his children, from every region over which his spiritual solicitude extends.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL GREY.

ROME, AUGUST 27, 1832.

“*Nec alia erit lex Romæ, alia Athenis—nec vero per senatum aut populum hac lege solvi possumus.*”—CICERO *DE REPUBLICA.*

MY LORD—Many months have now elapsed since I had the pleasure, or rather the pain, of addressing your lordship on the lamentable condition of large districts in Ireland. The scenes that have since passed in rapid succession, have demonstrated, if, indeed, demonstration was required, that the evils of that unfortunate land are too deeply rooted to be the casual productions of times or seasons. No; they are the natural result of an inveterate system of misrule, to which almost all are now happily agreed in tracing them; and thus candid unanimity in recognizing the true seat of the disorder, ought to afford a presumption of the speedy application of an effectual remedy.

But, alas! I fear that such hopes are illusive, since it would appear, from the report of the latest proceedings, that the object is now rather to shift the position of the disease, than to eradicate its virulence. When in Ireland, I could not, in common with every individual who had a heart to feel, but take a lively interest in its melancholy condition. That interest has been heightened since, by the strange and humiliating contrast that is found between the excellence of our constitution and the misery of our people. Whatever our notions may be of the governments of the Continent, there is not so wretched a peasantry to be found under them as that of Ireland. Of the British constitution, apart from the more recent penal and bigotted statutes that do not belong to it, I am a sincere and fervent admirer, and distance does not diminish my sense of its excellence. But if the maxim of Junius be true, that you may infer the character of a government from the condition of its people—and it is not an unfair

maxim of legislation—it would be well for those who cannot endure the nations of the Continent to pause, on the contemplation of Ireland, before they can boast of the unqualified superiority of their own. Of those governments I am not, assuredly, the panegyrist. Yet, for those who prefer practical utility to theoretic excellence, the state of Ireland cannot afford any theme of national exultation.

And yet many affect to feel the utmost surprise at the persevering discontent and distraction of that country. Their surprise, however, would be less, if they seriously reflected on the unjust inequality of her laws. But has not that injustice been cancelled by the great measure of Emancipation? No, Emancipation conferred but little benefit on the great body of the people. At best it could only be regarded as the precursor of more extensive and substantial advantages. It opened the way, it is true, to a small number of Catholics to wealth and honors; but the mass of the population was left to groan under the accumulated load of oppression which centuries of misgovernment heaped on their devoted heads. In short, the whole system by which Ireland has been governed was always partial; nor did the same narrow and intolerant spirit cease to accompany the measure of Emancipation. Seats in Parliament, and other places of distinction, were made accessible to a few, while thousands of the peasantry were stript of the valuable privilege of the franchise of which they were in possession, merely for the guilt of having learned its value, and exercised it with independence. Can it, then, be denied, that in granting this reluctant boon, the government kept in view the same narrow policy that was always pursued towards that unfortunate kingdom? What did the people gain in the meantime by this boasted measure? Were they freed from the iniquitous operation of the vestry laws,* which empower a parochial little parliament to levy taxes on the poor, in order to minister to the comfortable devotion of sometimes but a single family? Were they freed from the odious imposts wrung from them for the support of individuals, who, lest they should appear to form an exception to the maxim, that taxes are always in consideration of some return, take care, in the absence of any other service, to requite those who pay them by insulting their religious feelings? In short, did they, after Emancipation, receive an exemption from the most galling of all tyrannies, that tedious and enduring spirit of religious hate, which forced, or attempted to force, on them an obnoxious system of education, adding insult to injury, by the hypocritical pretence that it was given in mercy to their ignorance! No, my lord, none of those sore, deep-seated, and

* That odious impost has been since abolished.

extensive grievances were redressed. Sessions of parliament passed over without the Kildare-street system being checked; and allow me to add, that it would still have maintained all its parliamentary popularity, if the people who were oppressed by its hollow professions of kindness did not assume a tone and attitude of bold, but constitutional remonstrance.

With the evidence of this state of things before their eyes, it is wondered that the people of Ireland still persevere in agitation. They have persevered, because as yet the whole mass of its inhabitants have not been brought within the pale of one general comprehensive measure of justice, such as a nation has a right to expect from a wise and paternal legislature. Let us suppose that the Protestants of Ireland amounted to near seven millions, and the Catholics but to one—that those Protestants were the poorest class in the empire, and that the Catholics possessed such wealth as that they could easily procure the religious service of the minister of their own choice—that notwithstanding, those poor Protestants were often stripped of their most necessary articles of furniture, to swell the enormous revenues, and minister to the luxury of a Catholic priesthood, whose only requital for those comfortable blessings of this world, was—to insult those who gave them, by every offensive epithet which was ever ransacked by polemical hate, and then to threaten them with the torments of the other. Let us suppose, further, that those few Catholics were empowered to erect large churches, and steeples, and organs, for the accommodation of a few Catholic families, while the unfortunate poor Protestants, at whose expense they were built, must hear the word of God under the rain and wind of heaven; and that, in fine, the Catholic proprietors and priesthood were receiving large sums of money levied on the Protestant poor, in order to seduce their children to adopt a religion which they loathed,—what would be the impression made on the British House of Commons by the advocate of such a system? Would not the just indignation of every friend to freedom be kindled against its continuance. Its advocate might go round the dull and hacknied road of defence, in which his duller and more bigoted predecessors walked before him, and talk of established rights and spoliation of church property, without advancing a single argument to palliate such injustice. But surely such sophistry would soon give way before eloquent legislators, who could not fail of winning the favour, and conquering the conviction of the house, by those comprehensive views of immutable justice, and those burning appeals to a nation's sense of right and wrong, by which the Roman orator, whose legal aphorism heads this letter, not only animated his own contemporaries, but instructed the latest posterity.

JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXII.

LORETTO, SEPTEMBER 5, 1846.

LIKE the return of the wise men of the East to their own country, my route from Rome was over new ground, by me as yet untrodden. But through whatever region of Italy you pass, you are sure to be delighted with rare specimens of the arts, as well as the beauties of its scenery. Among the latter, the cascade of Terni, the birth-place of Tacitus, is deservedly celebrated, formed by the fall of the Velino into the Nar. It is impossible not to admire the wild fascinations of the waterfall in its first rapid descent, precipitating itself perpendicularly, and then rushing over three high, but less steep declivities, amidst spray and foam, into the stream below. On the opposite northern bank is a palace inhabited by the unfortunate Queen Caroline. A more interesting curiosity is found in the enormous petrefactions hanging from the rocky roofs of a neighbouring grotto.

The city of Spoleto, so rich in historical recollections of the middle ages, is still remarkable for its Gothic aqueduct, supposed to have been erected in the reign of Theodoric. Foligno, not far distant, presented a dreary spectacle, having suffered so much from a recent earthquake, which we slightly felt at Rome, that beams were stretched between the opposite walls of the streets, by which they were sustained. Serra Valle, a handsome little town, indicative of its name, attracted my particular notice on my way to Loretto, being built between two hills of the Apennines, approaching each other so closely, as scarcely to have room for its erection. On the 1st of September I arrived here, and on Sunday, the 2nd, had the long sought consolation of celebrating Mass in the "Santa Casa," in which our Divine Redeemer was conceived, and the Blessed Virgin was born.

In distant countries, the miraculous translation of the house of Loretto, first into Dalmatia, and again over the Adriatic, excites no extraordinary interest, because it seldom comes under discussion. Some affect to think the legend too clumsy even for the trouble of controversy. But independently of many circumstances well worthy of consideration, the very apparent clumsiness of the story gives it a title to credit, since a miracle so much out of the ordinary reach of miraculous events, would have scarcely entered into the conception of any, or gained anything like a lasting assent, had it not originally rested upon irrefragable attestations.

From the frequency of the pilgrimages to Nazareth, in the

earlier ages of the Christian era, the size, form, and dimensions of the holy house were quite familiar to European travellers. At the same time that it began to be missed in Palestine, a new and a hitherto unheard-of house, attracted the notice of the people of Dalmatia. The similarity of both houses soon led to the knowledge of their identity. Persons who had visited Nazareth, and seen the dwelling of the Holy Family, were sent to examine the circumstances of its disappearance from the East, and its translation to the banks of the Adriatic; and the more all those circumstances were sifted, the stronger was the conviction that the interposition of the Divine Power had conveyed it to another land, to protect from the continued indignities of the infidels, this holy sanctuary of the Incarnation. After a long interval of time the "holy house" was again transported over the Adriatic Sea, and placed on the opposite shore. Here, too, another translation took place from the spot on which it had been first deposited, owing to the quarrels that sprung among two brothers, from the sacrilegious traffic which they were deriving from the piety of pilgrims. The truth of the miraculous translations of the "Santa Cosa" is referred to in the rescripts of several Pontiffs, and the devout pilgrimage to its shrine has been recommended by the practice and example of many of the most eminent and enlightened saints, who, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, reflected lustre on the Catholic Church.

Such is a brief history of this holy shrine, now the object of my pilgrimage. Every portion of this revered relic engaged my attention; its interior walls left in their original simplicity; its door facing the north in its present position, its gable to the west, perforated towards the top with a solitary window; its chancel, or space behind the altar, covered with plates of gold, and its fire-place, now the depository of the little pious offerings of the faithful. But the exterior of the house is clothed with marble, and adorned with pilasters, sustaining a rich entablature, tastefully designed and executed, and crowned with an open balustraded parapet. Between the pilasters the walls are hollowed into deep niches, to receive the statues of the prophets and sybils who announced the mystery of the Incarnation. Over the "Santa Cosa" is seen the lofty dome of the church which enshrines it, being placed at the point of intersection of the magnificent cruciform temple which was erected to commemorate its miraculous translation to Loretto. Its treasury has been rifled, and much of its worldly glory is fled. The sacrilegious avarice of another Heliodorus has plundered its wealth, and carried away captive the precious treasures by which the piety of wealthy votaries had enriched it. But it is only the glitter of its wealth that disappeared, and, like the hidden glories of its holy inmates,

the Son of God and his Divine Mother, there is a mysterious splendour within the walls of Loretto, which would fail all the impiety of the world's tyrants to take away, and to honor which, kings and queens will not cease to bring their offerings to the end of time.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXIII.

VENICE, SEPTEMBER 14, 1832.

AFTER leaving Loretto, with feelings such as a visit to the "Santa Casa" is calculated to inspire, my sojourn in the intermediate cities was comparatively brief. Ancona, now the key of the Adriatic, exhibits a maritime bustle and activity, that singularly contrast with the solitude of the other cities, lying along the coast. It bears, besides, in its fine monuments, proofs of the munificent attention of the Emperors and the Popes. Rimini I should have passed through, with an indifference quite in keeping with its present condition, were it not that it recalled the scene of the Council, so memorable in ecclesiastical history, in which the Fathers, cajoled by the fraud, and threatened by the violence of the Arians, adopted an imperfect or ambiguous form of faith, which has exposed their memory to reproach, and left a warning to succeeding bishops, of the danger of temporizing councils. Even the zeal which defends their orthodoxy, must acknowledge their weakness, and lament the want of courage which had exposed them to the dangers of a fall. Ravenna, once the Dublin of the Royal Lieutenants of the Eastern empire, now mourns over its historical recollections. It afforded Dante, the Father of Italian Poetry, an asylum, which was denied him by the ingratitude of his native city of Florence; and the tomb of the poet, which it contains, is visited with more of curiosity and veneration, than the superb mausoleums of Theodoric or of the daughter of Theodosius. Perhaps Italy does not contain a city more calculated to inspire melancholy, or, rather, a just estimate of the instability of human power. Rome, though fallen, and buried in ruins, has again risen from her ashes with renovated splendour. But Ravenna, the city of the Exarchs, and the occasional residence of their imperial masters, is fallen, not to rise, nor are its towers again likely to reflect one solitary gleam of imperial splendour.

Ferrara, too, once the rival of Florence, exhibits another

faded monument of ancient celebrity and renown. The glories of Este, the songs of Tasso and Ariosto, who had long resided in this city, were spontaneously recalled. I visited the prison of Tasso, and it required no extraordinary enthusiasm to sympathize with the fate of this singular poet, no less remarkable for the brilliancy than the melancholy of his imagination, and whose fitful maladies are said to have been aggravated by the severity of Alphonso, whose praises he sings at the very opening of his celebrated poem on Jerusalem. Whether it was to the infirmity of the poet, or to the jealousy of his patron, Tasso's confinement is to be attributed, is a question that has exercised much of adverse zeal and learning. It should more probably be ascribed to the joint influence of both. But, whatever might have been the cause, with Ferrara will always be associated the fame and misfortunes of Tasso. At Sorento and Naples his young genius had its dawn. At Rome his troubled spirit found its last repose, from the caprices and persecutions of the world. But it was in Ferrara it shone forth in all the fulness of its meridian splendour, and there, too, it was first seen to be crossed by that eclipse, which had gradually dimmed its lustre towards its decline. From the residence of Ariosto, too, Ferrara derives a large portion of its literary glory. The chair which he usually occupied is kept in the library as an object of great curiosity. His manuscripts, especially those of *Orlando*, are preserved with care. The singular industry with which he wrought his poems to the perfection which they exhibit, is illustrated by one stanza appearing written in three successive different forms, a circumstance which so filled Lord Byron with admiration, as to have occasioned him to bedew the manuscript with his tears.

After Rome and Loretto—I except neither Florence nor Naples—Venice is the city which excites most interest. On Monday morning I set out from Chioggia, a flourishing town on the borders of the Lagune. Towards evening, the floating city rose before my view; and, on seeing it, as if springing from the bosom of the deep, I fancied the figures of the ancient poets endued with reality, nor could I deem the birth of Thetis so wild a fiction, on witnessing the living energy of this daughter of the ocean. We entered by the canal fronting St. Mark's, by the time the sun was going down, and casting his setting splendours on the domes and pinnacles that broke on our sight, with all the suddenness and variety of enchantment. As we entered the magnificent basin, the Church of St. George was on our right; and, on our left, those of the Redentore, and Santa Maria della Salute, with its triple dome; while the lofty Campanile, in front, directed our attention to the Cathedral of St. Mark, and the open space opposite enabled us to catch a passing glance at the celebrated horses placed over its portico—the trophies of the

aged Dandalo, and his Venetians, over the imperial power of Constantinople.

Every thing about Venice shares in the magic of its origin. On the confines of land and water, it has a mixture of the two elements, its streets being accessible only by gondolas; and, forming the boundary between the East and West, you perceive how largely its language, its manners, and, particularly, its architecture, have borrowed from an oriental origin. Passing under the far-famed Rialto, you cannot but admire the magnificent palaces that line the canal, particularly those of Pizarro and Rezzonico, bearing traces of Saracenic origin in the arches, formed into pointed Gothic by the intersection of the Grecian curves. The palace of the last of the Doges was shown us along the canal. Like the banking-house in College-green, it looked like the sepulchre of national freedom. Having waited on the Patriarch Monaco, whose virtues have been since rewarded with the purple, I experienced from him a kind and hospitable attention. His amiable simplicity and warmth of manner reminded me of some of the good ecclesiastics of Ireland; nor was he at all insensible to the sufferings and fortitude of the people of our country, in preserving, amidst the direst persecution, the sacred inheritance of their religion.

During a week's sojourn in the amphibious city, I visited its principal churches—some of them the monuments of the taste and genius of Palladio, and rivaling those of Rome, in the productions with which the pencils of Titian, and Tintoretto, and Paul of Verona, and other masters of the Venetian school, had adorned them. The academy of the fine arts, as well as the churches, furnish beautiful specimens of their works. In the school of St. Rock is to be seen the famous Crucifixion of Tintoretto, representing the city of Jerusalem, and the various groups of soldiers and pious people, who are supposed to have assisted at the tragic scene. The composition gave full scope to his imaginative powers, especially in the variety of costume. The academy of the fine arts contains the Assumption of Titian, which reminded me of the Transfiguration of Raphael, being both among the master productions of men who had no superiors in the art—the latter famed for the unrivalled grace and delicacy of his designs and figures, and the former for the exquisite freshness and fascination of his colouring.

The Doge's palace and library, the senate-house and dungeons, approached by the “Ponte de Suspiri,” cannot be viewed without alternate feelings of a different kind, as they recal the memory of the glory and of the crimes of Venice. I was told, on entering the dungeon of the Inquisition, that Lord Byron begged of his conductor to be left locked there alone for an entire hour, that he might feel more vividly, and paint more

strongly, all its horrors. It was an experiment requiring a desperate courage to submit to ; for on this side the grave a more terrible fate could scarcely be imagined, than to hear the sullen jar of the closing portals of this terrible dungeon grating on one's ear, and awaking in the imagination all the hideous images of its history.

In one of the churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, a simple slab of marble placed on the floor, points to the resting-place of Titian. In the same church is to be seen a fine monument to Canova, the eminent sculptor, which he is said to have designed for this distinguished painter. On one side is represented a group of six females weeping, emblematic of the loss which the arts sustained in his death. It is said that one of the most beautiful of Mozart's Masses, which he composed for another, was sung for the first time at his own death ; and by a similar coincidence, while Canova had meditated a suitable monument for Titian, he was unconsciously labouring for the erection of his own.

In the weeping figures which form the group of Canova's monument may be found appropriate emblems of the fate of the fallen city. It retains, it is true, the name of Venice, but, like Tyre and Carthage, its glory is fled—it is no longer the Venice of the middle ages. The dominion of the Queen of the Ocean is passed away, and she sits a solitary city, repining with unavailing regret over her departed glory. Though the name has an historical claim, it is one which must be confessed, is associated with misdeeds of the blackest atrocity. Crime is sure, even in this world, to find its retribution. Those of the Queen of the Adriatic have not been unavenged. The winds which were wooed by her successful commerce, now waft the sails of more prosperous cities. The stranger is supreme in her chambers of commerce, and among the imported officials, the insolent tones of the Teutonic are as loudly heard over the humbler and more harmonious speech of the natives, as is in Ireland the Saxon dialect of the same tongue over the Irish, kindred to the Italian, both owning the Celtic stock as their genuine origin. The fate of Venice is another warning which history reads to proud and oppressive nations to practice justice ; otherwise that the height of their guilty power is but the precursor of their rapid decline.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXIV.

TRENT, SEPTEMBER 22, 1832.

THIS is another, and the last in the series, of that class of places, to which I have been conducted, by reverence for religion, and admiration of those great and holy men, by whom its majesty has been asserted. With the vindication of the most sacred dogmas of the Catholic faith, the fame of the chief cities of the East and West is associated. To Nice belongs the glory of asserting the Godhead of the Son against the impiety of Arius, the Lucifer of heresiarchs, who, like the rebel chief of the fallen angels, thought to upset the throne of the Divinity. Constantinople, with a kindred zeal, guarded the Church against a kindred blasphemy ; and its Council vindicated the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. The Virgin Mary, the next person in the order of dignity, and nearest of God's creatures to the throne of the Most High, was assailed by the blasphemies of the wicked Nestorius ; and to Ephesus was reserved the high honor, and the affectionate duty, of asserting for the Blessed Virgin her just prerogative, of Mother of God. In the refutation of subordinate errors—offshoots from those huge impieties to which I have just alluded—the same cities, together with that of Chalcedon, have, through the zeal of the Fathers, assembled in their respective General Councils, under the guardian spirit of the Apostolic See, won the gratitude and reverence of the Catholic Church.

Nor was the West behind in the sacred duty of condemning those sectaries, who strove to darken its faith, and defile its purity, by their errors or their crimes. Rome, ever foremost in every project and achievement, having for their object the protection of religion or the improvement of society, has had its General Councils ; and the four Councils of Lateran, held during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, attest its untiring solicitude for the purity of the faith, as well as the freedom of Christendom, which were then in imminent danger, from intestine sectaries, as well as the more overwhelming power of the Saracens. Lyons and Florence had, too, their share of distinction among the cities rendered celebrated by Ecumenical Councils ; and Constance had the singular good fortune of closing, by its Council, that terrible schism, which had rent the Church in twain, and of which the seeds were already cast in the Council of Vienna, its predecessor, the Pope who presided there having already fixed his Pontifical seat in Avignon, in the neighbourhood of Bourdeaux, of which see he was archbishop.

Yet, of all those cities, so entitled to reverence, there is none

more conspicuous than the city of Trent, and no General Council has laboured with more efficiency for the protection and elucidation of the Catholic faith. In some of the preceding Synods, the giant of heresy was smitten and laid prostrate by the sword of the Spirit, which was wielded with energy by the assembled Fathers. Soon, however, he started up under another form, and again ravaged the Church, until extinguished by the exercise of a similar authority. It was reserved for the Fathers of Trent, not only to proscribe one error, but to crush it under every form. They traversed the wide and varied ground of the canon of the inspired Scriptures, the dogmas of faith and principles of morality furnishing weapons to repel every assailant, and leaving no corner in which the enemies of the faith might take shelter. The sixteenth century is charged with ignorance, by the advocates of licentiousness and disorder. The acts of the Council of Trent furnish the most effectual refutation of their calumnies. Not only do they stand out, a prominent and imperishable monument of the faith, which they vindicate, but also of the learning, the eloquence, and the purity of classical doctrine, which distinguished a large portion of those eminent and venerable Fathers.

It is no wonder if, on leaving Venice, I should be impatient to reach a city, possessing such lively interest. Had my rout been reversed, and were I entering Italy for the first time, instead of departing, I should have loitered longer among the classic monuments of Vicenza, of Padua, and Verona. My mind was too familiar to such specimens of excellence, as even they contained, to detain me as long as I should stop, in different circumstances; but still those places were too much connected with renown, to pass them over without a transient visit to their most striking monuments. The banks of the Brenta were thickly studded with beautiful palaces and casinas, erected by the "merchant nobles" of Venice. To the soil of Padua, learning and genius appear indigenous; the name of Titus Livius alone, to whom it gave birth, would confer celebrity on any city, and well has it sustained the reputation worthy of such a name, in the number of learned men, who have been reared in its university. The peaceful pursuit of literature and the arts invested Padua with some of the sacred character of an asylum; and, accordingly, it came, with comparatively little injury, out of the political convulsions, by which the rest of Italy was torn. The congress was yet fresh in the memory of the citizens of Verona, as well as a variety of anecdotes connected with the monarchs who attended it. Those, however, will soon fade away. Besides Pliny, it may boast of another name, that outweighs them all, in Maffei, by whom the history and antiquities of his native city have been so ably illustrated. His museum, and the amphitheatre, form the principal curiosities of the city. No reader of Shakespeare

would pass unvisited the tombs of Romeo and Juliet. Seldom is the charm of association found so illustrative, in lending importance to objects, as in this very monument. Though eagerly sought by every traveller, its littleness almost escapes observation, while the mausoleum of the Scaligers protrudes its huge dimensions on the view of every passing stranger. Yet, with all those elaborate appliances, the name of the Scaligers is scarcely heard beyond the precincts of the city, while those of Romeo and Juliet must continue to participate in the fame of Shakespeare.

The road from Verona towards Trent leads through a beautiful valley, watered by the stream of the Adige, and rendered agreeable by the succession of handsome villages and romantic views, by which its banks are diversified. Among the various places that were suggested for the meeting of the Council, a more appropriate selection could not have been made than this city, embosomed in the solitudes of the Tyrol, and shut out from the surrounding tumults, by the mountains that encircled it. It possesses some handsome churches—among the rest, the cathedral. But by far the most celebrated, is that of the Santa Maria, in which the holy Council was so long assembled. The traditions connected with such assemblies long survive; and it is equally creditable to the piety of the inhabitants, and the memory of the Fathers, that, in speaking of the Council, the adjunct of “holy” is scarcely ever omitted. There may have been, and there was occasionally, much warmth in their discussions. Much greater heat of disputation was often evinced by persons, to whose keeping, interests far less sacred were entrusted. The faith of those might have been justly suspected, who could view with coldness or indifference the frightful inroads then made upon the fold. Their zeal, therefore, furnished proofs of piety rather than topics of reproach, especially when it was found, from a close intimacy, to have been enlightened by learning, and sustained by the blameless habits of their lives. The dimensions of the Church of Santa Maria are comparatively small; its form simple—two coupled pillars on either side, resting on large pedestals, and supporting a corresponding entablature, form its only exterior ornament. Nor is there any profusion of decorations in the interior. The only object worthy of attention is the picture near the great altar, which represents the members of the Council; their stations, dignity, and costume, grouped in the same canvass, yet admirably distinct in detail—a picture, which sheds a lustre on this little church, which the choicest collection of the most celebrated masters could not bestow.

LETTER LXV.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

FRANKFORT, NOVEMBER 18, 1832.

SIR—Amidst the fears and rumours of war which here beset us, I found leisure to glance over the last number of your literary journal. If I may judge from the extent of its range, the force of your sympathy for the miserable lot of mankind must have been intense, indeed, when it could embrace such a vast and varied compass. Spain, and Portugal, and Italy, are made to furnish separate articles of your invective or your condolence; and the Pope and Jesuits, not forgetting the followers of St. Dominick and Francis, form the usual corps dramatique, to fill up the pauses of the parts, and relieve the lassitude of the reader. The lovers of freedom must unquestionably applaud the benevolent zeal which leads the editor of this Review to follow the fortunes of Pedro, and penetrate beyond the Pyrenees, in order to let in some portion of philosophic light on the dark dungeons of the Inquisition. But, sir, as your heroism appears so generous in going thus in quest of foreign servitude, had you no eyes to fix on those who are labouring to establish real freedom nearer home, and to break more galling fetters? As you are so shocked at the laziness of monks, and the amount of ecclesiastical property in Spain, how did the three millions annually wrung from the wretched peasantry of Ireland escape your notice, and that to feed a body dying of actual plethora, for want of any duties to perform? In all the history of sinecures in Catholic countries, pray point out such an example of oppression, in ancient or modern times. As the Jesuits are made the special subject of your abuse, and Don Miguel loaded with execration for their re-establishment, could you not transfer any portion of your indignant feelings to those ecclesiastics in your own country who are clinging, with a desperate tenacity, to all that is revolting in church tyranny and corruption? And as the Pope and Ferdinand are copiously abused for keeping up a standing army of monks and friars, had you not a word of reprobation against the ministers of a government who wield all the force of the military to retain in the possession of their unhallowed wealth a body of men, against which the sound intellect of the country has risen.

No; such homely visions did not suit the policy of your journal, or the views of the party to which it has uniformly pandered. More distant and excursive benevolence is more

suited to that Whiggish philosophy of which it has been the selected organ. Loud and vehement complaints against foreign despotism—deep and solemn imprecations against the Pope and his satellites—commisseration, high-toned and impassioned, for the Italian legations, were topics better adapted to parade an hollow philanthropy, without the cost of a single drop of practical commisseration. Are not the poor ragged peasantry of Ireland, who furnish, by the terrible excesses into which they are occasionally driven, a disastrous evidence of their wrongs, as deserving of your interference as the Portuguese, who are so stupid, it appears, as to be contented under Don Miguel? Have not the provinces of Munster and of Connaught more pressing claims on British wisdom and benevolence than the remote legations of Foligni and Ferrara? Such artifices will no longer do. The days of the humbugs of reviewers are gone by, as well as other delusions, under which the public has too long laboured. All the affected solicitude of the Whigs for foreign freedom (and it is only affectation), will only serve to expose them to contempt; whilst the anomaly of the Church of Ireland is already beginning to draw forth the curses of every country in Europe.

Perhaps, neither you nor your readers are aware of the intense interest which the wrongs of Ireland, now more generally known, have awakened. The ignorant writer of the article on Sismondi's history has concealed the fact, that the grievances of the tithe system find their way into all the leading gazettes of Italy, Germany, France, and the Low Countries. The knowledge of the state of Ireland is an antidote against all the political poison, with which your reviews, as well as many of your London journals, are generally fraught. You may fancy that, whilst you prepare your literary rockets, on the banks of the Tweed or the Thames, they will go forth, loaded with destruction, as far as the Tagus or the Tiber. Their force is spent ere they reach their destination. When your productions are read there, it is only to excite a just horror of your habitual calumnies, or a contemptuous feeling for your ignorance. You are surprised at the belief of the Italians in miracles. It is no wonder, when they find Don Miguel still living and fighting, who, according to the various reports of the Paris and London journals, collected into a pamphlet, now before me, was put to death, by his mutinous subjects, *eighty-three times!!* And as for your pretended solicitude for their happiness, it only calls forth a strain of the most sarcastic irony. What! they indignantly exclaim—represent us as priest-ridden, whilst the people of Ireland, nay, of England, are borne down by the heaviest ecclesiastical tyranny on earth. If we support a clergy, they are a clergy of our own choice, who make us some requital. They instruct our youth; they minister to all our wants; and, far from

forcibly seizing our substance, they cheerfully share with us their own. We are not, however, thank God, arrived to that pitch of enlightenment and freedom, which would reconcile us to starve, while our substance is seized by an unchristian priesthood, from which we receive nothing but insult, and then fall down and bless a government, which would force us, with bayonets, to submit to our fate. If that be the freedom of your countries, we envy you not its possession ; it is well worthy of the cruel and hard-hearted origin from which it sprung. Behold, they tell you, the boasted liberty of France. They talk of freedom, whilst their acts are replete with tyranny ! The press is persecuted—the poor inoffensive Trappists are banished—and education is utterly proscribed, unless administered by a board of sophists, who, conscious that there can be no tyranny exercised with impunity while the mind is free, labour to make a monopoly of the human intellect, and reduce man to the condition of a machine, that is to move in blind obedience to all their caprices. And as for England, with what consistency can she talk of justice to other countries, while she denies it to Ireland ? Let her first introduce among her own people the ecclesiastical reform which she seems so zealous to establish at Rome. It will be high time to turn her attention to our condition, when she frees her own subjects from that load of ecclesiastical despotism, which neither the people of Italy or Portugal would endure.

Do then, Mr. Editor, as you are, doubtless, a man of philanthropy—for charity is not a term sufficiently philosophical—descend to turn your attention for some time, from the classic regions of Italy, to the more important affairs of home. Lend a helping hand to your kinsmen on the other side of the channel (for you are aware that we are descended from the same old Scythian stock), before you trouble us with the affairs of Spain. It must be, no doubt, a kindred sympathy with the old race from which we are supposed to be sprung, that you are so exceedingly solicitous for the happiness of that gallant people. This, however, is a legendary tale, too old for the enlightened meridian of Edinburgh. But should so much credulity linger still among you, as to think we are sprung of the same Milesian line, still we, as of a more recent origin, are nearer cousins than the Spaniards, and have, therefore, a stronger claim to your support. Help us in our present difficulties, and we will forgive all the injurious things you have hitherto said about Ireland. Nay, we will waive the old disputes about our primogeniture, and not quarrel as yet about the number of saints, of which Dempster thought to rob us, some of which, no doubt, will modestly be transferred into your new Scottish biography.

But if we cannot have your valuable assistance, cease, at least, to write about subjects of which you are most profoundly igno-

rant, until you receive more accurate information. There are, in the last number of your journal, evident symptoms of that superannuated imbecility, to which all things human are doomed. The story about the Spanish monks has not even the merit of a well-imagined or a well-told fiction. Such a clumsy tale, of which the inventor would be scouted from any court of justice, defeats its own malignity. It is well worthy of those travellers, whose object is only to minister to the appetite for scandal that has diseased the mind of the country, and who, in the unblushing effrontery with which they retail foreign corruption, seem to forget that they often furnish evidence of their own. The tale, however, is a proof that the spell of Scottish fiction is broken, and that the potent spirit which presided over its literature, and lent it all its charms, is withdrawn.

As for Italy, the article regarding it has as many blunders as it has paragraphs. Some French pirates take forcible possession of Ancona, and the sovereign subjects of Louis Philippe are sent into a peaceful territory, to indemnify themselves, by foreign license, for the political fetters which the Citizen King was forging for them at home. They meet some congenial minds, fit conductors of their spirit, and those few are supposed to represent the people of the legations. An envoy is sent to Rome, to mediate between the Pope and his people, and because the Sovereign Pontiff does not adopt the diplomatic wisdom of a Mr. Seymour, in the government of his estates, the *Times* and *Morning Chronicle* must weep over the melancholy destiny of Italy. How, fancy you, would they relish the intelligence, that some Italian envoy was sent over by the Holy Father, to counsel his Majesty to get rid of his usual advisers, and substitute a body of cardinals in their stead? The thing, however ridiculous, would be as reasonable as the unwarrantable interference of the French and English in the internal settlement of the Pontifical States. But, in short, Italy is a theme which but few understand; it requires a tone of mind which few bring to it. Its hallowed and romantic literature cannot be relished by the grosser spirits of the North; and as well might a Mussulman, who pants only for a sensual paradise, be expected to describe justly the devotions of the Holy Sepulchre, as that the libertines who sometimes infest Rome could feel or tell the meek influences of its government or its religion.

Without, however, expecting any profound views on those subjects, the readers of *Reviews* should, at least, expect for their money a correct statement of history. The *Edinburgh Journal* is too poetical for the tame sobriety of history, and like the poet who synochrocised persons, whom time had placed asunder, the writer in the *Review* introduces fancied personages to the acquaintance of the Roman Pontiffs. Thus, Innocent IX.

is brought into contact with persons with whom he had no acquaintance. Do not in future rely on the statements of those who ought to read before they commence writing, and who, with all the ignorance of schoolboys on every subject, save vice and folly, affect to dissertate with pompous emptiness on the gravest subjects which affect the interests of mankind.

As for any aid you can lend Ireland, she will, I am sure, disclaim your services. It has abler and more efficient instruments to achieve its regeneration. To your *Review*, or to any other, it owes not a particle of obligation. With much of speculative freedom in its pages, your journal is the real abettor of the worst of tyrannies in its admiration of that utilitarian system, which, by loosing legislators from the force of anterior moral restraints, would leave the people at the mercy of the most sanguinary enactments. You boast of your Vattels, and your Locks, and your Bentham's, and your Paleys, and your Bacons, until some of your ignorant readers, who never read them, are brought into the belief that their maxims are the safeguards of happiness and freedom. If we are to judge of the tree by its fruits, all the laws that have been passed, and are still perpetuated by the admirers of those writers, are anything but a model of that meekness and justice which should characterize a code of Christian legislation. Where, but under the iron sway of Bentham's philosophy, could the public prints ascribe the following sentence to a judge of the land—"I know of no such monster as unjust law." A more monstrous sentence, and one more fraught with despotism, was never ascribed to any individual. Here law and justice are at once identified, and the most unjust and cruel enactments bring the force of moral obligation. What a pity the Catholics of Ireland during the last, and the Christians in the first ages, did not become acquainted with this philosophy, which would have saved them the foolish expenditure of their property and blood, by teaching them that there was no such monster as an unjust law. For me, I prefer the old theology of Thomas Aquinas—a name that is never introduced into the fashionable pages of your *Review*, but for ridicule—to the maxims of sophists, who acknowledge no law superior to their own. "A tyrannical government is unjust, being ordained, not for the common good, but for the private good of the ruler; therefore the disturbance of this rule is not sedition, unless when the overthrow of tyranny is so inordinately pursued, that the multitude suffers more from the disturbance than from the existence of the government." Probably you were not aware that such maxims of civil liberty are to be found amidst what is called the slavish rubbish of the scholastics of the middle ages. They have been misrepresented as the foes of political freedom, and moderns have taken the merit of discovering principles which,

without any of the alloy by which they mix them, may be drawn from the rich sources of Catholic jurisprudence.

Why have I thus referred you to those fountains ? To show you that the Irish Catholics, in the vindication of their just rights, have no need to draw from the turbid streams of French or Scotch philosophy. No ; instead of the vile materialism of those schools, which necessarily make man a despot or a slave, there is a vitality about the doctrine of a justice anterior to law, which protects the rights of a community, by forcing upon governments the necessity of their recognition.

Forbear, then, I implore you, from the silly boast of a monopoly of political wisdom. Your reign is nearly at an end. Rivals have started up that are largely sharing the fragments of your empire. You may continue to amuse the vacant reader by loose and lengthy paragraphs, which are ever ready to crumble for want of any meaning to sustain them, and then strive to uphold them by the buttress of a *but*, the usual resource of the architects of nonsense. In despite of all the opposition of its enemies, and the silent neutrality of its pretended friends, the cause of Ireland is happily progressing. The *Edinburgh Review* may abuse the churches of Italy and Spain. His brother of the *Quarterly* may scribble maudlin fustian in praise of the pious children of Oxford and Cambridge ; in spite of the artifices of both, the temporalities of the Church of England are fast tottering, and the wealth which has been so long detained in injustice must soon circulate through the country, and diffuse joy and gladness over the land. Property may be seized, gaols may be filled, and the people may be fatigued by a fresh succession of legal terrors. There is nothing new under the sun, and those who have read history to any purpose must know that prisons and torture, when arrayed against right, have only matured the advent of that justice which they were intended to retard. Disclaiming any attachment to the inveterate Tories, who, it seems, are at last ashamed of their odious name, I have the honour to be, with an equal disgust of the triple alliance of French Liberals, English Whigs, and Scotch economists, your humble servant,*

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

* This letter I first published with the signature "An Irish Catholic."

LETTER LXVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL GREY.

ON THE NECESSITY OF A LEGISLATIVE MEASURE, TO ANNIHILATE THE
ESTABLISHED CHURCH IN IRELAND.

BALLINA, AUGUST 20, 1833.

MY LORD—In the last letter I had the honour to address to your Lordship, I promised to fix your attention on one measure which must decide our confidence in the sincerity of Ministers to promote the peace and happiness of Ireland. Not that the measure to which I allude will confer any positive advantages. These I am not sanguine enough to hope, until the tide of Reform shall have swept away the mass of corruption which has been accumulating so long in the temple of the Legislature. Then and not till then, shall the people of Ireland send forth their unanimous prayers for the total removal of those burdens by which they are bowed down to the earth; and leaving to England her favourite forms of worship, they will not fail to petition a reformed parliament for the repeal of the Established Church in Ireland.

Until that auspicious period shall arrive, we must be content with a mere negative boon. Instead of asking that the fire of religious discord should be utterly put out, we must be content with praying that it may not be heated by additional fuel into a more dangerous activity; and instead of imploring the Legislature to appropriate to the support of the poor a portion of that ecclesiastical property which has been the curse of Ireland, we must at present content ourselves with entreating that the Parliament do not give new power to the foes of the public peace by any grants to the Kildare-street, or any other anti-national societies.

Your Lordship must be well aware that religious bigotry has been the deep and bitter fountain from which some of the worst of the evils of Ireland have sprung. Until that is effectually sealed up, it is in vain to hope for a prosperous tranquillity. It was from a sincere or affected purpose of stopping its poisonous effusions the great measure of Emancipation was carried; after which period we fondly hoped that the foul traces of sectarian ascendancy would utterly disappear. Yet, to our bitter disappointment, we found in the ensuing year the Kildare-street and other societies, which are the pregnant sources of religious discord, remain untouched, and still continuing to poison the land by an uninterrupted stream of bigotry and rancour.

Whilst those remnants of ancient intolerance are suffered to continue, religious freedom is but a name. Whilst the people

find these societies turned into engines of annoyance, they indignantly remark that Emancipation was a mockery, and that they are insulted with a shadow of a liberty of which the substance is withheld. The Earl of Fingal may be permitted to take his seat amongst the hereditary senators of the land. None can more sincerely rejoice than I do in the tardy justice which has at length restored the legitimate honours of that noble house. O'Connell may, if you will, be made Lord Chancellor—nor shall his country deem any honours the government may be pleased to confer, to exceed the measure of his services. A Catholic may receive the Minister's support, and become a member for the Dublin Corporation. But allow me sincerely to assure your lordship, that however highly the body of the people may appreciate the deserts of any individuals, they shall take no personal compliments as an equivalent for their legitimate rights. As long as their children are left a prey to proselytizing bigots, they cannot believe they were really emancipated. Their understandings are too simple and unsophisticated to be amused by diplomatic assurances of which they cannot feel the reality. They may be told that a Catholic Peer is to regulate the ceremonies of the Coronation. They would rather see the liberality of government illustrated in affording an unprejudiced system of education to the children of the Catholic peasantry. In short, if all the Catholic Members of the House of Commons were to be honoured with special marks of the royal favour, the government cannot win confidence as long as the intellectual resources of the great body of the people are neglected. Professions of an equal regard to the followers of every creed may be made; their sincerity, however, will be estimated according to the degree of encouragement given to anti-catholic societies. Whoever wills the cause must will the effect; and to regret the prevalence of religious dissensions, whilst the Kildare-street and other obnoxious associations are fostered, would be like the conduct of a man who would cut some nettles out of his garden, whilst he should industriously scatter the seed by which the noxious crop might be continued.

We may be wrong in obstinately repelling the boon which is proffered us by those good-natured societies. But we live under a government where thousands are suffered to go wrong—nay, to riot without control through all the fantastic varieties of opinion. Amidst this universal license, by which British subjects are suffered to roam with as much freedom through all the crossways of religion, as they saunter through their parks, why should the Catholics alone be restricted? Such tender vigilance over their movements must imply a secret suspicion of the soundness of their intellects. But, my Lord, if they labour under any intellectual distemper, it is now too old and too inveterate to be era-

dicated. It is high time to come to the conclusion that it is vain to labour any longer for our conversion. The Irish people are utterly irreclaimable on the score of religion. They have proved rebels to the light of Evangelism, as well as to the torches by which its pious followers sometimes tracked them into their mountains: even the gifts of Mammon, which have been abundantly lavished to procure recruits to the holy cause, were tendered to them in vain; and after such perverse and persevering obstinacy, is it not wiser to abandon them to their fate than to expend any further labours upon creatures so utterly undeserving of the favours they have rejected? There seems to be something in the very soil and climate of Ireland uncongenial to the growth of error. Sect may succeed sect with the rapidity of the wave, and the frothy menace which is but the presage of its breaking, yet sooner shall the Atlantic swallow Ireland in its bosom, than its ancient religion and its monuments shall be swept away.

These observations have been reluctantly forced upon me by the conduct pursued by the associations of the sectaries during the late famine—I allude particularly to the spirit that guided the operations of the committees of Sackville-street and Exeter-hall, in making persons of a particular creed the exclusive organs of their benefactions. Surely those bodies had an undoubted right to choose befitting agents in the distribution of their funds. Had they made an open profession of proselytism, I could not question their candour, though I might laugh at their folly. But as if they were conscious of the shame of such an imputation, the committee of Exeter Hall nobly disclaimed the charge of being influenced by any views of sectarian ascendancy. To prove their sincerity they put forth a *catalogue raisonne* of the individuals through whom their funds were transmitted. And lo! by a singular combination of chances, that defeated their pure and unprejudiced resolves, not a Catholic, lay or clerical, appears on the list of the publication. Nay, they refused to transmit their funds through the medium of public and responsible committees, composed indiscriminately of Catholics and Protestants, by which judicious union, the fair and impartial distribution of the funds was secured. I am not, then, surprised that in the allocation of their funds none but those of the favoured creed could be selected by the discriminating judgment of the committee of Exeter-hall. The public are not ignorant of the volley of calumnies, that was poured upon the devoted heads of the Catholics, at the opening of that assembly. It has since preserved its character for consistency. As it grew out of bigotry, in the same spirit was it conducted, and finally closed in the religious rancour from which it sprung—

“ *Servetur ad imum,*
Qualis ab incepto processorit, et sibi constet.”

That the wandering agents of Biblical societies, who fatten on the calumnies which they propagate, should avail themselves of the distress of the people, to strive to carry on their system, cannot excite surprise. But that some of the ministers of the established church should join in the crusade, is a proof of the most unaccountable fatuity. How quickly the most mutinous and repulsive elements of sectarianism rush into a common combination against truth and justice, has not escaped the observation of any to whom the records of history are familiar. Of the disposition then of schismatic ministers, to annoy the Catholic church, no doubt can be entertained. Nay, they would cheerfully form a junction with the followers of Mahomed himself, in opposition to their Christian brethren. But what surprises me is, that the fanaticism of the parsons is not cooled by their selfishness, and that a pious solicitude for their tithes does not teach them a little moderation. They ought to read in the signs of the times, the fate that soon awaits the system. The spirit of reform has gone abroad, nor is it to be supposed that after sweeping away the nuisances that defiled our civil establishments, it shall leave unpurged the Augean stable of ecclesiastical abuses. Little did the dignitaries of the establishment dream that they were uttering a true prophecy, in announcing the second reformation. Like Caiphas, they were the heralds of a truth of which they were utterly unconscious. Yes, we are on the eve of a second and a radical reformation. The first reformation relieved the Church of England of the heavy load of fasting, and penance, and celibacy, and good works of supererogation, and the necessity of feeding the indigent, leaving, at the same time, the poor clergy oppressed by the intolerable burden of the wealth which Catholic superstition had accumulated. From that period until now, the church is groaning under the heavy burden; anxious, like the creature mentioned by the Apostle, to be renovated. Its prayers are at length heard, and the axe of reform, a deep and wholesome reform, is already laid to its many rooted abuses. The immense wealth, which must be a stumbling-block in the way of its ministers, shall be removed, by the kindness of a Parliament, which will labour to extend to the church the sound spirit of reform, by which it shall feel itself invigorated. It is then, and not till then, the doctrine of the Church of England shall shine out in unclouded lustre, and the pious parsons, who now pant for its livings, will no longer be reproached with being attracted, like Heliodorus, by the gold of the sanctuary. The poor shall then rejoice, that the funds which have been diverted from them for ages, have at length returned to their legitimate channel; and the prelates will be doubtless glad that if, like St. Martin, the Bishop of Tours, they may not part with half their robes, they shall at least be eased of half their superfluities, to clothe and nourish the poor of God.

Such is the second reformation, which I venture to assert shall soon be realized. The Protestant bishops have supplied me with the naked text, but as the text is sometimes obscure without illustration, I, in accordance with our tenets, have hazarded the commentary. Nor does it require much political sagacity or any religious inspiration to be confident of the near accomplishment of the prediction. The Catholics have been for ages tired of the established church. The burden of its tithes seems to press sorely on the orthodox shoulders of the Protestant laity. There are, to be sure, a few old bigots among them who have been taught that the tithes were the essence of Christianity, and who fancied that without them nothing could go right, since they strove to pronounce together the Church and Constitution. But this obsolete race are fast sinking into their graves, and the few that survive are retiring quietly into their old habitations, or uttering an occasional feeble screech at the painful introduction of the light by which they are surrounded. The young generation are, however, happily atoning for the blind and bigotted fatuity of their fathers. Their organs not being hardened before the circulation of liberal opinions, they have felt and confessed their influence. Hence, if we except a few hereditary fools, on whose intellects there is as regular an entail of idiocy as the family incumbrances on their estates, all the young men whose minds have received any cultivation, are arrayed against the tyranny of tithes and vestries. In short there is no individual distinguished for a reach of thought, or integrity of purpose in the country, who, according to his temperament, does not indulge in feelings of ridicule or indignation against the mockery of supporting an establishment in defiance of every reason for which an establishment should be upheld. If his Majesty's bishops confined their pretensions to the lordly titles which it is surely in the power of his Majesty to confer, we should as cheerfully recognize them as any portion of the secular aristocracy of the realm. Had they ministered any religious comfort or instruction to the poor flock, by whose fleeces they are clad in all the glory of Solomon, though they might still merit the indignant reproaches of Ezekiel, there might be some colour of right for their rapacity. But to stand up in a country, and to possess all the pride and pomp and property of a peerage, without those hereditary obligations which are some pledge of its popularity; and again to arrogate the respect and veneration of pastors from a people who look upon them as laymen, and for whose property they make no return except in unbounded contumely towards their persons, and the most unsparing calumnies on their creed, is an anomaly in legislation to which no country on earth can furnish a parallel. Waiving altogether the abstract and original right of tithes, it does not escape the obtusest understanding, that if they were formerly

given as an equivalent for service, to build the churches, and to feed the poor, it does not follow that they should still be continued, when they have ceased to be converted to those laudable objects, and when the only return which the people can perceive is the cruellest exaction of his tithes during the parson's life, and after his death a legacy of a long and needy family to increase the public misery, and alas, not unfrequently to swell the amount of public scandal. Was there ever such a price known to be paid for the services of any officiating ministry ! And yet for what this gorgeous establishment ! to teach a Bible which even the most ignorant layman can understand as well as the Archbishop of Armagh—nay, of which the plain and obvious meaning is equally accessible to all !! These things have not escaped the keen perceptions of our people. They have begun to extend their antipathies to the persons who come into the remotest contact with the collection of their tithes. Nay, we learn from a late instance that they have applied the law of Leviticus on this occasion, by refusing to bury in consecrated ground the descendant of a tithe-proctor in the third generation ! But this indignant feeling against a system, which is at variance with every principle of reciprocal justice, is no longer confined to one or two classes of the community. It has gradually worked its way, until at length it has taken possession of the entire mass of society. All the Catholic and most of the Protestant laity are opposed to it ; nor shall my sincerity be questioned when I assure your lordship, and the public, that the Catholic clergy will not waste much of their precious time in inculcating the payment of tithes to persons who neglect the churches, and suffer the poor to starve. The press, that powerful engine that has already levelled more grim and terrific powers, is already planted against the walls, and some of the most practised at the art are seen among the most formidable of the assailants. In short, my lord, the blows are coming from every direction ; the battlements are already shaking, and the long-defended Ilium is “ nodding to its fall.” Not that the purity of the Protestant religion is therefore in danger. No, its spirit shall then find vent ; nor shall it be any longer confined by those who wished to immure it within the dark bulwarks of an establishment, and like the Pagan priests of old, to feed it with the odour of the fattest hecatombs.

To this consummation the ministers of the establishment are now directing all their energies. As if impatient of the forthcoming change, they are rushing forward, in order to accelerate, by a fresh supply of the fire of fanaticism, the rolling engine that is bringing reform in its march. Instead of being angry, we should rather applaud the labours of those, who are propelling the progress of events. The vacancy in Dublin as well as the violence of the parsons, are fortunate instruments in the hands of

a powerful minister. Let them but continue, and soon after the reform in the state we shall have to thank them for the blessing of a second and a radical reformation.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXVII.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL GREY.

ON THE IMPOLICY AND INJUSTICE OF THE THREATENED ACT OF COERCION.

BALLINA, ASH-WEDNESDAY, 1833.

MY LORD—It is a strange and melancholy coincidence: on the same day we have commenced to humble ourselves in fasting and ashes, we receive the appalling intelligence of all the horrors that are to await us. Yes, “and in all provinces, towns, and places to which the cruel edict was come, there was great mourning, fasting, and weeping, many using sackcloth and ashes.”* However we may be reproached with superfluous penances on other occasions, the report of a speech ascribed to your lordship, in the British senate, has removed the imputation of unnecessary sorrow at the commencement of this season. The menaces of hostility to Ireland which breathe through that report—for it is to the report alone that I refer—have fallen like a bolt of thunder on the hearts of its inhabitants. At a time when the hopes of the country were high, and its people were indulging in the anticipation of measures for their happiness, they suddenly find that all their hopes are almost entirely dashed, and that one of the first acts of a reformed Parliament, is to consign them to all the terrors of military law.

I will not, my lord, now expatiate on the ingratititude of such a requital. I will not detain you by observing that Ireland did expect a different return from ministers, who owed the final triumph of reform to the unflinching fidelity of her representatives. These topics have been urged elsewhere with an eloquence and a force which, if they failed to induce forbearance from those measures, at least convinced the British people of the justice of the remonstrance. Besides, I will not urge an argument, which under some circumstances might not be conclusive, since, after

* Esther, iv, 3.

all, whatever might be the services of Ireland, and your lordship's obligations to her sons, ministers have a right, nay, it is incumbent on them as a duty, to suspend the constitution, if the evident necessity of the case required such a sacrifice.

Leaving, then, gratitude and services aside, and confining myself entirely to the question of justice and necessity, I must solemnly protest against the evidence for such a measure, especially as far as a large district with which I am connected. If the number of crimes and misdemeanours which crowd the calendar of England, were to be summed up together, no doubt it might furnish a plausible argument to a minister of the crown, in demanding powers beyond the law. Such a confused mass of enormities, huddled together without reference to time or place, or any clue to trace them, prevents distant persons from forming any clear or correct judgment on the subject, and their minds are naturally filled with phantoms which are magnified by their prejudices or their fears. As if conscious, however, that this wholesale synthesis of crimes, did not supply sufficient evidence, the reporter adopts the process of analysis, and after mentioning almost the entire of the province of Munster, the county of Mayo is specially particularized, as one in a state of dreadful disorganization.

In the whole course of my life, I can solemnly declare, that I never felt more surprise, to forbear a harsher phrase, at any public statement, than that which represented the county of Mayo in a condition that would justify a minister of the crown to demand a suspension of the constitution. To this part of the country, then, I will confine myself, not possessing sufficient local information to discuss the state of other parts of Ireland. The task will, doubtless, be performed by others, and besides, the evidence of each must be much stronger, by being restricted to the district over which his information extends. In the name, then, of two hundred thousand of his Majesty's liege subjects, I beg leave, respectfully, to inquire what evidence has been laid before parliament, to justify the tremendous powers that are sought by his Majesty's ministers? It is not sufficient to say, that some outrages have occurred: they have occurred, and will occur to the end of time, in the best regulated societies, notwithstanding the combined influence of law and religion. But what are the outrages which, in number, or in atrocity, exceed the ordinary average of the calendar of this large county, and principally, where is the character of combination against law and the constituted authorities, that can warrant the extraordinary measures that are contemplated? When documentary evidence was demanded in the Imperial Parliament, that evidence is reported to have been found in the notoriety of the facts. This is not true, at least with regard to Mayo, for seldom, as will

appear from many respectably signed petitions, were the poor peasantry of this county more amenable to the laws.

In the case of Mayo, however, your lordship is reported to have repeatedly and exclusively appealed to the testimony of the Marquis of Sligo. Even under the rigorous law of Moses, two witnesses were required before any measure of condemnation was adopted, that could affect the lives of the people. St. Paul requires two, and allow me to remark, that it is foreign to the spirit of the Christian religion, as well as the British constitution, to strip the people of an entire district of the protection of the laws, on so slender a testimony. Of the noble marquis I wish to speak with great personal respect. But it is not disrespectful to him to insist, that neither his lordship's single testimony, nor that of any nobleman, should be a sufficient warrant to hand over the inhabitants of an entire county to the mercies of martial law. If his lordship's testimony is to decide on measures of severity, it were to be wished that it was found equally effectual in procuring measures of relief. I well recollect that early at our meetings in the central committee of Castlebar, in the year 1831, the noble marquis read a feeling statement of the utter destitution of the starving poor, which he addressed to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, praying for the interposition of the government. The reply, however, was couched in those courtly terms of regret which generally accompany the government's refusal. Again, after a short lapse of time, the distress became more urgent, and all felt alarm that property and life would be endangered. At the request of the central committee, composed of all that had weight and influence in Mayo—the noble marquis, himself, Catholic and Protestant Bishops, and some of the leading gentry—another address was drawn up to the government, respectfully pressing the necessity of its interposition against the famine which was already felt in the loss of many lives; yet the whole fruit of this document, conveying the sentiments of the most respectable witnesses from all parts of Mayo, was a repetition of the same barren politeness. As the last resource, it was resolved, that a deputation from the body should wait upon his Excellency, to represent the frightful condition, and more alarming prospects of the people, and to press upon the government the necessity of snatching them from the jaws of famine. Even there, the credence given to our report appeared reluctant, and the prospect of relief was faint. I must, however, in justice to the noble viceroy,* remark, how striking was the contrast between his feeling urbanity, and the official petulance of his secretary,† who seems better fitted to devise measures of oppression than of relief. From Dublin, however,

* Marquis of Anglesy.

† Right Hon. Mr. Stanley.

we were referred to the English government, and your lordship may well recollect, that the noble Marquis of Sligo, and one of the present members of Mayo, the only witnesses who, as yet, have borne public testimony to the disturbance of this county, were of the number that composed this deputation.

Why, my lord, have I entered into this detail? Because it bears strongly upon the present question of the state of this country and proves that a greater mass of evidence is required, in order to save the people from starvation, than to inflict on them all the horrors of martial law. To justify the suspension of the constitution, and to deprive the inhabitants of an entire county of the invaluable privilege of the *habeas corpus*, the only evidence adduced is that of the Marquis of Sligo. Yet, when there was a question of arresting the career of hunger, and subduing a foe which, with a fearful cruelty, would soon tear all the bonds of society asunder, the solitary testimony of the noble marquis was utterly unheeded. In addition, the government required all the valuable testimony which the suffering districts could supply. The gentry and the clergy, both Catholic and Protestant, lent their concurrent testimony to the distress, and still it cost us a long and expensive journey to London, to induce his Majesty's government to save a famishing people.

We want nought on this occasion but "equal weights and measures." Let but the same cautious process of inquiry be adopted in inflicting penalties, that was resorted to in meting out a parsimonious relief, and I pledge myself that the justice of Englishmen shall exempt Mayo, and, I may add, the entire country, from the threatened enactments. The *favores ampliandi*, and the *odia restringenda*, is not a maxim confined to the canons of the Church. It ought to form the most prominent feature in the character of every paternal government, and surely it is not too much to ask, that a people should not be punished on evidence which was deemed insufficient, when there was question of rescuing them from immediate death.

I repeat, then, most emphatically, that there is no evidence to justify the harsh measures that are contemplated towards Mayo. Nay, we challenge an inquiry, and shall fearlessly abide by the result. I have some experience of the habits of the people, and have recently passed through a large portion of the county, and I can declare with sincerity, that never did its inhabitants exhibit a more peaceable disposition, nor could I trace the least vestige of insurrectionary movements. Yet for isolated outrages, which sprung from causes utterly unconnected with disaffection to the state, the people are to be deprived of the sacred shield with which the British constitution has covered them. And what enhances still more this tranquillity is, the unexampled privations under which the peasantry are suffering. Those who are pam-

pered with the luxury of Ireland's produce, may well deduce from its exports, an argument of its prosperity. Did they live here, and witness the condition of the peasantry, their theories would be soon resigned as so many fallacies; since this very year, in consequence of the depression of grain, thousands, I do not exaggerate, were obliged to sell what they wished to reserve for seed, and the food of their own families. But I may return to this subject another time. It is a theme on which I would not now venture to touch, since, whoever has witnessed the happiness of the people of other countries, who are, of course, calumniated by the Whig journals that advocate martial law, cannot but contemplate with a heavy heart, the incomparable wretchedness of the people of Ireland.

Yet, this noble peasantry, because they are becoming more sensitive to their condition, and pant for the reality of the blessings of that constitution which they enjoyed but in name, are the objects of hatred to those who have uniformly oppressed them. His Majesty's ministers are imposed upon by false statements, and now, as of old, "many abuse unto pride the goodness of princes, and not only endeavour to oppress the King's subjects, but not bearing the glory that is given them, practise also against them that gave it." The minds of all are filled with indignation that the character, and, eventually, the lives of peaceable subjects should be sacrificed to the interested suggestions of a number of individuals, who can be found in the most peaceable state, "seeking by crafty fraud to deceive the ears of princes that are well meaning, and judging of others by their own nature." Of persons of this description, it is not to be expected that any portion of Ireland should be exempt, nor is the county of Mayo without its due proportion. Even virtues, seen through their organs, wear the colour of crimes, and the free exercise of the elective franchise, which, without freedom, is a mockery and a contradiction, becomes, in the estimation of some of those people, treason against the majesty of their landlords. If it be the meaning of the law, or the spirit of the constitution, that the landlords should command the votes of their tenantry, it would be a much more simple and summary process to invest the landlord at once with as many votes as he has qualified tenants. If, however, such a proposition should be received with merited ridicule, who are they, I respectfully ask, who violate not only conscience, but the spirit of the constitution, the tenant who votes as he will, or the landlord who labours to extort it, against the tenant's interest?

It is by the solution of this single case that the guilt or innocence of the people of Mayo is to be decided. In a moral point

* Esther, xvi, 2, 3.

of view I have no hesitation in deciding in favour of the freedom of conscience. But I am not sufficiently skilled in the canons of political casuistry by which others may arrive at an opposite conclusion. Should it be decided by any magisterial bench that it is a high misdemeanour for the people of any county to vote against the known will of their landlords, to that misdemeanour numbers of the inhabitants of Mayo must plead guilty. They proved they were moral agents, possessed, as well as their task-masters, of the faculties of an understanding and a will, and not mere physical machines, to be impelled without volition. As for the violence which is said to have disgraced the election, we challenge inquiry into the sources from which it issued. My object is to vindicate, not to cast censure. The invidious task of accusation I leave to others—mine is the more congenial and Christian duty of refuting the unmerited charges that have been heaped upon a large and unoffending class. Let, however, inquiry be made, and then it will be found who exercised most violence, and what freeholders were cast into confinement, and fatigued with alternate promises and threats, until their resolution to vote for the candidate of their choice was finally subdued. It is also made a heavy charge, that the popular candidate was favourable to Repeal. Why not, on the same principle, deduce an argument of the necessity of suspending the constitution from the peaceful counties of Meath or Roscommon? But waiving the policy or impolicy of discussing this measure—for of its merits there can be no question—it is not true that it was the Repeal of the Union that kindled the enthusiasm of the people of Mayo. Within a very short period we had two other elections, each of which, without any reference to Repeal, was warmly contested. No, my lord, the people of Mayo, like the people of Ireland, do not care if the parliament were in the moon, provided they were well governed. But, besides the national grievances, in which they largely participate, there is a flood of bitterness and corruption long overspreading this county, and all proceeding from the same stagnant representation. Of this the people are resolved to get rid by opening new veins as yet unexplored amidst the large properties of Mayo, and drawing a more healthy current from their fresh and untainted source. Without such a transfer they are well aware they cannot get rid of the secret hostility of many underlings in office, who find it their interest to calumniate them, while they can hope to profit by their oppression. Allow me to assure you, that penal inflictions, far from breaking this constitutional spirit of asserting the right of election, will only give it the force of compression—and whenever the next opportunity offers, it will act with a resilient energy in electing the members of their choice, which all the undue weight of any nobleman will not be able to control.

From any participation in such unworthy views I must, in justice to his character, exempt the noble Marquis of Sligo. He is incapable of wilful misrepresentation, and he possesses, in a high degree, those noble courtesies of manner which fail not to win the favours of the smaller gentry, who deem it an honour to approach persons of his rank. But, in the late election, his lordship took a decided interest, and it is not too much to suppose that this very circumstance has given a strong bias to his feelings, of which he is unconscious. Of the influence of strong political prejudices in warping the judgment, we have many cogent examples. Sir Robert Peel piously believes, and the Protestant bishops are of the same opinion, that true religion will retire indignantly from the earth, if they are deprived of one farthing of their enormous revenues. Lord Lorton, as well as many other statesmen, equally conscientious and profound, can see nothing but separation in a Repeal of the Union; and, doubtless, the noble Marquis of Sligo, from the long habit that has associated in his mind order with his lordship's influence in Mayo, imagines that the county would return to anarchy and barbarism, if he did not transmit its representation as an inheritance. Has not your lordship, in the question of reform, encountered the power of such fantasies, over well-disposed minds? Were not you accused by many of designs to overthrow the constitution, as his Grace of Wellington was before in granting Emancipation, and as O'Connell is now in demanding a Repeal of the Union. No doubt the fears of the opponents of Emancipation and Reform were as sincere as those that are entertained against Repeal. Lord Eldon fancied that on the evening on which Emancipation passed, the sun of the glory of England had gone down for ever. Did not many noble lords identify reform with revolution? Did they not confidently connect the triumph of anarchy with that measure, and, like the astronomer in *Rasselas*, who fancied that if he ceased his labours, the heavenly bodies would fall, many of their lordships imagined that the constitution would reel from its course, if the boroughs—the observatories from which they watched and directed its movements—were once destroyed.

Once more, I beg leave to impress upon your lordship, that the people of Mayo challenge inquiry into their conduct, in the full conviction that their county is not in the state in which it has been represented. Let the unbiassed of every class, who do not hope to thrive by measures of coercion, be questioned, and their verdict will be in attestation of the peaceful conduct of the people. For that peaceful conduct, especially in this diocese, I may take some portion of credit; and while I reprobate the few outrages that have occurred, and caution the people against those who would mislead them, I do not believe that there is a more patient or better disposed peasantry on earth, under so many

privations. In their name, then, I protest against the adoption of any measures that would equally involve the innocent mass with the guilty few. The existing laws are sufficiently strong for the punishment of the latter. Let, then, those laws be vigorously asserted, and the delinquents feel their force, that it may be evident "that rulers are not a terror to the good work, but the evil." Should they, however, become inoperative, through the connivance of those who are appointed to execute them, in the hope of being invested with tyrannical power, I tremble in looking forward to the fearful consequences. I will not attempt to balance the account between a calendar marked by no unusual features of atrocity, and the expenditure of treasure, and perhaps of lives, that may follow the suspension of the law. I will not anticipate wanton and vindictive imprisonments, and the virtue of a sister or a child made the price of a brother's or a parent's liberation. Such a picture would not be fanciful. It has been pourtrayed in 1798, and other disastrous periods, in colours too vivid to be effaced even by our humid atmosphere. We are told by the wise man, that what was, will be again, and experience proves that the history of the past is but the prophecy of the future. It is no wonder, then, that Ireland abhors the very idea of martial law. The instinctive feeling with which every people revolts from the idea of tyranny, becomes stronger here from its bitter recollections. I know the materials of which the individuals are generally composed, to whom such an extraordinary power would be entrusted. I know their education, their feelings, their habits, and propensities, and am convinced a man of probity and independence—not that blustering independence of the world, which often consists in words—but that virtuous and Christian independence which swerves not from the dictates of conscience—a man of such a character would rather become a voluntary exile, and dwell among the Turks, than hold his liberty by the courtesy of such an anti-christian faction. I have confined myself principally to Mayo, in order that my appeal might have more weight, founded, as it is, on personal knowledge, and challenging, as it does, any covert calumniators to gainsay its statements. My sympathy, however, extends to Ireland, and I am convinced, though there are atrocities which demand the most signal vengeance of the law, yet there is no necessity to suspend its ordinary operation. Adopting the noble sentiment of the Apostle, in the name of each of the poor people who cannot speak for themselves, I appeal to the British Parliament—I am a British citizen. Let me then solemnly adjure your lordship to listen to that appeal, and to appreciate the earnestness with which the people seek all the blessings of the British constitution, rather than to throw them into despair, by depriving them of its protection. Should, however, the measures be persevered in, contrary to the hopes of the people of this country, and to the

conviction that they are uncalled for, they have a strong and just reliance on the fidelity of their representatives, as well as on the sympathy of all the honest English members of the House of Commons. They were wont—at least they boasted—of making common cause with the oppressed of all nations over the globe. Ireland possesses stronger claims upon their patriotism, since in the despotism established there, they may anticipate their own danger, whereas, by seasonably guarding against the inroads on Irish freedom, they will be more effectually providing for the permanent security of their own.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's humble servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO THE LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

ON THE NOXIOUS INFLUENCE OF THE PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT.

BALLINA, JULY 4, 1833.

“ Is wisdom no more in Theman ? Counsel is perished from her children.”

MY LORD—Your lordship has been doubtless surprised that I have so long remained your debtor. It is now some years since you honoured your present correspondent with some of the choicest specimens of the style of a scholar, and the spirit of a Christian. The Political Pamphleteer was one of those noisy things of which the innoxious buzz was accompanied with no sting, and hence no surprise could have been felt at my forbearance. The scene, however, is since changed, and the notice which I refused to Dr. Philpotts, I willingly bestow on the Bishop of Exeter. Your lordship is now seated among the senators of the land, surrounded by legal embrasures, through which you may securely discharge a battery upon your foes, without any fear of retaliation. Those privileges with which the law has fenced in your lordship, I am neither disposed to arraign nor to violate, confining myself to the speech reported in the public journals. On the principle which commands courtesy to those who cannot defend themselves, it would become a Christian bishop to be forbearing in his attacks upon those who cannot be present to make him feel the folly of his intemperate aggression. By the grace of—the Duke of Wellington, Dr. Philpotts is invested with the name and temporal title of a bishop. The mace of the

military captain has realised in its potency, all the fabled wonders of a magic wand, and metamorphosed for a season, the sturdy and violent opponent of the Catholic claims, into the meek partisan of his patron, and the advocate of all his measures.

Do not imagine that I question the disinterestedness of your views, or the sincerity of your professions. No; from the infancy of the history of your Church, to the present day, its members were distinguished, by the most admirable flexibility to the persuasions of power. With every new administration, fresh light broke in upon their views, and like obedient planets, they quietly revolved round the political centre, to which they owed their existence, reflecting the orthodox colour of every adverse creed, to which caprice or fashion gave a temporary ascendancy. By the Church Reform Bill, if we are to believe your lordship's reported speech, the coronation oath is violated. Was it not to be equally violated, if we were to believe your writings, by the measure of Emancipation? Yet a seat on the episcopal bench dissipated all your illusions, and reconciled you to a measure which you denounced with such vehemence. It is no wonder; the same objects appear different, when viewed from a different position; the sphere of our horizon always stretches, as we rise, and it was therefore but natural that Dr. Philpotts should be acquiring a more correct and comprehensive prospect of his duties, as he was gradually ascending to his present elevation. In following the footsteps of his Grace of Wellington, untempted by wealth or honours, your lordship was only walking in the splendour which the pure, disinterested truth of his reasoning flung around you, and well might you exclaim:

Andiamo,
Ma non gia per onor, ne per ricchezza
Questa non spero, e quel de piu non bramo.

The friends of the establishment have just reason to deplore that the prelates of the present day are not characterized by the pliancy of their predecessors. "Is wisdom no more in Theman?" that those public functionaries, instead of gently sailing down the tide of events, should struggle in vain against its resistless current. I am not one of those innovators, who would vote for ejecting your order altogether from the house of peers. No, my lord, I should rather vote for their continuance, in order that they should be seen from their lofty position, and that the world might appreciate the profound wisdom of the arguments, by which they are enabled to sustain their cause. Provided you keep not your light under a bushel, we shall rejoice at every occasion on which it may be displayed, if it were only to shake the gravity of the benches. Your lordship is reported to have occupied much of the attention of the house, with animadversion

on some of the Bishops of the Catholic church. For me, any uneasiness I could have felt at your lordship's attempt at being severe, was removed by the general merriment which your ratio-cination is said to have created.

But before I advert further to your reported effusions, allow me to ask why, in your lordship's attacks upon our characters, trust to the invidious and irresponsible medium of private correspondence? You state that I have assailed the Protestant establishment, and predicted its downfal. Your lordship must be well aware that there was nothing novel in this intelligence. I preach and write in public, and in private I say nothing. Are not the writings on which you once animadverted with the most perverse ingenuity of commentary, evidence that I did assail the Protestant establishment, and confidently anticipate its dissolution? Far, then, from shrinking from any avowal of hostility to a system fraught with such injustice, I must frankly own that the establishment has been, and shall continue to be, the object of every legal and constitutional opposition in my power. However irreconcilable you deem such a declaration with the obligations of our oath, I must protest against your competency to expound its meaning, nor shall any prelate of the school of the unprincipled Cranmer be the guide for my theology. You deem it a crime that I have predicted the fall of the Protestant church? Has your lordship read Jeremy Taylor on the Liberty of Prophesying? What! the pulpits of the establishment have rung for centuries, and are still ringing, with prophetic anticipations of the downfal of Popery, and every successive Pontiff is to be the last of the unhallowed series who have kept mankind in darkness for ages, and we only laugh at such silly denunciations. Yet, if we venture, from the unerring analogy of other schismatical churches, combined with the signs of the times, to predict that the fall of Protestantism is not distant, we are charged with turbulence, and considered as enemies to the state. Why, however, such excesssive sensitiveness on this point? Why such fears and trembling anxiety about the fate of that pure and unspotted church, which has descended from heaven, and is sustained by the hand that planted it? Why accuse me of a crime, in predicting the fall of the establishment, when the members of both houses are among the prophets of woe, and the great captain himself, like another Chalcas, confessing that he would not vote for the second reading of the present bill, only in the hope of rescuing the church from the danger to which it would otherwise fall a victim? Behold, then, its most faithful children press forward to relieve an expiring parent, without whose solicitude they confess it would perish, and it is treason in me to anticipate the fall of a thing so perishable.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that whilst I proclaim an un-

appeasable hostility to the Church establishment, I entertain none whatever towards any individual for his honest religious opinions. On the contrary, the hypocrisy which the wealth and patronage of the establishment have fostered, suppressing the expression of the sincere convictions of the mind, are a powerful cause of the just hostility of every ingenuous individual. As long as there were none in the house to expose the flagrant injustice of the charge, how often were Catholics held up to the execration of Englishmen, as advocates of intolerance and persecution ? Witness, however, the revolution of opinion which a few years have effected. Who were the most strenuous advocates for universal freedom of conscience ? The Catholic members. Who espoused, with most zeal, the cause of Captain Acheson, whose conscience forbade him to perform service at a ceremony of the Catholic religion in Malta, which he deemed incompatible with the sincere profession of the Protestant religion ? The Catholic members, who, on that occasion, sincerely spoke the sentiments of the church to which they belong, since nothing is more abhorrent from the nature of the Catholic religion, than to require of any person any exterior act or profession, which is at war with the convictions of the heart. Yet, until lately, Englishmen laboured under a contrary impression. It is not surprising, therefore, that the bigots of every order should have so long laboured to exclude Catholic members from parliament, conscious that, as soon as they should enter, they would dissipate at once those prejudices, that kept the eyes of the people spell-bound, and open them to all the fraud by which they had so long been deluded. No longer will the Bishop of Exeter, and his episcopal brethren, be able, by a cry of—the church in danger, to excite the feelings of the English against the Irish people. Your lordship may fling your torch, and its smoke and hissing will only show into what an uncongenial element it has fallen.

What little sympathy you have excited when, in agony of real or affected grief, your lordship has pathetically deplored the reduction of the hierarchy. Why, you add, not make a similar reduction in the ranks of the Catholic bishops ? My answer to your lordship's interrogatory will be brief and simple. The reason is, the Catholic bishops are at your defiance. The experiment has been already tried. The time was, and within the memory of many still living, when not a part, but the entire, was devoted to destruction, under one fell sweep of legal annihilation ; and yet they again walk abroad, clothed in renovated splendour, to show the impotency of law against justice, and to prove that it is not in the power of man to annihilate what God has decreed to be immortal. We are not weeds, that may be planted or plucked up at pleasure ; we are not those corporate functionaries whose titles depend upon a royal patent,

whom “a breath can make as a breath has made,” and who may be conveniently laid aside, like many other municipal officers, by the same power by which they were created.

Your lordship is aware of the parliamentary jealousy with which we were treated at the passing of the relief bill. Then the Protestant prelates, meek and humble souls, affected to fear that we should assume their titles, as they are now trembling lest we should become possessed of their palaces. Verily it would seem as if those pious personages had no other thought or dream, but of titles and palaces. In the title of a peer is centered all their claim to veneration; and provided they have a palace in which to slumber away, like Boileau’s ecclesiastic, their unprofitable lives, the church is maintained with suitable dignity and splendour. Alas! those who argue thus, know little of the genuine sources of respect and veneration. Keep, then, as long as the growing intelligence of the times will permit you to keep them, your titles, and your palaces. For us, we require neither one nor the other. We have here no permanent city; and as for titles, leaving the vain ambition of such baubles to your lordship and the Gentiles, we shall be content with the more Christian office of ministering to the wants of those over whom we were appointed. Assume your titles!! Why, our Catholic predecessors were bishops of our sees for centuries, before your religion came into the world. It is not, then, your titles we assume, but our own that we perpetuate, in transmitting the regular succession of the Catholic hierarchy and Catholic doctrine. No, my lord, your titles are of man’s creation; but our heraldry is from heaven. *Our shield is faith*; its field vermillion, from the blood of the martyrs, and emblazoned with the light of hope; on the two compartments of this divine escutcheon, are to be seen the *sword of the spirit* and the *breast-plate of justice*, whilst the crest that crowns the whole, is the *helmet of salvation*. With such armorial bearings, the trophies of many a hard-fought fight against the errors of every age, we may smile at opposition, and in the language of the inspired artist of our shield, defy the *fiery darts* of our enemies.

But though indifferent to your palaces, your worldly pomp, and titles, we are not indifferent to the evils which the Protestant church has inflicted, and continues still to inflict on this ill-fated country. It is the prolific womb, from which all the misfortunes of Ireland teemed in fearful succession. Is it not to uphold this monstrous establishment, that the national debt has been accumulated on the shoulders of the devoted people, and that the most industrious energies are tottering under its pressure? To uphold this establishment, all the asylums of science, of piety, and humanity, were levelled, and education exiled from the land, as it was deemed essential to plunge the people into mental dark-

ness, in order to make them enlightened Protestants. To uphold this establishment, the sacred ties of nature were rent asunder, and a more grateful offering was never laid on the altar of ascendancy, than the unhallowed first fruit of the son, whose apostacy had plundered an helpless parent. To uphold this establishment the poor were stripped of the treasure which the piety of their fathers had gathered in the temples of religion for their support, and the maiden was deprived of those sacred retreats, from which the odour of her sanctity and virtue might be diffused to scatter the moral pestilence which is exhaled from the corruption of the world. But as this is one of those blessings which, though preferred by St. Paul, I know your lordship would controvert, there are other counts against the establishment, in which I am sure to gain your sympathy, and that of all the lovers of science. I am told you have a taste for literature. Is it not to uphold this establishment, that Ireland fell from the literary rank by which her sons were distinguished? I do not allude to any records, which might be traced only to national vanity; I allude to the more solid and imperishable monument of stone, which gratitude has erected to their memories in every country in Europe. Was it not, then, the malignant influence of the establishment, that blighted the genius of our country, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the muse of Italy awoke to rival the ancients, and France and England, as if inspired by the sound, followed in a career of improvement that approached competition? During this disastrous period, the spirit of the country was broken; and the men who, did they possess the advantages of their neighbours, would have shared in all the glories of the revival of literature, were doomed to drag out a life of proscription—their only solace, to lament the misfortunes of their country in music, which, even in this fastidious age has been one of the first instruments by which England (thanks to our national poet) was charmed out of its hostility. In short, is it not to uphold this establishment, that Ireland is still without colleges or universities, or any other school of sculpture, or of painting, or of agriculture, that would tend to develop the natural and intellectual resources of the country? Trinity College and Maynooth, are scarce an exception—the one a sepulchre, in which, from a spirit of national antipathy, the ancient records of Ireland are kept industriously buried; and the other, forced from its straitened circumstances, to dispense with some of the most ordinary apparatus for improvement, and, as yet, even destitute of a press, for publishing the works most necessary for ecclesiastics. And yet, instead of expending any of the surplus fund of this useless Protestant establishment, in more ample endowments of the imperfect institutions that exist, or establishing others in the provinces, the entire must still continue to be devoured in the same

unproductive manner as before. However, this is called a measure of church reform. It may be reform for the parsons; but it is no reform for the people, who are no longer to be amused by promises, which confer no substantial benefit. If the property of the church has been hitherto detained, in injustice, from the use of the people, what matters it to them into what numbers of portions it may be divided? As a measure of any practical utility, it has no value, save the extinction of the vestry cess; but as a measure pregnant with prospective benefits, it is hailed by the Irish people. If they were not to anticipate fuller advantage from the measure, they should, with your lordship, grieve rather than rejoice at the decapitation of some of the Irish churches. They know well, as has been recently remarked, that it is to them a matter of indifference, whether their substance is devoured by many smaller kites or one master vulture. Besides, it would be an injustice to multiply the labours of those functionaries, without any equivalent, if it were not intended by this ejectionment, to clear their lands for the plough of future legislation. Well has your lordship observed, that it is not in any human power to impose upon any person, against his will, the burden of the episcopacy. On hearing such a doctrine, it is no wonder their lordships should relax their gravity, well knowing there was no danger of seeing it reduced to practice in the Protestant church. And as for me, I fancied your lordship was, at length, turning to the right path, which led to the illustrious examples of a Gregory, an Ambrose, or a Bonaventure, who really trembled at the prospect of the pastoral office, because it suggested more awful ideas than titles or palaces. But though it is not in the power of parliament, or the King himself, to make a man a bishop against his will, I see no reason why they should not be permitted, for wise purposes, to enlarge the sphere of his utility, by widening his jurisdiction. Were his emoluments to be increased, they might, it is true, supply him with fresh energy, and enable him to sustain the additional burden; but it appears an inexorable stretch of legislative power, to impose the additional cares of other sees upon an individual who receives no additional peace, or quiet, or comfort, as a compensation.

Come ne cibo cosi non ricevo
 Piu quiete, piu pace o piu contento,
 Se ben de cinque Mitre il capo aggrovo.

After all the evils it has heaped on this devoted land, it is some consolation to reflect that the legislative axe is laid to the root of the establishment. The pruners of the ecclesiastical vineyard have not read the Roman history in vain, and already ten of the lofty plants, which poisoned, by their narcotic influ-

ence, the wholesome vegetation, are laid low. This, doubtless, is a prelude to a further and more enlarged process of expurgation. With every successive measure of reform, existing abuses will be removed, until, it is to be hoped, not a vestige of the mighty nuisance will remain, and the sincere and honest Protestants will be relieved from the imputation of being attached to the Establishment from mercenary motives. Then, with the drying up of their copious fountain, shall the waters of bitterness cease to flow, and men of every creed unite in forwarding the interests of their common country. The professors of every faith will pay their pastors, in proportion to their sense of the services they receive, and entitle themselves to the praise of being sincere, by such disinterested evidence of sincerity. But all this reform must be achieved peaceably and constitutionally, without violence or infraction of the law. It will be brought about principally by the honest and independent exercise of the elective franchise, which was wrested out of the hands of one class, because it was wielded, it was thought, by the Catholic priesthood, and transferred to another. In the hands of its present occupants it has found trustees equally pious and patriotic ; and on the principle that it is the religious duty of electors, in every country, in every college, in every convent, nay, in short, in every corporation, of whatever character, to choose the most worthy person to the public office, it will be the duty of the freeholders of Ireland, to choose the most worthy representatives, and the duty of the priesthood, solemnly to impress on them the sacredness of the obligation.

Sincerely wishing you life, to witness this happy consummation, to which I have alluded, I have the honour to be, your lordship's obedient humble servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL GREY

ON THE REPEAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE UNION.

BALLINA, FEAST OF ST. FELIX OF VALOIS,
NOVEMBER 20, 1833.

In vain kind seasons swell the teeming grain ;
Soft showers distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain ;
The swain, with tears, his frustrate labour yields,
And, famished, dies amidst his ripened fields.—POPE.

MY LORD—The preceding lines are sadly illustrative of the condition of a large portion of the Irish peasantry. Like many of the sentiments of our own national bard, their repetition serves but to show more clearly the justness of their application. When, on a late occasion, I called your lordship's attention to the clamorous importunity of the starving inhabitants of Mayo, I did not hesitate candidly to declare that the distress was not entirely owing to the bad season, but that it was partly traceable to a long practised system of the most inexorable local rapacity. And, accordingly, I strove to impress upon your lordship, that, without remedial legislative measures, which would strike at the root of the evil, our appeal to the British minister would be, in a great measure, abortive. We might, it is true, succeed in exciting sympathy for our distress, during one or two seasons ; but still our anticipations must have been gloomy, whilst the prolific cause of our distress remained uneradicated. That cause—the truth cannot be dissembled—is not to be found in the sterility of our soil, or the badness of the seasons, or in the indolence of our inhabitants ; but in that hateful code of laws, which enable unfeeling landlords, who may have nought of humanity but the form, to seize the entire produce of the tenants' labour, and to fling them, without food or raiment, on the mercy of society.

Great alarm has been already felt, on account of the shortness of the potato crop. It is not confined, this season, to Connaught, but has pervaded, as the public journals attest, the province of Munster. The southern journals, with a laudable concern for the interests of the poor, recommend the keeping of the corn crop, to meet the probable approaches of distress. Such a re-

commendation may be wise there ; but as for us, you might as well look for dried grapes or figs among the peasantry, after the month of February, as search for any vestige of the oat crop in their little corn yards, even if the potato crop did not extend beyond that season. No, my lord, not only is the oat crop generally seized for rent, but it is also converted by the landlords, or agents, or drivers, for they shift the odium from one to another, into a traffic of the most revolting usury. There are few of the under tenants who are not obliged, during this month, to pay for the seed which they put down last season, and to bring to the market more than two measures of oats for every measure which they had to purchase. Yet, far from being allowed to keep the seed necessary for the next season, they must give it up, and take it back again, in March, from the very same stores, for more than double the price for which they had delivered it ; and thus, if they have not learned it in speculation, they can give a feelingly practical instance of the problem of the infinite series, stretching from year to year, in an endless chain of the most usurious rapacity and oppression.

I have had several communications from benevolent individuals in London and Dublin, solicitous to learn the extent of the failure. These communications are still unanswered, as I have been anxious to convey an accurate report, from the result of inquiry and observation. Let it not, however, be imagined, that I am meditating a mendicant mission to the English people. So far from entertaining such a project, I must solemnly and seasonably declare, that to whatever extent distress should rage, I shall never appeal to the sympathy of the British people for its mitigation. No, my lord, it is unworthy the character of any nation—especially of one so favoured by nature as Ireland—to be a periodical mendicant at the doors of another. I should cheerfully volunteer in any scheme of benevolence, however humiliating, were I conscious of conferring a benefit on my fellow man ; but the impression of receiving relief from England in the time of our distress, would be anything but serviceable to the interests of society. It would completely annihilate the spirit of our peasantry, which two such experiments have unfortunately so much broken down, and prompt our country squires to manage, with a more dexterous hand, all the legal machinery, which they have already so effectually wielded in “grinding the faces of the poor.”

No, my lord, we require neither English benevolence, nor—though the assertion may startle ears long familiarized to its industrious repetition—do we indispensably require the aid of British capital. What we require is a practical vindication of Providence, that it may no longer be blasphemed, by imputing to seasons or to climates what is the incontestible effect of bad

legislation. We want laws in accordance with the unchangeable principles of justice, which require that in every covenant the obligations and advantages be reciprocal, and which, while they secure to the proprietor the first rent of the soil, will not suffer him to defraud the tenant of the whole produce of his labour. We want laws to check the continual emigration of our wealth into other countries, to feed the absent drones of Ireland. Was there ever such an anomaly—to be begging food from the very people who are fed into insolence with the superabundance of our produce, and to be depending on another nation, whose capital is swelled by the starvation of our own? Yes, I make the assertion advisedly. English capital is swelled by the luxurious extravagance of Irish absentees; the luxurious extravagance of Irish absentees is fed with the exports of the Irish people; the exports of the Irish people—unchecked by any law, which would secure a portion to the growers—are regulated in their amount only by the will of the absentee landlord, and the extortions of the home agent: to satisfy these incessant two-fold demands, the entire produce is often seized and exported, and hence it follows, that English capital is accumulated with the price of Irish starvation.

What! it may be asked, are the Irish peasantry, in case of the recurrence of distress, to be permitted to starve from a fastidious feeling of not wishing to appeal to the generosity of England? No, my lord, there is another alternative. We will, then, appeal to your lordship, or to the individual who fills the place of prime minister, to apply a remedy to what is not the effect of casualty, and to check by opposite laws that distress which bad laws occasion. It is not to be imagined, at the same time, that I am an unqualified believer in the sanatory powers of law. This superstitious credulity in the potency of legislative enactments, without any reference to their adaptation to the condition, and feelings, and habits of society, but, above all, to their accordance with original justice, seems to have been one of the besetting sins of English ministers, as well as the whole train of subordinate functionaries who dispensed the oracles of legislation. Laws seemed in their eyes to possess a healing charm which none was at liberty to question, and I must frankly confess, that there are many of the English laws which I shall not cease to execrate, as long as one shred of them shall hang together. It is not coercive measures, then, that can supply the Irish peasantry with food, or avert the return of periodical starvation. No; of the impotence of coercion to effect good, Ireland can supply a long lamentable experience. The humbler classes have been sufficiently coerced. Now, it is in contemplation to make them amends by the coercion of their task-masters. The former do not look for any such ungenerous revenge, and if it is resorted

to, the latter will not bear the yoke with the same resignation. You may pass laws to have the hungry fed and the naked clothed. Your laws cannot work miracles, and will be of no avail without a development of the resources from which such necessary funds are to be drawn. You may coerce the absentees to remain in Ireland. Their hearts would recoil from enactments so much at variance with, I do not say the reality, but the boasted freedom of British law. In short, you may entangle yourself in a labyrinth of legislation, and still not find the clue by which you may arrive at the end for which such a cumbrous edifice of laws may have been erected. In the best regulated and most prosperous states of antiquity their laws were few and simple, because they were the production of men who knew the wants of the people, and were anxious to relieve them. Members of parliament chosen in England and Scotland, who form the overwhelming majority of the British senate, have not sufficient knowledge of the wants of the Irish people, nor anxiety to relieve them. The first proposition will scarcely be combated; and, as to the second, as the English members are the representatives of a nation which considers mastership as a right, it cannot be disparaging to their moral feelings to assert, that they shall always deem it a duty, that the laws which affect England and Ireland should be marked with the same relative discrimination. Your lordship may recollect that *Patres Conscripti*, was the appropriate name bestowed on the most venerable political assembly, that ever yet fixed the attention of mankind. It was a name characteristic of the paternal solicitude which legislators owe to the people as to children. No such name or relation can ever attach to legislators who are filled with the ideas of ascendancy of one portion, and the abasement of another, of the subjects; and hence *Conscript Masters*, rather than *Conscript Fathers*, is the name which, at least as regards Ireland, the historian should bestow on the British senate. Your lordship, or the reader, cannot mistake the obvious tendency of those remarks. I have a confidence in laws, but it is in such laws as proceed from men who are acquainted with the wants of those for whom they legislate, and filled with a parental anxiety to promote their happiness. It is these alone that can enact laws for the benefit of the Irish poor—direct their labours into remunerative channels—develop the hidden resources of the country, and then call forth all those noble creations of art, of literature, of science, and of civilization, which, without any coercive laws, will bring home the absentees, and make them feel a pleasure and a pride in residing in the land of their fathers. Other measures may be partially beneficial, but none can be fully adequate to the nation's wants, save those that proceed from the nation's real representatives, such as the Irish members *will* be in future,

not such as they were in the Irish parliament, when the people had no share whatever in their election. Without the protection of laws issuing from such a source, the evils of Ireland cannot be effectually remedied ; and while the people shall cling, with their characteristic heroic devotion, to the throne of the British monarch, they cannot be content with anything short of the vigilant, paternal, and presiding care of a national legislature.

Scarcely a day passes in this unfortunate country that does not bring the account of seizure of crops, or auction of cattle, amidst circumstances of cruelty that would fill even a Pagan with compassion. If at home, those heralds of woe come as thick as the messengers of Job ; and when you go abroad, you behold with your own eyes the melancholy evidence of their statements, in the filthy pounds choked with cattle, the only modern architectural monuments in which Ireland may vie with any country on earth, and which do so much singular honour to the pious taste of agents and parsons. Not long since my attention was arrested by the sound of an auction bell, which almost ceases to excite wonder, from the frequency of its repetition. However, from the murmurs which occasionally escaped from the crowds that followed this functionary, it struck me as a case of more than ordinary interest. On inquiring into the circumstances of this transaction, I found that a village, Carookileen by name, had been filled with a troop of police, horse and foot, from this and the two neighbouring baronies, together with an appropriate reinforcement of bailiffs, clerks, drivers, and pound-keepers, the ever-ready instruments of their employer's will in executing the most obnoxious mandates. I inquired of what crime were those villagers guilty, that the whole barony of Tyrawly should be "frightened out of its propriety" by such an alarming muster of armed police. I heard their only crime was the accumulation of arrears of rent, which, from the uniform low price of produce, but chiefly from seasons of distress, they were unable to pay. As, however, vague reports might be naturally chargeable with exaggeration, I can, fortunately or unfortunately, refer your lordship to the sworn evidence of a number of individuals, some of them bearing the signature of Oliver Jackson, others of Thomas Paget, two of the most independent and respectable magistrates in Mayo, attesting the genuineness of their sworn declarations.

To transcribe the entire of their evidence into this letter would extend it to a fatiguing length. To abridge it would be to spoil that touching simplicity with which the tale of those poor sufferers is so artlessly and affectingly told. I must, therefore, content myself with referring your lordship and my readers to the original published depositions.

From the first of those witnesses it appears that her house

was broken down ; that a boy of three years old, a cripple, was brought out of it, and her oats given to the bailiffs' horses. From the second, that, in consequence of the seizure of her crop, she was unable to pay for the seed. From a third, that the potatoes were eaten by the police, and that on his complaining, one of the distraining party observed, that he would sooner give them to the pigs than to him. From a fourth, that his wife, confined for lying-in, was obliged by the party to quit her bed, and that in consequence of the ill treatment which she received from one of the drivers, when throwing her out, she is since in a precarious state of health.

From one, your lordship may learn he could not pay those exorbitant demands, on account of the failure of his potato crop. From another, that the inhumanity of the drivers had interdicted turf, water, or anything whatever to come inside his doors ; in short, from all, that a formidable party of police, horse and foot, bailiffs, drivers, clerks, and labourers, were quartered for several days on the miserable villagers.

What was their conduct on this trying occasion ? Though smarting under provocations which would have maddened a less excitable people, did they offer any resistance to the multifarious ministers of the law, while wringing from the wretched creatures the very necessaries of life ? No : under the guardian spirit of religion, and trusting for consolation to its hopes, they bore it with unexampled meekness. Contrast this their patience with the systematic incendiaryism of the sister country, not when starvation stares them in the face, but when they fear the subtraction of some luxury, by the diminution of wages, and then let the calumniating journals of England and Ireland pour forth their venal denunciations against the agrarian turbulence of the Irish poor. They had recourse for advice to their pastor ; and, as the proprietor was a ward in Chancery, they were advised to lay their complaints before the Lord Chancellor, who would not fail to lend a patient ear to their petition. They, accordingly, addressed to his lordship a respectful memorial, which was seconded by a similar letter from their pastor.

More than a month has elapsed since the memorial was forwarded, and yet no reply has been received by the sufferers. The duties of his lordship are diffused over too wide a range, to enable him to attend to the complaints of the distant inhabitants of the barony of Tyrawly. The Almighty draws good out of evil. Though overlooked by those, whom they considered as their legal protectors, those poor people are not bereft of every solace. Such examples of heart-rending cruelty have a powerful effect in enlightening the minds, and stirring the sympathies, of the people. Their eyes are gradually opening to the causes of such oppressions ; and they who but lately reproached them with

ignorance, are now beginning to deplore their imprudence, and to think that the people are acquiring too much knowledge. The clergy, too, have been reproached as parties interested in perpetuating this ignorance. We have sufficiently repelled the odious calumny ; but if we have been ever remiss, it is now generally felt and acknowledged that we are atoning for our past apathy by our efforts to enlarge their information. Yes, my Lord, they are beginning to know, and they shall know it better, that the laws, under the sanction of which such unnatural cruelties were committed, were passed in the time of those misrepresentatives, who, as they felt no obligation to the humbler tenantry, felt no interest in providing for their protection. Hence they are resolved to return the future members of parliament without having their honest votes diluted through the deteriorating proxies of landlords. They feel that their nonage is passed. They feel, too, that the recollection of that period has no charms which would induce them to sigh for its return. Hence their stern and unshaken resolve never again to trust their votes to the disposal of persons who, by sacrificing the interests of their wards to a cruel selfishness, have proved themselves such treacherous guardians. The bell that announced the auction of the food that was necessary to sustain the lives of the villagers of Carookileen, shall be heard through the trumpet of the press all over the empire, announcing to every ten-pound freeholder to take timely precautions to guard himself and his children from a similar visitation. In Mayo it has had already its effect, by calling the attention of its constituency to the necessity of revising the code of laws between landlord and tenant, for the purpose of throwing into it some elements of humanity. It has already reclaimed from their corruption some of the oldest retainers of the system ; it has decided the wavering and fixed the host of honest freeholders in the firm resolve of never returning under a yoke which was no less ruinous than ignominious. The utter bereavement of the poor, under the insolent oppressions of their task-masters, who are controlled by no law in the measure of their spoliation, shall form one of the many topics on which our future representatives must be instructed. In this letter I have not room to enumerate the others. It is sufficient to observe, that the abominable tithes, the master-grievance, the salient spring from which all the waters of corruption, even those I have mentioned, flow, must, in the first instance, be really, totally, and unequivocally destroyed. We shall, therefore, petition for their extinction ; and as we are not believers in the omnipotence of parliament, so far as to destroy the significance of language, the petition for their *extinction* will be not according to Stanley's construction, but the good old meaning of Johnson's Dictionary.

As for the Repeal of the Union, any aristocrat might as well

rebuke backwards the flowing current that is rushing from the west, as hope to stay the strong and steady tide of opinion which is rapidly ascending in favour of that measure, and on which alone, even a trust-worthy member can have any chance of being borne into parliament. The people's hopes are by no means visionary. From what they have already accomplished, they have a well-grounded confidence in the extent of their moral power. Checked as they have been in their advances to science, by a Satanic penal code, of which the effects will be long felt, they have made such a progress in arithmetical proportions as to understand the rule-of-three, and accordingly the youth of Ireland are now busily engaged in *working* this problem. If a given number of members, returned by the influence of the people, have, in despite of coercion, been able to extort such large concessions from the British minister, what will double the number returned at the next elections be able to achieve?

I have the honour to be, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXX.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL GREY.

BALLINA, FEAST OF SAINT MATHIAS,
FEBRUARY 24, 1834.

Jam fragor tectorum quæ diruebantur, audiebatur, quum larem ac penates, tectaque in quibus natus quisque educatusque esset; relinquentes exirent: jam continens agmen migrantium impleverat vias, et conspectus aliorum, mutua miseratione integrabat lachrymas.—TITUS LIVIUS.

MY LORD—I have been recently favoured with a communication from the Commission of Inquiry regarding the state of the poor of Ireland, containing a lengthened series of interrogatories. The issuing of such a commission, after the varied and palpable information that has been already laid before the House of Commons, is a proof, that when any measures of relief are contemplated towards Ireland, the government is resolved not to rush into them with precipitancy. Except when there is question of

coercive enactments, every other inquiry is conducted with a dilatory caution ; and on this, as well as on the question of tithes, education, corporations, &c., &c., we are sure to have a long and tedious train of committees, commissions, and correspondences, which, like the former, will probably terminate in disappointing the hopes which they created. Yet they will have one sure effect—that of adding, however economically conducted, to the burdens of the country ; and, though frustrate of any public advantage, they will be quoted by the few whom they have benefited, as evidence of the government's benevolent intentions. Few former commissions were productive of any good, and that good so trifling, that if nothing more is expected to result from the present inquiry, one cannot but regret the vast disproportion between the wretchedness of the structure, and the cumbrous expensiveness of the scaffolding.

The inquiries of the commissioners respecting the poor of Ireland we have answered in this diocese, by a series of resolutions, solemnly put forth by the assembled clergy, exhibiting, as far as regards the physical, medical, and intellectual wants of the people, a state of destitution in all those particulars, such as could not be found under any civilized government. The appalling picture, I know it, astonished some of the government functionaries. It has been asked, with real or affected surprise, if, in a territory co-extensive with two counties in Ireland, where the people, from nakedness and hunger, are peculiarly exposed to disease, there was no public infirmary ? Such, however, is the fact. As for schools or colleges, they are a species of intellectual luxury, which the rude inhabitants of this country were not deemed fitted to enjoy. The clergy may be accused of sinister motives in putting forward such statements. Whilst the facts contained in their text remain undisputed, they shall be content that any volunteers become commentators of their meaning. But if so much ignorance of the condition of this district existed nearer home, are we to wonder that the members of the British senate, who never set a foot in Ireland, should grope in the dark when legislating for a country of which they have so little knowledge ? And yet, with this utter indifference to the accommodation of the people, the county books will attest that Tyrawly has been, uniformly, as heavily burdened with public cesses, as any other portion of the country.

Do not be surprised if, notwithstanding the speech put into the royal mouth, the people should persevere in petitioning for an Irish parliament. The inhabitants of Mayo, in common with the people of Ireland, still recollect the comforts they enjoyed before the Union ; and it is happy for the country that the memory of those comforts has not yet passed away. The peasantry were then clad with the fleeces of their own little flocks,

wrought amidst the cheerful and virtuous industry of home manufacture. They ate of the corn which was reaped and sown with the sweat of their brows; and the numerous streams that intersect the country murmured delightfully on the ear, whilst turning the mills, that ground it for their own consumption. They then drank of the milk which was supplied by their own pasture; and though flesh-meat was not an article of ordinary consumption, scarce a week passed in which the poorest were not regaled with that luxury. This picture of domestic happiness is still recollected, and becomes dearer by the sad reality of the privations with which it is contrasted. Nay, those privations become more poignant still by the insulting speculations of heartless financiers, who, whilst the people are but half fed and half clothed, deduce from the exports of the country an argument of its prosperity. If those exports consisted of the superfluities of the produce, or were they exchanged for a corresponding importation of the luxuries or comforts of other countries, the argument might have some weight. Now, their beef, their butter, their pork, their poultry, their wheat, their oats, nay, their very eggs, are all exported to swell the incomes of idle and luxurious absentees, as well as to feed the voracity of agents, who, unconcerned for their comfort, and uncontrolled by the influence of a local legislature, drive a merciless slave trade on the poverty of a wretched and unprotected tenantry. In return, the peasantry can procure but little of the manufactures of England. Their cabins are unfurnished, and the wretched state of their beds, almost destitute of any covering, will astonish the commissioners who may visit them. I trust Mr. Johnson, a young gentleman who possesses influence, and, what is more valuable, a sense of humanity, to which many of our gentry are strangers, will visit the Irish cabins, and then he must be convinced that in return for the exports which rob them of their food, the peasantry have not been able to furnish themselves with the most necessary raiment. Let, then, the interested opponents of a Repeal of the Union continually harp upon its exports, and deduce evidence of a sound system from a continual process of systematic exhaustion.

But I must proceed to other more particular and pressing grievances, which have fixed the minds of the people on the accomplishment of that measure. I had scarce returned here after some absence, when my attention was unfortunately turned to many scenes of heart-rending oppression, which took place in the interval. The first was the ejection of a large number of tenantry in the neighbourhood of Killala, and nearer still to the small town of Ballycastle, who were cast upon the world during the most inclement season of the year. Whilst those who are now treated with such ruthless cruelty had the name of free-holders, and were flexible instruments in the hands of those who

commanded their votes, to perpetuate their own degradation, no inconvenience was felt from their numbers, nor could the landlords perceive the advantage of letting farms on a larger scale. When, however, they became guilty of the crime of asserting their freedom in reality, and paid the deep forfeit of that crime by their disfranchisement, a new light suddenly burst upon the benevolent proprietors, and the cabins that disfigure their estates must be demolished, to make room for more geometrical divisions of their land. Little do they feel the extent of suffering they inflict, and the lot of many families, thus banished for ever from their homes, weighs not a feather in the estimation of those who look on the state of the poor only as a problem of political economy. Their misery does not meet their eyes, and is heard of only with the most callous indifference; and when an eye-witness told me of the groups of the occupants straying along the roads, and the shrieks of the children, returning again and again to take leave of the roofless cabins in which they were reared, I was naturally reminded of the pathetic words of the historian, with which I have prefaced this letter. But I must conclude. I could not comprise in this epistle the other still more distressing transactions. Besides, I have read a most extraordinary and incredible speech, attributed to one of the members for Mayo, as well as the new transmigration through which the tithe system is to pass. Can the ministers be serious in denouncing Repeal, whilst they are furnishing such materials for the necessary agitation of that measure?

I have the honour to be, &c.,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA,

LETTER LXXI.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL GREY.

THE CATHOLIC CLERGY CHARGED WITH PRIEST-CRAFT, BECAUSE THEY SHIELD
THE PEOPLE AGAINST THEIR OPPRESSORS.BALLINA, FEAST OF ST. CASIMIR,
MARCH 4, 1834.

“Adrian visits each province, one after the other, in order to inspect the rural districts, and cities of the empire.”—TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF JOANNES XIPHILINUS.

MY LORD—The solicitude with which the Emperor Adrian visited the different parts of his vast dominions, has been made a subject of great praise by his historians and biographers. There was scarcely a province, from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, that did not feel the salutary influence of the presence of the monarch; and the fear or hope of such frequent visits, had a powerful effect in checking the influence of the remotest delegates, and inspiring confidence among the people. This useful trait in Adrian’s character, has covered a multitude of gross personal delinquencies. It has shed some lustre over a life which crimes had tarnished, and made even the folly of his huge mausoleum be forgotten, in the admiration which his attention to his subjects had excited. Were our kind sovereign to see, with his own eyes, the condition of his subjects, it would naturally affect the policy with which they are ruled. If, for example, his Majesty’s ministers were to advise him to visit Ireland, and like Adrian, to become personally cognizant of the respective characters of the people, and the delegated depositaries of his own sway, through the different parts of that kingdom, they would, probably, have never counselled his recent speech from the throne. He would have then witnessed the misery which overspreads the land—the country towns, except on a market-day, silent almost as a church-yard, and the owners of the deserted shops standing with folded arms at their doors—the peasantry clothed in rags, and so wasted from habitual privation and premature labour as to exhibit, at the ordinary age of manhood, all the feebleness and decrepitude of old age—the gentry, a sullen and isolated class, estranged from their tenantry, holding no sympathy with the tillers of the soil, themselves a prey to the general destitution that surrounds them; and striving to rescue

themselves from that pauperism which is making rapid approaches to their own fortunes, rather by usurious and other hard-hearted fiscal exactions, than by a generous co-operation in advancing any enlarged system of prosperity, in which all might participate. In short, he would behold rivers, the most fitted for manufactures and for commerce, never disturbed by the motion of a boat or mechanical engine—coasts, the most abundant in fish, never vexed by any fishing enterprise—fields which, even in their present state, produce food for his army and navy, appearing still neglected in the eyes of those who are accustomed to the advantages of cultivation. Besides those evils which would at once meet his eye, he would also behold snug little houses with huge steeples, erected at vast expense, with none, or but few, to participate in their devotional comforts, and thousands who produce the wealth, by which those useless edifices are raised, hearing mass under the canopy of heaven, exposed to all the peltings of the storm !! He would thus behold the disgraceful anomalies of a people, perhaps the most intellectual in the world, the least supplied with the means of knowledge, amidst the most lavish endowments to impart it ; and the same people, assuredly the poorest and most destitute, in a country which is as undoubtedly the most fertile and productive.

Aware that the effects of good government are often such as to counteract the disadvantages of climate, and to pour plenty over a country which was not blessed with a good soil, he would naturally ask what curse came over a land so singularly favoured, as to blight all its natural advantages ? The very nature of the interrogatory would introduce a train of thought, which would soon lead to its solution ; and the benevolent monarch would be convinced, that the folly of misgovernment can be as active in marring the choicest blessings of Providence, as the wisdom of virtuous rulers in supplying their privation. Above all, he would not fail to admire the heartfelt attachment of a people, whom neither injuries, nor sinister reports, could alienate from the throne. In their earnest, but peaceful and constitutional exertions to effect a Repeal of the Union, he would recognize the legitimate struggles of a people, to get rid of those evils to which they can partly trace their misfortunes. Contrasting the prosperity of England, less favoured by nature, with the miseries of Ireland, enjoying greater advantages, he might be disposed to adopt the sentiments of the people of the latter country, by ascribing the difference to the circumstances of the want or influence of a local legislature. Convinced, too, by historical experience, that a domestic legislature is far from being synonymous with separation, he would, no doubt, receive with caution any suggestions that would attempt to confound them ; and after witnessing the effects of religion in checking the excesses of a

people naturally excitable, and smarting under unheard-of oppressions, he would have cast indignantly away any insinuations of disaffection against men who could easily rival any of his Majesty's ministers in the fixedness of those principles that bind their allegiance to the throne.

The shortest visit would have sufficed to convince his Majesty of the suffering and loyalty of his people. Were he to reside longer among us, instead of being surprised at the impatience of the Irish, he would have wondered at the forbearance with which they bore the vast accumulation of their unmerited wrongs. Your lordship may form some inadequate idea of those varied experiments on the patience of the people, by two or three examples. In the month of January, one hundred and fifty-four families on the estates of an absentee landlord were served with ejectments in the neighbourhood, and some of the houses of the unfortunate occupants actually thrown down. This, my lord, is not the scene alluded to in my last letter. No; there is enough of distressing novelty furnished in this county to minister to any taste, however panting for tragic excitement. The ejectments referred to in my former letter occurred in the neighbourhood of Killala. Those I instance now were on the property of Lord Limerick, a good man, who loves to dwell on the olden times of Toryism, and laments, I am sure, with a sincere regret, the searching spirit that dares repine at his lordship's enjoying the luxuries of London scenes, whilst his tenantry, who were never yet favoured with his presence, are ejected from their homes. Surely he cannot be a party to those heart-rending scenes. Whilst his soul expands amidst convivial happiness with kindly feelings to the human race—whilst the stream of wealth reaching his lordship must convince him that Ireland is another Peru—whilst the turnpikes of Lancashire, to use a phrase of an English writer, are choked with the pork and beef of Ireland, his lordship could not believe that those who export such superfluities could ever be in distress—hence this generous scepticism about the misery of Ireland—hence this noble-minded condemnation of any degrading provision for the poor—and hence, in fine, his high loyalty against the disaffection of those who could venture to insinuate that the Irish would wish for the return of absent landlords.

But as I cannot hope to convince his kind-hearted scepticism that such things could occur on an estate, of which he is the proprietor, allow me to assure your lordship, that amongst the miserable tenants that were unhoused on the occasion, there was one who, on the following day, required the last rites of the church, and who, though labouring under a disease which called for the most tender solicitude, was dislodged from his tenement to make room for the ministers of the law. Nay, such was the forlorn

condition of many of those ejected creatures, that they were observed to pass the following night in a deserted old mansion, the Catholic chapel.

It might be imagined that on this occasion the ministers of the establishment would interpose their kind offices in favour of the afflicted, and, like the illustrious Pole, whose life is read in the liturgy of this day, display the genuineness of their divine mission by that spirit of sympathy with the poor, which distinguished our Redeemer. Were the people of Ireland to judge the establishment by its treatment towards themselves, they should conclude that not only a portion of St. James, but every precept of mercy, was expunged from the sacred volume by the first reformers. There is, it is remarked, a kindred spirit in misfortunes which makes evils come together, and scarcely was the parish visited with the aforesaid calamity, when a numerous retinue of police were seen patrolling entire villages, and driving more than fifty head of cattle to the pound to pay for the spiritual comforts administered to the Catholics by the parson. He might, without doubt, have amply indemnified himself for his arrears by applying for a portion of the million, which was humanely granted by the legislature to relieve his starving brethren. The pound of flesh, however, was sweeter, and the mutinous people of Ireland should be taught, through the goading powers of an armed police, to feel the mild influence of that church which is the perfect model of Christianity!! Though the parsons have released themselves from the superstitious practice of fasting, it seems that, on this occasion, they adopted the example of the Ninivites, by subjecting the cattle to its operation. They were accordingly driven into a filthy pound in this town, through which no water passed. The consequence was, that the carcase of one of the cattle belonging to a poor pensioner, which died of bad treatment, was seen carried into town, to be delivered, it is said, to the parson. I know not how this strange transaction terminated, but it is certain that the poor pensioner, who fought the battles of his Majesty, was threatened by a small functionary, whose prowess is only shown in driving to the pound, to be deprived of his pension, if he did not observe a prudent silence on this subject. He will not, I trust, suffer by my publication of the fact, nor do I know by what warrant any individual could threaten to intercept the merited rewards which his Majesty bestows on the defenders of their country.

No doubt, it will be urged by those who maintain that the poor are entitled to no mercy, that they were on this occasion treated as they deserved. Why not, it will be asked, punctually pay their rents, and meet, at any warning, their stipulated covenants? If the pecuniary obligations that bind the tenants to the landlords should ever give way, let those be answerable for the conse-

quence who never make allowances for times or seasons, but stretch the chord until it snaps, by the violence of the tension. Who, my lord, were they who were thus ejected from their homes, and whose cattle were driven, for the services of religion? A people who passed the three last winters attending divine service in the open air, without any shelter from the severity of the season. Yes, during that long period, have they been obliged to hear mass without any roof but that of Heaven, for want of means to cover a chapel, of which the walls are so long erected. Nay, during the month of January, I was obliged to go and address those poor people in the open air, to exhort them to roof the chapel. Seldom did I perform a more painful duty than that of urging such a claim upon persons whom I saw shivering with the cold for want of necessary raiment; and yet those are the individuals who are represented as comfortable, by interested reports.

During the same period in which one parish was thus afflicted with the combined operation of tithes and rack-rents, a neighbouring parish had nine individuals lodged in the county jail for illicit distillation. This, my lord, is one of the crying evils with which the land is cursed, and which springs from the same source as the others to which I have alluded. Yes, it is the hated offspring of tithes and rack-rents which is not only wasting the substance, but what is worse, impairing the health and destroying the morality of the people. One of the first tales of distress which I heard on my return, after a short absence from this diocese, was that of a poor woman whose son and husband were lodged in the jail for having been taken in one of those factories of illegal distillation into which they had incautiously strolled. How long shall such a demoralizing system be suffered to continue? Calculate the loss of their labour, and that of many other such victims, at this season of the year. Calculate too, the loss of health, their support in prison, as well as the vast expense of the revenue officers who thrive on the continuance of this ruinous practice. Calculate, in fine, the loss of morality from intoxication which follows in its train, and then let any statesman say whether any advance in the price of land can be a compensation for such frightful losses. Yet this system of illicit distillation is the necessary consequence of the unnatural disproportion between rents and the price of produce. It has been uniformly connived at by the landlords, in order to receive those rents which the channels of ordinary industry can never enable the tenants to pay. When pressed by exorbitant and vexatious demands, which they cannot possibly meet, they are driven to the terrible resolve of throwing their little produce into the lottery of a smuggling distillation. The frequent consequence is seizure, and thus they individually suffer, whilst the public is burdened

with the heavy expense of their imprisonment. For the sake of Christianity, let this inhuman traffic be put an end to. Let not the unfortunate people be alternating between the fears of a prison, or an ejectionment: of a prison, if they strive by this illicit process to raise their corn to the amount of the rent; or of being ejected, on the other hand, if the rent is not thus extracted out of the produce. They have frequently before them the sad choice of a gaol or the fields to repose in; and remind me of the fate of the unfortunate Britons, who complained that they were driven by the Picts to the sea, and again by the sea into the hands of their enemies.

Yet amidst this wide-spread local misery, and the consequent anxiety of the people to see the source dried up from which it springs, they are represented in the imperial parliament as in the full enjoyment of every comfort, utterly opposed to the Repeal of the Union, and the miserable dupes of turbulent agitators, who have the singular art to persuade them that they are miserable, notwithstanding the conviction they feel of their own happiness. It is somewhat singular that it was at this same period of the last session I had to defend a noble lord from Mayo, from the mis-statements which were ascribed to him by the carelessness of reporters. And now again, on the recurrence of the auspicious anniversary, I have to protect another member of the family from a similar injustice. I allude to the statement of the disturbed condition of the county of Mayo, which was inaccurately, no doubt, ascribed to the Marquis of Sligo, and from whom I found it necessary to remove the odious imputation. It was an act of justice due, on my part, to the much-enduring people, that they should not be calumniated by an anonymous scribe, under the sanction of a noble name; and accordingly I ventured to lay before your lordship satisfactory evidence of the tranquillity of this county. Again, it appears that the reporters have taken a similar liberty with a member of the House of Commons, who is charged with stating that the petitions from Mayo for a Repeal of the Union are all the effect of terror and "priest-craft." With the reports made in the House of Commons by those who sit there from Mayo, the people have no concern. They are utterly indifferent to their sentiments, since they are convinced those sentiments are not in unison with their own. It is, however, matter of great moment, that the feelings and conduct of the clergy and people of a large county should be totally misrepresented, and that the one should be deemed the agents, the other the victims of a sinister and noxious influence. Let Mr. J. D. Brown then enjoy his convictions, and the privilege of uttering them in polite language, without fear of being replied to by the objects of his remarks. Let him riot in the parliamentary immunities in which he is shrouded, and select a subject

for his oratory, which will be sure to supply the want of talent, and call forth those vehement responses from congenial minds, which his eloquence on any other topic could never excite. Those privileges I have no wish to violate, since the object of my remarks is the published report, leaving the honourable member for the *property* of Mayo, in the undisturbed enjoyment of the fame, with which his senatorial courage must have crowned him.

It was not by design he is reported to have styled himself the representative of the property of Mayo, and to have utterly lost sight of the numerous class of freeholders to whom he hitherto owed his seat. Yes, the secret wish of the Whig partizans to restore the most degrading species of feudal vassalage is revealed. When Louis Philippe assumed the title of King of the French, and Leopold that of King of the Belgians, how loud and rapturous were their congratulations! And what was the circumstance that called forth such enthusiastic jubilee? The recognition that the inhabitants of those countries were free agents, to whom their respective monarchs owed their election. The names of King of France or King of Belgium could no longer be endured by the enlightened Whigs of France or the Low Countries, lest it should imply the idea that those kingdoms were their allodial properties, and that the people were serfs, appended to the soil, to be disposed of at the will of their masters. I recollect the impassioned sympathy that was expressed by the Whigs of England at this recognition of the rights of freemen, and how one of the present ministers exhibited ecstacies of joy at the dawning of this millennium of freedom. And is it possible that those Whigs could cheer the sentiments of a man, who boasts himself the representative of the soil of Mayo, rather than the object of the choice of its freemen? The proprietors of Mayo, or of any other county in Ireland, are only a small fraction, compared to the mass of the other freeholders. How absurd, then, to boast of being exclusively the representative of the property, or, if you will, of the proprietors, meaning nothing more than that all the rest is a parcel of serfs, whose will is of no value, but who must be disposed of like the rest of the master's property. Let the farmers, the shopkeepers, the merchants, and, in fine, all that class of freeholders who produce the wealth, and constitute the chief strength of society, value this compliment at its proper worth. But, after all, it is a pardonable effusion; it is only the natural recklessness of a man who cannot conceal his hatred of that influence by which he sees his own must be overturned. As for the reported attacks upon the priesthood, your lordship will not surely imagine that I am going to vindicate that body from the exercise of any occult powers, which are generally associated with the refined phrase applied to them by the enlightened senator. Should any member

of parliament now be found haunted with such phantoms, it is to be regretted that the legislature of the first James, had not the advantage of his labours. He would have been a valuable member of the committees of that period, and would, no doubt, have lent considerable light to the darksome speculations of that profound monarch. The birth of such a being is some centuries behind that period when it could be either useful or noxious; and as he seems to be a believer in astral influences, he ought to curse the influence which retarded his nativity, until the learned world has become indifferent to the wisdom of those worshippers of the stars. However, the tales of the nursery are long remembered, and perhaps there are some legends still lingering in the west, and alluded to by the honourable member, to encourage the belief that the mysterious craft or power of the priests was only in the ascendant, when the augurs of a more favoured creed had triumphantly anticipated its decline.

But to be serious—is it to be endured that sentiments should be put into the mouth of any honourable member of the British legislature, so much at variance with truth and justice? It is impossible that any individual could consider himself as the most appropriate type and figure of the landed property of Mayo, who, if I am not misinformed, does not possess even a freehold in that county, and who owes his return to his connexion with a noble person, who lately left Ireland without any regret, but that of a few dependants, for his departure. He could not forget the exercise of much clerical forbearance, if not of active support; and though conscience, in the moment of silence and of thought, the most equitable as well as the most formidable judge, must have whispered despair of its continuance, still gratitude should have imposed abstinence from abuse, through a deep sense of past obligations. He could not but recollect that those who gave their undivided suffrages to a candidate for Repeal at the last election, far exceeded the joint supporters of a similar class of the sitting members; and with such recollections in his mind, it is impossible that any member for Mayo, could have asserted that the people of that county were adverse to a national legislature. He must have probably known that from every district in Mayo, the people were sending forth petitions against the tithe system and the legislative Union; and such a conviction must have operated in making him forbear an assertion which could be so easily defeated. But those petitions are the effect of priest-craft and of fear; for this singular reason, probably—that none are entrusted to the honourable member. Let him console himself for the want of the people's confidence by making the most of the present session, and continue to vote as he has done, for the sacred integrity of the pension list, in the hope that his exalted services to his country might entitle him to a small portion of

that fund, which no worthless individual is known to enjoy. I hope he will make unto himself friends of that mammon, that in his retirement, after this session, from the bustle of parliamentary life, he may be indemnified for the loss which his love of country shall have incurred. He has pronounced his own sentence. He knew that he long since forfeited the support of the people of this county, and now he wishes to pander to the prejudices of the aristocracy, by his advocacy of the pension list and tithes. They will undoubtedly lose more than they will gain by the continuance of those burdens; and in the general lottery of pensions and fat parsonages, but little will fall to the share of the humbled and neglected aristocracy of Mayo. Their interest, did they possess intellect to see it, is no longer bound up with a nefarious system of religious ascendancy and exclusion. It is identified with the general prosperity of the country, and they must sink or rise with the depression or prosperity of the great mass of the people. Hence it is their interest that the system of tithes should be utterly abolished, and that the ministers of religion should be paid, in proportion to their services. If your lordship thinks that any change in that measure, short of real extinction, will satisfy the people of this country, the thought is delusive.

They quarrel not with the mode of payment. They have a rooted aversion to the unrighteous principle of ascendancy on which that payment is founded; and they are not such bad logicians as to be satisfied that an argument strong in its principle, loses its force as soon as there is a change in its form. Call it then tithes, composition, land tax, church cess, vestry rates, ministers' money, parsons' fees, or any other name you can take out of the shifting vocabulary of legislation, the people of Ireland will be justly discontented until the Protestant parsons are supported by their Protestant flocks, or a portion of the tithes commensurate with the necessity of their ministry. What, my lord, becomes of the exclusive beauty of the Protestant worship; the charming simplicity of its service; and the overpowering evidence of its doctrines? If it be really so captivating, its followers will give to the world a more disinterested proof of their conviction by supporting their own ministry, than by transferring this burden to the shoulders of those who are content with their own religion, and do not wish to burden any others with its support. *Cui bono?* is the question which justice suggests regarding such an establishment. If such an anomaly existed, in any other country upon earth, of a people proverbially starving, until the very repetition of the phrase ceases to excite compassion, and an enormous staff of public functionaries saddled upon the same people without any possible assignable reason for its continuance, the English press would teem with burning invectives against such a system, and the walls of St.

Stephen's would ring with the most indignant denunciations of such a system. If any nation in Europe had suffered so much from "priest-craft," as Ireland has endured from tithes and parson-craft, it would form a rich theme for an historian's eloquence to dwell on. It would be curious to compare the effects of "priest-craft" and parson-craft on the rights and happiness of the people in this land, which has consecrated the liberty of the subject in its venerable constitution. In the struggles for reform, in the debates for contracting to their first dimensions the power of the aristocracy—in short, in any question that affected the rights, the privileges, the properties of the people, have not the ministers of the establishment been uniformly found arrayed on the side of power, no matter how exercised? When did they, like Aaron, interpose to stay the weight of ministerial vengeance from falling on the heads of the people? When were they ever found fulfilling the duty of mediators between the throne and the subjects; conveying to the sovereign the prayers of his people; and again, the messengers of mercy from the throne to the subject? When did they tender any of their enormous revenues for the public service? On the contrary, were not ministers often obliged to add to the public taxes, by the erection of churches for the best paid clergy in the world? They may, it is true, indignantly reprove vice wherever they discover it. In the middle circles, it is near enough to be seen, but should it happen to perch on the pinnacles of human greatness, then it gradually diminishes until it becomes totally invisible from its distant elevation. Nay, were not some found, who, on the question between the late King and his Queen, were so dazzled with the splendours of royalty, to defend the personal impeccability of the monarch?

Towards such amiable and condescending teachers, I am not surprised that there should be a leaning by the oligarchy. The priest-craft of the Catholic clergy in Ireland is felt in a different way; and is become equally obnoxious to the same sensitive class. As for violence, it is a clumsy calumny, invented by those who cannot understand, and endure still less, the commanding influence of moral persuasion. Your lordship may inquire how the petitions for Repeal of the Union from Mayo are got up, and thereupon will judge what credit is due to the parliamentary reporters of the House of Commons. These petitions contain the spontaneous signatures of a people sensitive to their distress, and sincerely desirous for a restoration of their native legislature. And, however numerously signed those petitions may be, they will not include the one-tenth of the names of those who would invoke parliament to grant this measure. But why those repeated attacks upon the legitimate exercise of the duties of the Catholic clergy? Because of

the exercise of their “priest-craft” over the minds of the people ? Allow me to explain to your lordship in what this formidable craft of the clergy consists. They denounce perjury as an atrocious crime, from the guilt of which, no candidate, however powerful, can release its unhappy victim. They condemn force, by whomsoever exercised, as striking at the root of the freedom of elections. They condemn bribery as a still more treacherous engine, which too often seduces the integrity of the judgment, so as to forget that he who bribes is the enemy of his country. They strongly recommend a severe scrutiny into the qualifications of every candidate—a recommendation recognised by every law of election—and then exhort the electors to give their suffrage to him who is most worthy of their choice. They explain the good or evil, of which the electors are instruments, by returning individuals who have such influence in producing good or evil to their country; and then, on the ground of that responsibility from which no human act is exempt, they leave the important question to the decision of the people’s own conscience. They, finally, exhort the people to petition the parliament for their rights. Behold, then, the extent of this dread priest-craft. It consists in nothing more than enlightening the mind on its public and private duties, and then raising a fence around conscience, against fear, fraud, bribery, violence, and corruption of every kind, by which its steady convictions are so often and so successfully assailed. If this be priest-craft, it is a craft that commenced, and will continue in the Catholic church to the end of time. It is in vain, then, that your lordship, or any other member, would attempt to controul this legitimate influence of the Catholic priesthood. It is identified with the very nature of their office ; the duties towards our country form a part of the code of our ethics ; the duties of electors are written in every treatise of the obligations of different states ; and until the course of our theology be compiled by deputies of the government, a measure which I should not be surprised to be in contemplation, this priest-craft, so much complained of, will not cease to be beneficially felt, and cheerfully endured by the faithful people of Ireland. .

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship’s obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF MARONIA.

LETTER LXXII.

Tobair na b-riam, JULY 4, 1834.

Graiorum cedant rivuli, cedant Romolidum fontes,
 En ibi salubrior longe, scaturiens unda ;
 Quae Uvam sanitare superans, nomen indidit agro
 Ex quo eam hausere inlyti Fianorum Heroes.

Ալլի թիւր նա Քոյնե Շար նա ս-Ծիւշ,
 Տելլի Տօբար նա ե-քան, թօր եար յօ հ-ես ;
 Վլանը դե քոյս-սլլզէ Շ-օշայծ լան,
 'Տ տա մաք յու օօլիա-քոյս, թլան,
 Տօ էսշ ծոն եալլե այլմ Ռ օալ,
 Օ ծ' օլ ար Ֆլանա Ֆիոյի Ֆալ.

INDEPENDENTLY of the beautiful scenery, by which it is encompassed, the spot from which I now write, possesses for me those peculiar charms, which are ever found associated, with the place of our birth. It is, I think, St. John Chrysostom remarks, contrasting the correct and truthful simplicity of youth, with the false and fastidious refinement of after-life, that if you present to a child his mother and a queen, he hesitates not in his preference of the one, however homely her costume, to the other, though arrayed in the richest attire of royalty. It is a feeling akin to that filial reverence, which the Almighty has planted in our breasts, towards our parents, that extends also to the place where we first drew our being, and hallows all its early associations. This religious feeling is the germ of true patriotism, radiating from the centre of home, and taking in gradually all that is around, until it embraces the entire of our country. It is this mysterious sentiment, common alike to the rude and the civilized, that gives his country the first place in each man's estimation, and makes him regard the most refined or the most prosperous, as only second to his own. I should not value the stoicism that would be indifferent to such a sentiment, and if it be a weakness, it is one that is as old as the times of the Patriarchs, and which some of the best and wisest men in the Catholic Church, have consecrated by their example.

To him who wishes to explore the ancient history of Ireland, its topography is singularly instructive. Many of its valuable records have been doomed to destruction ; but there is a great

deal of important information written on its soil. Unlike the topography of other countries, the names of places in Ireland, from its largest to its most minute denominations, are all significant, and expressive of some natural qualities or historical recollections. If the Irish language were to perish, as a living language, the topography of Ireland, if understood, would be a lasting monument of its significance, its copiousness, its flexibility, and its force. A vast number of its names is traceable to the influence of Christianity. Such are all those commencing with *cill*, of which the number is evidence, how thickly its churches were scattered over the land. The same may be said of *teampul* and *teampuim*, but, being derived from the Latin language, they are more rare than the word *cill*, a genuine Celtic word. The words commencing with *lóir* and *raic*, or rath, are supposed to ascend to the time of the incursions of the Danes; but, whatever be the period of their introduction, they and *dún* are expressive of military operations. Other denominations imply a territory, either integral or in parts, such as *círr*, *baile*, *leac*, *tír*, *ceathair*, *cúig*, &c., and mean the country, the village, half, third, fourth, or fifth of such a district. It is from *cúigad*, or a fifth portion, our provinces were so called; and though now but four provinces are generally named, the corresponding word in Irish signifies a fifth, as *cúig cír* *Éireann*, or the five provinces of Ireland. Hence, if a stone were not to be found, to mark the ruins of the magnificence of Tara, the Irish name of a province, will remain an enduring attestation of the ancient monarchy of Meath.

The name of *muir*, or Ros, so frequently characterizing some of our Irish townlands, always signifies a peninsula or promontory, or, for a similar reason, an inland spot, surrounded by moor or water. The words commencing with *maí*, or Moy, signify extensive plains, and assume the appellation of *cluan*, when comparatively retired. The highlands, from the mountain to the sloping knoll, are well known by *rlab*, *cnoc*, *cullaí*, or Tully, and *leap*, while *glean*, *laí*, called in English, Glyn and Lag, denominate the lowlands and the vallies. It is not to be supposed that the numberless lakes and streams, that cover the plains or descend from its hills, had not a large influence in giving their names to a great portion of the country. Accordingly, we find *loč*, *tobar*, *abha*, *reas*, forming the commencement of the names of several townlands and villages. The qualities by which these several names are modified, are as various as the properties of the soil, and the traditional records of each locality.

Tobarnavian has, like other ancient names, employed and divided skilful etymologists and antiquarians. Some have derived the name, from the excellent quality of its waters, not inferior to the juice of the grape, whilst others, with more strict regard to the just rules of etymology, as well as the truth of

history, have traced it to the old legends of the Fenian Heroes. *Τοβαρι ἀν φιον* would be its correct name, according to the first derivation, whereas *Τοβαρι να b-φιαν* is its exact and grammatical appellation, as connected with the historical and poetical legends, of the followers of the great leader of the ancient Irish chivalry. Its situation, as well as the tales connected with the scenery, by which it is surrounded, give additional force to this etymology. It is situated at the base of Nephin, the second among all the mountains of Connaught in elevation, and inferior but to few in Ireland. The south view is bounded by a portion of the Ox mountains, stretching from the Atlantic, in the form of an amphitheatre. They are called the *Βαρηνα-να-ζαοις* mountains, from a narrow and precipitous defile, where the storm rules supreme, and rendered famous by the passage of the French, in 1798, on their way to Castlebar.* Round the base of this circuitous range of hills, is seen, as if to sleep, the peaceful surface of the beautiful Lake of Lavalla, bordering on the woods of Massbrook. Directly to the east, the large Lake of Con stretches from the Pontoon, to the north-west, the lofty hill of *Σνος Φαρη* intercepting the view of its surface, and again revealing to the eye, on the north side of the hill, another portion of the same sheet of waters. Beyond the extremity of the lake, you can contemplate some of the most cultivated and picturesque portions of Tyrawley, stretching along in the distance as far as the hill of Lacken, of which the view is animated, by a fanciful tower of modern construction.

Such is the view that presents itself from this elevated spot, forming the summit level of the district, from the sea to the Ox mountains. In this remote district, secluded by its encircling woods, hills, and lakes, the olden legends and traditions of the land, were preserved with a fond and religious fidelity. When the other provinces of Ireland, and a large portion of Connaught, were overrun, and parcelled out among strangers, the territories of Tyrawley were inherited by the descendants of the ancient septs, until its fair fields were, at length, invaded and violated by the ruthless followers of Cromwell. For its long immunity from the scourge of the despoiler, it paid, at length, the forfeit in the increased oppression to which its inhabitants were doomed; and whilst the descendants of the ancient settlers were mingled in a community of blood and interest with those of the Celtic race, in other parts of Ireland, the Catholics of Tyrawley, like those of Tipperary, were doomed to be treated, by those more recent task-masters, as aliens in country, in language, and in creed.

* As exciting events take a strong hold of the youthful mind, the age of seven years at the time—the interval between 1791 and 1798—enables me vividly to recollect the distressing incidents of that period.

The retired position of Glyn-Nephin afforded a secure asylum to the songs and traditions of the olden times, and the indignities, to which the inhabitants were subjected, by the Covenanters, who were planted among them, served but to endear every relic of story or of minstrelsy, which time had transmitted. It was here Bunting* collected some of the most tender and pathetic of those ancient airs, to which Moore has since associated his exquisite poetry. It was here, too, on the banks of Loch Con,† that Mr. Hardiman took down some of the sweetest specimens to be found in his collection of Irish minstrelsy. It was no wonder: The name of Carolan, who frequented the district, was yet familiar with the older natives of the valley of Nephin; and in no portion of Ireland did his soul-inspiriting airs, find more tuneful voices, than were there heard, artlessly pouring them forth, amidst the solitude of the listening mountains.

Of the legends of Ireland, both oral and written, the people were not less retentive, than of the songs of their bards. I knew myself some who, though they could not at all read English, read compositions in the Irish language with great fluency; and even of those who were not instructed to read, many could recite the Ossianic poems with amazing accuracy. While Macpherson was exhausting his ingenuity, in breaking up those ancient poems, and constructing an elaborate system of literary fraud out of their fragments, there were thousands in Ireland, and especially in Glyn-Nephin, who possessed those ancient Irish treasures of Ossian, in all their genuine integrity, and whose depositions, could their depositions be heard, would have unveiled the huge imposture. There is scarcely a mountain, or rock, or river in Ireland, that is not in some measure associated with the name of Fion and his followers. On the highest peak of Nephin, is still visible an immense cairne of large and loose stones, called “*Leact Fion*,” or Fion’s monument. Some fanciful etymologists are disposed to trace the name of Nephin, or Nefin, to the chief of the Fiana, insisting that it means *Neamh-Fion*, as Olympus was the seat of the Pagan divinities. But though the monument just alluded to may give weight to this opinion, the authority of Duard Mac Firbis is opposed to them, *Neamh* being, according to this learned antiquarian, its pure and primitive orthography. The circumstance of *Gol*, one of the most celebrated of those military champions, belonging to this province, may well account for their intimate connexion with our scenery; and as the Fiana were supposed to have been frequent and familiar visitors in those regions, it is no wonder that their superior quality, would have drawn their attention

* See his “*Ancient Music of Ireland*”—index.

† See Hardiman’s *Irish Minstrelsy*, vol. I., page 341.

to the waters of this fountain. The Latin and Irish lines, with which I have prefaced this letter, are inscribed on a stone slab—an appropriate and significant ornament of this ancient fountain, from which are continually gushing its classic or legendary waters.

From the disastrous period of the wars of Cromwell, few or none of the Bishops of Killala, to the time of my two immediate predecessors, had a permanent residence in the diocese. Doctor Waldron, my lamented predecessor of pious memory, and Doctor Bellew, filled up near the last half century of that dreary interval.* The notices of the lives of the bishops of the preceding portion are but scanty—nay, it would be difficult to supply some considerable chasms with their very names. This has been a misfortune not peculiar to the Diocese of Killala. The churches of Ireland shared in the same calamity. It is to be hoped, however, that, whilst the material edifices, which they erected, have been destroyed or effaced, their names are written in the more valuable records of the Book of Life. Even of the bishops antecedent to that period, the catalogue is imperfect. Duard Mac Firbis, whom I have already quoted, has preserved the names of seven bishops of the Mac Celes,† who flourished between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. To such annalists as the Four Masters, and the authors of the Book of Lecan, &c., we are indebted for such fragments of ecclesiastical history as survived the wreck of violence and of time. I indulged a hope, when first I went to the Eternal City, to be able to trace back the unbroken stem of our episcopal succession, and, through it, many subordinate ecclesiastical branches. But even there the task became difficult, if not hopeless. It is some consolation that this diocese has supplied some of those who have been most successful in illustrating the annals of Ireland. The Book of Lecan is prized by every scholar, as one of the most valuable of our records, and the name of Mac Firbis ranks among those great benefactors, who, in times of difficulty and darkness, cast a gleam of splendour over the declining literature of their country.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF KILLALA.

* The names of their immediate predecessors were, Erwin, Skerret, Philips, Mac Donnell, of whom the last, or most remote in the series, is here still recollected by some of the old and patriarchal natives.

† See the "Hi-Fiana," one of the last volumes published by the Archeological Society. The learned translator, Mr. John O'Donovan, does great justice to the memory of Duard Mac Firbis, who earned the encomiums of O'Flagberty and Charles O'Connor.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO THE CATHOLIC CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF KILLALA.

TO BARNAVIAN, SEPTEMBER 1, 1834.

DEAR AND VENERABLE BRETHREN—Your simple and touching address, which speaks too genuinely the language of the heart to be affected, utterly overpowers me. Although I anticipated that such a separation as ours would be painful, I was not prepared for the feelings which it inspires. When I look back on the years I have spent in this my native diocese, and recollect that spontaneous homage of the heart, with which I have been received by the clergy and people, whenever I went among them, I cannot but feel the pang of being torn from a place, where the best affections and virtues of Christianity are cultivated. Yes; the soil is fertile—the seed is cast and reared by the assiduous care of the clergy—and the fruit is manifest in the virtues of the peasantry; their fidelity to their God, their respect for his ministers, their desire of public tranquillity, their practice of those virtues that make home a temple, and, in short, their meek and Christian patience under privations, which nothing but the spirit of religion could enable them to endure.

To my attention to the wants of the people you have kindly made allusion. Alas! that I had but the mere will to mitigate those hardships, which it often grieved me to witness. It is true I have striven to call the attention of those who have a control over their destiny, to a sense of their obligations; and should the Almighty at last give them “hearts of flesh and bowels of mercy, instead of the hearts of stone,” which they have hitherto exhibited, no one would more sincerely rejoice than I at their conversion.

As to my zeal for the house of God, when I consider that some parishes in this diocese are almost without a chapel, I must deplore what I left undone, rather than take credit for what I achieved. But the unexampled poverty of the people may well plead our joint apologies. As for the cathedral, it was a work which my predecessors, like the pious King David, seriously meditated; but, like the same King, they found obstacles to its accomplishment, in that desolate wreck of the people’s fortunes, which then, as well as in ancient times, followed the disastrous shiftings of the ark of their religion. A comparatively better state has enabled us to commence and to cover in a magnificent

temple to the Lord; but let it be recollected that, besides the aid I received from a generous public, I was mainly assisted by your zeal and large pecuniary contributions, and that, besides the faithful of Kilmore Moy, whose exertions are beyond praise, the cathedral is a proud monument of the ardent zeal and generosity of the clergy and the people of Killala.

You have kindly congratulated me on my appointment to the metropolitan see of the province. Alas! whilst others see but the honours that dazzle from the distant heights, I ought, in common with a Gregory or an Ambrose, tremble at the precipices which lie beneath, and are always deep and dangerous in proportion to the elevation. However, if I meet co-operation such as I met here (and I cannot but anticipate a kind assistance), I fear no difficulties; and, relying on the aid of Him, who has often chosen the "weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," I have accepted the pastoral staff, which has been confided to me by him to whom Christ has given, in the person of St. Peter, the supreme dominion of his fold.

It is to me most consolatory that the connexion that has hitherto bound us is not to be entirely severed by my translation. Whatever may be the solicitude which will extend over the province, the clergy and faithful of Killala shall not be forgotten. Accept once more my heartfelt thanks for the splendid carriage—a proof that where there is the will, people can be generous out of the poorest resources. In conclusion, I beg a share in your prayers, and those of your flocks, to enable me worthily to sustain the weight of my office. If you have sustained any loss by my removal, I rejoice in the wise provision that enables you to repair it, by the selection of such zealous and enlightened persons as will furnish you with a worthy successor. To him I have the consolation of handing over a flock, not only undiminished by the prowlings of the wolf, but increased by many accessions of strayed sheep returning to the fold. And by one of those wise dispensations of Providence, which binds the resolves of kings and senates to its own ends, I have the further consolation of transmitting to him, without collision with parliamentary pretenders, the old and hereditary title of the legitimate pastors of the Catholic Church, which, though sometimes clouded, can never be taken away, whilst I subscribe myself, dear and venerable brethren, your obliged and affectionate servant in Christ,

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF KILLALA.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

ON THE ESSENTIAL INJUSTICE OF PAYING TITHES, IN ANY SHAPE, FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF THE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, DECEMBER 8, 1824.

Cedant arma togæ.

MY LORD—It is no longer doubtful that your Grace has ventured to grasp the reins of government which fell out of the feeble hands of your incapable predecessors. It is no longer a secret, that you have been called to preside over the public counsels, in order to support the tottering establishment in Ireland, or to protract to a further period its inevitable fall. This, my lord, is a hazardous undertaking. It is a project fraught with more difficulties than any you encountered in your military campaigns, and experience will convince you that it is much easier to scatter the armies of Napoleon than to break the firm, resolved, and concentrated will of eight millions of people not to pay an odious impost, revolting to justice, insulting to religion, and a badge, likewise, of national degradation.

In the one case nought was required but a superior numerical force, or a preponderance of physical strength and courage. In the other you have to combat a moral power, which neither numbers, nor discipline, nor courage can conquer. Nay, it is a power which is not only invincible by arms, but which, with all the authority of the legislature at your side, you will find it impossible to subdue. Yes, my lord, the eternal laws of justice are against you, and until right and wrong are found to be such changeable things as to shift their position like the corps of a camp, or the members of the senate, at the nod of a minister or military commander, the opposition to tithes in Ireland shall remain beyond the reach of any adequate control.

No doubt, my lord, you will be astonished at such a bold assertion. However grating it may seem to your ears, the truth has ere now reached you in a variety of forms, that the maxims of the camp are not those that are fitted to sway a civilized society. Amidst the tumult of arms, the cries of justice are so generally unheeded, that the heart becomes insensible to its dictates. Allow me, then, as you are not hurried away amidst

the rage of battles, to whisper to you calmly the reasons why your efforts to uphold the church establishment in Ireland must prove abortive. It is because the laws by which it was founded and upheld were at variance with every principle of justice, and because there has arisen in the country a moral power superior to the brute physical strength by which those atrocious enactments were hitherto enforced. Your Grace is not, I trust, one of those persons who imagine that the mere will of a Sovereign or his Minister imposes the obligation of law; nor is it, I trust, your impression that every enactment brings with it that solemn sanction, provided it is passed by a majority of the senate. No, my lord, all the united authorities of the sovereign and the senate can never annex the conscientious obligations of law to enactments that are contrary to right reason and justice; and, hence, the stubborn and unconquerable mutiny of the minds of the people of Ireland against these odious acts (I will not call them laws), which have ever forced them to pay tribute to the teachers of an adverse creed.

Perhaps, during your military sojourn in the Peninsula, the name of illustrious Isidore, Bishop of Seville, reached your Grace's ears. Allow me to lay before you his definition of law—a definition that has been found so much in accordance with reason as to have been afterwards incorporated with the jurisprudence of Europe: “*Erit lex honesta, justa, possibilis, secundum naturam; secundum consuetudinem Patriæ, loco, tempori-que conveniens, necessaria, utilis manifesta quoque, ne aliquid per obscuritatem in captione contineat, nullo privato commodo, sed pro communi utilitate civium scripta.*” This, my lord, is a definition of law, the comprehensive correctness of which is best evinced by its general adoption; and which all the legal ingenuity of Bacon or of Brougham could not impeach. Yet are the enactments that enforce the impost of tithes conformable to its dictates? Are they *honest*, or accordant to the spirit of religion, from which the co-relative obligation of obedience springs? Are they *just*—nay, are they morally *possible* in their observance, and suited to the *customs* of the country, as well as to the *circumstances* and to *times*? Are they *necessary*? Are they *useful*? Are they written for a *selfish ascendancy*, or to promote the general public weal? These are the natural interrogatories that arise from the first notions of law that are contained in the above definition, and the entire of which must be answered in the negative. So far from being *honest*, the laws regarding tithes are at variance with every principle of commutative justice, which supposes that the enacted law ratifies the previous obligation of giving to each man *his own*. Yet previously to those penal enactments that wrung his tithes from the Catholic peasant, to find in a Protestant parson any root of *ownership* whatever to

such a property, I might challenge the entire Tory University of Oxford. Subsequent laws may be heaped on laws, and majorities may acclaim their enactment, but since justice was wanting at the base, the whole superstructure crumbles, for want of a necessary foundation. Again, the Tithe laws, so far from being *necessary*, it is universally confessed that an imperative necessity has arisen for their abolition. *Useful* they never were; but, whatever might have been hitherto their influence, it is now admitted that they are become entirely and incurably noxious. Not only are they not conformable to the *customs* of the country, but the whole nation revolts against their endurance; and as to *time*, the period is arrived beyond which their utter extinction cannot be safely protracted. The *public good* they never promoted; on the contrary, they were maintained as the aliment to private cupidity, and always furnished a stimulant to the profigate few to array themselves in unholy hostility against the nation's welfare. Far from doing any kind of office, the parsons are recollected as a tribe who scourged the people with scorpions.

May I then be permitted to inquire, is it laws so unrighteous your Grace is called on to maintain, and is it ascendancy so oppressive, you are resolved to perpetuate? You may bend the necks of the people under the weight of a military despotism—it will only last as long as the hand that imposes it is on them; the moment it is removed, justice will recover its spring, and with a force proportioned to the pressure. What avails, then, this incessant and angry struggle against right and justice?

Your Grace may be deluded with the notion that this opposition to tithes is only a temporary ebullition of feeling that may pass away, and that the people may be brought to be reconciled to the reimposition of the heavy burden.—Never. They may, it is true, be forced to submit, but let me impress upon you that it will be only a forced submission. The laws that shall enforce tithes may be endured—they cannot be obeyed—and hence the import of that word, passive obedience, so little understood and of which the misunderstanding has thrown such undeserved odium upon Catholics. Passive obedience is nothing else than a passive acquiescence in laws which are unjust, and which one cannot correct; yet are still tolerated on account of the greater evil of public commotion, which should result from their resistance. Hence the obedience to them is termed passive, or permissive, in opposition to that active, free, and spontaneous obedience of the heart, which a reasonable being always yields to wise and beneficent laws, and which such laws only can impose. In this latter and true sense of obedience, the laws regarding Tithes to the Protestant establishment were never obeyed, and never can, whilst destitute of all the elements of right and justice, of utility and public good, that constitute such an obligation.

The truths I have now advanced have nought of novelty to a mind disciplined in the science of morals and jurisprudence. Not so however to a person who was wont to manage men like machines, and who might have been taught to look on the sword as the best sceptre of justice. You may now perceive that any enactments to enforce tithes will not have the moral influence of law. Nay, the consequence of such enactments would be, that you would have to war, not with men, but with reason, with religion, with justice, with necessity, with utility, with the customs of the country, with the resolution of the people—in short, with the public good—a combination of powers which you will own to be more formidable than the armies of the French Emperor. This is the reason why I have stated that the conquest of such difficulties required courage and fortune superior to any you had hitherto to display. Let me then adjure you not to sully your fame by attempting impossibilities. Imitate not the Persian despot, who thought to bind in fetters the waves of the Hellespont. You may drive your triumphal car over the prostrate people of Ireland. If so, it will be as mad a victory as that of Caligula over the Bay of Baiæ, by attempting to submit it to the yoke of a bridge. The treasures of the empire may be spent, and lives may be lavished, as then, in the prosecution of the insane project; but the broken arches of the prostrate work shall remain to tell posterity of the folly and the cruelty of the projector. Witness your impotent laws against Catholic bishops assuming their ancient and hereditary titles. Think you they have any force of binding men's consciences? The parliamentary church may enjoy any temporal privileges which a parliament, without any injury to the people, may confer. His Majesty's bishops may surely enjoy all those lordly titles which his Majesty, the rich source of worldly titles, can bestow. But neither his Majesty nor the parliament can make what is, to be what it is not, nor the true and legitimate bishops of the Catholic Church to be other than the true and genuine successors of the Apostles.

Imagine not that it is my intention to trouble your Grace with a series of letters on the subject of tithes and the establishment. I trust my time shall be better employed. I have written this letter to convince you that the question is already disposed of, and that further controversy on its merits would be nugatory. Compositions and land taxes in lieu of tithes are all vain artifices. If the landlords take on them the payment of tithes, and attempt to charge them on the tenantry, then the landlords will be conspiring against the payment of their rents, nor need they any more dangerous combination. I shall freely declare my own resolves. I have leased a small farm just sufficient to qualify me for the exercise of the franchise, in order to assist my country-

men in returning those, and those alone, who will be their friends, instead of what their representatives usually were, their bitterest enemies. I must therefore confess, that after paying the landlord his rent, neither to parson, or proctor, or landlord, or agent, or any other individual, shall I consent to pay, in the shape of tithe or any other tax, a penny which shall go to the support of the greatest nuisance in this or any other country.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXV.

TO THE CATHOLIC CLERGY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

ST. JARLATH'S, FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST,
MAY 6, 1835.

DEAR AND VENERABLE BRETHREN—We are again on the eve of one of those periods so disastrous to the interests of morality and religion that recur occasionally in Ireland. During elections, the minds of many of the faithful are so often loosened from the ordinary restraints of duty, that it is unfortunately looked upon as a time when bribery, perjury, drunkenness, and every species of corruption, are permitted to supplant the ordinary virtues of the people. It is our duty to endeavour to check those mighty evils, filled with the just apprehension of the threat of the prophet, that if the faithful should sin for want of seasonable warning, the judge of the living and the dead “ shall demand their blood at our hands.”*

I am well aware that an apology is sought for those transgressions in the strong temptations held out by men who, as they affect a zeal for the morality of the people, should never hold out any dangerous inducements to sin. The dread of those who might persecute the freeholders for a faithful discharge of their duty, ought to be subdued by the words of the Redeemer, telling us “ not to fear those who can kill the body, but rather to fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell.”†

* Ezekiel, iii, 17, 18.

† Matthew, x, 28.

After filling their souls with this salutary fear which the Gospel inspires, you will not fail to impress upon the people that they risk the loss of their immortal souls by the crimes of perjury and bribery to which I have alluded. Remind them of the inspired admonition, "Speak the truth every one to his neighbour : judge ye truth and judgment : love not false oaths, for these are the things I hate, saith the Lord."* Nay, assure them^t in the words of the same prophet, "that the curse of the Lord shall come to the house of the thief, and to the house of him who sweareth falsely in his name."† Let them not, therefore, give a vote, unless their conscience assures them that they have a real freehold, to the enjoyment of which they have already sworn.

As for bribery, that foul crime that has done so much to corrupt the purity of elections, by debauching the minds of the people, your denunciations of so enormous a sin must be cogent in proportion to its atrocity. The freehold is not a property to be set up for sale. It is held in trust for the benefit of the people, and no man can have a right to traffic upon what is not solely his own, and by such a vile bargain to inflict injury upon the community. There can be no compromise of this truth ; let, therefore, the people be persuaded that whoever receives a bribe directly or indirectly for his vote, is to be excluded from the benefits of the sacraments, until he makes restitution of the money, which might be called the price of the happiness of the poor, the widow and the orphan. No matter through what medium the bribe may be received, no matter under what specious contracts the traffic may be disguised, the Catholic Church detests all such prevarications and evasions ; and, therefore, the saying of St. Augustin is applicable to all such cases : "until restitution is made, the sin is not forgiven." Let those who receive a bribe as the price of their country's happiness, entertain no hope of absolution until they atone for their crime, by restitution of their ill-gotten treasure. When the film with which bribery covers the eyes of the electors is once removed, they will more easily perceive the straight path which duty points out of giving their suffrages to those who shall best promote the interests of religion and the happiness of their country ; for the Scripture assures us "that presents and gifts blind the eyes of judges, and make them dumb in the mouth, so that they cannot correct."‡ When, therefore, that obstruction is once removed, it will be an easy task to convince the freeholders of their duty. In short, when once the hope of bribery, on the one hand, and the fear of unchristian oppression on the other, are taken away, the people will come to the hustings as

* Zachary, viii, 17.

† Zachary, viii, 34.

‡ Ecclesiasticus, xx, 31.

reasonable, intelligent, and free agents ought to come, with a consciousness that they are not the serfs of any man, but the trustees of religion, and that they owe no account, but to God alone, for the use they make of the elective franchise.

It will be your duty to remove the ignorance, or cure the corruption of such voters as would fain persuade themselves that they, indeed, are released from the obligation of serving the community, from gratitude to some great family. Some of those are persons who, though labouring under such lamentable ignorance of the plainest maxim of Christian morality, affect the possession of superior information. Alas ! it is to be feared that, under the abused name of a specious virtue, they strive to cloak their unjustifiable selfishness. It would be bribery, it seems, in a poor man to receive a few pounds for his vote ; and, forsooth, it would be otherwise to receive some hundred pounds, or an equivalent situation, for a son or for a friend, by the transfer of a lot of subservient freeholders. According to such depraved morality, the sin of bribery would be lessened by the magnitude of its amount. Impress then, upon all, that gratitude is an estimable virtue, when exercised in its proper sphere. It has no right, however, to trench upon the other moral and Christian duties. Each one ought to be grateful for a gift when he can be so without injury to others ; but the gratitude that would bring with it public injury, instead of being a virtue, would be robbery and injustice. The gratitude to which I allude means nothing else but because persons who have basely sold their votes received in return a share of the public plunder, they ought still to continue the same system. Past sins, instead of being an incentive to their continuance, ought to furnish the most powerful argument for their expiation. Let those, then, who, through a mistaken gratitude, have given their votes to the enemies of religion and of the people, atone for their transgressions, by doing them justice henceforth, in case they are unable to make a more complete reparation. In matters of duty and of religion the church knows no distinction or respect of persons. You are to treat all with charity, courtesy and respect, according to their rank in society. They, however, are to understand that no station affords an exemption from the duties of justice prescribed by the Christian law, but that the more influence a man possesses, the more he is obliged to use it in leading others to follow his virtuous example. Tell, then, those, if there should be any among your flocks, who were wont, by any unchristian means, to coerce that freedom, which the very word election always supposes, it would be sinful in them to continue a practice, and, should they persevere, to impress on the freeholders that obedience to such commands, contrary to a sense of their own duty, would be a sin against the law of God. And should any be found so ignorant of the respect

they owe religion, as to mistake this inculcation of their bounden duties to the people, as an interference with the rights of any class, they ought to be taught, in return, that no class can have a right to meddle with the consciences of your flocks. There are other considerations connected with this subject, which I should wish to explain to the people, but from which I must forbear, for fear of being too tedious, leaving them to be supplied by your own intelligent and prudent zeal. Such, for example, as the ignorance of some who may fancy, that a bribe is a seasonable God-send, too valuable to be rejected. I have explained the heinousness of such presents. The whole world has not value enough for the loss of one soul; but, should any be so weak, as to consider the subject not so much in the light of duty, as selfish calculation, they ought to reflect, that those who will give the bribe will soon indemnify themselves by subjecting the community to fresh imposts, which would take away the entire amount; whereas, if all virtuously refuse it, they will have representatives who will effect such an improvement in the laws, as must advance the prosperity of the country, and the interests of religion.

After all, I fear that some attempts may be made to annoy the honest people who may discharge their duty. The best chance of escape for them is to perform that duty so well, as to secure the triumph of that franchise, which the constitution gives them for their protection. If they do, they shall never again be molested, and the sale-masters of the votes of the freeholders will quietly acquiesce in the just and peaceful triumph of conscience over corruption, and of the constitution of the country over its enemies.

Should they, however, be exposed to any suffering, you must console them by the assurance that such has been generally the fate of those who fearlessly discharge their duty, "and that those who wish to live piously in Christ suffer persecution."* Let me, however, adapting the beautiful language of the liturgy of the season, exhort you "to strengthen the feeble hands, and confirm the weak knees. Say to the faint-hearted, take courage and fear not. Behold, your God will bring the revenge of recompense."† Exhort them to Christian patience, under whatever sufferings they may endure—telling them, in the language of St. Peter, "For what glory is it if sinning and being buffeted you suffer it; but if doing well you suffer patiently, this is thank-worthy before God. For this is thank-worthy if for conscience towards God a man endure sorrows, suffering wrongfully."‡

"But let them commend their souls in good deeds to their

* II. Tim. iii, 12.

† Isaias, xxxv, 3.

‡ I. Peter, ii, 19, 20.

Creator.”* Praying to you and your respective flocks, an abundant participation in all the blessing of the holy season, allow me to conclude in the language of the Apostle: “Wherefore, dearly beloved, be diligent that you may be found before him unspotted and blameless in peace.”†

I remain, your faithful servant in Christ,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE UNHEEDED DESTITUTION OF THE SUFFERING PEOPLE.

ST. JARLATH’S, FEAST OF ST. ANNE,
JULY 26, 1835.

MY LORD—Six weeks have now elapsed, since I ventured to call your lordship’s attention to the alarming condition of the western peasantry. It were, perhaps, uncourteous not to acknowledge the terms of civility with which the communication was professed to be received. It would be a much more grateful task to be able to convey, in the name of the starving creatures, their gratitude for the realization of those hopes which that and such other documents were calculated to inspire. Truth, however, must not be sacrificed; and though we were amused with repeated promises of relief, it must be confessed they brought to many of the wretched sufferers only the bitter aggravation of disappointment. Need I refer to the various and appalling statements of actual starvation which, during the brief period alluded to, reached the public through letters addressed to the Viceroy or through petitions presented to parliament? Those letters were not couched in any vague generalities, nor did the writers shrink from the most searching inquiries into the startling particulars to which they solemnly and feelingly deposed. No; they pointed in the most definite terms to the scenes of distress, as well as the numbers of the sufferers. They detailed instances of human endurance which those unpractised in such privations

* I. Peter, iv, 19.

† II. Peter, iii, 14.

would think nature unable to sustain, and invited the agents of government to come and witness the work of famine within those hovels where shame and hunger struggled, the latter forcing its victims to go out in quest of food, and the former feeling more imperatively keeping them within doors, lest public decency should be outraged by such exposures. Think you, my lord, that the evil is at an end? No; I shudder at the forms of disease which it is soon likely to assume. The people, unable to contend with a foe to which the mightiest must yield, are already rooting up the unripe stalks of the potato crop, and laying a broader foundation for a famine next year than that which is now passing over.

Again and again the sympathies of the legislature were striven to be enlisted in their favour, by the feeling appeals of Mr. Sharman Crawford, and such other practical and enlightened lovers of their country. The secretary of the government is said as often to have promised the promptest attention to their wants. The sentiment was cheered; the people starved; and, alas! the unfortunate creatures who perished in Burishoole derive no consolation from the applause of this speculative benevolence. There was not a week during that period in which a number of enormous pensions was not paid to individuals, of whose services the world are yet ignorant. And yet that valuable class, by whose exertions and industry those drones are supplied, are abandoned, without any extension of relief, many to the reality, and more to the chances of starvation. Yes, my lord, the spectacle that was exhibited this season along the western coast was one which a Christian philosopher should be proud to contemplate. It taught in living acts those lessons of real Christian charity which you would in vain strive to gather in Oxford or in Cambridge. It exhibited almost an entire population literally and voluntarily renouncing the distinctions of ownership, and, like the primitive Christians, putting their little possessions into a common fund, for the relief of the common misery. Many were known to retrench their scanty meals, in order to share them with their afflicted neighbours, and it is to this heroic self-denial, rather than to any government aid, that we are indebted for the preservation of the lives of the people. Those generous individuals, who, aided by their contributions in mitigating our distress, are entitled to our best acknowledgments. The seasonable supply of potatoes sent by the kind-hearted people of Wexford has called forth, as it merited, the lively gratitude of the suffering inhabitants.

Allow me once more to contrast, for the contrast is too striking to be overlooked, the singular manner in which the people and parsons are treated. A million of money, a sum that requires some analysis to comprehend such a mass, and which is beyond the reach of the comprehension of thousands, is lavished on a

small band of functionaries, though their most sanguine friends could never yet explain one solitary benefit which they conferred on this devoted country. They never manned the fleets of Britain—they have not filled her armies—their brows are not decked with the laurels of her battles. What, then, is that usefulness, which calls forth such sympathy for their imaginary suffering; or what is the vast amount of those services, that can justify such incalculable remuneration? Why, they are the dispensers of law, of which each one's conscience is, according to the true principles of Protestantism, the best interpreter; and they are the expounders of a Bible, which requires no expounder, being a plain and intelligible book, which all can understand!! Behold, then, the range of their ministry; and I put it sincerely to Sir Robert Peel, and the other pious panegyrists of the Irish parsons, whether the people should be suffered to starve, and a body such as I have described be so amply supported? Suppose three millions of money had been accumulated by the wise economy of our ancestors, to sustain, with suitable dignity, the temples and ministers of justice. Suppose that a body of men, schismatic from the usages and practices of the realm, were to pronounce any such authorized expounders an invasion on individual independence; and that they were gravely to dispense such doctrines, while clothed with the ermine, and enjoying the emoluments of the bench. Suppose that, in consequence of such frequent appeals to their own enlightened independence, the people came to the conclusion of the uselessness, nay, the noxiousness, of the modern benchers, and the entire of such anomalous legal establishment, and that some of them took the consistent priests at their word, by taking into their own hands the decisions of the law; whilst the others, who form the mass of the people, preferring the ancient practice, always applied to the old courts of the kingdom, and supported the judges by voluntary contributions, rather than forego those advantages, of which experience had taught them the value. Suppose that between those two numerous classes the modern temples of justice were entirely abandoned, and that the few who crowded round their precincts were persons who were gaping for some of the perquisites of the lonely functionaries, rather than looking for any decision of law, what would be thought of the financial or philosophical talents of the minister who should, at any hazard, secure such a mass of property for such useless judges, at the expense of the entire population? Were a case, such as I have supposed, to occur in any part of the civilized world, how the legislature would ring with ridicule against its madness, and with denunciations against its injustice. Nay, were it practised in the remote regions of the East, it would be no less a subject of severe reprehension, and many of the British journalists would not fail to deplore such barbarism,

and to applaud, with the utmost complacency, the wisdom of their own more happy institutions.

If, besides its own inherent inconsistency, this system of jurisprudence were to mark, by its origin and establishment, the progressive steps of physical and intellectual misfortune through the land—if, with its introduction, the arts had fled, literature disappeared, and a wide and boundless waste of ignorance had announced to the inhabitants the plenitude of its dominion—if to its ruthless sway every ancient record was to be sacrificed, and every ancient remembrance surrendered—if it demanded, for the security of its reign, the abolition of the only language which stretches across the gulf that lies between the modern and the ancient world, and links the present with the by-gone times—if the rack and the gibbet were the wonted engines by which it insinuated the persuasion of its superior excellence—if, after the destruction of its literary monuments, the land itself became waste, and agriculture languished, for want of the outlay of the capital now appropriated to the keepers of the empty courts, but heretofore expended in the employment of the poor and the improvement of a country—if, with a train of associations connected with the supposed legal establishment, as cause and effect, the people were resolved not to pay their money for the perpetuation of such blessings, the resolve could not, assuredly, excite any surprise.

Amidst the variety of your senatorial avocations, your lordship may have condescended to cast a glance at the scenic exhibitions of Exeter Hall. They were quite in keeping with the policy which the apostles of mischief have ever adopted towards Ireland in the hour of her misfortune. The wretched inhabitants of the west of Connaught, exhausted with hunger, supplicated for bread, and those tender-hearted missionaries attempted to drown their cries in the louder and more protracted echoes of the charges of their idolatry. If the potato crop failed, or if the entire of the produce was seized by heartless and unrelenting landlords, Popery was the pregnant source of the mischief. Yes, the spirit of anti-Christian fanaticism has not relaxed in its various transmigrations through successive sectaries, and to-day, as well as in olden times, “should the Tiber overflow its banks, or the Nile withhold its waters, the zealots devoutly exclaim, *Christianos ad Leones.*” Besides their affinity with the more classic Pagans, those missionaries have displayed in their rituals, a semblance with our old Celtic hierarchy, of which they are, probably, unconscious. Some of the plains of our country still bear the names and monuments of those rites, by which children were sacrificed to the oriental divinities. The “field of slaughter” is not, however, a name of mere obsolete tradition; the rites have been renovated in many a Rathcormac.

The cries of the victims have not only run through the country, but the prophetic inspiration of Ireland's cherished bard has been fulfilled, and the lamentations of the widow and the orphan have gone forth, wringing tears of sympathy from many a generous soul in England and Scotland. The force of this kindred feeling has been felt—its contagious propagation would prove fatal to the Irish establishment. It must, therefore, at all hazards, be arrested ; and, therefore, those itinerant prophets, who did not read the Bible in vain, were resolved, like their predecessors in the valley of Jophet, to make a flourish of drums, in order to drown, in the clamour of this artificial war, the cries of the victims who had perished in the “valley of slaughter.”*

But such wily and treacherous artifices can no longer succeed. The *ignis fatuus* of such mountebanks can no longer mislead the intelligence of the English people. They may, like the prophets of Baal, again and again flourish their drums—appropriate emblems of the hollowness of their hearts, and the driftlessness of their clamour. The “No-Popery” cry is, at last, extinct, for ever ; and its last “dying, dying fall” was that which quivered on the lips of one of those tuneful Orpheuses, who soothed, with the last echo of the favourite sound, the fierce passions of the menagerie cased up at Exeter Hall. Britons now feel and appreciate the value of Catholic Emancipation more than the Irish themselves. Till then, they were the dupes of every ecclesiastical hypocrite, who persuaded them that they had no evil to fear but the Papists of Ireland, and the deluge of those doctrines which should, from thence, inundate their country. The Catholics have been, at length, emancipated. Does the Englishman find that the dismal phantoms, with which his mind has been filled by the “No-Popery” parsons, have been realized ? Does he find that the Catholic representatives from Ireland have leagued in any unholy alliance against his rights, or striven to swamp the freedom of the constitution in a flood of arbitrary principles ? No such thing. He finds them foremost amidst the foes of every species of corruption. To their steady and unflinching alliance he is indebted for parliamentary reform. To them he will be now indebted for the lustral waters that are pouring across the stables of municipal corporations. In fine, to their compact and sacred array, the Englishman is indebted for the recal of two successive ministries, that were unceremoniously dismissed, and again respectfully recalled, in accordance with the wishes of the people. These are truths which the English know well. They sink deep into their souls. They are not ungrateful ; and instead of co-operating to perpetuate in Ireland the most disastrous evil with

* See Moore's “History of Ireland,” page 19.

which a nation was ever cursed, they will make a requital for the services they have received, and aid in the achievement of peace, and order, and freedom, those who so nobly have contributed to the establishment of their own. Let, then, those fanatics rave about treatises of theology. Whilst we practically convince our Protestant brethren of our love of our neighbour, of every creed, is it to be imagined that we are to consult those empirics, in the adoption of the books which we may recommend to our clergy? Whatever some old treatises may have been, they are utterly harmless, except by the experiment of exhumation: they have been generally written with ink on leaves that long since mouldered. Our modern apostles are more classical, and seem to pant for the opportunity of writing, like some of their predecessors, their doctrines with an "iron style," and leaving to posterity ineffaceable traces of its deep and deadly incisions.

After the severe condemnation of all our casuists at Exeter Hall, it may be important to ascertain who it is that is in future to guide our theological decisions. No other, it seems, than the saintly Sir Robert Inglis, who has totally lost sight of every earthly object in his charitable solicitude for the souls of the Catholic members of parliament. Nay, he appears to overlook the danger of rashness and presumption, not to talk of falsehood, with which some of the boldest among Protestants confessed their own oaths to be fraught. If a man swears absolutely to a thing which it is impossible for him to know, he exposes himself to the imminent peril of swearing what is false in fact and of incurring the guilt of perjury. Has Sir Robert sufficiently convinced himself that the Mass may not be idolatrous? Has he bestowed sufficient attention on the fulfilment of those University oaths which bound some of their members not to marry, or to those sworn obligations of teaching schools which were annexed to the possession of benefices? But what cares he for all these petty dangers compared with those which beset his Catholic brethren? For their salvation his whole soul yearns; and in the beginning and end of every debate he fulfils his chivalrous vocation by warning the members, if they vote, of the gulf that yawns beneath them. Poor man!! he has yet made no converts; and in defiance of every menace and of every admonition, the Catholic members are following the error of their ways. What a pity that doctrines emanating from such a disinterested source should be utterly disregarded! But to be serious, my lord, you need not fear the desertion of the Catholic members on the church question more than any other. They have intellectual capacities to discuss the nature of an oath, as well as the member for the University, and they have courage to keep a conscience too. Besides their own lights, they have a reverence for the pastors of their church, which no genius supersedes, and which forsook

not an Alfred or a Turenne, in the full meridian of their glory. They know that if they are exposed to danger by their oaths, it would be the duty of those to warn them who ought to speak out and who are aware of the course they are pursuing. Let, then, Sir Robert and the Bishop of Exeter sigh and whine, the Catholic members will only deplore their folly. And should it appear that the baronet himself, like his Pythian predecessors, was only the mouth-piece of some craftier spirits, that lay concealed in the hollow of the tripod, it will doubtless be manifest that some weightier considerations, than a mere puff of inspiration dictated the responses of Sir Oracle.

It is high time, then, that the laws of eternal justice and the real and substantial interests of the people should be preferred to that calculating policy, which hitherto sacrificed them, for the support of a mischievous establishment. The people can no longer be neglected with impunity. They know it is they who fought your battles, filled your fleets, and still feed the manufacturers of England with the produce of their industry; they know, too, that they have been your lordship's best allies in fighting against corruption the battles of reform; and they have intelligence enough to understand that it is not a fair requital of all these services that a useless body should be pampered with gorgeous wealth, and they abandoned, without any sympathy, to starve. This they have endured too often, and with a patience unparalleled in the history of any other nation. That they have not done so this season is, in the estimation of some, one of the greatest crimes of which the poor peasantry could be guilty. Though it is lately become fashionable to reproach the priesthood of Ireland with a tendency to agitation—still, all this could be easily forgiven them, if they did not expose the wretchedness of the people, or if they persuaded them to lie down and starve in peace. But to exhibit so many hundreds without a cow, horse, or any four-footed animal—so many families through the country without a night covering at an average for twenty persons—to represent some of the gentry employing persons to scourge from their gates the unfortunate victims of their own rapacity, and others encumbering their mercenary relief with conditions of such cruel and complicated usury as to render it a prospective curse, is one of the most treasonable acts of which the Catholic clergy could be guilty. At the recurrence of an election, when there is question of debauching the integrity of the people, the coffers are freely opened to effect that immoral purpose. No matter what perjuries may stare the guilty dispensers of this mammon in the face; they are hardened enough to brave all such terrors. But famine threatens—no money appears. The only fear is the exposure of certain classes; and better far, it has been murmured, that

such nuisances should be entirely swept away than that persons unaccustomed to such treatment should be writhing under the indignant tongues of British senators, or suffering from the equally bitter pen of British journalists.

Can, then, the British public wonder that the political power of such men has for ever passed away? Can they wonder that they cannot lead any longer their wretched serfs to the political market-place? Allow me to say, that they appear to possess little consistency who to-day lash the landlords of Ireland as the most grinding, unfeeling, rapacious, and oppressive, body on earth, and to-morrow inveigh with equal warmth, against the stupidity, ingratitude and recklessness of all natural ties, which turned the infatuated tenantry against their amiable and kind-hearted protectors. Let those journalists, then, retract all the articles of impeachment with which their papers have teemed against them; let them resolve and write that instead of being hard-hearted and persecuting, they are the kindest, most gentle and compassionating men to be found; or let them cease to wonder at the loss of their moral influence. The cause of reform, then, has nothing to dread from their noisy and vaunting preparations. They have been weighed, and found wanting, and their power has passed away; nor have they yet evinced any symptoms of contrition or satisfaction sufficient to warrant the hope of recovering the lost favour of the people.

As it is, then, in the honest hands of the latter that political power is lodged, it would be impolicy as well as injustice to sacrifice them longer to the landlords or the parsons. Whilst the landlords could barter the representation to the highest bidder it is no wonder if the people, without a voice or influence in the councils of the nation, should be reduced to absolute servitude. As they have now a voice, they will most loyally and constitutionally use it on being left a portion of the produce of their own labour, rather than that all should gorge those absentees who have hitherto unmercifully drained their very vitals. The extent to which the ancient Scotch and Irish recognised the claims of kindred has been often made a theme of ridicule. I must confess there is something ridiculous in self-sacrifices which the Irish still make, whilst they should loudly and imperatively demand relief from other sources. Their exercise of the domestic affections must ever command the admiration of every generous mind. But it is too bad that their feelings should be continually exposed to this specious of martyrdom, in order that my Lord Limerick should enjoy the luxury of expatiating, among the cold sentimentalists of the high circles in London, on the warm-hearted kindness of the poor peasantry of Ireland. I can assure his lordship that a large centage on his and other estates, for the benefit of the paupers which are scattered over them, will not at all dry up the fountains of domestic

charity. Some writers from Limerick have conjectured why his lordship is so adverse to any provision for the poor. Whoever travels through the extensive district between the Pontoon and Ballina, may gather additional reasons for this reluctance. The lake, the hills, the woods, the mountains would gladden his heart, if he were not to be saddened by the humiliating contrast of the misery of the noblest of God's creatures. When Popery was in its zenith in Ireland, Lough Cee resounded with the devout strains of the harp of St. Columba; along the banks of Lough Con you may often hear the wailings of the untenanted cottier mingle with the hoarse lash and the more terrific imprecations of the driver; but no hallowed sounds of thanksgiving or of joy are heard like those of the Saint of Iona to breathe along its waters.

In concluding this letter, I may be allowed to make one or two reflections on the serious misapprehension of some well-meaning Protestants. We have no feeling of hostility whatever towards them on account of their religious opinions. We quarrel with no man on account of his creed; nor is he, whatever may be the complexion of his faith, an object of our alienation. But we complain, nor shall we cease to do so whilst the cause continues, of the political injustice with which religion has been forcibly connected. We complain, that a vast property should be exclusively devoured by a few ecclesiastical vultures, whilst the many, for whose physical and moral nutriment it was intended, should, in every sense of the word, be bereft of its benefit. Let the Protestants propagate their religion as largely and as freely as they please, but let it be in a manner that will prove its purity to the world. They talk of the revenues of Catholic priests. Why do not they, if they have any reliance on their office, trust to the same resources? Some talk that the effect of reducing the establishment will be to establish the Catholic religion in Ireland. What! establish the Catholic religion in Ireland!! They might as well talk of resolving to plant the stars in the heavens, or of plucking them out of the firmament. The Catholic religion is too deeply established in Ireland to be rooted out. It has been established, and fostered, and sustained by the finger of Him whose power no government can frustrate, and whose councils no legislature can control. If the Protestant establishment is founded on a similar basis, why not trust to a similar protection? Let it, like the Catholic church, flourish by its own vigour, or fall by its corruption. As for the legislature, it has already done enough for the establishment. There has been no lack of bribes, of forfeitures, of confiscations, and all the grim artillery of penal laws, so well described by Burke, which had so long frowned upon its enclosures. Yet all were of no avail. The tree, though fed with abundance of manure, has produced nought but barrenness. It is not deserving the toil or expenditure of any further

cultivation. It ought, therefore, to be left to its own fate, unassailed and unsupported. It has had sufficient time to thrive, but though its roots have been saturated with abundance of blood, no dews from heaven have descended on its branches. Without at all, then, interfering with the purity of religion, the barren trunk ought to be abandoned to the decay that has come upon it, until, without any stroke of external violence, but by the mere weight of its own caducity, it perishes from the land which it has so long and so lamentably encumbered.

I have the honour to be, your lordship's very obedient servant,

Y^A JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXVII.

TO THE RIGHT REV. DR. BLOOMFIELD, LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

ACHIL ISLAND, NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN,
SEPTEMBER 8, 1835.

MY LORD—The remoteness of this island beyond the reach of his Majesty's mail, will, I trust, justify my tardiness in acknowledging your lordship's attention. The interesting occupation, too, in which I have been engaged, guarding this distant portion of the flock from the poison of errors, confirming the many in the faith, and receiving back into the fold the few who were straying around its enclosure, will, no doubt, plead in my favour, as an additional apology. Whatever may be your lordship's opinion of the painful labour of such duties, I can sincerely assure you that the gratification derived from them is such as could not be supplied by any correspondence, however exalted. Yet, as those busy reporters that invade the sacred recesses of legislation, have represented you as pouring the viol of your unmeasured wrath upon an humble and unoffending individual, who could not by his presence disarm your anger, he must avail himself of the only medium left him of bringing his censor to a becoming feeling of the fatuity of his accusation.

It must be that the whole tenor of the observations ascribed to you, regarding the extent, the usefulness, the resources, the ministers and the opponents of the church establishment in



Ireland, is nought but fabrication. It would ill comport with those modest acknowledgments of liability to error, which so amiably characterize all the effusions of Protestant Prelates, to assume at once such a tone of fierce intolerance and dictatorial dogmatism, as runs through those supposed parliamentary lucubrations. It is impossible that on a subject in which your sources of knowledge were scanty and imperfect, you could hazard such an assertion as that the Protestant religion was spreading in Ireland. In the days of Lord Farnham and Captain Gordon, such impudent assertions might have gained credence. In latter times, commissioners of unimpeachable veracity have sealed their refutation. What? the Protestant religion increasing! And what is the evidence to establish its progress? Eight hundred and sixty parishes without fifty Protestants, and not one solitary individual professing that faith to be found in a number of parishes amounting to one hundred and a half. If from such data you deduce the spread of Protestantism, it must be that you attach to numbers the idea of negative quantities.

But instead of numerical figures, you have discovered an infallible standard to ascertain its diffusion. What is this novel criterion by which the public is to estimate the growth of Protestantism in this country? The increase of parsons, glebe-houses, and churches since the Union!! It is true we have had an increase of parsons, many of whom had not even a clerk to answer "Amen," until he returned from the Catholic chapel. These parsons, without flocks, were snugly lodged in glebe-houses built at the people's expense for their accommodation. Does your lordship call this an increase of the Protestant religion? If so, the calculations of those who estimate the extent of Catholicity from the numbers of its followers, must be erroneous. For of the congregations that are seen on Sundays thronging from the four quarters of the heavens to adore their God in the sacrifice of the Mass, there are many that have not a roof to shelter them; and for none would the amplest area of any modern Catholic church be sufficiently capacious. Those are not I suppose to supply any evidence, that it is the Catholic religion, and it alone, which has been established in the hearts of the people. No, my lord, cold untenanted walls, lifeless stones, un-trodden floors, and deserted boxes are your symbols of religion. The hearts of the people, the living temples of the Holy Ghost, and the tongues of the myriads who, quickened with his spirit, celebrate his praise in the cities, in the towns, in the valleys and through the mountains, are as nought. You may, then, boast of your parsons as a proof of the spread of Protestantism. I shall exhibit the people as evidence to the contrary, compared to whom the parsons are but as a few drops in the vastness

of the ocean. And as for your churches, so far from being any evidence of the growth of the Protestant religion, their steeples, like the London Monument, are so many “tall and lying bullies,” erected to create a delusive belief of the establishment of the Protestant religion, in places where a vestige of it was never to be seen.

Conscious, however, of the fallacy of your views regarding the extent of Protestantism, you encourage the hope of its prospective diffusion, and suggest that all the measures of the legislature should be so shaped as if Ireland “were one day to become Protestant.” When will that happy day, the object of so many delusive prophesies, arrive? If the propagators of error have no retribution to fear until the day that Ireland becomes Protestant, well, indeed, may they mock the day of judgment, and rest secure from their delinquency. But such topics are really too ridiculous for refutation. Are your lordship’s eyes alone so infatuated as not to perceive, in the signs of the times, the evidence of its failure instead of harbingers of its propagation? Your church establishment may flourish for some time longer in England, as being more deeply rooted in the country. In Ireland it has never sunk below the surface of the soil. Not all the English Bishops, with all the missionaries they could employ, and all the treasures of mammon with which they could so liberally supply them, would make the least advance in the fulfilment of your lordship’s expectations. There is something in the very soil and atmosphere of Ireland uncongenial to the growth of error. Its people are too quick, and too intellectual in their conceptions, as well as too lofty and abstracted in their hopes, ever to bend their necks to the ignominious yoke of an establishment, which offers nought beyond the prospects of a carnal, political paradise to its votaries.

Witness, for example, the recent abortive exertions of the Achil Missionary Society, that was to renovate the face of this island. Not only were the exaggerations of fancy put in requisition, but all the resources of falsehood were resorted to, to muster a crusade for the spiritual conquest of the inhabitants. Before the dizzy eyes of the holy impostors, not one, but two hundred Achils floated on the Atlantic, and England was repeatedly traversed to procure money for the salvation of the hundreds of thousands with which those imaginary islands were peopled. New houses rose, a spiritual colony was planted, moneys were expended without measure, and though hunger, and nakedness, and famine were constant allies of which imposture availed itself, still it could make no advances in this island. In vain was it attempted to seduce the people from the faith of their fathers. A few strolling strangers, such as could be appropriately grouped with the fathers of the first reformation, was all they could enlist in

their ranks. The contemptuous scorn with which the natives treated the pretensions of those ignorant fanatics, if adequately conveyed to your lordship, would considerably sober your enthusiastic anticipations. Some of the brotherhood have already fled from the bitter derision of the people—others are preparing to follow their example—finding or feigning a convenient apology in the unwholesomeness of the atmosphere. The Achil mission is already another tale of the numerous failures of fraud and fanaticism; and its buildings, now unfinished, are like the Tower of Babel—a monument of the folly and presumption of their architects. Whoever, then, in future should contribute to such a project, will be not only the dupe of delusion, but the willing agent of imposture.

Your lordship is reported to have gravely advanced, as an argument for the enormous wealth of the Irish establishment, that without the pomp with which it surrounds the ministers of religion, their instructions could not fall with any force among the humbler classes of society. This is doubtless a small infusion of sarcastic irony with which the reporters deemed it necessary to season the dullness of the production. Enormous wealth a necessary ally of the Christian religion!! The pride which it generates an indispensable precursor of truth!! And the luxurious indolence with which it unnerves its votaries, the most appropriate instrument to give force and efficacy to their instructions!! St. Paul, and perhaps his best imitator, as well as admirer, in eloquence, in purity and in the privations of life—St. John Chrysostom, may now retire from the ranks of Christian orators, of which they were the acknowledged leaders, and give way to those who assert that a golden calf is a more potent instrument of persuasion. No one familiar with the records of history, or the feelings of the human heart, can believe in such speculations. There are, and ever will be in society some unprincipled individuals for whom wealth will have attractions, no matter with what objects it may be associated. But with regard to the convictions of the heart, it is truth, accompanied by its practical illustration in conduct, which alone can lead them captive.

What aid did they ever derive from the splendour of wealth, who achieved the most signal triumphs for the benefit of mankind? To whom, under Providence, are we still indebted for our Christianity? To two poor and untitled individuals,* a hermit and a monk—of whom the one, by the energy of his voice, and the charm of his virtue—and the other, by the burning spirit which he flung into his writings, awoke Europe from its torpor, and saved its inhabitants from the licentious

* Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard.

dominion of the Koran. Was it with the weight of their purse the zealous disciples of Loyola won and exercised their peaceful reign over the once happy people of Paraguay? But as such historical retrospects may not be so agreeable to your lordship's taste, I shall confine myself to our own times, in which there is less of enthusiasm, and more of calculation. I will then seriously put it to your lordship, is the persuasive influence that still sways the intelligent mass of society measured by the quantity of wealth that is in possession of the teachers? No, it is not still so degenerate; and though avarice has still silently worked its corrupting way into large portions of it, the great body has happily been proof against the infection. Is your lordship aware that an humble Catholic curate in Ireland, with only £30 a year, exercises more of that exalted influence which proceeds from the mysterious communion of mind, than does, with all his untold wealth, the Protestant Primate of all Ireland? I have myself witnessed, in two remarkable instances, what little importance an auditory attaches to the possession or privation of worldly rank or riches, in the dispensers of Christian morality.

The one was on the anniversary of this very festival of the Blessed Virgin, when the august sovereign of those realms, surrounded in Westminster Abbey by the ancient nobles of the land, and encircled with all the magnificence which so interesting a spectacle could call forth, entered into a sworn covenant to promote the happiness of his people. The second was when another monarch, and likewise the father of the Christian world, with the princes and prelates of his court around him, as also the bishops whom reverence towards their centre drew from every quarter of the Catholic church, assembled in the Vatican to prepare with due devotion for the celebration of the Christian Passover. A discourse on the respective duties of the assembled auditory, formed a part of each of these solemnities. The one was delivered by a prelate of exalted rank and supercilious bearing, whose full and corpulent frame, unwasted by fasts or vigils, attested the sincerity of his belief in the superstition of such practices. It was Dr. Bloomfield, the Protestant Bishop of London—the other by a Capuchin, than whom nothing could more strongly contrast with the former figure. The feet, almost bare, were bound by a few latchets to their scanty sandals; a coarse, dark, flowing garment was wrapped by a leathern girdle round his emaciated body; the sinews upon his attenuated wrists and fingers were seen to rise like reeds upon a column; and the fulness of the tonsure, which his downcast head had rendered visible, manifestly revealed how completely he had got rid of all the vanities of the world. The effect of their discourses corresponded with the striking opposition of their characters—the one, conscious of the obligations which he owed to the powers of this

world for his elevation, seemed disposed to return the compliment by a kind accommodation to its maxims, as if his auditory were adjuring him in the language of the prophet, to "speak unto them pleasing things." He appeared to acquiesce in their amiable requisition. No abrupt invectives against fashionable vice interrupted the smooth current of his sermon ; no awful visions from another world broke on the tranquil slumbers of his audience. A cold, unimpassioned harangue, such as could have been composed by Epictetus, was addressed to an auditory impatient for its conclusion ; nor was there a single stroke depicting the beauty of chastity, or the terrors of judgment, which could remind one of the triumphs of an apostle over the illusions of a court, or over the combined influence of sensuality and pride. On the contrary, the other came forward as one whose "conversation was in heaven," and who, being abstracted from the influence of the world, was resolved not to lend himself to its caprices. Each word was a warning sent from a superior spirit, and though there were present those whose lives were worthy of the pure and primitive times, the most pious could not but feel the awful influence of the holy man when he denounced the more terrible punishments that awaited the high and mighty delinquents who in church or in state forgot the obligations of mercy to the poor.

To persons whose ears and minds are long attuned to the simpering notes and soft ideas of perpetual gratification, it will appear strange that such an exhibition of pulpit eloquence could still be tolerated. To the poor and oppressed people of Ireland, who feel the direful effects of flattery on the great, it is equally a subject of poignant regret that the wholesome, and the bitter truths of religion, do not find their way into the fastidious ears of many of the legislators. With such an accommodating moral discipline as I have described, I am not surprised at the infatuation that has characterized the recent measures of the peers. What wonder that they should reject the corporation reform, when they grow up with such hereditary notions of their own irresponsibility ? It is not surprising that they should reject the Catholic marriage bill, and punish with unmerited rigour an unoffending offspring. In short, not to waste time in prompting attention to all their wayward and capricious movements, there is one consolation, that their bad effect must be neutralized by their own folly. Their rejection of the tithe bill should make us forget all their previous hostility to truth and justice, and fill us with thankfulness for the wisdom of their resolves. Do not, my lord, henceforward accuse me or any other innocent individual of designs to subvert the Protestant establishment. All our designs are innocuous, compared to your own acts. You charge me with characterizing the

establishment with the odious names of *vampire*, and *bloodsucker*, and *Juggernaut*. I have never loaded it with those offensive epithets. It is Doctor Bloomfield who has done so—and if it be true that “they best can paint it who have known it best,” let those who dislike the picture charge him, and not me, with the correctness of the delineation. It is not *our* words or writings, then, but their own deeds, that are hastening the dissolution of the establishment. Yes, such deeds as those of Rathcormac, are hurrying it on to its fate.

And not only those, but other deeds as dark, to which, in obedience to the injunctions of the Apostle, I shall not give utterance, but to which the gentlemen of the long robe, not so forbearing, have given a scandalous publicity. Those are the deeds which, united with the decrees of the Lords, have doomed the establishment to destruction. Already the parsons are commencing the practices of the Catholic religion: fasting is becoming a favourite observance. There is no longer any clamorous controversy about communion under both kinds, since vestries cannot tax the heterodox parishioners for the wine which would administer spiritual comfort to the faithful. Nay, hateful as celibacy appeared to the Protestant churchmen, they are beginning to agree with Malthus, that it would be unjust to be burdening society with an unprovided offspring. For all these benefits allow us to thank your lordship and your brother peers. With one accord the people of Ireland have resolved to pay no tithes in any shape, whether to landlords or parsons; they are determined to persevere in that resolution; one year more will settle the question for ever; and, as you and the lords have adjourned it, you will be entitled to the credit of having effectually contributed to the slow and natural demise of the parsons, and the extinction of the Protestant church.

I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER.

ST. JARLATH'S, FEAST OF ST. RAPHAEL,
OCTOBER 24, 1835.

"Religionis non est religionem cogere."—TERTULLIAN.

SIR—As your liberal journal has been made, I am sure unintentionally, the vehicle of a gross calumny upon me, you will deem it, I trust, but an act of justice to publish its refutation. I allude to an extract, which appeared in the *Courier* of the 16th of October, from a pamphlet of a Rev. Mr. Stanley, regarding religious education in Ireland. Among many things in that publication, more deserving of commendation than of censure, he wantonly introduces my name, for the purpose of the most offensive and gratuitous slander, in the support of which there is not offered one particle of evidence. After historically stating the odious practices of torture and persecution, which have cast such a stain upon Protestants and Catholics of former times, he adds: "If one were to judge by his language, Dr. Mac Hale, the titular Archbishop of Tuam, may be one of those who cling to such obsolete doctrines in all their odious integrity."

This must be allowed to be a heavy impeachment, especially coming from one who affects a tone of peculiar candour and moderation. Had it been uttered or written by any of those practised slanderers, with whose effusions the columns of the *Times* and *Standard* are daily teeming, I should pass it over, as I have done many similar calumnies. But such an observation from the rector of Alderly is calculated, if not met, to do the more mischief: since his little work is, with many imperfections, a wonderful effort of liberality, amidst the rancorous bigotry that pervades the writings of almost all the English and Irish parsons.

In the name of a large portion of the Catholics of Ireland, over whose opinions I possess some influence, from my station, as well as in the name of the honest British Protestants, who may be misled by the assertion, I solemnly call upon Mr. Stanley, to state his reason for so foul an insinuation. Should he not satisfy a requisition so reasonable on my part, and so imperative on his, the public must not think him entitled to their confidence. That

“may be,” in which he insinuates his charge, is anything but a manly or Christian mode of aggression. A man may be anything, for aught another can know of the deep and mysterious thinkings of his mind. But such thoughts are not the object of the reward or punishment of any earthly tribunal. It is one’s outward acts or language alone that can warrant a positive judgment on his opinions. Now, I fearlessly appeal to all the spoken and written language of my life, and challenge Mr. Stanley, or any other person, to find a word which can justify the charge, that I *may* be an advocate of persecuting any human being, for speculative religious opinions. On the contrary, it is a doctrine which I abhor from my soul; it is one which I have uniformly reprobated. If ever I might have indulged in any peculiar warmth of language, it was when the odious doctrines or practices of religious persecution called forth merited denunciation. Again I challenge Mr. Stanley, or any other who chanced to read a line that I ever wrote, or hear a word that I ever uttered, to find in them any leaning to such odious opinions. Persecution of every kind has always called forth my severest censure, nor has it ever been qualified, but by expressions of pity for those who might have been ever betrayed into so cruel and unchristian a practice.

What is Mr. Stanley’s pretended evidence? Some epithets, which I am supposed to have applied to the Established Church in Ireland, taken from the parliamentary speech of the Bishop of London. Now, I must protest against my opinions being viewed through the distorting medium of any enemy, but especially a Protestant bishop. It is a maxim that no one should suffer twice for the same crime, and, as I have already brought to judgment his lordship of London, for his unwarrantable calumnies, I shall, for the present, forbear any further infliction. But, in reality, the distorted words, which the bishop ascribed to me, so far from warranting Mr. Stanley’s inference, are rather demonstrative of the horror in which I hold persecution. I have denounced the tithes, as the prolific fountain from which blood has copiously flowed through Ireland. I have held up the Church *Establishment*, as entitled to anything but affection from the people. In all this I have been but the feeble echo of the louder and more indignant denunciations of abler men, who have raised England, Scotland, and Ireland, from the lethargy of their delusion, and called forth the sympathies of the world, in reprobating such a system. And for thus denouncing tyranny—for thus pointing the public indignation against cruelties, committed in the name of religion—for thus advocating the just principle, that no one is bound to pay others, for continually abusing and insulting his religious creed—I am exhibited by a meek minister of the Gospel, as one of those who still cling to the antiquated doctrines of per-

secution. If such be the premises from which he draws his conclusions, he must have the merit of discovering some hitherto unknown laws of reasoning.

Having done with his unwarranted attack upon myself, I shall say but little on the merit of his production. Compared to the splenetic and ferocious calumnies of the whole tribe of the fanatical fudges, it is a pamphlet of some merit. However, the writer makes a very erroneous estimate of its value, if he imagines, whilst the odious monopoly and monstrous injustice of the Establishment are perpetuated, that his arguments can make the impression which he benevolently anticipates. Nay, more, should it be his object, by his smooth and conciliating language, to reconcile the people of Ireland to the abominable Church Establishment, he is but a covert advocate for the continued persecution, which he so strongly and justly reprobates. You cannot well complain of any system which you contribute to uphold. You cannot complain of the cruelties of any monster whilst you minister to its support. Nor can Mr. Stanley or any other complain of the folly of antiquated doctrines of persecution, whilst they endeavour to fence against public exposure the injustice of ecclesiastical monopoly. He has drawn up a *catalogue raisonné* of analogies between the Catholic and Protestant Churches. He has striven to narrow the gulf that lies between them, and to bring them into closer and more Christian approximation. It is not to be imagined that I regret such charitable labours. On the contrary, I should rejoice that the most repulsive systems of religion were brought into an identity of truth and benevolence. I am glad that he has taught the good Protestants of England, that the difference between their religion and that of Rome was not as great as they imagined. This remark I must accompany with two others equally important, of which I owe the one to my own sincere conviction—the other, to my respect for the religious feelings of my dissenting brethren. Whilst I rejoice that the difference is not so great as they imagined, I must deplore that there is a disagreement on many serious and all-important subjects. But again, in doing so, I must remark, that it is without any feeling of the least unkindness to any human being.

It is in vain, however, that you strive to persuade people, that the pass between their religions is narrow, if you advocate that, by which the narrowest channel will appear indefinitely widened. I have often seen every tenet of the Catholic religion advocated by some distinguished Protestant polemic. I pledge myself—and I make the pledge solemnly and advisedly—that should the day come when the tone of the public mind will be so calm as to value such discoveries, I shall prove every article of the Catholic faith by the testimonies of Protestant writers. Why have we not done

so hitherto? Because we had too deep a knowledge of the force of human temptation, to be amusing ourselves with such experiments. It is here the rector of Alderly is deceived, or wishes to deceive others. Does he imagine that the Tories of England will become enamoured of the Catholic faith, by persuading them that it was from its rich and gorgeous canvass the painters of the Reformation borrowed whatever there was of excellence in their own? Does he imagine that they prefer the Church of England, because it happens to be the nearest to that of Rome, and because it is “less deformed, because reformed the least?” Does he imagine, in short, that they would become attached to the Catholic religion, though he were to show there was no difference between it and the pretended reformed faith; but that they were both, in every form of outline, like opposite rocks, which some sudden shock had separated? Little does he know of the heart of man, or the history of his kind, if he indulges in such hopes. He must, before his reasoning reach the heart, remove the obstructions that stand in the way. Does he know that former governments wished to plant Ireland with colonies of Jews, or Turks, rather than have it peopled by Catholics? If, then, by the showing of Mr. Stanley (and Mr. Stanley is perfectly orthodox in the supposition), the Church of England is more like that of Rome than any other separated conventicle, it cannot be that a love of religion prompted the persecution of the Catholics of Ireland. No; it was pelf—it was plunder—it was spoliation. And it is pelf, and plunder, and spoliation, though now disguised under legal forms, that prompt the continued and untiring persecution of the Catholics. Let me suppose that Catholicity, and monopoly, and the power of the few, were on one side, and that Protestantism, and poverty, and the proscription of the many were on the other, who could doubt of the position which would be adopted by the Biblicals, and the Tories? To attempt, then, to disarm their tyranny, by favourable representations of the Catholic religion, is a hopeless task. The only method of doing it effectually, is to annihilate the monopoly on which they fatten. Hence, I attach but little value to the learned labours of Mr. Stanley. Lactantius said once, he could collect a body of sound morality from the scattered sentences of pagan writers. So could I gather the body of Catholic theology from the several admissions of Protestant controversialists. It will be high time to enter on this hallowed mission of peace, and charity, and reconciliation, when we shall all meet on the ground of political equality. Then I promise that our dissensions shall cease. Then the people of England shall know that the No-Popery cry was an artificial clamour, kept up by interested and unbelieving bigots, to cheat them out of their property and their freedom. To put down, then, that

spirit of persecution, which the rector of Alderly deplores, we must take away the tithes—the accursed aliment that feeds it. Let every man in the empire who loves true religion and Christian charity, but echo the same sentiment: the reign of tyranny and Toryism will be at an end; and it will not be difficult, with the blessings of Providence, to smoothe the way to a general reconciliation.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

DUBLIN, FEBRUARY 12, 1838.

MY LORD—A declaration ascribed to Lord Lansdowne in the *Freeman's Journal* of this day has filled my mind with serious alarm for the purity and freedom of the Catholic religion in Ireland. It is needless to allude to the statement of his intention to forward the suggestions recommended for adoption by the education commissioners. At present I have not leisure, on the eve of my return to my diocese, to enter into all the bearings of the question of the system of education, with a fullness deserving its importance. It is not less vital than the questions regarding the veto on the appointment of Catholic bishops, or the pensioning of the Catholic clergy, which have long and repeatedly occupied the deliberations of the Catholic bishops. It must then excite the surprise, and alarm the fears of the faithful, that any minister should declare his resolve to act on a report essentially connected with the religion of the Irish people, on which the bishops could not have pronounced an opinion, and into the grounds of which they had not time to inquire. I should, therefore, beg of your lordship to pause in the career of legislation, until the sentiments of the Catholic bishops and clergy of Ireland are sufficiently ascertained on the benefits or evils of the system,

and its practical operation. I take occasion to address your lordship thus briefly to remove a delusion under which many members of the legislature manifestly labour. They seem to be under an impression that it is competent for them, through the agency of boards of their selection, to assume and exercise complete control over the education—even the religious education—of the people. That is an error, which would be as fatal to the interests of the state, as it would be to the purity of the Catholic religion. It is but right to acquaint your lordship that the Catholic bishops, and the Catholic bishops alone, have the right to regulate the choice of the books out of which the faithful are to draw the nutriment of piety and sound doctrine. It would be a lamentable day for Ireland that books of piety were to be regulated by the devotional taste of those alone, to whom any government would wish to confide the spiritual care of the people. Could I transfer this right, or delegate my duty of vigilance to another, I should gladly resign the trust to any one or more of my brethren in the hierarchy. But every bishop is entrusted by the Holy Ghost, and by the successor of St. Peter, with the peculiar care of his own flock. I beg leave, therefore, to assure Lord Stanley, and others who would wish to subject the Catholic Church to the influence of the ministers of the day, that to no authority on earth, save the Pope, shall I submit the books from which the children in my diocese shall derive their religious instruction. On the disproportioned number of Catholic and Protestant commissioners—on the lectures to be given in the training of the masters—on the recent number of inspectors, and their qualifications and duties—on the want in the board of a fair representation of the different localities of Ireland—but, above all, on the mass of important evidence which I have gleaned from the voluminous reports regarding the recent education inquiry—I shall forbear any remarks until my resumption of the subject. I must, however, not forget to remark that the attention of the public is alive to the dark and mysterious nature of the office which is to be exercised by those foreign functionaries, some of the new inspectors—all forsooth for the preservation of the faith of the people, and the legitimate influence of their pastors!! The Catholic clergy will not, I hope, omit to inspect the English or Scotch puritan inspectors. In the meantime, deprecating any interference with the temporal titles or revenues of which the Protestant bishops are so jealous, and assuring your lordship that it is assumed only in conformity with the primitive practice, before titles or benefices were known in the Catholic Church, I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,

JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXX.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER,
FEBRUARY, 22, 1838.

MY LORD—The imminent danger to the interests of religion with which the present system is fraught, prompts me to redeem, without delay, my promise of directing your lordship's attention to the subject of National Education. Hitherto it has been tried as a mere experiment—not, however, without some of the distrust and apprehension which the anomalous formation of the board, and the principle on which it was founded, naturally gave rise to. Let it be recollected, that the present system of education was never hailed by the Catholics of Ireland as a positive benefit. Coming from a friendly government, anxious to confer a favour, it was tolerated as less obnoxious than the Kildare-street Society, which the government was obliged, at length, to abandon, after lingering a baneful existence of near twenty years. In the commencement of its career, that society was, like the present system, specious and delusive; it enlisted in its support men of integrity and virtue. Like the present system, it was denounced as too conciliatory to Catholics by the bigotry of those who cannot be satisfied with anything less than the perversion of the entire body, or their consignment again to all the intellectual privations which they were so long fated to endure. This hostility of many of the Protestants left some of the Catholics long insensible to its danger. A similar opposition, from the same quarter, to the national board, has had a similar effect of disarming their fears, as if, indeed, between the Catholic church and the extreme position which may be taken by Lord Roden, or the Bishop of Exeter, there was not ample space for many an insidious foe to make inroads on its doctrine. If, then, we are to rest satisfied with the National Board because it does not satisfy the Protestant bigots, the same line of argument must plead in favour of the Kildare-street Society, and reconcile the Catholics of Ireland to its legislative restoration.

But though the timid and the time-serving urged the arguments of expediency in favour of their plausible system, the pastors of the Catholic Church, at length alarmed at its danger,

conveyed to their respective flocks their own just apprehensions. They petitioned parliament against the society, and prayed for a portion of the public funds to be placed at the disposal of Catholics, for the education of that large mass of the people who recognised their spiritual authority. Again they petitioned, but petitioned in vain; and, in despite of their repeated prayers, the Kildare-street Society would have still flourished, to their annoyance, had the freeholders of the country not wrought a tardy persuasion in the parliament, of the utter unfitness of that society to promote national education. Yes, it was at the general election in May, 1831, that the freeholders made it a condition with the candidates for their favour that they would oppose any government which, under the guise of educating their children, would carry on a treacherous persecution against the Catholics of Ireland. It is not, then, to the spontaneous benevolence of a Whig government we are indebted for the extinction of the Kildare-street Society. No, whether Whigs or Tories, you are all equally hostile to the Catholic religion. Such was the fidelity of the humble but heroic patriots, who are persecuted or abandoned by the very persons who are reaping the fruits of their sacrifices, that achieved this national blessing. Nor will they be wanting, on the recurrence of a similar opportunity, to require similar terms from the members of parliament, and to insist that, if they are denied their other national rights, they must at least have the religious education of their children free, without being forced through the suspicious mediums of government commissions.

It was necessary to glance briefly at the last stage of the Kildare-street Society, and the circumstances under which it disappeared, to enable the public to form a just estimate of the inauspicious introduction of its successor, the present board. Had the government been in reality disposed to do justice to the Catholics of Ireland, they would have listened to the petition of the Catholic bishops, praying for separate grants for the education of their flocks. Their numbers, their poverty, and their unimpeachable fealty to their sovereign, gave them a claim to the attention of the legislature. The tithes of the entire kingdom, and six hundred thousand acres of church land, formed, surely, an ample fund for the education of the small section of Protestants. The monopoly of those funds, originally destined for the general mass of the people, should have given additional cogency to their claims on the justice of parliament. The grant would be amply requited by the diffusion of religious peace, and a corresponding feeling of gratitude: but such simple counsels did not suit the cabinet, and the policy which was first tried by the apostate Julian, and, after a long interval, adopted by Joseph, and since pursued by the most despotic governments in Europe,

finally prevailed. The people must be taught that the religious instruction which was hitherto derived from the apostles, through their successors, is to be placed under the control of the ministers of a secular government. A board is accordingly formed, well fitted in the machinery of its construction, to carry out the views of the minister. If it were framed on fair principles of representation, we should have six Catholics for one Protestant composing the board, being nearly the proportion of their respective numbers. But such a board might not be a pliant instrument for the political projects which the other education societies had failed to achieve. It must, therefore, have an overwhelming preponderance of Protestant influence, with just as much of Catholic representation as can never equal the majority continually opposed to it, whilst its appearance in the board may inspire that body with confidence. However, not to alarm the jealousy of the Catholics, this majority is said to be on the principle of representing various religious denominations:—one a Socinian, another a Calvinist, and three orthodox church-of-England men, as if it had not already in its gorgeous establishment sufficient protection. Such was the dexterous contrivance with which the materials of the board were apparently balanced, on the model, I must presume, of the pre-established harmony of Leibnitz, as if, forsooth, all sections of Protestantism were not combined in a common league against the Catholic Church, and, I must own, not inconsistently, since the Catholic Church equally proscribes them all. Those Protestant members (for I shall call them by that generic name, which characterizes all Dissenters from Catholicity) are praised by some as gentlemen of the most liberal cast of thinking; by others they are denounced as the bigoted adherents of their respective creeds. Perhaps they might with more justice be divided into both classes. However, it would be a driftless discussion, since the indifference of the one would have as fatal an influence on the religion of Catholic children, as the decided hostility of the others.

Of the board there are two members, one an English, and the other a Scotch gentleman, and each zealously representing the established religion of his native country. Doctor Whately, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, is well known for his publications against the religion of the Catholic people. I should not quarrel with any gentleman who conducts religious controversy as a fair and honourable opponent. But the Catholics of Ireland should be cautious in entrusting the education of their children to one who owes his archiepiscopal throne to his hostility to their faith, and who has dedicated his book on the “Errors of Romanism” to his bosom friend, Blanco White, who was the first to track the path for the M‘Ghees and the O‘Sullivans, and who, to use the language of the apostle, “foaming out his own

confusion," strove to cast the slaver of a corrupt heart on the holiest institutions of the Catholic Church. It may be said that the Protestant Archbishop is not now the same Dr. Whately who penned the offensive dedication. There is no evidence of any change. Besides, it would be a libel on his grace to charge him with apostacy from his early principles, or to insinuate that he is one of those who may take up a theory for convenience, and afterwards repudiate the opinions which conducted him to his elevation. The Rev. Mr. Carlile is, I understand, a native of Scotland, and a minister of the Presbyterian church, who, some twenty years ago, directed his zeal against episcopacy, and became lately an associate with members of adverse churches in giving a new version of portions of Scripture, in which the ingredients of their respective creeds were to be so judiciously blended, that not an undiluted particle of a separate faith, might be seen in the amalgamation. But the attempt has failed, illustrating the interrogatory of St. Paul, regarding the incongruous combination of light with darkness. As well might you expect order to spring from chaos as any precise form of faith from such heterogeneous elements; and yet it is this production, without shape or figure, equally rejected by all, since none can see on it the impress of his own faith, we are gravely told by a Catholic commissioner, is "approved by the Catholic bishops of Ireland!" I, for one, protest against such an unwarrantable inference, having never read a line of the lessons until my attention was directed to them by the strange declaration. Now, however, since our silence has been construed into acquiescence, I must own that so far from approving of them, I know the Scripture lessons to be liable to more serious objections than are suggested by their mere indefinite form.

Alas! it seems to be the fate of Ireland that no plan can be devised for her improvement, whether it regards education or the relief of the poor, that is not to be conducted by individuals opposed to us by religious and national antipathies. For the education of the youth of Ireland, a board is constituted, in which the chief influence is exercised by two aliens in reality—in religion and in country—an English Protestant and Scotch Presbyterian. This influence is manifest in the train of subordinate functionaries of their religion, with which they have contrived to fill the most important departments. The secretary a Protestant—the chief teaching master a Protestant and a Scotchman—time has not yet revealed the number of Protestant inspectors. Such preference, however humiliating, might be endured, if it were not attended with danger to religion. The character, the station and piety, of one individual alone have hitherto protected the system, from the distrust and hatred which it merited. It is, however, now manifest that he is unable to obviate the evils with which it is

pregnant, and better far for the Catholics of Ireland that the plan would be carried on with the undisguised and unmitigated bigotry of the Kildare-street Society, than that they should be deluded into a confidence of fairness which he, or even a greater number of the same character, would be unable to realise. Can they be present when the teachers meddle in biblical criticism, and learn or dispense the Rabbinical treasures that are exported from Coblenz, or from Edinburgh ? They do not hear that by each of the six days of the creation is to be understood a period of thousands or millions of years—that Jesus Christ (I regret to be thus obliged to transcribe the sacred name) was the spirit that moved across the waters. They do not hear that Melchizedeck was the same person—that Enoch and Elias shall never again come : or, what is more important, they do not hear that justification makes no change in the soul—that it is the mere imputation of righteousness, and that faith is forfeited by the violation of the evangelical law ! They cannot be present when those masters may instil into the infant mind throughout Ireland, such pernicious commentaries. Surely it is not necessary for the rising generation that the heads of the teachers should be filled with such poisonous opinions, nor can it tend to the purity of their morals that they should be trained amidst the licentiousness of crowded cities. I am quite satisfied with the ancient simple faith once delivered to the saints, and am resolved never to entrust the religious education of any child in my diocese to any teacher, whether Protestant or Catholic, whose faith shall be fashioned by such lectures as were and may still be delivered in the normal schools of the Board of National education.

Having so formed the board as to secure in its literal meaning a vast Protestant ascendancy, the minister's next object was to strive to subject the consciences of the clergy and people to his political supremacy. Such is the clear meaning of Lord Stanley's letter to the Duke of Leinster. "They (the board) will exercise the most entire control over all books to be used in the school, whether in the combined literary or separate religious instruction." What a pity that Lord Stanley did not live in the times, and form one of the ministry, of Henry the Eighth. The sentiments of his letter seem well to accord with that monarch's notions of the extent of his political power. What ! the pastors of the Catholic Church cannot convey their religious instructions to the people, unless those instructions, if delivered through the medium of books, be placed under "the most entire control" of a board formed by the secular power ! Let individuals talk after this of agitating or political ecclesiastics. It is such persons as Lord Stanley call them into existence—rash and headstrong ministers—who, ignorant or regardless of the boundaries which are set to the civil power, are not content until they encroach

beyond them, and then call them haughty prelates who, with a Christian and constitutional freedom, war against their unwarrantable aggression on spiritual authority. It is the same sentiment that excited the long and angry quarrels between the church and the empire. It is the sentiment that is now shaking the repose of the Prussian provinces, and excites the sympathies of his flock for the persecutions sustained by the illustrious Archbishop of Cologne. The government has a right to check seditious publications, and to inflict punishment on such as would spread disaffection; but to interfere with mere spiritual doctrines, innocuous to the state, is beyond its legitimate control. The harshness of the letter is softened down by a subsequent explanation of the commissioners, that they mean to exercise no control over the standard works of the respective churches; but what are the standard works, is not yet ascertained. The catalogue may be abridged or enlarged at their pleasure. It appears, too, that some of the standard books first enumerated were discovered to be too controversial for the *liberal* spirit which the majority of the board are labouring to propagate, and that some valuable books, written by some of the most pious Catholic bishops, such as the works of the venerable Dr. Challoner, ought to be purged of some harsh and unpalatable passages. These portions I shall illustrate by reference to the published evidence regarding the National Board.

But the subject is too ample and important to be disposed of in a single letter. Some of the worst consequences of the system have not yet been exposed. Such, for example, is the concession made to the importunate demands of the Protestants or Presbyterians of Ulster of having the Scriptures read at any hour that may be required, not by the pastors, but by the parents or guardians of the children. Such, too, is the secret service to be required of the inspectors, plainly conveyed in the following passage:—"He will also be required, from time to time, to inquire into such matters as we may refer to him, and to report specially thereon." No doubt the fulfilment of this office of secret espionage on the part of these inspectors will be a peculiar recommendation to the favour of the majority of the board, and to the patronage of the government. Such, in fine, is the cumbrous machinery of the system, swallowing up in sumptuous edifices, and an expensive staff of officers, for open and secret services, the immense funds, of which but a small share finds its way to the education of the poor. Such, too, will be your poor law bill; its ostensible object to relieve the poor—its real end to oppress the middle classes, and multiply places and patronage to such extent as to absorb the revenues which should go to relieve destitution. Between English poor law, and Scotch education functionaries, Ireland will be placed in a most happy position. Never,

it is my solemn conviction, were its liberties and its religion placed in more imminent peril. Its enemies, jealous of the gigantic progress it has recently made, are labouring to throw back the country into its former state of abject dependence. Hence their efforts to sap the religion of the people, under the specious guise of a liberal education. Hence the heavy taxation by which the middling classes are to be oppressed, and some of the higher detached from them by the distribution of the patronage, which that taxation will supply. Mr. O'Connell is right in opposing the details of the poor law bill. I am only surprised that, as the present ministry owes its existence to the confidence of the Irish members, it perseveres pressing the details of this measure, which are as confessedly opposed to the wishes as they will be fatal to the interests of the Irish people. In common with the Catholic clergy of Ireland, I am most anxious for measures by which the physical and moral condition of the poor would be improved ; but we should not suffer ourselves to be deluded by plans so contrived, that the relief contemplated will be intercepted by a train of expensive placemen, and that but little of it will reach its destination. Your poor law and your education board will be twin institutions, well worthy of each other—the one pressing on the country the flood of its Scotch faith, and the other filling it with the abundance of its English charity, until the national feeling of Ireland is to be completely drenched, under the influx of the exotic mixtures. Centralization is now the great secret of policy ; it is deemed wise to draw the most distant within the vortex of court influence. Hence, instead of placing funds in the hands of responsible bodies, who in their respective districts would administer relief and education at little expense, you must have central boards in London and in Dublin, of which the principal object, at least the effect, will be to swell the crowd of eager suitors who are continually besieging the porches of the court in their importunate scramble for its patronage.

I have the honour to remain your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEMS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION AND POOR LAWS.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, MARCH 6, 1838.

MY LORD—The brief interval that has elapsed since my last letter to your lordship, has furnished fresh proofs of the spirit that first swayed, and still pervades, the counsels that preside over the scheme of an anti-Catholic education. I appeal to your lordship, as well as to the Secretary for Ireland, as competent witnesses of the truth of this position. If the most recent debates on the detestable details of the poor law be correctly reported, your lordship hesitates on entrusting the appointment of the chaplains to the ordinary ecclesiastical superiors; and, to an interrogatory proposed by the member from Waterford, relative to the provisions for education in the poor-houses, Lord Morpeth replies that it shall be provided for by a plan, formed by the guardians and commissioners. Now, no Catholic clergyman is to be a guardian of the poor establishments, lest we are told, their appointment should disturb the harmony that is to reign in those abodes !!—whence it clearly follows that the entire education of the poor in those houses is to be controlled by the arbitrary will of individuals, many of them English and Protestant commissioners. In hesitating to confide the appointment of the chaplains to the ordinary spiritual authorities, is it your intention to perpetuate the angry collisions between the secular and spiritual powers, which, growing out of the persecution of former times, so long disturbed the peace of society ? Does your lordship forget the disgraceful and protracted strife that occurred in Dublin, relative to the chaplain of one of its prisons, when one party, covering their rancorous bigotry under the shield of an iniquitous penal law, kept a suspended priest in pay, in contemptuous defiance of the legitimate pastor ? This is but a solitary instance of the many such scenes that have occurred, and recently, too, in different parts of Ireland. And you, my lord, the minister of a government, flattered with the name of paternal, are for continuing those collisions, and furnishing fresh aliment to the expiring bigotry of the times.

We did hope that, with the abolition of the chartered schools

of Ireland, there would be an end to that species of tyranny that was exercised over their unfortunate inmates. The prison houses for the poor are, it seems, to be subjected to a similar discipline. It is not enough that their wretched occupants should be forced from their families, and the ties of nature and affection should (as is the universal complaint in England) be rent asunder, but the consolations of religion itself must depend on the caprices of anti-Catholic commissioners. With the injurious effects of this measure on the physical comforts, or the political freedom of the middle classes, it is not my purpose to engage, at any length, your lordship's or the public attention; nor should I advert to it for the present, were it not for the observations made in parliament, on the subject of chaplains and education, revealing, as in the case of the national board, the ministerial hostility, but ill-disguised, that is directed against the Catholic Church.

Allow me, however, to remark, that it is not true that those who find fault with the present poor law project, have never suggested any other. Often has the attention of parliament been directed to the waste lands of Ireland, so capable of remunerating any expenditure of money and of labour. From the want of capital and enterprise among the generality of the proprietors, those lands lie unprofitable, whilst the peasantry, who are often overcrowded in the interior, might derive comfort and wealth from their cultivation. If but a portion of the money to be expended on the erection of the vast prisons were to be laid out by the government in the purchase of those lands, over which the legislature is competent to give it a control, and if those lands were then let on such terms of rent and tenure as would adequately reward the outlay of labour; if, too, the Establishment were persuaded to surrender a portion of the wealth, of which the unjust seizure was the first source of the public misery, and landlords obliged in their covenants to make allowance to their tenants for the fruit of their toil—then, instead of the squalid and disgusting wretchedness, that every where meets the eye, not only would the wastes be covered with abundance, but, what would be better, those who labour in producing it would become contented and cheerful, by sharing in its enjoyment. Whereas in the present plan, as is well remarked by Mr. O'Connell, there is but little to soothe, and much to embitter, the public misery; and, as has been ably demonstrated by Mr. Sharman Crawford, there is nothing of prevention and nothing of that sanative legislation, which should be directed to the original sources, from which the appalling and unprecedented wretchedness of Ireland continues to flow. I will add that the plan is pregnant with still worse consequences than any to which they have adverted. With the penal provisions of the law, and the most arbitrary power to be vested in the commissioners and

guardians, they are liable to be made charter schools or charter prisons for proselytism, as you may call them, where the destitution of the people will become a fit instrument for such designs, and where but as little of the instructions or consolations of religion will be let into their dungeons as their keepers may choose to bestow.*

These, my lord, are not exaggerated consequences, they are the ordinary effects that are flowing every day from the combinations of power and bigotry in different parts of the kingdom. Even in the town which I inhabit, one of the most Catholic in the kingdom, with a large and efficient seminary for the education of the male and female children, such is the paltry and vexatious tampering with the poverty of the people, that, literally, for a mess of broth or of buttermilk, the children are occasionally tempted to go where their faith may be endangered. What security have we that the same offensive system shall not be pursued in those prisons, whilst the law contemplates to vest in mixed boards of Protestant and Catholic laymen the exclusive education of the children, nay, the appointment of their pastors? Let there be in every town large and appropriate asylums for the relief of the aged and infirm. It is a provision imperatively called for by a sense of humanity and religion. And let the benefits of religious instruction be freely communicated to them, as well as to the other members of the community, by their ordinary respected pastors. Employ the redundant labour of the country in working the mines of wealth that are hidden in its uncultivated lands, instead of wasting the public taxes in the erection of prisons, and immuring the able-bodied within their walls. Such a plan (it is neither complex nor impracticable) would be more in accordance with the feelings of the country than the one you are precipitating with such indecent haste through the house. At a comparatively small expense it would provide for the existing distress, and guard against its prospective accumulation. It would be drawing upon the rich and permanent resources of nature, rather than resorting to the contrivances of art, which are the miserable expedients of a great deal of modern legislation. The wastes that are now a solitude would be covered with a cheerful peasantry, inhaling health and vigour from labour in the open air, rather than disease and weakness from confinement in those prisons; the inmates of the same families would not be separated from each other; and, without severing those ties that bind not only the Irish, but all mankind, to their native land, it would have all the advantages that are contemplated by the advocates of emigration.

* The recent attempts to proselytize made in the Dublin and other poor-houses of the kingdom, but too sadly realize the truth of those predictions.

You are pledged to do justice to Ireland. It is on that condition you have so long enjoyed the confidence of the Irish constituencies. It is strange, then, that the ministry would press the obnoxious details of such a measure with the knowledge which it must have of the general aversion with which it is viewed by the entire country. It may be on the paternal principle that the Irish are yet in a state of pupilage, and that their interests are best promoted by not consulting their inclinations. It is, doubtless, on such an assumption that you are pushing forward the present bill, exclusively adopting the views of a Mr. Nichols, who, travelling through many parts of the country, as the Italians say, like a coach trunk, had not time to make himself acquainted with the nature of our distress, and could not be a competent person to suggest an appropriate remedy, since—and I say it without meaning him any offence—his country, as well as his religion, allowed him not to ascend to the bitter causes of our destitution. Yet it is to such persons, groping their way in darkness, importing all the prejudices of foreigners, and unacquainted with the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, that the operation of the whole machinery of the poor law is to be entrusted. Like all the education societies, the poor law scheme, unless materially altered, will end in disappointment, and leave no other effect but the memory of the extravagant and ruinous expense with which the country was burdened by the enormous salaries of its officers, and of the religious annoyance to which the people were exposed by a vexatious interference with the legitimate authority of their pastors.

If, then, a ministry, supposed to be favourable to Ireland, cannot disguise its jealousy of the Catholic religion, what wonder that a government decidedly hostile should have exhibited that hostility, in framing a Board of National Education? Do not imagine that there is anything singular in what I have advanced regarding the principles on which that board was formed. Were my letter reduced to a series of propositions, it contained the following statements: That the bishops of Ireland put on record, by their petitions to parliament, their decided preference of a system of separate education. That the government, by acquiescing in their prayer, would be consulting no less for the tranquillity of the state than the purity of religion. That the selection of appropriate books for the religious education of Catholics belonged, without reference to any secular or government tribunal, exclusively to the bishops. That the present board exhibited in its construction all the odious features of a Protestant ascendancy. That even, setting religious bigotry aside, it was not fair, as far as regarded local representation. That it was tolerated merely from expediency, like the Kildare-street Society, without ever having received the solemn approval of the Catholic

body. I am not aware that any of those or the other propositions into which that letter could be resolved, is still liable to contradiction. I am only surprised that the commissioners of education would have, on the very eve of the meeting of the bishops, put forth a document deeply affecting the religion of those entrusted to their care, and at variance with their former resolutions, without even the courtesy of awaiting their deliberations. It was not so of old. It only shows what the Catholics of Ireland should have to expect, if government boards were to obtain influence over the important concerns of their religion or its pastors. The Protestant spirit of the majority of the commissioners breathes through that document, and never was one more calculated to deceive, or to conceal, under a plausible phraseology, more of the seeds of future persecution; though nothing could be farther from the minds of the Catholic commissioners than to give it their sanction, if they thought it liable to such consequences. The paramount importance of the question of education was, as must always be, felt and acknowledged by all. In my last communication I made no reference whatever, nor did I think myself authorized to do so, to the sentiments of the Catholic bishops, as manifested in the late assembly. As, however, an invidious and unfair reference has been made to them, suffice it to say, that the evils of the system of a mixed education in principle and in its practical effects in various countries of Europe were exposed by prelates more competent, from talent and information, to form a just opinion of the subject than I was; and that after much discussion the subject was adjourned, on account of the lamented indisposition and absence of the Archbishop of Dublin. This much, however, is certain, that, of the prelates, some confessed their full conviction of the evils of the system—others, their fears of danger, and their anxiety to read the evidence published regarding its practical operation; none, as far as I could learn, was an unqualified approver of the system on principle, and all decidedly preferred—could they obtain parliamentary aid on such terms—a system of separate education. On principle, then, there was no difference of opinion. On a question of expediency, lest we should encounter greater evils, it is no wonder if there should be some discrepancy, as there must be on open questions in all free assemblies, especially when we recollect what time and deliberation and exposure, were necessary to open the eyes of all to the dangers of the Kildare-street Society.

I, therefore, again beg leave respectfully to advise your lordship and Lord Lansdowne to pause, ere you give a legislative sanction to the recommendations of a document, which was never approved by the Catholic bishops of Ireland—nay, more, which will never receive the approbation of that body, since they

could not approve it, without cancelling their own solemn and repeated resolutions. I must further add, that, in recommending to your lordship to give a grant for separate education, I am only conveying the petition last adopted on that subject by the unanimous consent of that body. Were you to vest such a grant in a board like that of Maynooth, composed of bishops representing the different local interests of Ireland, and a few of the Catholic aristocracy and gentry—men who have proved their attachment to the faith—and to make such a board, not like the education one, the dependent creature of the crown, but like that of Maynooth, independent of the caprices of the minister, and perpetuated by the elective power of its members, you would do more to conciliate the confidence of the Catholics of Ireland, and secure peace and good will among all classes of her Majesty's subjects, than all your crude, though elaborate contrivances of an undefinable system of liberality can ever achieve.

I now leave your lordship and the public to judge whether, in expressing sentiments in such accordance with those of my venerable brethren, I can be said to be alone. No, my lord, the "*solus eram*" is not a sentiment congenial to the faith or discipline of the Catholic Church. It is the motto which is seen inscribed on the forehead of every schismatic, from Simon Magus to Luther; and those who adopt it must deprive themselves of all claim to authority. Not so with us: our just boast is a fellowship in the same faith, and a communion in the same discipline. Speaking not from ourselves, but delivering that which was handed down to us as a deposit, and "*commending it to other faithful witnesses*," we embody in our instruction not only the collected influence of our contemporaries, but, likewise, the unbroken mass of the authority of the wise and virtuous of past times. It is this wide-spread companionship with the present and the past—it is the solicitude of being himself one of the faithful and unswerving witnesses to which the future may look with confidence as a connecting link, that gives the humblest and least talented bishop in the Catholic Church an influence and authority which no intellect or learning, severed from such connexion, could command. It is on this connexion I shall rely in combating your new-fangled and treacherous systems of education, unknown or reprobated in the best and purest ages of the Catholic Church.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's humble servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. GREGORY,
MARCH 12, 1838.

MY LORD—The Catholic clergy and people of Ireland owe a large obligation to her Majesty's ministers, for having awakened them from the fatal confidence in which their vigilance so long slumbered. They have but to compare the splendid triumphs which they achieved, when relying on their own exertions, with the retrograde movement of their religious and civil interests, since the transfer of their confidence to those who proved unworthy of such a trust; and the humiliating contrast must fill them with alternate sentiments of exultation and of sorrow. With a combination of energy, of union, and perseverance, unexampled in the history of any other people, they not only escaped from the religious thraldom in which they were long kept, but wrung from the reluctant hold of their enemies such an ample concession of civil rights as the most sanguine seer of his country's regeneration, could not have a few years previously anticipated. Never was there a more signal illustration of the power of mind over the most formidable obstacles, especially when acted on by the exalted influence of religion. Had the enemies of Ireland, content with the hereditary oppression which they so long exercised, only forborne from insolent aggression on the faith of the people, they might have still voted in the undisturbed monopoly of their power; but, in an evil time for themselves, they pushed their insolence too far. Despairing of open force, of the abortive effect of which the very existence of the vast Catholic population of Ireland was a monument, they had recourse to fraud, and spread over every portion of the country their religious toils, in order to catch the unwary simplicity of the rising generation.

They carried on for some time the insidious scheme of severing the connexion between the pastors and the faithful with apparent success, and never failed to season their religious instructions with the most insidious insinuations against the Catholic priesthood. From covert attacks they were emboldened to carry on a system of open aggression. The zeal and energy of the clergy and the people were, at length, roused by a mutual sympathy

for each other, and they resolved to repel the injuries and insults which they respectively sustained. The one, by a display of talents and learning, which at once astonished and dismayed their opponents, nobly vindicated their insulted religion—the other, determined to guard their faith, by raising up the fallen fences of their civil liberty, without which religion itself cannot be long protected; and all, with unanimous accord, put themselves under the guidance of an individual, whom Providence raised up to achieve the independence of his country.

Let us but compare the prospects which our then position placed before our view, with those which we now contemplate, and we shall be able to ascertain what we have lost in the interval. Wielding a moral power which was able to control successive ministries, the people were desired to suspend its exercise, and that ample justice should be the reward of their moderation. They have, as they often did before, listened to the insidious overtures; and the interval has been dexterously employed in striving to dissolve the national combination, and to put in abeyance not only the justice for which they covenanted, but to meditate more deep designs against their religion. Waiving other topics necessarily connected with the consummation of that justice, which has been so long promised and delayed, your lordship cannot but indulge a secret triumph in the alteration of tone which has taken place with regard to the annihilation of tithes, and the reduction of the church establishment. Such, a few years ago, was the pressure of a just public opinion on your honourable house, that they came to the resolution of easing the country of the incumbrance of near two thousand supernumerary Protestant clergymen. I question much whether the present bill of Mr. O'Connell, which secures the integrity of even the entire body, may not be rejected, merely because it contemplates some transfer of the burden exclusively from the shoulders of the Irish people. Who could imagine that the ballot, a mode of suffrage which the dictates of conscience and sound policy equally recommend, would have any opponents, especially among those who owe their seats to the heroism of freeholders who risked, by their open votes, the most heartless persecution. Yet there were found among the Irish members some who, slumbering in the enjoyment, or panting for the possession of office, sacrificed to the nod of the minister the interests of the persecuted peasantry of this country. As my concern, however, is at present with the religion of Ireland, I must confess that I seldom contemplated a more sad spectacle than to find ourselves, after such a struggle, borne down, as well by the force of the current as by the relaxation of our own efforts, to the same point from which we started some years ago. And yet is this all the clergy and faithful of Ireland have gained by the signal

triumphs, in which they bore a conspicuous share, that they must now submit in silence to such dangerous and ignominious conditions in the religious education of the children, as in the period of their civil and religious disabilities would not be endured?

What were the unanimous sentiments of the Catholic bishops of Ireland in the year 1824, regarding the introduction of the Scriptures into schools, your lordship may learn, from the following extract of a petition on the subject of education, which they presented to parliament: "That Roman Catholics have ever considered the reading of the Sacred Scriptures by children as an inadequate means of imparting to them religious instruction—as an usage whereby the word of God is made liable to irreverence—youth exposed to misunderstand its meaning, and thereby not unfrequently to receive, in early life, impressions which may afterwards prove injurious to their own best interests, as well as to those of the society which they are destined to form." Compare, my lord, this solemn, deliberate, and unanimous expression of the sentiments of the Catholic bishops of Ireland with the modification in their rule by which the commissioners propose the reading of the Scriptures in the schools, at any time that will not be objected to by the parents or the guardians, and you will perceive that the board, or the government, or both, vainly calculate on the hierarchy's surrendering now those conscientious principles which they maintained under more adverse fortunes. I have experienced no small share of obloquy for asserting those ordinary duties annexed to my sacred office, and which I cannot resign without a renunciation of the trust which the Prince of Pastors confided to me. Over the books used for the religious instruction of my flock I have stated that I shall exercise, without regard to any board, exclusive and absolute control. It may now be necessary to add that I shall never entrust their religious education to any person professing a different faith, or whose faith shall be tainted by the religious training of any professing a different creed. No master shall have the control of such education, who will not be appointed with my express approval, or removed upon my representation.

Under any wise government, anxious to promote not only the interests of morality, but of social peace and harmony, and to which the volume of history was not opened in vain, such sentiments, far from provoking the bitterness of controversy, could not create any surprise. You might as well find fault with the institution of episcopacy itself, as quarrel with the fulfilment of obligations from which it is inseparable. Permit me, then, my lord, to lay unquestionable evidence before you, that so far from any arrogant assumption of individual privileges, I am only literally conveying the resolutions adopted by that body to which I belong. In the year 1826, January 25, at our general meeting,

held in Dublin, we unanimously adopted the following resolutions:—

“Resolved—That, in order to secure sufficient protection to the religion of Roman Catholic children, under such a system of (national) education, we deem it necessary that the master of each school, in which the majority of the pupils profess the Roman Catholic faith, be a Roman Catholic; and that, in schools in which the Roman Catholic children form a minority a permanent Roman Catholic assistant be employed; and that such master and assistant be appointed upon the recommendation, or with the express approval of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese in which they are to be employed; and further, that they, or either of them be removed upon the representation of such bishop. The same rule to be observed for the appointment or dismissal of mistresses and assistants in female schools.”

“Resolved—That we consider it improper that masters and mistresses intended for the religious instruction of Roman Catholic youth, should be trained or educated by or under the control of persons professing a different faith.”

“Resolved—That, in conformity with the principle of protecting the religion of Roman Catholic children, the books intended for their particular instruction in religion shall be selected or approved by the Roman Catholic prelates; and that no book or tract for common instruction in literature shall be introduced into any school in which Roman Catholic children are educated, which book or tract may be objected to on religious grounds by the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese, in which such school is established.”

“Resolved—That, appointed as we have been by Divine Providence to watch over and preserve the deposit of Catholic faith in Ireland, and responsible, as we are, to God for the souls of our flocks, we will, in our respective dioceses, withhold our concurrence and support from any system of education, which will not fully accord with the principles expressed in the foregoing resolutions.”

Let any impartial individual now judge whether it is my views, or those of the Education Board, that are in accordance with those resolutions of the Catholic bishops. The commissioners, in deference to the importunity of a few Presbyterian Protestants from Ulster, propose that the Scriptures be read in the schools by the children, at any hour their guardians or parents may choose. The prelates pronounce this to be a practice making “the word of God liable to irreverence, and pregnant with danger to themselves and to society.” The commissioners assume such control over the books to be introduced into the schools, that they may prohibit them if they deem them “objectionable, as peculiarly belonging to some religious denomination.”

The prelates declare, as indeed they should, "that the religious books are to be selected by themselves, and none to be introduced that may be objected to on religious grounds by the bishop of the diocese in which any school is established." The commissioners, by the power they assume of "withholding the salary from any master whom they may deem objectionable, until another is appointed, and their sanction obtained," exercise the most entire control over the appointment or dismissal of the teachers. The prelates declare, "that such masters are to be appointed upon the recommendation or express approval of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese, and to be removed upon his representation." In fine, it has been hitherto the practice of the commissioners to employ persons of quite a different faith for training Catholic teachers, and who have striven to fill their minds with the leaven of their own opinions; whilst the prelates unanimously declare it to be "improper that masters and mistresses, intended for the religious instruction of Roman Catholic youth, should be trained or educated by or under the control of persons professing a different faith."

If, in a system of combined education, we deemed such safeguards necessary for the protection of the faith, it follows that we cannot divest ourselves of fears for its integrity during the prevalence of a system, where all those safeguards are neglected or removed. I do not anticipate that the pastoral solicitude for the purity of their religion, put forth in those resolutions, shall find much ministerial sympathy. I trust, however, that you will not be equally indifferent to the solemn warning of the dangers to society, with which they proclaim such a system to be fraught. It cannot be otherwise. It is worse than mockery to strive to blend in one harmonious mass elements that are essentially discordant and repulsive, and while men attach a value to religion, and believe—as believe they must—that only one is stamped with the prominent seal of the Divinity, it is impiety to attempt to smoothe away that impression by a refining process, intended to obliterate all the distinctive features between truth and error. That the printing office of the board may be turned into a theological laboratory in which all the asperities of creeds and confessions are to be rubbed away, may be inferred from the testimony of some of the commissioners, as well as the motley character of some of their compilations. Not to dwell further on their sensitive antipathy to books "objectionable as peculiarly belonging to some particular religious denomination," allow me to direct your lordship's attention to the declaration made on the production of the following passage from "Dr. Challenor's Catholic Christian Instructed":—

"What if a person, through the absolute necessity of his unhappy circumstances, should be tied to a place where he can

never hear mass, do you think he might not then be allowed to join in prayer with those of another communion, by way of supplying this defect? No, certainly. It is a misfortune—and a great misfortune—to be kept, like David, when he was persecuted by Saul, at a distance from the temple of God and his sacred mysteries, but it would be a crime to join one's self upon that account with an heretical or schismatical congregation, whose worship God rejects as sacrilegious and impious. In such a case, therefore, a Christian must serve his God alone, to the best of his power, by offering to him the homage of prayer, adoration, contrition, &c., and must frequently hear mass in spirit, by joining himself with all the faithful throughout the earth, wherever they are offering to God that divine sacrifice, ever sighing after those heavenly mysteries, and praying for his delivery from that Babylon which keeps him at a distance from the temple of God." "Having read this, I wish to observe," replies Mr. Blake, "that I have no doubt there will be found in this book, and in other Roman Catholic books, matter that may give offence to the feelings of Protestants, and that nothing could be more gratifying to me than to see it utterly expunged."

I, too, am unwilling to give offence to the feelings of Protestants; but, if passages are to be expunged from doctrinal books, because they may take offence, it follows that they should be purged of every Catholic principle, since some would take offence as long as one solitary tenet would remain. There is a spirit of deep and solemn reverence for the true worship breathing through the above quoted passage, which shows that nothing could be farther from the mind of the pious author than any want of real charity towards those who had the misfortune to be deprived of its benefits. It reminds me of the pure and lofty piety of Eleazar, who refused to purchase life by the least compromise with the stern duties of his religious law. While such a sincere respect for faith sways the teachers of religion, there is very little danger of the prevalence of an unprincipled liberalism, which would mistake indifference of faith for feelings of charity, and call those bigots who wished to retain the impressions of any particular creed. The doctrine laid down by the venerable prelate, of not joining in worship with any other sect, cannot be controverted or disguised. The style in which the doctrine is put forth is bold, it is true, and characteristic of those strong lines that marked the religious opinions of his age—but, with all its apparent harshness, I should prefer the book in its integrity rather than subject it to the experiments of some of our moderns, whose peculiarities of faith are so polished by the perpetual friction of political life as to leave scarcely a visible trace of any religious character at all. As long as a scrupulous regard is felt for the obligations which religion imposes, it is a

pledge of the soundness of the nation's morality. It would be almost as safe to entrust the education of Catholic children to Pagans as to any persons who would strive to cancel the sound doctrine of Dr. Challenor and the Catholic church, regarding the sin of ever joining in religious communion with the sectaries, or taking any part in the unholy worship of their conventicles. But, once destroy this conscientious adherence to religious faith, which, properly understood, is always allied with a regard for the conscientious opinions of others, and you fill the country with public functionaries, who will not scruple to make a traffic even of the sacred interests of religion.

The experiment, of which only the intimation is expressed with regard to our doctrinal books, has been actually made by the board on the sacred volume. They have published extracts, under the name of Scripture Lessons, omitting passages, for which Catholics feel peculiar veneration, as well as the language long consecrated by custom, in which their doctrines were conveyed. I instance the words "penance" and "repentance"—the former being the phrase in the Douay, the latter in the authorized version, by which the original is usually rendered. In the Scripture Lessons, not owing, I suppose, to any Protestant preponderance of influence, the Catholic phrase, "penance," never occurs. That its omission was not fortuitous is avowed by Mr. Carlile, who owns that he was anxious to get rid of the word penance through the whole of the book, and for that purpose a clumsy note is appended, calculated to mislead both Catholics and Protestants regarding the meaning of penance, which, if it does not entirely suppress, at least does not sufficiently unfold, the Catholic doctrine of satisfaction by penitential works. On this important subject I refer your lordship to the Scripture Lessons from the New Testament,* and also to the Evidence on the new plan of education before the select committee.† Seldom has a more injurious expedient than that now referred to been adopted to withhold from view the opposition on point of doctrine between different Christians. However, the attempt must be as abortive as it is dangerous, fully proving what the experience of eighteen centuries has already demonstrated, that by no political junction of individuals, or by no conventional refinement in phrase, can the essential difference between true and erroneous doctrine be ever confounded. Surely it could never be imagined by the Catholics of Ireland, when this very Mr. Carlile was carrying on a most offensive warfare against their religion and its pastors, that the day should arrive when he would be entrusted with the compilation of Scripture Lessons, in which he labours to get rid

* No. 1, page 14, &c.

† Report, page 1384, &c.

of the old language expressive of Catholic doctrine. They must feel additional reverence for this source of scriptural knowledge, on learning that they have omitted in those lessons the language of the evangelical salutation. The commissioners could not agree on the translation of the Greek word, though Grotius a Protestant commentator, translates it “*gratia plena*,” or, “full of grace.” Therefore they thought it would answer the purpose of accommodation better to insert within a bracket a compendium of that portion of the sacred volume. But mark, my lord, at the end of every lesson there is a series of questions, to be put by the masters and answered by the scholars, embodying its entire substance. There is not a portion of controverted doctrine between Catholics and Protestants that may not thus be made the subject of insidious interrogatory by masters who were themselves trained in the manner of teaching those lessons by a Presbyterian teacher, who I suppose was as anxious to “get rid” of the reverence paid to the Blessed Virgin as Mr. Carlile was of penance, or Luther of the real presence. Among the questions with which the foregoing concludes are:—“How did the angel address her (Mary)?” “What more did he say to her?” By which it appears that the very words of the angelical salutation, cautiously omitted in the lesson, may be made the subject of its explanation. The masters may then explain that the “full of grace” of the Catholic church is a devotional phrase founded on error not so orthodox as the “highly favoured” of the Church of England, or the “peculiarly blessed” of Mr. Carlile and the board; and then the learned commentators of the national schools may show the children that there is not much more favour implied in the words addressed to the Virgin than in the similar language applied in the Sermon on the Mount, to various classes of mankind. See then at once the proselytizing spirit that first suggested the formation of such an anomalous body—a spirit that is still perseveringly bent on the attainment of its object. The majority of that board have been, in defiance of every principle of right and justice, placed there for the purpose of “getting rid,” in all the books published by the Board, of Catholic language and Catholic doctrine; and well and strenuously have they laboured in their vocations. Nestorians in religion, as far as regards their jealousy of the honour of the Mother of God, they have designedly expunged the “Hail Mary full of Grace,” lest children should find in those lessons, those words which they are taught to lisp, from infancy, with affectionate veneration. It is not wise, my lord, it is not statesman-like, to strive to dissolve the holy charm that consecrates those truths that are imbibed in childhood. The same church that instils into the tender minds of children a reverence for the Mother of God and revered of Heaven, as sedulously labours

to impress upon them a respect for the throne. Do not, then, encourage the rash schemes that would dissolve the ties that connect them with Heaven. If they are once broken, history will teach your lordship that they cannot feel much respect for the obligations that bind them to society.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. CELSUS,
APRIL 7, 1838.

MY LORD—On a retrospect of the vital question of the religious education of the youth of Ireland, I must own that I have to reproach myself with being so long silent regarding the evils of so incongruous a system. Though from its very origin the plan created serious apprehension, to which I did not fail then to give expression, yet I consented to watch in silence the experiment of its fuller operation. In this forbearance I deferred to the feelings of many, who, fatigued by the long and importunate hostility of former proselytizing bodies, were content to seek a temporary respite from their annoyance in a less obnoxious association. The impressions that were made by the first formation of the board have been strengthened by all that came under my observation during the interval. The exclusion of some persons and districts from any participation in the funds of the board, and the favour that was extended to others, where there were influential political patrons, excited suspicions that the board was regulated by political, as well as religious antipathies. There were instances, too, of masters who embraced the Protestant religion, one of whom, in this very diocese, had been kept in a national school, after the remonstrance of the pastor. Surely it cannot be made a subject of reproach to the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, or to the Calvinistic minister, Mr Carlile,

or the other Protestant members who compose the majority of the board, that they should rejoice in every such conversion, and that they should deem it a blessing that every teacher in the national schools should abjure what they are pleased to call the errors of Romanism ; and, were they invested with absolute control over the appointment and dismissal of the masters, without reference to the religious influence of the local pastors, who should, as on the above occasion, withdraw their children from the danger of perversion, no doubt there would be other instances of equally creditable conversions. Though it appears from the resolutions of numbers of the clergy of this diocese, that there are in it fifty-nine parishes, containing a population of two hundred and sixty thousand Catholics, left destitute of any aid, though the clergy were amused with a driftless correspondence, still we suffered such manifest injustice in the distribution of the public funds without any public exposure. Notwithstanding all these facts, I might still observe the same silence, were it not for the fundamental change, affecting the best interests of religion, contemplated in the last Report of the Commissioners of Education, as well as the alarming evidence of the ulterior views of the government, or rather its advisers, which the examinations before parliament unfolded.

The following words (paragraph 34) in that memorable report : “ We have received your Excellency’s permission to revise our existing rule as to religious instruction,” &c., were those which chiefly fixed my attention. Is it, then, from her Majesty’s vice-roy permission is to be obtained for adjusting the rule by which the religious education of the Catholic youth of Ireland is to be conducted ? Is it from the Castle of Dublin the canons are to issue which are to govern the bishops and pastors of the Irish Church in training the young generation in the knowledge and practice of the faith of their fathers ? For the Protestants, it is fair and consistent that the members of that creed should take the lessons for guiding the religious education of their youth from the spiritual head of their church, or her representative. But as for Catholics, it has been unheard of, since the days of Henry, that they should apply to the temporal monarch, or her lieutenant, for making or changing any rule for religious education, or that the Court of St. James should supersede the authority of the Vatican. The effects of the application bear evidence of the source from which the authority of the commissioners is derived. One of its first and most disastrous consequences was an utter forgetfulness of the respect due to the legitimate pastors of the people, and the adoption of the principle of making the sacred Scriptures a school-book, in defiance of the solemn and unanimous resolution of all the Catholic bishops of Ireland.

“ We therefore propose (say the commissioners, paragraph 38)

modifying the letter of the rule, so as to allow religious instruction to be given, and the Scriptures to be read, or the Catechism learned, during any of the school hours, provided such an arrangement be made as no children shall take part in, or listen to, any religious reading or instruction to which their parents or guardians object." It is said that a commissioner has addressed a circular letter to all the bishops of Ireland, except one, to know whether the present plan of education was so dangerous as that it could not receive their sanction. This is gratifying intelligence. It proves, that whatever might be their wishes, the commissioners and ministers of government cannot hope to carry on any system of education that is at variance with the resolves of the Catholic hierarchy. It were well had they adopted the wise precaution of consulting them, before they ventured on publishing their report. Had they done so, they would not have fallen into the fatal error of sanctioning the principle of making the Scriptures a school-book, in direct opposition to the repeated resolutions of that body. The faithful of Ireland, who are deeply interested in this inquiry, must be anxious to know if the prelates were consulted on the question whether it was "safe and useful" to make the Scriptures a school-book, provided the parents and guardians of the children had no objection to their introduction.

This is the fundamental change in the system of education of which I arraign the present commissioners. It is the principle on which the great controversy between the Catholic prelates and all the Biblical associations hinged. It is but right to know whether they were consulted on this principle which not only involves their own authority, but likewise the authority of the Pope. "The reading of the Scriptures by children the prelates have solemnly pronounced to be an usage whereby the word of God is made liable to irreverence, youth exposed to misunderstanding its meaning, and thereby not unfrequently to receive in early life impressions which may afterwards prove injurious to their best interests, as well as of the society which they are destined to form." Let, then, the correspondence be exhibited. Let it not be concealed whether the distinct question regarding the introduction of the Scriptures was at all mooted; and then it will be manifest whether the prelates of Ireland have pronounced the principle of making the Scriptures a school-book to be now "safe and useful," which they before pronounced to be productive of irreverence, and injurious to the children and the best interests of society.

It will not, I am sure, be pretended that the irreverence of which the practice of making the Scriptures a school-book is productive, is diminished by the regulation of leaving their perusal to depend on the wishes of the "parents and guardians,"

It is singular what stress is laid throughout the entire of this famous document on the wishes of "parents and guardians," in contradistinction to "pastors," who appear to be almost totally forgotten. In one paragraph the commissioners condescended to allow pastors to have "access to the children for the purpose of religious instruction." But who are those pastors? "Such pastors or other persons as are approved of by the parents or guardians." The phrase of the "approved pastors" would not suit the Presbyterian principles of some of the commissioners. No; it must be "such pastors as are approved of by the parents or guardians," to show that if their lawful pastors, in obedience to the highest authorities in their church, forbid the introduction or perusal of the Scriptures, then the parents and guardians are authorized by the board to select another pastor, or any other persons, to read and expound them.

That this regulation, at variance with the essential principles of government in the Catholic church, was drawn from a Presbyterian source, is evident from its conformity with the following resolutions of the Synod of Ulster, which "are stated to be agreeable to the resolutions of the board":—"That it shall be the right of all parents to require the patrons and managers of schools to set apart for reading the holy Scriptures a convenient and sufficient portion of the stated school hours, and to direct the master, or some other whom the parents may appoint and provide, to superintend the reading."* Never was the long-contemplated design of detaching the faithful from the obedience due to their lawful pastors more insidiously put forth than in this last report of the Commissioners of Education. It is for the pastors and the parents of the children mutually to look to the consequences, and weigh well whether the proposition comes from a friendly source that would sever a connexion which centuries of suffering have endeared. The system teems with the seeds of persecution. Suppose the Catholic clergy, as in this diocese they will invariably do, to prohibit the Scriptures being made a school-book by the Catholic children, under any circumstances. Suppose, too, that some of our sanctimonious gentry, who, in the neighbouring county of Mayo, and other places, are at this moment throwing their unfortunate tenantry on the world, be seized, as they were some years ago, with a desire of expiating their practical oppression by a proffer of the Bible—they have only to require of their wretched dependants to send their children to the national schools, and insist on their natural right of having the Scriptures put into the hands of their children, and expounded by "such pastors or any other persons who are approved of by them or the guardians," and in doing so

* Evidence before the House of Lords, vol. 1, page 66.

they would be acting in accordance with the regulations of the National Board. Besides, it may not be generally known that one of the commissioners has avowed his wish of placing the education of the country in the hands of a minister of public instruction, assisted by a Council, the appointment of each of whom should be exclusively and invariably vested in the crown* I have already given a specimen of this gentleman's theological accommodation, in the expression of the gratification he should feel in having erased from Catholic books every sullen line that should separate, even in public worship, the Catholics from the sectaries. Yet he has been relied on as one that was to secure the faith of Catholics from the influx of error!! It must be confessed that the advocates of the unlimited prerogatives of royalty must admire his principles no less than those who are for the abolition of the odious distinctions of religion; for such is his antipathy to popular influence or self-election, that a particle of either he would not suffer to influence the choice of the council or minister for public instruction, but that all should be unreservedly left to the arbitrary discretion of the Crown.

But amidst this barren waste, where religious faith or civil freedom look in vain for a resting-place, the board has, it seems, contrived to plant one green spot on which the eyes of all are invited to repose. They have, it is said, planted a garden, where all the exotics of the world will spontaneously bloom, without the funds which are granted for all parts of the kingdom being expended on its cultivation. Whilst the model school was being built, at the enormous expense of nearly £30,000, the secretary's general answer to applicants was, "There are no funds;" and if complaints were made, that the remoter peasantry were neglected, surely they ought to be satisfied, on being told that the money was expended on architects, and a long train of clerks and inspectors. Let them now be reconciled to similar privations for two or three years more, whilst the parliamentary grants must be wasted not only on stewards, but on lecturers on botany, &c., who, like the commentator on the six days of the creation in the model school, will doubtless commence his learned lectures by a sarcastic sneer on the literal meaning of the Mosaic history, and then demonstrate to his agricultural pupils, how the indigenous moss, that grew in unsightly patches out of the rocks, was improved by Scottish skill into the most luxuriant vegetation. What a mockery of the public mind! Establish as many schools of agriculture as you please (and, I must confess, they are much wanted), but do not insult the understanding of the people, by wasting on a system of jobbing the funds that are said to be for the religious education of the poor of Ireland; and which reli-

* Appendix to Reports of Commissioners, 173—6, pages 84, 5.

gious education, no matter how long you may insist on it, we shall never suffer to reach them from a poisoned source.

It must, no doubt, give great consolation to the ejected tenantry of Connaught, whose tears are now appropriately mingled with the sorrows of this season, to behold, on their passage to some more friendly country, those agricultural schools. It must allay their affliction to be told, in the canting sentiments of the fourth report, how plenty would bless the land if the peasantry had a little more of industry and order! Not a word against the hard-heartedness of their taskmasters escapes in this precious document, though some slight recommendations of humanity to landlords would not be unseasonable. However, the humblest of peasantry can feel the insulting derision of such plans for their improvement. Those to whom I have alluded can say that they needed not to leave their own western mountains, to witness improvements equal to those of any agricultural school. Nay, it is to make room for such improvements, and to accommodate influential political friends, who talk much of philanthropy and the idleness of tenants, they are banished from their homes. They can admire, as much as any botanical professor, the beauties of an improved farm; but they will not fail to murmur, on their departure, deep execration upon those, whose green fields must be watered with the tears of the widow and the orphan.

I have now, my lord, briefly stated the grounds on which, however tardily, I have been obliged to enter my solemn protest against the present system of, not national, but government, education. Those grounds are: First—The introduction of the Scripture as a school-book, in defiance of everything that is exalted and holy in the Catholic Church; secondly—The attempt to set at nought the authority of the legitimate pastors, and to have it superseded, in the choice of books and masters, by a board, the majority of which are at once able and willing to make selections in both injurious to our religion; and, thirdly—The more fearful prospect, which is not disguised, of having the entire education of the country placed in the hands of some corrupt and time-serving minion of the crown. For the present, I pass over their flagrant violation of their original rule, of regulating annual grants to masters by the number of the scholars, since I shall demonstrate, from their own reports, that schools containing but a few scholars, under favourite patrons, receive larger grants than others that contain four or five times the number; I shall pass over the marked neglect with which this diocese has been treated. The interests of near a half million of Catholic inhabitants, which it comprises, might be deemed worthy the attention of any legislature. But your education board is a proof of what we may expect from the poor law. The education of the many has been the pretext; patronage for the few has

been the fruit of the system. Such will be the poor law, since it seems there are already eight thousand of these birds, that are attracted by every prey, fluttering and screaming for a share of the provision, ostensibly intended for the poor, but which those political vultures will not fail to devour.

Were I to be longer silent in regarding a system so fraught with evil, I should incur the self-reproach of "detaining the truth in injustice." I should be only treasuring up for my latter days the remorse of having timidly betrayed the faith, like the late Archbishop of Mentz, who, terrified by the frowns, or seduced by the favours, of the Prussian government, confessed that he compromised, in an evil hour, the sacred interests of his religion.

Who could imagine that, in a land, where liberty is so much boasted of, such efforts would be made, as I know have been made, to suppress all inquiry on this important subject, and that some of those who hailed the accession of the priesthood, in the assertion of their political rights, would be the first now to turn round, and strive to stifle the voice of those very pastors, when raised for the protection of their flocks, against the inroads of irreligion? The frustrated attempts that have been made by the organs of the government, who yet pretend to be the advocates of the people, to crush all discussion regarding this government board, fully reveal the spirit that is at work, to lay the freedom of our national church at the feet of the minister; else why, if the board is so fairly constructed—if it represents the religion of the Irish people—if there is nought of bigotry in its composition—no leaning towards Protestant opinions in its books, such as the studied substitution of repentance for penance, &c.—why not rejoice that the light of public discussion should be let in on its proceedings? No; the sensitiveness with which they shrink from inquiry, betrays a consciousness that the system cannot bear public discussion. Supposing even I were wrong in my views of the board, I should expect that, whilst the opinions of the other bishops were sought (if report be true), I should not be laid under the political excommunication of any commissioners. Had a circular been addressed to me, I should have been probably able to show that the chief evils of the system, namely, making the Scriptures a school-book, might have been overlooked in that communication, whereas some of the other prelates had not yet probably an opportunity of reading the fouler report of the commissioners, or the more obnoxious mass of evidence which has been laid before the legislature. The exclusion of any one prelate, for having merely performed a conscientious duty, only shows what the bishops of Ireland should expect if any government commissioners had power to rule them. It was one of those small expedients, to which human policy has ever had recourse,

when combatting the majesty of truth. I have advanced nothing regarding the principles of that board, in condemnation of which I have not been able to array the unanimous and deliberate resolutions of all the bishops of Ireland, assembled together. I might, in condemnation of the principle of making the Scriptures a school-book, refer to the rescripts of some of the Pontiffs, who sat in the chair of St. Peter for the last fifty years. It is, then, to me a matter of indifference what may be the opinion of a body, composed of a majority of the rankest enemies of my faith, so long as I speak the recorded sentiments of the bishops and the Pope. Whilst I can put what I have written in juxtaposition with the resolutions of the one, or the rescripts of the other, I can well afford to be put under the political ban of any government commissioners, who, at the *congé* of a Protestant Lord Lieutenant alone, proceed to make fundamental changes in the religious portion of a course of education.

In a very recent number of the *Freeman's Journal* there was an extract attributed to Mr. Carlile, which, if it be genuine, proves what confidence the Catholics of Ireland ought to repose in the national board. The authenticity of the passage is questioned; I am glad of it, since it will afford an opportunity of knowing if the board be, in reality, so bigoted as that passage would warrant us in believing, as Mr. Carlile is not an inactive member of that body. Mr. Blake confesses, in his examination before the select committee of the House of Commons, 1835, that so important was Mr. Carlile, that the business of "the board could not be carried on without his services." He is the compiler of the Scripture Lessons, of which I have interdicted the use throughout all the schools of this diocese. But I have a letter of Mr. Carlile's before me, published in the *Morning Chronicle*, of September, 1824, containing passages, than which more offensive could not be written against the Catholic religion, and particularly its clergy. I will, however, for the present, content myself with the following extract from another active member of the board—I mean Dr. Whately, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin. Its genuineness, I hope, will not be questioned, since, if it be, the whole book of "The Errors of Romanism" must be a forgery:—"It (the Romish system) was the natural offspring of man's frail and corrupt character, and it needed no sedulous culture. No one, accordingly, can point out any precise period, at which this 'mystery of iniquity,' the system of Romish corruptions, first began, or specify any person who introduced it. No one, in fact, ever did introduce any such system. The corruptions crept in one by one—originating, for the most part, with an ignorant and depraved people, but connived at, cherished, consecrated, and successively established, by a debased and worldly-minded ministry, and modified by them,

just so far as might best favour the views of their profligate ambition. . . . The corruptions of the Romish Church were the natural offspring of human passions, not checked and regulated by those who ought to have been ministers of the Gospel, but who, on the contrary, were ever ready to indulge and encourage men's weakness and wickedness, provided they could turn it to their own advantage.”*

When Dr. Whately was penning this singular passage against the religion and the priesthood of the Roman Catholics, how ineffable would be his surprise, were he assured that the time would come when he would be allowed to dictate, *ex cathedrâ*, the conditions on which that priesthood and people should receive, for the youth of their communion, a religious education.

His Grace may regulate as he chooses the religious education of his flock, without any interference on my part. He shall never have any control over the spiritual instruction of mine. It is enough that we should have been cajoled by hollow professions out of the hoped-for concession of our rights. We shall not suffer ourselves to be betrayed by any acts, however deep and disguising, into any abandonment of religion.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. ATHANASIUS.
MAY 2, 1838

“I have ever thought a prohibition of the means of improving our rational nature to be the worst species of tyranny that the insolence and perverseness of mankind ever dared to exercise.”—BURKE.

MY LORD—Having felt and witnessed the blighting influence of the penal code on the intellectual and religious freedom of the country, it is no wonder that the writer of the above passage

* “The Errors of Romanism,” by Richard Whately, D.D., London edition, 18mo., pages 11, 12.

should have pointed against it his most eloquent denunciations. From the statutes of Edward, requiring all Latin and English Missals to be consigned to the flames, under a heavy penalty, unless such as “are set forth by the king’s authority,” to the establishment of the board of Lord Stanley, controlling all books, except those that are set forth by the king’s commissioners, we contemplate, under a sad variety of forms, that “worst species of tyranny which prohibits the means of improving our rational nature.” From the enactments of the same sovereign, enforcing a uniformity of worship, and inflicting a fine of one hundred marks upon all who should disparage the Prayer-book, to the formation of a board who are angry with those who disparage their Scripture Lessons, who recommend in their third report “to hold the faith in the unity of spirit,” whilst themselves profess the most conflicting variety of creeds, you behold the same anomalous system always at variance with the freedom of conscience, and labouring, though in vain, to bring about a mere artificial uniformity. Since the time of the notorious George Browne, the founder of the abortive reformation in Ireland, to his Protestant successor, Dr. Whately, it has been the uniform policy to represent the Irish as “zealous, yet blind and unknowing;” and, like the flexible prelate who received a royal reproof on account of the contrast of his liberal indifference after his promotion with the zeal which recommended him to the office, many of his successors were stimulated to assert, by similar “monitions,” the spiritual headship of the monarch, “though they found much oppugning therein,” fearing to incur his Majesty’s displeasure. Though a considerable period has since intervened, how like the language of Archbishop Browne, who represents the Catholic clergy as “crafty sorts to cozen the poor people,” to that of her Majesty’s commissioner, who compares the “Romish to a pagan priest, who keeps hidden from the people the volume of their faith, that they may, with ignorant reverence, submit to the dominion of error.”*

In the diversity of societies which it has since animated, the spirit of persecution has been always the same, in some more fierce, in others more mitigated—always prohibiting the improvement of our rational nature. Since it is in vain you attempt to improve it, if you require conditions which outrage that freedom which the Christian religion requires, it is the same spirit that has transmigrated through the infamous charter schools of Ireland, where the spiritual food administered to the unfortunate inmates was so poisonous, as almost to have effaced from their mis-shapen forms the noble image of their Maker. It is this spirit that has passed through the Hibernian, the Kildare-street,

* Doctor Whately’s “Errors of Romanism,” page 112.

and Tract Societies, of every denomination, and that now exerts itself with a hateful energy in the Education Board, where, if not seasonably checked, it will be more fatal to religion than in all the associations to which that body has succeeded. Yes, my lord, I assert, without fear of contradiction, that the board was regularly constituted on the principle of that worst of tyrannies which Burke so pointedly reprobates ; or we must adopt the other conclusion, that our rational nature may be improved by institutions that war with the freedom of religion. If once you concede to the civil magistrates the right of insisting on the conditions on which the subjects are to receive religious education, I must own your lordship will make out a case to justify the wreck that has been made of the schools, and colleges, and other sacred institutions of this country, and you will acquit the Reformation of much of those horrors which followed in its train. But if, on the other hand, you are bound to own, with the best and wisest men, that religion ought to be free from all coercion, by what consistency can you claim a right over that which has the greatest influence in moulding the religious opinions of children—namely, books and teachers ? And must not the Catholics stigmatize the folly of their fathers for spurning the proffers of education, which were disapproved of by their clergy, if they now submit to a system, not only requiring unholy conditions, against which the bishops of Ireland unanimously protested, but a system that was formed after a public avowal, on the part of the Commissioners of Education Inquiry, utterly to disregard the resolutions of the Catholic bishops ?

I shall not, then, for the present, prosecute my intention of exposing the partial distribution of the funds committed to the board, or of inquiring why the education of two hundred and fifty scholars costs at the rate of fifty pounds annually in one district, whilst it is deemed only worth ten pounds in another—or why, in other places only eight pounds are assigned for the education of more than two hundred scholars. For those interesting details I refer the reader to the Appendix of the Report of Education before the House of Commons. The comparison will, doubtless, lead him to the conclusion that, in the estimation of their relative value, the vicarious merits of their respective patrons have been, in defiance of all the Calvinism of the board, occasionally imparted to the scholars. These, however, are but the natural consequences of a system, which has been itself founded on the most manifest injustice. To expect from it any other but their natural results, would be the same as to expect wholesome fruit from a tree, whilst its vicious root is in full vigour. The board itself is but the creature of a vicious principle, and, therefore, the religious bigotry and political injustice that presided over its formation, must be expected in all its operations.

Perhaps in the history of human inconsistencies there is nothing more amusing, than to exhibit to the world an example of most flagrant religious intolerance, and then to turn round and upbraid others with that same intolerance, because they have unmasked their hollow pretensions. Were I to advocate the principle of giving to Catholics the power of interfering with the Protestants in the religious education of their children, then I should be justly chargeable with the imputation of religious intolerance. I only claim the same exemption from any annoyance of conscience, which I should most cheerfully extend to all the children of the human race.

To illustrate this worst of tyrannies, which is manifest in this system, let us suppose a similar board to be formed for the literary and religious education of the Protestants and Catholics of England, composed only of three Protestants, who bear the same proportion to the Protestant population of that country as two to the Catholic population of Ireland—suppose all the rest of the commissioners, forming more than double that number, to be Catholics—yet, in order to amuse the Protestants with a specious fairness, some are said to be placed there to represent the Gallican, and others the Ultramontane opinions, that may be found under the general profession of the Catholic name. To follow up the parity, let us suppose that two of the Catholics who compose this English board, so far from being identified with the country, were aliens and Irishmen, who had uniformly indulged in the most rancorous invectives against the English clergy and people—suppose, too, that the first act of such a board, which was to arrogate the unjustifiable power of regulating the religious education of the English Protestants, was to associate to themselves a Catholic secretary, who so managed the affairs of the board that the official phrase, “that he had the honor of laying such a communication before the commissioners,” frequently meant nothing more than that he had the honor of laying it before himself, and submitting it to his own deliberation. Let us fancy, for it can be but fancy, that the English Protestants have sufficient patience for the slow execution of such a scheme for their cajolement as I am now describing, and that they behold one of the Catholic commissioners from Ireland bringing over two or three of his own family, to place them in the model school for training the future teachers of the English Protestant youth, to expound the Scripture lessons that were compiled by the Catholic commissioner, into which he infused his own peculiar opinions, and out of which he scruples not to own that he laboured to exclude “repentance and righteousness,” and every other distinctive phrase that was consecrated to Protestant orthodoxy; suppose that one of the Protestant commissioners, who was to protect the faith of the Protestant youth, was a most

accommodating gentleman, who, in common with the rest of the commissioners, relishes not for instruction “books objectionable, as peculiarly belonging to some particularly religious denomination;” that, on the contrary, he strenuously recommends books which would conceal every distinction of creed, and that so anxious was he to smoothe the road to science, by levelling into an even surface all the roughness of religious opinions, that nothing should give him more gratification than to see the passages expressive of Protestant doctrine expunged out of the works of the most pious and moderate bishops of his own communion, and that no sentiment should be ever uttered that could jar upon ears attuned to the sounds of liberality. Let us next suppose that a large staff of well paid Catholic clerks was stationed in the normal school, to answer the applicants that there are no funds, whilst at the same time they multiply their inspectors beyond any former example—that out of this number the majority is still Catholic, for the youth of Protestant England, by way of illustrating in their own example, the value of figures, and giving a proof of their practical appreciation of the golden rule of proportions. Let us suppose that in this revision of the inspecting corps they had discarded the most intelligent and meritorious of all their officers, because he was guilty of the crime of talking of the glories of old England; of feeling enthusiastic zeal for the religion of his ancestors, and denouncing the injustice of having the Magna Charta laid aside by the six coercive acts of Lord Castlereagh. Suppose that whilst the distant provinces were neglected, under pretence of having no funds, those raw recruits, the creatures of political patronage, were assigned a larger salary than is even now paid to the learned professors who have devoted their lives to training up Protestant clergy in one of the English universities, and that the officers alone swallowed up more than half the sum that is given for the education of the pastors of the Protestant people—we must add that before they are fitted for the office of inspection, they must be immured for some months in the model schools, to be initiated by the foreigners in their craft, and to be taught, by the example of their immolated predecessor, the prudence of stifling every emotion of country or of creed, until, disembowelled of every national feeling, they come out accomplished, but heartless inspectors. Suppose, in fine, that a Protestant prelate had been associated to this incongruous board, for the purpose of lulling into a treacherous confidence the entire of the English hierarchy, and that this board, emboldened by the strange forbearance which they had on that account experienced, issued a resolve not to admit the Scriptures to be taught in the schools, or expounded by laymen, though the Protestant prelates had declared that to be a practice fraught with reverence, and productive of advantage to the children and society—nay, that they attempted so to

intercept the English bishops in their right and duty of teaching, that they should not put a book into the hands, or appoint a master for the instruction of the children of their flocks, unless they obtained the fiat of the commissioners. But, applied to England, I am pursuing a phantom. As well might the ugly chimera, imagined by the Roman writer, composed of animals of earth and sea, be invested with life and form, as the strange body I have described to exist in England. It is only in unfortunate Ireland, long accustomed to misgovernment and insult, that such a monstrous reality, so revolting to its faith and so dangerous to its liberties, could be endured.

The laboured ingenuity with which the advocates of the government board have endeavoured to elude the resolutions of the bishops, proves their reluctant conviction that they must at last yield to the justice of those requisitions. We are told, forsooth, that they passed at a distant period, having no reference to a system of education, such as the board has adopted. It may, therefore, be necessary to show that so far from contemplating any other system, they referred to the very plan of a mixed education, which the government commissioners of 1826 were then projecting. In furtherance of this project, various conferences were held, and a repeated correspondence took place between the commissioners of education on the one hand, and the heads of the Catholic and Protestant churches on the other. The conferences turned on the compilation of Scriptural or Christian lessons, and among the letters that passed between them we find the two following in one of the reports of the education commissioners : *

“ 41, North Cumberland-street, 23rd January, 1826.

“ Doctor Murray presents his compliments to the commissioners of education inquiry, as he is desired by the Catholic archbishops and bishops now assembled in Dublin to submit to them the enclosed resolutions, relative to the system of education proposed for the poor of Ireland. He is further prayed to state that it would be highly gratifying to the prelates to be informed, at the earliest convenience of the commissioners, whether a system of general education, founded on the principles embodied in those resolutions, would be likely to meet their views and receive their approbation ?

“ Commissioners of Education Inquiry.”

“ Merrion-street, 26th January, 1826.

“ The Commissioners of Education Inquiry present their compliments to Doctor Murray, and have to acknowledge the receipt of his letter of the 23rd instant, enclosing a copy of the resolutions entered into by the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Ireland, at his house on the 21st instant, and stating that it would be highly gratifying to the prelates to be informed, at the earliest convenience of the commissioners, whether a system of general education, founded on the principles embodied in those resolutions, would be likely to meet their views and receive their approbation. As it is the duty of the commissioners to report their views only to his Majesty, they must abstain from any expression of opinion on the subjects contained in the resolutions which Doctor Murray has transmitted to them.

“ The Most Rev. Doctor Murray.”

* Ninth Report, pages 8, 9.

It is unnecessary to comment on the latter production. It is conceived and expressed in the true style of his Majesty's commissioners, who fancy it unbecoming their delegated office to express any opinions of their views to the Archbishop of Dublin, conveying the resolutions of the assembled bishops of Ireland, on the momentous question of religious education, in which their rights and duties were so deeply involved. However, the Catholic prelates did not shrink from the assertion of their duties on account of the high tone assumed by the commissioners. They insisted on their resolutions, which I have laid before the public in a former letter, as the basis of any accommodation that might be proposed on the important subject. Nay, the venerable prelate already mentioned, in a subsequent letter, addressed to Mr. Frankland Lewis, on the subject of "Christian Lessons" for the use of such mixed schools, concludes with the following important passage:—"I am instructed to say that the Roman Catholic prelates would not think themselves called on to discourage the attendance of children of the Roman Catholic faith in any schools in which the use of this compilation, so amended, might be required, *provided the regulations of said school were in accordance with the resolutions of the Roman Catholic prelates, which I had the honour to transmit to the commissioners on the 23rd of January last.*"*

I should not have animadverted on the dictatorial tone of the letter of the commissioners, were it not that their own subsequent report furnished a satisfactory commentary on that production. It is true they could not be required to give their views to any others than those, from whom their commission was derived. But that loftier pretensions than a mere dutiful and official reserve were couched in that communication, may be fully inferred from the following extract of the report which they submitted to his Majesty:—"It is necessary for us to state, with respect to the resolutions of the Roman Catholic bishops, bearing date the 21st January, 1826, that we feel it our duty not to suffer them, in any way, to obstruct or interfere with us in the course we were pursuing."† This is a candid statement, and reveals the opinion which the commissioners entertain, regarding the respective shares which the Government and their pastors should have in the religious education of the people. The document bears the signatures of the five commissioners of education, including that of A. R. Blake, one of the Catholic members of the present board. It may be curious to compare the reverence which this gentleman expresses, in the course of his examinations before the Parliamentary committees, for the opinion of one individual prelate, with the disregard which

* 9th Report of Education Inquiry, page 21.

† Ibid, page 27.

he here exhibits for the solemn resolutions of the congregated body. It would appear as if he fancied there was a virtue went forth from the Government, which entitled those who were in connexion with it to a species of infallibility. It must be on this strange supposition that Mr. Blake has attempted to elevate a garbled motley book, compiled by a Calvinist, and covered over with the leprosy of unsound and suspicious doctrine, to the dignity of the Douay Bible. How wayward is the ratiocination of some individuals! This gentleman construes the silence of bishops, who never read those mischievous productions, into a solemn approval, and yet their express, solemn, and recognised resolutions he sets so much at nought as that he feels it his "duty not to suffer them then to obstruct or interfere with him in the course which he is pursuing." For his strange doctrine on the silence of the bishops, I must express to him my deep obligation. It first directed my attention to those pernicious volumes, and, having read some portions of them, I did not fail to interdict them in all the schools under my jurisdiction, so that the faithful will be free from their pestilent contagion. Should any doubts have existed regarding their evil tendency, they must be dissipated by the last learned and zealous letter of "Camillus," a writer who feels on the subject as an Irishman and a Catholic should do, and to whom his countrymen should be indebted for the continuance of such valuable productions. As to the commissioner, however, he must labour under a very erroneous impression, if he fancies there is anything in an office under the crown which gives any additional weight to the opinions of any individuals on religious subjects. This, at all events, is certain, that the Irish people will confide in the opinions of their bishops, regarding the faith of books and the moral fitness of the masters, as much when they are aloof from its contact as when they are in connexion with any Whig, Tory, or Radical anti-Catholic Government. They are not yet sufficiently educated to comprehend the fine logic of the individual, who would feign make the world believe, that a system is not bad because it has the approbation of one bishop, whilst the same individual contemptuously disregards the solemn resolutions of that bishop, and all his brethren, when coming in the way of that obnoxious plan, which he was resolved at all hazards to pursue.

Notwithstanding all the efforts of the board to reconcile to itself the conflicting bodies by which it is opposed, it has only involved itself in fresh embarrassments. To conciliate the Rev. Drs. Cooke and Boyton, they scruple not to violate the resolutions of the Catholic bishops, and the discipline of the Catholic church. The former has declared—"that if the parents are left at liberty to direct that their children shall read the Scriptures at such times as they shall think fit, that is all he thinks neces-

sary.”* Dr. Boyton confidently expressed the same opinions on the necessity of the unrestricted use of the Scriptures as the condition of his adhesion.† “We do not thank them for their permission,” are the blunt expressions in which the reverend gentleman conveys his manly determination never to surrender his own religious convictions, or his rights to the truckling policy of the commissioners. They have yielded to those bold requisitions. What is the consequence? The same which your lordship’s associates are daily experiencing from the Tories, in return for your adoption of much of their policy. They have been alienating those who had some confidence in them before, and earning the derision of those whom they thought to win by concessions. Amid such unprincipled overtures, are the Catholics the only body, whose religious principles are to be put in abeyance? No, my lord, they will adopt the same manly tone; and as they ask not to interfere with the religious scruples of others, they will not allow any unauthorized board to barter away their religious rights in compliance with the requisition of Protestants. By appealing to their representatives in Parliament, they have already got rid of the religious tyranny of a secular society. They will not, after recovering their civil rights, suffer a bigoted board to worm itself into all the concerns of religion, until it should succeed in giving it over, bound head and foot, to the secular power. Whilst they are anxious for the complete freedom of others, they cannot be insensible to their own. Perhaps your lordship is not aware of their intense commisseration for the negroes, nor of their indignant surprise that some of the Irish members who were so lately emancipated should forget so soon the sympathies of other nations, and be so lost to the feelings of humanity and religion as vote for the continuance of the torture of the negroes and the tyranny of their task-masters. If, then, they interest themselves for others, they will not be indifferent to the fate of their own children. Instead of a paltry central board, as expensive as it is unproductive, formed after the suspicious model of persecuting Prussia, and regulated by the same despotic machinery as its armies, they will, in a fierce tone, demand, in return for their taxes, those ample local colleges that abound in every country where true Christianity prevails—that are congenial to its paternal spirit, and that are dear from hereditary associations to the people—where the children will not be brought up with suspicion of their very catechism, and made to hide it, as if it were a wicked thing, from the insults of some itinerant mercenary, and where their simple minds, while ranging through every scene, will be gathering fresh evidences of that creed, that first taught them to reverence their Maker and to love all mankind. As well might you compare the peddling

* Evidence of Education before the House of Commons, p. 4771. † Ibid, p. 250.

craft of a hawker with the commerce of those “nobles of the earth,” whose vessels are freighted with the treasures of every clime, as compare the wretched squirtings of small knowledge that are drawn out of those forcing schools, with those rich reservoirs to which I have alluded, springing up in all the provinces, and protected by municipal freedom from all contact with the aliens of the faith, who would infect them with religious poison.

The boasted *juste milieu* of the board is anything but a presumption that it is right, or a proof of its stability. What admirable logic! It is right because it encounters hostility from opposite quarters! Doctor Gregg must not fail, in the coming controversy, to urge the argument in favour of the Church of England, and to show that it must be right, because it is exposed to the double batteries—of the Catholics on the one hand, and the Dissenters on the other. Theirs is the *juste milieu* of Louis Philippe—a vacillating policy, veering about with every breath of expediency, because they are conscious of their weakness, and have no fixed principle to guide them. In proportion as they have receded from their first rules they have lost their former grounds, insecure as it was, without gaining any firmer footing; and by this middle policy they will not fail to illustrate the truth of the Irish proverb regarding the fate of the man who, in attempting to grasp the opposite banks, loses his hold of both, and is borne along by the current.

In the first letter of this series which I had the honour to address to your lordship, aware of the sensitiveness of the Protestant prelates to their lands and titles, I sincerely deprecated any intention of interfering with the one or the other. I fancied this declaration should have appeased their most nervous apprehensions. Again, however, I may be allowed respectfully to remind those prelates, and such others as tremble for their temporalities, that mine is altogether a spiritual and apostolical title; and that their fears from its hereditary retention (for our title is retained, and not assumed), are as vain as those of the monarch who imagined that his sceptre was to be seized by Him whose “kingdom is not of this world.” Let them, then, enjoy the fat of the earth, until the hearts of the legislature are moved to vote them, as they have already voted some of their associates, a useless encumbrance. We shall never repine at their possessions. Let them, too, take their seat among the senators of the land, and we shall be silent, provided they forget not the dignity of their office, to launch from their high places their violent invectives against our religion and our country. Those are honours which may be scattered among any whom the “Queen desires to honor,” and it becomes not any loyal subject to contest her approbation. Her Majesty undoubtedly has as good a right at her coronation to swell the number of episcopal barons, as of any other portion of the peerage, and to increase

or diminish the lustre of the mitre, by the appendage of a coronet. Those are baubles by which the vain are attracted to the throne, and which fortunately become instrumental in making human weakness subservient to the public weal. All, then, that is temporal in the episcopacy, its worldly rank and its worldly wealth, flows from the secular authority of which it may dispose at its good pleasure, and I should be the last to controvert the competency of that power, which has already strewn ten episcopal thrones, and scattered their honours to the wind. But the spiritual authority of the bishops is not in the power of Parliament to give or take away; it flows from a higher and a holier source, and the evidence of its untainted purity, is found in the continuity of the stream from its Apostolical origin. There is, then, nothing strange or novel, or that breathes any aspirations after temporal titles, in the practice of Catholic bishops using the name of the see over which they preside. Your lordship's learning can trace the practice to the remotest period of Christianity—a practice which has spread over every country where the Gospel was preached, and which shall ever be preserved, like the other time-honored memorials of the Catholic church. It was the title used by Catholic bishops, in the perfecting the most important instruments, as well as those solemn occasions when they addressed monarchs or their ministers in behalf of an oppressed people. I hold the seals of some of the most remote as well as the latest of my revered predecessors.* I knew

* To the Catholic it must be a source of consolation, and to every reader who values historical knowledge, a subject of interest, to be furnished with the following series of the Archbishops of Tuam, reaching unbroken from the Most Rev. Oliver Kelly, my lamented predecessor, to the fatal period of the importation of the Parliamentary Church, notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made to destroy all our records.

His predecessor, Edward Dillon, died in 1809.

Boetrus Egan in 1798.

Ph. Philips.

Mark Skerret was Archbishop, 1775.

Michael O'Gara, 1742 (*Hibernia Dominicana Suppl.*)

Bernard O'Gara, brother to the former, 1732 (*Hib. Dom.*)

James Lynch, whose name appears so often in the memorable registry of 1704, is found discharging his episcopal functions in the ordination of priests, from 1674 to 1691, at his rural residence in Cluanbar; and by a French periodical of 1701, we find that in the same year he was living in exile in Paris.

John Burk, translated from Clonfert in 1647, was living in 1670 (*Hib. Dom. Suppl.*)

Malachy Keely, or O'Kelly, was killed in Sligo by the Puritan rebels in 1646. From the nuncio Rinuccini, who knew him well, his memory received the following tribute:—"L'Arcivescovo era potentissimo per il credito e per l'eloquenza."

Florence Conry, or, as his Irish name imports, O'Mul-Conry, was Archbishop of this see from 1608 to 1629 (*Hib. Dom. & Ware*). To this illustrious prelate the whole Irish Church is deeply indebted, being the founder of Louvain, which was the nursery in after times of so many eminent ecclesiastics.

James O'Healy was living in 1594 (*Mac Geoghegan*).

Nicholas Skerret died in 1583 (*Hib. Dom.*).

Christopher Bodkin, in 1572, with whom Ware concludes the series of the Catholic Archbishops of Tuam.

no example of one of them, when his office required it, declining to assert his legitimate title; nor have I ever heard of a Catholic bishop carrying his compliance with an odious penal law so far, as not to impress on the most solemn instruments the seal of his episcopal authority. If so, then, where is the crime in the Catholic bishop of a see saying that he is that bishop, unless truth be a transgression, or English more reasonable than Latin? Now, I put it to your lordship's conscientious sense of right, which would be the greater crime, to perform publicly and repeatedly, solemn acts, which, in case of no title must be null and sacrilegious, or in the case of the acts being acknowledged by all as valid and legitimate, simply to express that title from which their validity and legitimacy flow? I have dwelt upon this subject to remove the misapprehensions of some, to relieve the fears of others, and to satisfy all that a title at which they affect to take umbrage, so far from having originated in the vain ritual of heraldry, is nothing more than the ordinary title of every Catholic bishop, designating his spiritual union with the see over which he is placed by the successor of St. Peter. It is, then, unnecessary to waste controversy on so clear a subject, since every one knows who are the titled, temporal, Protestant prelates, created or blown away by the breath of royalty; and who the true, spiritual, Catholic bishops, partaking of the firmness of the rock on which they are founded, and invigorated by a communion with that see, which continues to pour over the earth the pure waters of its apostolical fountain.*

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.,

✠ JOHN ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

* There is within view, and before the portico of our cathedral, an ancient and venerable monument, well calculated to illustrate more strikingly how utterly untenable are the claims of the Parliamentary Prelates, compared with the rights of the Bishops of the Catholic Church. It is the base of a magnificent cross, erected towards the middle of the twelfth century, by Hugh O'Hosin, Archbishop of Tuam, and by Turlogh O'Connor, Monarch of Ireland. This fact is ascertained by the following inscriptions in the Irish language, along the base, and in vertical lines down the length of the shaft of this monument:—

Ór do chomorba jarlath the do Aed U Órrin lar in deimad
in chmorra.

A Prayer for the successor of Jarlath, Aed, or Hugh O'Hossin, by whom this cross was made.

Ór do Thoilldelbuch uc Conchubur . . . lar in deimad, &c.

A Prayer for Turlogh O'Connor.....by whom was made, &c.

“This cross,” writes Mr. Petrie, “may justly rank as the finest monument of its class and age remaining in Ireland. Yet,” the indignant and learned antiquarian continues, “to the disgrace of the inhabitants of that ancient city,

LETTER LXXXV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE NATIONAL OR GOVERNMENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS

JULY 31, 1838.

MY LORD—The important events that have been crowded into the last few weeks, must recal to you and your lordship's colleagues the delusiveness of the policy which you have hitherto pursued towards Ireland. You fancied that what was called agitation here was entirely the result of the potent influence of some political leaders interested in its continuance. You entertained another strange fancy, the natural consequence of the first, that by setting them at rest, society should not be vexed by any future agitation. The vast tithe meetings recently held in Kilkenny, in Wexford, in Kildare, and in Mayo, must awaken your lordship from those dreams of security, in which you but too sanguinely indulged. For near three years there were no brands cast to inflame the populace—no tones of indignant denunciation against rulers were heard to "shake the fierce democracy." Not only was the surface of society smooth and peaceful, but every quarter of the country echoed with the artificial chorus of praise of a paternal government. Why, then, have the people, as if moved by a sudden and spontaneous impulse, risen to the attitude of a bold and majestic remonstrance against their civil and religious grievances, of which the recent history of the country has demonstrated the

its shaft, head, and base, though all remaining, are allowed to be in different localities, detached from each other" (Round Towers, p. 317). To the truth of the fact mentioned by the learned writer on the round towers, I lament to be obliged to subscribe. His just indignation at the neglect with which this monument has been treated, I cheerfully applaud; nor should I attempt to screen the present inhabitants from the censure, were it in their power to remedy the evil of which he complains. But the head and shaft are in the Protestant church-yard, by which so many relics of Catholic times have been forcibly appropriated, in order to mimic that antiquity of which it so much feels the loss. It is to expose that want of antiquity that I have introduced the mention of this singular monument; and though its parts are now scattered, reclaiming a union with each other, they still speak eloquently, reminding us of the glory of the Catholic Church, not only when Protestantism had no existence, but before an English foot had trodden on Irish ground.

beneficial effects? Because they find themselves not only literally disappointed in the hopes which they were taught to entertain, but see some of the evils of which they complained considerably aggravated. Yes, my lord, they find, to their cost, promises forgotten, pledges broken, grievances—for the extinction of which they laboured—fastened with new legislative ties upon the country; and men who, without any early sympathy with the people's wrongs, afterwards dexterously contrived to raise themselves on the people's shoulders to posts of official emolument and honour, again resuming their natural predilections, and turning round on the very people who pushed them into distinction. These are sentiments, the truth of which can no longer be disguised; they were long suppressed by many in the hope that individual views would be merged in a general concern for the public weal. But as it is now confessed that the great interests of the community are put in abeyance in proportion to the urgency of individual pretensions, there is no longer any affectation of reserve, and in every quarter of the country you behold how a sense of the danger that threatens their civil and religious liberties, gives free utterance to the public disappointment.

Your lordship is aware that the people of Ireland have ever found in the Protestant Establishment, the salient spring of all their national calamities. You are also aware that with every ministry, whether Whig or Tory, that hitherto ruled its destinies, the first question was, how that Protestant Establishment could be maintained? and that the "salus populi," which was the first maxim in every sound system of ancient legislation, has been, with regard to Ireland and its inhabitants, only a subordinate consideration. Faithful to the model that has been shown you, your lordship has not swerved from the political maxims of your predecessors. Indifferent what may be the effects of measures, provided they promise to secure the Established Church, you urge their adoption, and receive the support of those who consider the small section of its followers, of far more value than the peace and happiness of seven millions of people. No matter that this establishment is now confessed to be incompatible with the prosperity of the land—no matter that to the opinion of its inutility, has succeeded the conviction of its utter and irreclaimable noxiousness—no matter that the progressing tide of a Catholic population is so covering whatever little of dominion it held, as to contract it to a mere isolated rampart; still the small religious fortress must be preserved, to which, not only the interests of the country are to be sacrificed, but on which an expenditure is wasted, which, if properly applied, would spare the infliction of all the onerous measures for which it has furnished an argument, and which are intended

for its support. Not only are the vast proceeds of the church lands, which should have been sufficient, even were it useful, swallowed up in its vortex—not only are the tithes, gathered as they have been from fields of blood, thrown into its unproductive reservoir—it has been likewise the occasion of burdening the country with enormous taxes, towards the kindred systems of poor laws and education, which mark the pre-dilections of their framers, for the interests of the Established Church. I shall not dwell upon the obligations of the people to this paternal ministry, for swelling the constabulary force beyond any former example. It is in vain that you refer with complacency to the reduction of the military, while the people, who feel the effects of the change, can point to a corresponding increase in the heavier pressure of their county cesses, since, instead of the pay of the army coming from the consolidated fund, the cess payers are immediately burdened with the support of a staff, almost useless in many districts for every purpose, except that of patronage, or of prolonging the existence of the Establishment, by the collection of its tithes. It is, then, to your lordship's colleagues in office, and to their paternal solicitude for the interests of the Established Church, the people are beholden for this increase of their burdens. To what other source than the Establishment, can they trace your poor laws, by which the county rates will be considerably augmented? The frightful pauperism that ever followed the Reformation in its first establishment, proved, whatever may be thought of the orthodoxy of their faith, that its teachers were lost to the feelings of humanity. Hence the loud and importunate demands of the people for relief, wherever any remnant of freedom was left them. Though they were deprived by the new occupants of the church revenues, of that support which was liberally allowed them by their ancient possessors, still they insisted they should not starve, and in England extorted from the mass of the community, in the shape of law, what the trustees of their own sacred funds refused in the name of religion. Hence, in the estimation of its cost to the country, the poor rates should be added to the other revenues of the Establishment. Were the Protestant hierarchy of this country composed of the majority of the people, there might be some apology for this extraordinary exercise of legislative solicitude for its perpetuation. But when it is so rapidly diminishing, as to promise soon to disappear from the land, the people had a right to expect that, far from being burdened with fresh taxes, the useless treasures of that Church should have been applied by the government and the legislature, to the relief of that frightful wretchedness, of which the rapacity of that same Establishment had been the most prolific source. But the worst consequence of the measure is, that under pre-

tence of providing for the poor, it is intended for the gradual destruction of the franchise; and thus, in the name of mercy, the people are to be robbed of the best shield for their protection. For this insidious policy, the requital should be general execration.

Having obtained possession of the funds which, while administered by the Catholic hierarchy, dissipated ignorance and diffused the blessings of knowledge, it should have been expected that it would devote a large portion of them to the same laudable purpose. But, alas! its ministry was productive of intellectual as well as corporal privations, and often has the legislature been obliged to interfere to supply, at an enormous expenditure of the public money, the wants of which the selfishness of that Establishment was productive. To this very day have not the grants for education been a uniform and heavy item in the public taxes, and, with the exception of the niggardly grant to the College of Maynooth, have not all those sums been expended for the purpose of raising buttresses, to support the tottering walls of this crazy establishment? For this has the wily ingenuity of statesmen been tasked to devise those abortive schemes of proselytism and perversion, that have rapidly succeeded each other, from the days of the Protestant Primate Boulter to the formation of that anomalous society called the National Board. Of all those fleeting bodies, the one uniform object has been the support of the Protestant Establishment, which, in addition to its now enormous revenues, should be charged with the accumulated amount of all the monies, that have been squandered on these noxious associations. But of all its predecessors, the National Board is that which has been most extravagant in its scale of expenditure, and which threatens to be most fatal in its hostility to the Catholic religion. Yes, my lord, its anti-Catholic spirit is no longer problematical; its deep and insidious designs can no longer be a subject of doubt or controversy; and, if further testimony were wanting regarding the object that is meditated, that testimony could be furnished by your lordship's recent speech on the subject of education. You express a deep regret, and I give your lordship full credit for sincerity, that the education of the Irish people could not be conducted by the ministers of the Establishment; but as this was not practicable, the next best thing, was the newly contrived machinery of the board, which would be productive of corresponding results. The Catholic people of Ireland owe your lordship a deep debt of obligation for the candour with which you suffer the ministerial views to appear through the disguise in which they are so often enveloped. But it required no new manifesto to warn us of the lurking hostility of that system. It fully revealed itself, from the day that the members of that body sought and obtained

permission from the Lord Lieutenant to revive the rules regarding religious education, and exemplified the spirit of the source from which they derived their mission, by regulations manifestly at variance with the authority of the Catholic church. The novelty of such a strange proceeding excited general surprise, and a searching inquiry soon succeeded, which has opened the eyes of numbers to the dangerous tendency of a system, which attempts to supersede the most solemn duties of the legitimate pastors of the people. As your lordship stated that it would be desirable to have the education of the people conducted by the ministers of the establishment, why not extend the force of the same observation to the pastors of the Catholic church ? This would not suit the policy that must still be pursued, of sacrificing every other interest to Protestant ascendancy. To have their flocks instructed by Protestant ministers is an admirable principle. To entrust the education of their flocks to Catholic priests must, it would appear, be a downright abomination. To wrest them entirely out of their hands, and to transfer them to Protestant ministers, is a hopeless project : therefore, a new machinery must be constructed—wielded almost exclusively by Protestant power, and yet so contrived as to conceal its pernicious object from the people. This machinery has, indeed, worked astonishing results : witness the Scripture Lessons, of which the gross errors do not require a theological microscope to find them, since they are now palpable to the dullest apprehension : witness the complete analogy between its operation and the effects of the mixed systems, which have filled Germany with infidelity and discord. Allow me to recommend strenuously to your lordship's perusal a recent letter of Hibernicus, whose seasonable and judicious extracts from a production called the "Red Book," published in the Rhenish provinces, put the policy of the British ministers, and that of the Prussian government in *juxta-position*. Witness the recent appointment of twenty-five district inspectors, of whom a majority for Catholic Ireland are Protestants ! to be the authorized missionaries of this board, in regulating the quantity as well as the quality of religious instruction that is to be imparted to the people ! Had I been hitherto silent on this anti-national board, this singular appointment, together with that of the additional commissioners, should force from me the exposure of all its evils. What has any of your Protestant inspectors to do with the Catholic children of the province of Connaught, for example, with whom there are scarcely any Protestants to mingle ? As your system is avowedly a mixed one for a mixed population, its working cannot be adapted to a country, in which no such mixture is found. Does your lordship seriously imagine that I shall permit that board, or any such uncanonical body, to

send their Protestant missionaries into the schools of this diocese composed exclusively of Catholic children, there to be in continual communication with them, and tainting the simple purity of their faith with the poison of the Scripture Lessons of Mr. Carlile? No, my lord, it is not in the power of any British minister, to achieve such an unholy project. Already have a zealous clergy, among other wise and spirited resolutions, come to the determination of protesting against any Protestant inspectors being sent, to regulate the religious education of their flocks. Yet, in spite of these resolves, the board have, in the insolent exercise of their authority, sent a Protestant inspector into one of the districts of Tuam, where I am told he has been spared even already the toil of instruction. In this they must yield, as they have been obliged to do with regard to the Scripture Extracts, or this diocese will disown their unhallowed connexion. For a long time these Scripture Lessons were practically enforced, notwithstanding that in their preface the commissioners were content with a modest though strenuous recommendation. Many an unfortunate schoolmaster throughout Ireland was subject to the petulant reproofs of their itinerant officials, for not having the Scripture Lessons more frequently in the hands of the children,—I know not whether they might not in this instance have exceeded the measure of their instructions. Now, however, the Catholic masters are released from the obligation of teaching those pernicious tracts. They have disappeared from this diocese without a murmur on the part of any officer of the board, and the learned labours of Mr. Carlile may now sleep in his repository, a melancholy monument of such a waste of public money, as well as of the unconquerable attachment of the people to their ancient religion.

Allow me to impress this truth upon your lordship, that whether our schools receive aid from the Government or receive it not, they shall always be so conducted that no inroad be made on the authority of the pastors, or the discipline of the Catholic church. I am told the board complains of the inconsistency of persons asking a share of the education fund, whilst they resolve to suffer no undue interference with their own complete authority over the religious instruction in the schools. Pray, by what authority do those functionaries annex to the apportionment of the fund, of which they are but the trustees and not the proprietors, arbitrary conditions, offensive to the faith and subversive of the authority of the pastors of the people for whom those funds are intended? Those funds come through the Legislature from the pockets of the people. The insulting conditions which the board requires, have no direct Legislative sanction. They are the bye-regulations of some few bigots who rule the board, of which an approval is sought from some Secre-

tary or Lieutenant; and, then, these regulations are made to intercept the bounty of the Legislature! So far from being approved of by the Legislature, I will venture to assert that they shall never obtain any such sanction. No; such regulations would be reprobated in the House of Commons. Let the experiment be tried—let Ministers strive to embody those offensive and anti-Catholic propositions into an act of Parliament that are insisted on by the board, and there are but few Catholics in Ireland that would not startle at the re-enactment of the old penal code. Until the Legislature, then, decides the conditions, the people have a right to ask and to obtain the pecuniary aid that is destined for education, without subjecting their consciences to unholy conditions. The board may refuse it, it is true, but it will be at their own peril; let, then, those districts that are so refused appeal loudly to the Legislature; let them require of their representatives to insist that the public funds shall not be rendered unavailable by conditions, that are at war with the spirit of religion.

This ministry, of which your lordship is a member, take great credit for doing justice to Ireland. Is it justice to the Catholic people to refuse them education, unless administered through a Protestant medium? Is it justice to have more of the fund, said to be intended for the education of the poor of that persuasion, squandered on officials—the greater number Protestants—than the entire sum that is granted for the education of the whole priesthood of Ireland? No, my Lord, the injustice and the bigotry of the whole system of anti-national education are best attested by the zeal with which the ministerial press in England as well as in Ireland, laboured to check public discussion. If it be fraught with those benefits which its advocates ascribe to it, why not let it enjoy all the advantages of public inquiry—or why the alarm of journals, calling themselves popular, should they let such discussions into their columns? If the Government strive, then, to propagate this system by force or by corruption, it will not argue much of the wisdom of Gamaliel, since it must betray the strongest suspicions that it requires other aid than its own excellence to recommend it.

It is in vain that all the energies of patronage, so actively at work in other departments of the state to win over influential persons into an interested acquiescence, have been put into requisition. It is in vain that temptations have been held out to apply for some of the lucrative places, and the corruption which has eaten its way into much that was once sound in society, has striven to cross the very threshold of the sanctuary. It is in vain that you have endeavoured, by a more expensive pecuniary provision, to raise the small ignorant officials whose previous acquirements did not fit them for any such dis-

tinction, far above the condition of the professors of Maynooth College, or the parochial clergy of Ireland. Were you to give them the treasury, it will fail of giving them influence; and the humble working curates will continue to do more in the instruction of the people, and in the support of the true interests of the state, than the entire junta of your high paid mercenaries. No, no, my lord; rely on it, all your efforts to uphold so unpopular a body, and so unchristian a system, must prove abortive. The people are now beginning to know the materials of which it is composed. Amidst the apostacy or corruption of a portion of the press, there was also a portion placed beyond the reach of temptation. Besides the *Freeman's Journal*, which has pursued the straightforward tenor of its truly patriotic course, without any inclination towards the powerful bodies that alternately sought to draw it from its path, I hail with pleasure the manly tone, in defence of their religion and their freedom, which has recently distinguished many of the provincial journals of the kingdom. With such vigilant sentinels to arouse the indolent into a just alarm of the stealthy approaches of the foe, there is very little danger that the faith which their more manly predecessors could not subdue by open force, should now be filched from us by the deceitful stratagems of the Caledonians and the Saxons. Let it not be imagined that I wish to excite any unreasonable prejudice against those, to whom your lordship's compassion for the Irish Catholics would entrust their education. No; they must be judged by their works. We are told in the Gospel that a bad tree cannot produce good fruit, nor do people gather vines and grapes from brambles and thorns. Reserving some more precious extracts from their writings to other occasions, I beg to submit the following passage from a member of the anti-national board to the Catholic people of Ireland, that from the quality of the stem they may form a judgment of the nature of the fruit, which they are suffering their children to pluck from its branches:—

“Idolatry of the grossest kind (he writes regarding the Catholic Church) was gradually restored. The worshippers of the one true God, manifest in Christ Jesus, practically paid their chief adoration to deified mortals. The Scriptures were secluded from the people under the veil of an unknown tongue, and their interpretation fettered, and their authority superseded, even with the learned, by a mass of traditions which made the Word of God of none effect. Then sacraments became superstitious charms—then public worship a kind of magic incantation, muttered in a dead language, and Christian holiness of life was commuted for holy water, for fantastic penances, pilgrimages, amulets, pecuniary donations, and a whole train of superstitious observances worthy of paganism in its worst forms.” But I must pause here,

and forbear polluting my page, with the blasphemous application of a Scripture passage to the chaste spouse of Christ, worthy only to find utterance in that school which has striven, by the most audacious interpretations of Scripture, to strip the Divine Word of its due reverence. And who, the reader must anxiously inquire, is the author of this passage, so full of fine-turned compliments to the Catholic religion?* No other than Doctor Whately, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin—the faithful fellow-labourer of Mr. Carlile in compiling the Scripture Lessons, since we are informed by the latter, in his evidence before Parliament, that whilst the other members but little interfered, this zealous prelate not only gave his personal aid, but delegated a Protestant minister to the task of their compilation. The fruit is worthy of the seed from which it sprung; and let the poor Catholic children, who hunger for the bread of life, eat in future of this bread, kneaded out of the dough of English Lutheranism, fermented with the leaven of Scotch Calvinism, and mixed with the milk and water of Irish liberality. But no, they shall not taste of such rank and unwholesome nutriment in this diocese. Not only the clergy, but the faithful have taken the alarm, as is attested by their public resolutions. Doctor Whately has obtained from some individuals the reputation of liberality. This is a phrase which assumes a variety of meanings, according to the variety of tongues by which it is uttered. We are told to beware of the wolves in sheep's clothing. Whatever might be the insinuating courtesy of their exterior deportment, I know not what confidence could Catholics repose in those who would assail their religion in terms of such gross slander and vituperation. The Catholics may now judge what instruction should be given to their children, if he and such aliens from the Catholic Church (as they do almost possess it) should continue to entirely possess control over that instruction. We must disown the unholy and unnatural alliance which a corrupt and anti-Catholic policy has framed. There can be no lasting association between light and darkness, or of truth with error, or of God with Belial. The ass and the ox were forbidden to be yoked together, and those biblical advocates for the blending of all seeds of doctrine, and weaving into the same texture different qualities of belief, will find, in the interdict of mixing different seeds in the same soil, or of making cloth of linsey-wolsey, the condemnation of their own project. A corrupt press may defend it for some time, and were the Koran to form a school-book with the Bible, the system would have the advocacy of some of those who must abide the dictates of the reigning powers. But we have another engine, of which the corruption, and the pride, and the power of

* Errors of Romanism, p. 311.

the world have ever felt the sacred influence ; that engine is the Gospel going forth from the house of God. Against the Divine energy of that power no corruption shall prevail ; nor can the bigotry and injustice of your education plans succeed long, when denounced, as this has already begun to be, from more than a hundred altars.

I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ACHILL ISLAND, FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCHES
OF IRELAND, OCTOBER 24, 1835.

MY LORD—In the unprecedented rapidity of the spread of public discontent, your lordship must perceive the fruits of your recent legislation. Scarce did the intelligence of the odious Tithe Act reach the country, when it was received by all classes of the people with universal abhorrence. If you hoped that this measure would pacify Ireland, your lordship must now be convinced of the delusion under which you laboured. But you could not entertain such a hope without imagining that the Irish people had lost all their sensibility to oppression, or that they would patiently endure all their former wrongs, provided they were called by another name. If the Catholics of Ireland be doomed to pass under the yoke of an alien and oppressive establishment, what matters it to them whether it is to the landlord or the parson they are coerced to pay the tribute of their religious servitude ? Better far to enact at once, that it is just and necessary that persons should be perpetually retained in parishes where there are none to hear them, and that fifty, as in this diocese, should be taxed with the religious instruction of one individual, than that the vigils of the Senate and the patience of the people should be wasted, in confusing a question that is too clear for mystification.

Again and again have the people, in an endless variety of petitions and solemn resolutions, declared that under no name or form which it might assume, would they consent to pay this

execrable tribute, and sealed this declaration with their blood. Still an attempt is made to perpetuate it under a less obnoxious name. No sooner is the tithe recognized under the appellation of rent-charge, than the latter is assailed with the same hatred which was directed to the former, and significant indications given that the same feeling may extend to the entire of the rent-roll. To obviate such deplorable consequences, the landed gentry seasonably come forward to mingle and sympathize with the occupiers in the expression of their utter detestation of the new measure. Thus the ranks of the people are recruited with an important accession of force that hitherto appeared indifferent to the result, and some from the impulse of selfishness, others from benevolence, and all from a wise policy, have concurred in the opposition to tithes that now pervades the entire kingdom. Nay, many estimable landlords, rather than come in collision with the bitter feelings of their tenantry, have avowed their determination to relinquish their claims to the tithe charge, and make a painful sacrifice of their own interests to the peace of the country.

It is not to be imagined that the landed proprietors will submit without a murmur to the accumulated load of injury and insult, that has thus been thrown upon that devoted body. There are few of them yet so degenerate as to feel any ambition, that the offices of bailiffs or of tithe-proctors, should be associated with their hereditary titles. Much as some of them may feel for the interests of the Established Church, they feel for those of their children more, whose prospects have been attempted to be sacrificed to an odious monopoly, without the compensation of any public good resulting from such a sacrifice. They really are deserving of general commisseration. Between the exactions of the parsons on the one hand, and the Poor Law Commissioners on the other, their ample properties will soon be squeezed into small dimensions. However, the interests of such a class are too important to be overlooked by any government. Standing aloof, as they have hitherto generally done, from the common interests, they were feeble and powerless against the encroachments of the Establishment. At length they have seen their error, and, leaguing themselves with their tenantry in constitutional compact, have determined never to cease their exertions until they achieve a legal and peaceful triumph over the common foe, which, by alternately addressing itself to the interests of either, dexterously succeeded so long in marring the happiness of both.

In confirmation of this assertion, I refer your lordship to the different numerously attended tithe-meetings, that have been held all over the country, as well as to the resolutions which they adopted. Assembled in different and remote quarters of the kingdom, without concert or any previous arrangement, they

have come to an unanimity in their resolves, which nothing but their common and deeply-felt grievances could inspire. Their proceedings were not characterized by violence nor any marks of excitement; on the contrary, they bore the impressions of deliberation and debate; the immense masses were guided by the intelligence of the gentry—all unanimous in their denunciations of tithes, or rent-charge, or any other compulsory support of an hostile establishment; and in the properties of the one, as well as in the numbers of the other, there was nothing wanting to give manifestation or weight, to the legitimate wishes of the people.

The longer your lordship delays the complete settlement of the tithe question, by contracting the establishment to the wants of its adherents, and appropriating its revenues to useful purposes, the deeper will be your embarrassment. You are not only retarding the prosperity of the country—you are also endangering its peace, by encouraging every religious empyric to play the delusive and abortive game, of converting its people from the supposed errors of Popery. Instead of being, as it should be, a rich field to invite and reward the expenditure of capital, and to excite a generous rivalry amongst the encouragers of every improvement, pouring forth abundance among its cultivators, without any reference to the colour of their creed, it is still doomed, by the same sinister policy which has so long rendered it a waste, to be the theatre of religious bigotry, from which peace, and commerce, and agriculture, and all the arts which can only flourish where there is complete freedom, shall be scared away by the rod of religious injustice. Of this the melancholy state of Achill furnishes a striking example. Possessing in the mixed soil of which it is composed, as well as the shores by which it is surrounded, mines of wealth which would bless its inhabitants with abundance, what are the means which, to the disgrace of the British empire, we find employed for its cultivation? Instead of intersecting it with roads, and enabling the inhabitants to cover the thin stratum of bog with the gravel which is found so near the surface, we find that hypocrites or fanatics, who affect to feel an interest for the natives, are sending money to insult their misery, under the pretence of teaching them a new and untrodden road to heaven. Instead of furnishing them with boats and nets to explore their coasts, so famed for their fisheries, they are sending individuals who are continually stretching out their nets to catch the souls of the people. The English and Irish people are deceived and insulted by the lying accounts of trading missionaries, who cross land and seas to make one convert, and when they convert him, make him a child of hell. Surely such a disgraceful traffic must be rebuked, it will be said, by the proprietor of the soil or the government of the country. The proprietor appears of late to be entirely

absorbed in religious concerns, and to feel more anxiety for the spiritual than the temporal interests of his numerous tenantry. As for the government, there is no evidence that they discourage a scheme, which is productive of much annoyance to the inhabitants, and must lead to the worst consequences. The coast guards are all under their control, and it appears that some of that body have been as zealous in guarding the natives against the horrors of Popery as they have been in protecting her Majesty's revenue. Nay, complaints of the most unwarrantable interference with the creed of the people and the authority of the pastor, and substantiated by proofs, have been preferred by the Catholic clergyman, without obtaining any respite from its continuance. It affords no presumption that this missionary colony, as it is called, finds any disfavour with the ruling ministers, when we find the coast guards there almost exclusively Protestant, as if to swell the numbers of their conventicles. No, my lord, I am sure it is regarded with peculiar interest, and that until the frauds and imposture that are resorted to are so unmasked, as to make its support a matter of reproach, all Catholics will be studiously excluded from any situation on that coast. As an evidence of the frauds by which the public are deceived, the Catholic clergy are willing to publish the real state of the Achill mission in the *Herald* that circulates the slanders—a proposition which could not be refused to be acceded to, were truth the object of the publication. And yet such are the persons who avail themselves of every opportunity to favour schemes of proselytism, full of calumny and insult, to whom we are to intrust the control over the religious education of our people. Whigs or Tories, whatever may be the shades of your political creeds (and they are daily becoming less distinct), they are utterly lost in your common and deep aversion to the Catholic religion. To commit the religious education of my flock to teachers over which such undisguised enemies of my faith should directly, or through dependent boards, have control, would be the same as to give to the wolf the superintendence of the fold. Who, think you, was the person who offered the most outrageous insult to the Catholic clergyman in Achill in the discharge of his religious duties? An unprincipled creature—once a Catholic, and who, while teacher under the National Board, thought fit, like the famous Cranmer, alternately to personate a Catholic and Protestant. One of the parish priests of this diocese, deeming him an improper person to be still entrusted with the education of Catholic children, corresponded with the board on the impropriety of his being continued in that situation. His remonstrances were vain. No doubt the majority of that body found in the circumstance of the master's change of faith, a fresh claim to their confidence; and surely they could not

disparage their religion so much, as to remove an individual from a school, who manifested such a zeal for its diffusion. Nay, he was the very individual fitted for such a place; for so completely did he illustrate in his own person the religious harmony that is aimed at in this system, that to please the priest he went to mass on Sunday, and on Fridays ate meat with the Protestant pastors, to show what a fit medium he was to reconcile religious discordances. The zealous clergyman, however, considering that it was not to a government board that he was answerable for the souls committed to his charge, withdrew the scholars from any contact with one who would not fail to blow over their unsullied minds the tainted breath of his own wicked principles. This was the individual who lately, as one of the Achill missionaries, whilst the priest was just going to sustain the departing spirit of one of his flock with the confidence and consolation derived from the administration of his religion, insulted him in language to which the foul and incendiary itinerants who are infesting every land, could scarcely have given utterance.

Here is a good specimen of the masters who should have to form the faith and morals of the youth of Ireland, if this board could supersede the solemn resolutions of the bishops of Ireland regarding the choice and dismissal of teachers, and succeed in claiming control over that body. The query sheets which they circulate at this moment, claim, in utter contempt of the aforesaid resolutions, this unchristian control. Nay, they are striving to reduce it to practice by appointing to districts almost exclusively Catholic, Protestant inspectors, who, in reality, are nothing less than head-masters or teachers in such a district, visiting some of the schools oftener, and all, once at least in each month, and devoting three hours at a time to an examination of masters and pupils, not forgetting the Scripture Lessons where they are not expelled, and the unbounded range of invidiously insinuating their pernicious doctrines, which the vague and indefinite interrogatories at the end of those lessons afford them. Nor can they omit to dwell with particular complacency on a note in the last number of the Scripture Lessons, purporting to be explanatory of a passage in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, from which the primitive fathers deduced the sacrament of confirmation. Your lordship's time is, doubtless, too precious and too much absorbed in state affairs, to bestow a particle of it on the dogmas of theology. I must, however, warn such as are anxious for the faith, and have not read the passage, that the text from which Catholic theologians draw the chief scriptural argument for confirmation, is illustrated by an invidious note which refers to the effects of the descent of the Holy Ghost, which were transitory, while it studiously passes over those sacramental graces of confirmation, which were to be permanent

in the Catholic church. If I had not another of the many objections already preferred against those pernicious tracts, this note alone would sufficiently recall the latent spirit of the Calvinist, who, true to the principles of Blondel and of Beza, strives to obliterate, with his anti-Catholic commentary, a principal proof of the sacrament of confirmation, as well as of its connexion with the episcopal authority.

Impressed with the conviction that persons professing one creed cannot be fit teachers for those of a different religion, the clergy of this diocese came to the wise resolution of never suffering the children to be under the control of Protestant masters or inspectors, the latter of whom, as appears from their training as well as visiting duties, must exercise a dangerous influence on the young and simple minds of unsuspecting children. One of those inspectors has stated that the Scriptures are strong against the divinity of Christ; and no doubt, as they must be zealous for the propagation of their own opinions, they would not fail to dwell upon some of the questions and answers which bear upon this doctrine. St. Paul cautioned the faithful even to avoid a heretic—mine is not, the harsh and unfashionable phrase, the original is St. Paul's, which, from an apprehension of offending all polite and liberal Christians, will, probably, in the next number of lessons, be softened down into more conciliating language. The stern and uncompromising apostle knew, however, that faith and morals are soon corrupted by evil communication. If there be such a thing as heresy in the church, it must be at least in denying the fundamental doctrine of the divinity of the Son of God, who, by the effusion of his blood purchased our redemption. If then we are cautioned to avoid such as spread dissensions on less important points, is it to be imagined that we can suffer the little children to be in continual contact with those as examinators in their lessons and selectors of their religious books, who would taint their faith with any doubts about the divinity of our Redeemer? Accordingly, we have interdicted, all official intercourse with such masters and inspectors. I say official, to obviate all misrepresentation.

We feel neither contempt nor hatred for any on account of their religious opinions. They are objects of our charitable sympathies; nor do we inquire about their creed in the fulfilment of all social obligations. In short, we treat them as we should wish to be treated; and, conceiving it would be unjust that Catholics shall exercise any coercive or furtive control over the religious education of Protestant children, we claim for ourselves the fulfilment of the same equitable covenant. Yet, in despite of those resolutions, founded on the fairest principles of religion and of reason, and published to the world, the National Board

have, in the plenitude of their arbitrary authority, sent us a Protestant inspector in a diocese where scarcely any Protestants attend the schools. The masters in Tuam, in Westport, and in all the districts where my instructions reached them in time, refused him admittance. The commissioners have since expended a good deal of stationery, in insisting on the dismissal of those contumacious masters. They were not ignorant, I am sure, that those faithful teachers acted in conformity with the instructions of their bishop. If they were not, they cannot be released from the charge of encouraging ecclesiastical insubordination, by writing to a clergyman to dismiss a master in opposition to the commands of his bishop. Be it, therefore, known to them that the masters will not be dismissed, and that they have earned by their fidelity an additional claim to support. They threaten to withdraw the grant, and erase the school of Tuam from their catalogue. As soon as they please. But, reflect on the consequences of investing this bigoted board with such arbitrary power over the hard-earned taxes of the people from whose pockets they are wrung. We are not ignorant that the board, so far from being an independent body, is the obedient creature of the ministry. If, then, they withdraw the grant, unless their conditions, which violate conscience, as well as the authority of a bishop over his flock, are complied with, allow me to warn you that half a million of people and their faithful representative may soon withdraw their confidence from a government, which would encourage such covert persecution. *Principiis obsta* is as applicable to religious and political, as to other diseases; and it is not for the paltry sum of fifteen pounds, a Christian pastor is to suffer the admission of a principle pregnant with future mischief, at first slow and insinuating in its operation, but ready to pour its unchecked evils on the Church when it had attained sufficient strength and maturity, and when they who could first check it, may be no more. Let them, then, withdraw their miserable grant, and instead of the Tuam National School, we shall gladly inscribe the Tuam Roman Catholic School, surmounted with the emblem of the cross. On learning that all connexion is broken with them by the board, abundance of funds will flow in for the support of the school. The merits of the board, and its affinity with all the political bodies that have striven in every age, in this and other countries, to make the Church the footstool of the state, shall not be forgotten. Already the laity of every class, the educated gentry, as well as the generous poor, have pledged their devotion to the cause of free and unshackled education; and it is not to be imagined that those who for years have raised such ample contributions towards their country's freedom, will relax their efforts when there is question of preserving unshackled the freedom of their religion.

It is, then, high time to give up this protracted and bootless warfare against the ancient religion of Ireland. It is time to adopt a policy more consonant with justice and the prosperity of the land, as well as the feelings of its people. The paramount influence of the Catholics of Ireland cannot longer be controverted. They are, emphatically, the people. You may talk of the Established Church; the Catholic clergy, who shall never deserve that name in the odious and degrading sense of any pecuniary dependence on the state, are, in reality, the Established Church, rooted in the hearts and affections of that people. Why then, a narrow and bigoted system of legislation, suited to some of the past reigns rather than to the boasted wisdom—and it is but a boast—of the present period? Why strive, by anti-Catholic boards and missions, consisting of men opposed to our faith and nation, to uphold an establishment which never can thrive on the soil of Ireland? Why not at once appropriate the tithes to the development of the physical and intellectual resources of the country, without any direct or indirect interference with a religion, to which the people have clung with a fidelity, to which history has not a parallel? As the attempt to make them Protestants has proved abortive, why not, in the wise language of the enlightened Laud, strive to make them good Catholics, by not interfering with the legitimate authority of their own pastors! Make an ample and generous provision for the present incumbents. It would be unjust, nay, cruel, to consign them to destitution. But, after their demise, consult for the interests of the nation. Your lordship must cast away the thought of being able to keep up much longer the crazy establishment, in the face of the opposition of eight millions of people. It is time to put an end to the mockery by which the nation has been so long deluded on the subject of tithe, by successive acts of parliament, and not to expose the legislature to the reproach of the folly of Laomedon by striving to raise up again and again the fallen towers, which the popular agitation of every successive year is overturning. There is only one secret for allaying this agitation, which is justice. Were you to exhaust the treasury in patronage, it will not purchase peace without justice to the mass of the people. The consumers of the tithes are the fierce agitators that are tearing up society from its foundation. Appropriate the tithes to national purposes, and one great cause of popular ferment is destroyed. Extinguish, then, the tithes in reality by such appropriation, and you will close up the bitter spring of our worst national calamities. *Extinguetur atque delebitur non modo hæc tam adulta reipublicæ pestis, verum etiam stirps ac semen malorum omnium.*

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXVII.

TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE
DIOCESE OF TUAM.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF THE APOSTLES SS. SIMON
AND JUDE, OCTOBER 28th, 1838.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—Impressed with the solemn admonition of the Apostle, exhorting us to* “take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed us,” through the special favor of the Apostolical See, we have endeavoured, with unremitting solicitude, to protect the portion of the fold with which we have been entrusted, against the ravenous wolves that invade its inclosures. We need scarcely allude to the various sectaries who, under the benevolent guise of relieving the spiritual and intellectual wants of the poor, have laboured with incessant assiduity to poison the faith, and corrupt the hearts of the rising generation. Against the insidious inroads of those enemies of our faith, we have, in common with the faithful pastors of the Irish Church, lifted our warning voice, lest the souls committed to our care should perish through our apathy. Of this, our duty of untiring vigilance, we have, besides the advice of the inspired writings, been roused by the supreme watchman,† whose station on the loftiest towers of the Citadel of the Church affords him a commanding prospect of the various departments of his fold, and enables him to sustain the most feeble by his pastoral exhortations.

Having witnessed with what versatile craft and dexterity, the enemies of our faith have successively shifted their attacks, in order to rob you of that precious treasure, it became our duty to adopt the most effectual plan for your future protection. Education was the uniform channel through which, from the disastrous rise of the new religion, its poison was striven to be conveyed. Accordingly, the bishops of Ireland, assembled in synod, in the year 1826, after repeated conferences of some of their members with government commissioners, adopted a series of solemn resolutions, which were to be as landmarks to guide us, how far we might go on the hazardous and untried path of a mixed education, in order to guard the little children from the danger to which they might be exposed. These landmarks,

* Acts, xx, 28.

† Ezech. xxxiii.

which we hoped would be sacred and inviolate, we have seen transgressed by a new Board of Education, which claims to itself an authority which exclusively belongs to the bishops of the Catholic Church, and which the prelates of Ireland will not fail to protect. We witnessed with unaffected sorrow the utter inattention with which these resolutions of the Catholic hierarchy were treated by this board, and our regret was the more poignant on account of a venerable prelate, who was pledged to the resolutions of his brethren, being associated to the board by which they were totally disregarded. From a feeling of respect for him we suffered much to pass over in silence, which would have called forth our earlier animadversion and remonstrance. It was only when we saw that the vicious system teemed with evils which no zeal or piety on the part of any individual member of the body, however active, could correct, that we tardily raised our feeble voice to protest against a scheme of education, which threatened such serious dangers to the fold. If, then, we have been guilty of any error, it is surely not one of a rash or precipitate zeal. We have rather exposed ourselves to the reproach of slumbering, while the enemy was striving to sow tares* in the field, or rather of suffering feelings of personal respect to stifle so long the denunciation of evils, which a sense of public duty should have previously elicited.

In warning you, then, dearly beloved brethren, against the present evils and still greater dangers of this novel system, it will be a consolation to you to hear that the instructions which we gave regarding books and masters, were in entire accordance with the deliberate resolves of all the bishops of Ireland. Now the rules of the National Board are in direct opposition to those resolutions. It requires, therefore, not much penetration to conclude, whether it can be entitled to the confidence of the Catholics of this diocese. To enable you to draw a simple and safe conclusion, we shall beg to lay before you now the resolutions of the one, contrasted with the regulations of the other :—

“ With a trembling sense of the obligations which the nature of our office imposes on us, we have come together, after the example of our predecessors, to deliberate in common on the awful interests with which we are charged. We have taken into consideration various subjects which are intimately connected with the welfare of religion, and whilst we have sought with jealousy to guard the sacred deposit ‘ committed to our trust by the Holy Ghost,’† we have also esteemed it a duty to be ‘ ready to satisfy every one that asketh us a reason of that hope which is in us,’‡ that you, ‘ dearly beloved, our joy and our crown, may stand

* Matthew, xiii.

† II. Timothy, i, 14.

‡ I. Peter, iii, 15.

fast in the Lord,'* and that he who is on the contrary part may be afraid, 'having no evil to say of us.'† We know, dearly beloved, the filial duty with which you are solicitous to hear the voice of those who 'watch as being to render an account of your souls.'‡ We hasten, therefore, to make known to you our *unanimous* decisions on such matters as are of common concern, that you, on your part, may fulfil our joy; that being of one accord, 'you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, labouring together for the faith of the gospel.'§

"Having considered attentively a plan of national education which has been submitted to us: Resolved—That the admission of Protestants and Roman Catholics into the same schools for the purpose of *literary* instruction may, under existing circumstances, be allowed, provided sufficient care be taken to protect the religion of Roman Catholic children, and to furnish them with adequate means of instruction.

"That in order to secure sufficient protection to the religion of Roman Catholic children, under such a system of education, we deem it necessary that the master of each school in which the majority of the pupils profess the Roman Catholic faith be a Roman Catholic; and that in schools in which the Roman Catholic children form only a minority, a permanent Roman Catholic assistant be employed, and that such master and assistant be appointed upon the recommendation, or with the express approval of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese in which they are to be employed; and further, that they, or either of them, be removed upon the representation of such bishop. The same rule to be observed for the appointment or dismissal of mistresses and assistants in female schools.

"That we consider it improper that masters and mistresses intended for the religious instruction of Roman Catholic youth, should be trained or educated by, or under the control of persons professing a different faith, and that we conceive it most desirable that a male and female model school shall be established in each province in Ireland, to be supported at the public expense, for the purpose of qualifying such masters and mistresses for the important duties, which they shall be appointed to discharge.

"That in conformity with the principle of protecting the religion of Roman Catholic children, the books intended for their particular instruction in religion shall be selected or approved by the Roman Catholic prelates, and that no book or tract for common instruction in literature shall be introduced into any school in which Roman Catholic children are educated, which

* Phil. iv, 1.

† Tit. ii, 8.

‡ Hebrews, xiii, 17.

§ Phil i, 27.

book or tract may be objected to on religious grounds by the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese in which such school is established.

“That, appointed as we have been by Divine Providence, to watch over and preserve the Catholic faith in Ireland, and, responsible as we are to God for the souls of our flocks, we will in our respective dioceses withhold our concurrence and support from any system of education which will not fully accord with the principles expressed in the foregoing resolutions.”

Such, dearly beloved brethren, are the resolutions on the subject of the system of education, then submitted to their judgment, which were unanimously adopted by the venerable members of the Irish hierarchy. Allow me now to lay before you the regulations of the National Board on the same vital questions, regarding books and masters, and lest we should ourselves be misled, or inadvertently mislead a few by reference to any minor variable rules, which undergo modifications according to the convenience of the commissioners, we shall quote from those fixed and legal documents, that are drawn up with all the technical precision of law, and intended to bind the respective parties to the rigorous fulfilment of these covenants.

“And it is hereby expressed and declared (a copy of a lease signed by two trustees to a national school and three of the commissioners), and it is the true intent and meaning of these presents, and of the several and respective parties thereto, that the *entire control over all books to be used in the said schools, whether for the purposes of combined moral and literary education, or of separate religious instruction, shall be from time to time, and at all times, vested in the said commissioners, parties hereto or other such commissioners as aforesaid, their successors for the time being, none of the said books to be used or employed in such combined moral and literary education, except under the sanction of the said commissioners for the time being, nor in such separate religious instruction, but with the approbation of such of the said commissioners for the time being as shall be of the same religious persuasion with the children for whose use they are intended*; and further, that all the master and masters, teacher and teachers of said schools for the time being, shall not only in the first instance, before they shall be so appointed, have received previous instructions in a model school in Dublin, sanctioned by the said commissioners, and shall also have obtained from the said commissioners for the time being testimonials of good conduct and general fitness; but *shall be liable to be fined and fineable, removed and removable, or suspended from time to time, and at all times, and when as often as such commissioners as aforesaid for the time being shall deem it*

*necessary at their will and pleasure, in such way and manner as they shall deem expedient.”**

Now, dearly-beloved brethren, we leave it to your own dispassionate judgment, and to your zeal for the faith of the young generation, whether you are to be influenced by those enactments of this secular board, or by the mild and pastoral solicitude conveyed in the resolutions of the bishops. Weigh the trembling anxiety with which they deliberate on the subject, and the caution with which they declare such a system *may, under existing circumstances, be allowed*, to show their consciousness that they were about to try untrodden ground, and then the strong resolutions, asserting their inalienable rights over “books and masters” to “secure sufficient protection for the religion of Roman Catholic children.” Compare the legal terms with which those commissioners strive to claim unqualified control over the two most important mediums of religious instruction, and you may judge whether “it was hailed as a blessing by the great mass of a people who are so devoted to their pastors, and jealous of the purity” of their religion. It was rather suffered, as a lesser evil than those by which we were hitherto afflicted, and accompanied with much of the distrust and caution that mark the foregoing resolutions. Unwilling to “abound in our own sense,”† “not be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety”‡ we were rejoiced to be able to confirm our instructions to you regarding this system, by the corresponding sentiments of all our venerable brethren. And the enlightened docility with which the same instructions were received by you, are a proof that they were felt to be conformable with the spirit that has always guided the pastors of the Catholic Church. As the grounds of those instructions are now more fully understood, you will not, in future, sign any papers that would require a transfer to any other body of that control over books and teachers, relative to religious instruction, which we, in common with the bishops of Ireland, have reserved to ourselves. It will be more Christian and more candid to declare, that it is incompatible with the instructions of your pastor,§ who is to watch, as being to render an account of your souls, to sign such requisitions, than to expose yourselves to the imputation of bad faith by their non-fulfilment. As the duties of inspectors bring them now into nearer and frequent intercourse with the children, making them examinators on religious subjects, such as the words in the Scripture Lessons, you will apply to them the same rule as to masters, and not allow any persons to be official superintendents of Catholic schools, who will not profess the Roman Catholic

* Minutes of Evidence on the new plan of Education, Part I., p. 654.

† Romans, xiv, 5.

‡ Romans, xii, 3.

§ Hebrews, xiii, 17.

faith ; they shall, however, be open to every gentleman, of whatever creed, who chooses to visit them. And as we have declared that "we consider it improper that masters and mistresses intended for the religious instruction of Roman Catholic youth should be trained or educated by, or under the control of, persons professing a different faith ;" you will perceive the propriety of not sending any persons to the model-school in Dublin, where they are "trained under individuals professing a different faith, and where they are examined in the Scripture Extracts, precisely as they are expected to examine the scholars."*

Here, dearly beloved brethren, we might pause, content to leave it to the judgment of the most dispassionate, whether our instructions, relative to the system of education, are not as conformable to the resolutions of the Catholic bishops, as the regulations of the National Board are opposed to them ; and whether, in conveying those instructions to you conjointly, we have not been as far from "domineering"† over the clergy, as requiring from the faithful anything more than "a reasonable obedience."‡ But as a distinguished prelate, himself a member of the board, has addressed the Roman Catholics of Ireland in defence of that body, we deem it a duty we owe to our flock to vindicate, at somewhat further length, the grounds on which they should feel alarm at the progress of a novel system, which has originated in Protestant Prussia, and still progresses there, to the manifest injury of our holy religion.

Though there may be now a discrepancy of opinion between some prelates on this subject, you are not to feel surprised. It only shows the compatibility of rational liberty with union, reminding us of the beautiful language of St. Augustin, that "while on debateable points we may assert our freedom, we shall never forget the unity that binds us on necessary ones, or the charity that should link us on all." In the first place, two letters are introduced, in favour of the system, from the Primate, and another from a respected prelate of the North of Ireland. Now, it happens that we find the names, not only of the Prelate, who is a member of the board, but also of the Primate, appended to the resolutions which we are vindicating as the standard of our sentiments and conduct regarding the National Board. Nay, one, the Archbishop, a member of the board, states, in his correspondence with the Commissioners of Education Inquiry, that he was "instructed to say that the Roman Catholic prelates would not think themselves called on to discourage the attendance of children of the Roman Catholic faith, in any schools in

* Report of Plan of Education, question 1132.

† I. Peter, v. 3.

‡ Romans, xii, 1.

which the use of this compilation so amended might be required, provided the regulations of said school were in accordance with the resolutions which he had the honour to transmit to the commissioners, on the 23rd of January last." Here the resolutions alluded to are insisted on as the condition on which alone the children would not be discouraged from frequenting the schools of a mixed system of education. Conditions quite opposite are now insisted on by the contracts of the board, with applicants for their aid. If, then, those venerable prelates be referred to in favour of the board, we, too, must claim the weight of their joint authority, in union with the bishops of Ireland, in opposition to the most important of the regulations which govern that institution.

Again, by referring to the date of those letters, early in March, we find that scarcely any of the weighty objections relative to the errors of the Scripture Lessons then appeared, nor were many other obnoxious parts of this system as fully developed. The resolutions of the bishops are not at all adverted to, nor the serious and fundamental change regarding the perusal of the Scriptures in school, whether separately or conjointly, to be left to the discretion of parents and guardians, without any reference to the authority of the ordinary, is not undertaken to be justified in that correspondence. The most important questions, then, are left untouched, and were we to be written to, we could not do less than express ourselves in terms of sincere personal compliment to the respected prelate, such as we published from Rome on the first origin of the system, qualified, however, by the expression of our convictions that the concerns of religion were too serious for mere courtesy, and that we could not acquiesce in the transfer of a trust to any hands, however pure, for the due fulfilment of which we could not be released from our own responsibility. As to the opinion of the majority of the bishops and clergy at present, they are the persons most competent to depose to their own sentiments. Many might have given a vague approval to the system, without entering into the particulars. We know there are many serious propositions fraught with important practical consequences connected with it, which none could approve. Such, for example, is the power of permitting the vernacular Scriptures in or out of school hours—whether in separate or joint education—a power which no secular, or even ecclesiastical board or bishop, has a right to exercise, without the permission of the ordinary of the diocese in which such vernacular versions are read.

Finally, the circumstances of the north of Ireland are so peculiar, and the difficulties that must beset its prelates relative to schools are so great, that what must often be tolerated there from necessity can form no model for the free adoption of the

Catholic provinces of Ireland. The Kildare-street system was found, in order to escape from greater evil, to be in operation there, when it was almost disused in other parts of the country. Yet, it could not be inferred from that circumstance, that it ought still to be continued. It is so with the present system. It is not surprising that it is deemed a relative benefit, when contrasted with the annoyance experienced from the wealth and power of some of the enemies of the Catholic religion. It is stated in evidence before the committee on education that in a district of the north alluded to, "the practise is to read the Scriptures in the authorized version, in a school where there are nearly three hundred Catholic children, and that the Protestant version has been expounded by the teacher, a Protestant layman." Making allowance for probable exaggerations in the circumstances of this case, they prove how difficult it is to secure complete religious freedom in that province. However, under the zeal of its hierarchy, and the spirit of its people, it will soon overcome those untoward obstacles. It has excited surprise that religious instruction under the constitution of the National Board, should be represented as under the control of the ministers of a secular government. However, it seems to be admitted by the appeal to the feelings of the Catholics of Ireland, whether such a control was liable to any abuse in such hands. That it would be intentionally abused in such hands, has not been asserted nor insinuated. That the religious instruction is placed by the board, as far as its influence extends, under the control of the ministers of a secular government, is undeniable. If any doubts existed hitherto on the subject, they must be dissipated by the stringent clauses of the covenant which we have cited, placing the religious instruction, as far as regards books and masters, in the hands of the commissioners. Books and masters, next to the feeble and limited efforts of our personal exertions, are the ordinary and most efficient instruments by which we can fulfil that important commission of *teaching*, which we have derived from our apostolical ministry. It is by virtue of this ministry our priests have power to teach, and were any of them to attempt to preach unsound doctrine, on us alone would devolve the responsibility of protecting the faithful from such errors. Yet, the constitutions of the board attempt to take from the bishop over an ordinary lay school-master the power, which he possesses over the most exalted of his clergy. Of this control of the secular power over religious instruction, you have an instance in the case of the Boffin and Achill school-master, whom we could not dismiss, according to the rules of this board, until the scholars were withdrawn from his dangerous instruction and example.

Having discussed this question from the commencement on strict principle, without reference to persons, we must deprecate

any other course that might possibly lead you astray. Can it, then, be doubted, that the religious instruction hitherto derived from the Apostles, is placed by the board under the control of the ministers of a secular government? The clause that the religious books for separate religious instruction shall be under the control of the commissioners of the same religious persuasion as the children, and not under that of the bishop of the diocese, places the truth of this assertion beyond any controversy. You are not, thank God, even approaching that degree of indifference regarding your faith, exhibited in this clause, as that you would allow to the laity the right of dictating to their bishop the books which should be used for religious instruction. The laity, thank God, would be in general the last to claim it. Yet such is the power claimed by the government board. But as that portion of the prerogative may be deemed to be confined to the episcopal members of the board, even then it is placing religious instruction under the control of a secular government. The member of the board selects the religious books as a bishop in communion with the Holy See, or as a minister of the government. If in the former capacity, every other bishop must exercise, by virtue of his office, the same jurisdiction in his diocese. If as a minister of the government, then it is still true that religious instruction is placed under the control of a secular government, since to him is given a power which he could not exercise as a Catholic bishop. As to the practical results, which are always more to be attended to than reasoning, however cogent, you must perceive to what consequences such a power would lead, when one of the lay commissioners would remove from the schools, if allowed, some of the most pious productions of our venerable bishops. However, the resolutions of our prelates providentially guarded against the assumption of any such illegitimate control. It is true that the interests of true religion can never be promoted by the vituperation of those who hold a different religious creed. It does not, therefore, follow that one bishop should be selected by the government to determine the religious books that should be used in the schools of the diocese of another, or to regulate, either by himself, or what would be more dangerous, in union with Protestant members, the fitness of teachers for religious instruction. It is admitted that there is not a sufficient number of Catholic members in the board to inspire us with sufficient confidence. It has appeared surprising that any apprehension should be felt from Protestant inspectors, or that they should be designated as "the authorized emissaries of the board in regulating the quantity and quality of religious instruction that is to be imparted to the people." We must confess, we entertain the most serious fears for the faith of the children from frequent contact with authorized visitors and examinators, whose religious

prejudices are directly opposed to their creed. Nor can it be questioned that their secular office is to regulate the quantity and quality of religious knowledge to be dispensed to the children. The quantity is regulated by the hours allotted to religious instruction. The quality is to be determined by the control that is assumed over the selection of the religious books, from which it is to be drawn. They are the authorized missionaries of the board in seeing that those arbitrary rules be enforced. They may, if any bishop should be so negligent of his duty as to allow the exercise of such an unchristian control, remove from the schools the religious books which he should recommend to his own flock for perusal. If so, can it be deemed that they are to regulate even the quality of religious instruction to be dispensed to the people? You could scarcely believe, dearly beloved Christians, that one of those inspectors of the board is said, on good authority, to have prohibited Butler's Lives of Saints to be used for instruction—a book replete with the most varied and valuable information, and which furnishes the strongest incentives to virtue in the heroic lives of the holy men who exemplified, in their own practice, the precepts of the Gospel. This book, and the Imitation of Christ, we especially recommend to the diligent study of the young in the schools, as well as to all other persons in the diocese.

It is no wonder, however, that the Lives of the Saints and the Catholic Christian Instructed, and such other holy works compiled by men of primitive faith and sanctity, should find peculiar disfavour with a board, composed, for the most part, of persons utterly indifferent, or hostile, to the Catholic religion. For them they are striving to substitute books, which represent God in the work of the six days, not creating, but forming the earth that existed (it is assumed for a certainty) for many previous generations. Although "God hath delivered the world to their disputations, so that man cannot find out the work which God hath made from the beginning to the end," none would rejoice more than we at any improvement in school-books, that would open to the young mind a literary prospect unclouded by bad prejudices. For this, however, those books should not be infected with scepticism that might lead to dangerous discussions, and shake the children's faith regarding the very foundations of religion.

As for the Scripture Lessons, it is some advantage that they are not enforced. They are still, however, "earnestly and unanimously recommended," though tainted with an anti-Catholic leaven, from which it is difficult for young minds, under the obnoxious system of the national schools, not to imbibe the poison of the deadliest errors on faith and morality, such as grace, justification, good works, satisfaction, the priestly and episcopal characters, and their corresponding offices of sacrifice

and of ordination. On the disputed points between Catholic and Protestant, the language of the authorized Protestant is generally preferred to the Catholic Douay version. For example, instead of "priests," the Catholic child finds "elders," or presbyters. The notes are sometimes so ambiguous as to leave the doctrinal meaning to the caprice of the teachers.

At other times they consist of the very objections, with which the Catholic faith is generally combated, and when they go beyond verbal explanation, and touch on doctrine, they lean for the most part towards the errors of the sectaries. Following the example of some ancient Heresiarchs, the compiler of the Scripture Lessons reproaches the father of the faithful with having incurred a disgraceful punishment for dissimulation or a suppression of mental truth; while Saint Augustin demonstrates that his conduct was not only correct and indicative of full confidence in God, but that otherwise he would have been tempting the Almighty to use in his favour an extraordinary interposition. In short, in the compilation of the lessons themselves, extracts are introduced, for which no cause can be assigned, to the exclusion of others equally appropriate, than that they are the usual favourite passages from which Protestants derived their peculiar opinions on the points of grace, good works, free will, and predestination. Nay, in the one instance, where the passage from St. James on good works is introduced, we find a translation not only differing from the Douay and Vulgate, but even from the Irish Protestant version, and where the Greek, which is said to have been followed—where the original was that language—did not require this marked deviation.

Even these novelties in words which, in modern languages, are often shifting their meaning, should not be lightly adopted. The Catholic Church is fond of antiquity, and sacred inflexibility is its character. Possessing an ancient and unchangeable doctrine, it delights in retaining the ancient words by which this doctrine is consecrated. Forms of phrase, between which as little difference could be assigned as between penance and repentance, fomented the most angry controversies in the Church. Yet those words were not indifferent, since, like presbyters and priests, they were understood in a different theological meaning. You cannot surely imagine it conducive to piety that the young children should be puzzled with critical doubts about the "sound form of prayers which you taught them in their infancy." Yet these lessons are calculated to throw doubts on some passages in the Lord's Prayer, and diminish their reverence for the Angelical Salutation. You should not like to hear them talking about the hard name of some German critic to show that some passages of the Lord's Prayer were not found in some ancient manuscripts. Nor could you be edified in hearing some children, after returning

from their schools, finding fault with their aged parents for saying "Hail Mary, full of grace," remarking that such a privilege was only applicable to God alone, whereas, they were taught by their masters that the Greek only authorized them to pray, Hail Mary, peculiarly blessed. No, dearly beloved brethren, you will impress on them a reverence for the fixed and "sound form of words" which you have taught, and the necessity of "avoiding the profane novelty of words, and the oppositions of knowledge, falsely so called."

With such Scriptural lessons, then, and strange translations recommended, as "truth recorded under the influence of inspiration," to be taught by masters, perhaps Protestants (for they can by the rule of the board be Protestants, even in Catholic districts, as well as the inspectors), and with the exposition which will be given them by persons all to be trained in a model-school, where the greater number of teachers are said to be Protestant, and where the compiler of those extracts is, along with another, of his own Calvinistic opinions, entrusted with a large share in the teaching and training department, we must solemnly declare our conviction that we are not without serious apprehensions for the purity of the faith of the rising generation. Whether there be some inaccuracy in the relative numbers of Catholic or Protestant teachers in the model-school, or of inspectors, or of masters through the country, is a matter of little importance, since there is question of a principle which authorizes the board to select them as they choose, even in opposition to the prevailing creed of the districts in which such inspectors and masters may be appointed. They may as well appoint Protestant masters to conduct, as Protestant superintendents to inspect, the exclusively Catholic schools. One prelate perceives no danger in Protestant inspectors—another may see none in Protestants teaching Catholic children—other persons might permit the Protestant Scriptures to be read by Catholic children; and of all those cases it is certain that there are now instances in different parts of Ireland. Doubtless much of this is tolerated through mere necessity. It should not, however, be inferred that we ought to be refused a portion of the parliamentary grant for education, because we cannot acquiesce in such sentiments or practice. We may be too sensitive to the fears of having the "faith once delivered to the saints" tampered with by Protestant masters or mistresses. Still, a wise government should respect such conscientious convictions.

It may appear to others that there is no danger, provided the Catholic clergy exercise due vigilance. We respect their honest sentiments; but if other prelates and their clergy cannot feel the same persuasion, surely they or their flocks should not be deprived of their just portion of a grant which they cannot accept

but on conditions that trench upon religious freedom. They may have the grant if they subscribe to the conditions of the board. It was the argument of every hostile society that hitherto assailed their faith. It was the argument which dictated the penal laws, as well as the ancient persecutions, since the Catholics of both periods might enjoy honour and emolument provided they subscribed to the terms that were proffered them.

We see a source of danger in the very confidence that some repose in the system. Where there is security there is little incentive to vigilance. They must, therefore, watch least against its dangers who repose most confidence in the "National Board." In few parishes in Ireland is there an adequate number of clergymen to discharge the various duties of the mission. "The harvest is great, but the labourers few."* They are laboriously occupied in attending the sick and hearing confessions for a great portion of the year. Human nature, instead of being exposed to temptations, should be protected. No parents would suffer into their families a domestic of tainted principles, because he might be honest if sufficiently watched. The faith of their children is too precious to be trifled with; and where neither the parents nor the pastors can be present, they should be entrusted to those in whom they could repose confidence, and not to any whose corrupt faith would be a source of contagion.

Without questioning the sincerity of the confidence reposed in the honour of the Protestant commissioners, nothing can induce us to commit the religious education of the children of this diocese to persons selected by men entertaining their avowed hostility to our religion. There is manifest danger that this confidence in their honourable feelings, may be carried too far. Perhaps it is owing to this circumstance, of confidence too unsuspecting, that the Scripture Extracts abound so much in the peculiar language of the Protestant version, and that if we are to believe the compiler, while the Protestant Archbishop suggested alterations—he does not recollect any alteration suggested by the Catholic Archbishop.† The Protestant commissioners have been determined enemies of our creed. They have given no proof that this hostility has ceased. On the contrary, the only difference between their present and former characters seems to be that then they came like wolves undisguised, and harmless, because then shunned by the flock. But now they are the same wolves in sheep's clothing, and the more dangerous, because the same fears are not entertained of them, on account of being habitually seen with the legitimate pastors of the fold.

* Matthew, ix, 37.

† Report of Education, page 84, question, 895.

Allow us sincerely to warn you of the anti-Catholic spirit that is abroad, aiming at a severance of the sacred ties that hitherto connected the faithful and their pastors. The invidious religious system against which the bishops of Ireland, as if by a special Providence, drew up their resolutions, first originated with the unprincipled monarch of Prussia, who was the bosom friend of the leaders of the infidels of France. The system, well worthy of such parentage, went on gradually encroaching on the liberties of the bishops, until its bitter fruits are now developed in the persecution of the illustrious Archbishop of Cologne, whose merits and sufferings have excited the sympathy of the Roman Pontiff. By not suffering any inroads on the religious education of our youth unknown to our sainted ancestors, we shall preserve the Church in Ireland from the endurance, at a future day, of similar disasters.

Our gracious Queen will, no doubt, appreciate the uncalculating allegiance which Catholics have to their sovereigns, and will not, when reminded of its danger, enforce a system which, by invading religious liberty, might poison those pure principles uniformly taught by the Catholic Church, "of being subject to higher powers—for conscience sake."* In cautioning you against the dangers of religious education being under the control of an anomalous alliance of conflicting creeds, we are protecting the state from corresponding conflicts in society. And in vindicating the full right of spiritual *teaching*, which has descended to the bishops from the Apostles, unshackled by regulations which encroach on its efficient exercise, we are only advocating that which has exalted human nature and spread the arts of civilization among mankind. Yes, the pastors of the Catholic Church have done more to diffuse literature throughout every country in Europe than all the other associations, of whatever name, put together, and at much less expense to the people. Instead of checking, then, we are anxious to spread education, but to have it so regulated that it may not become an engine, as it has in other countries, of religious oppression.

We have been informed that the Education Board are resolved to withdraw their grant from the Tuam schools, because we have refused to submit our schools, exclusively Catholic, to the control of Protestant inspectors. As other schools in the diocese have been similarly circumstanced, we feel it our duty to prepare you to meet with firmness, should you be doomed to encounter it, the same temporary privation. Were small annoying trials of this sort to subdue their fortitude, we should not now be enjoying the precious inheritance of the faith of our fathers. They made far greater sacrifices, when they not only "sustained a great conflict

* Romans 13, 1—5.

of afflictions—but, received with joy the plundering of their goods, knowing that they had a better and permanent substance.” We have, however, no fears of the continuance of any annoyance, since the policy of a wise government will not fail to respect the conscientious feelings of the subjects, and secure to them a fair proportion of the public funds they are entitled to. Besides, we have the assurance, that such was the honor of the Protestant commissioners, that the Catholic members were never taught to feel the inferiority of their numbers. If so, it affords a presumption that you will not be deprived of the education grant, since they will not fail to plead in behalf of your religious liberty, and will not be left in a minority by their associates. This concession is more than due to them. Such was the firm and intrepid perseverance of the Presbyterians of the north of Ireland, that they obtained from the board a concession, long refused to them, of having the Scriptures read in the schools at the requisition of the guardians and parents of the children. This concession was yielded to that small body, though, as regards Catholics, it invades the discipline of the Catholic Church, and may, in the hands of bigoted landlords or other powerful lay patrons, become a source of religious persecution. If, then, the original rule was so changed as to make this concession to a few, which may interfere with the religious freedom of the many, it is not unreasonable to expect a similar respectful deference to the religious scruples of thousands, when this deference will not trench upon the religion or the freedom of one solitary individual. We are, then, to hope that the arbitrary and offensive regulations respecting masters, &c., found in their present query sheets, will be exchanged for others more conformable to the resolutions of the bishops and your religious feelings. The Protestants themselves cannot refuse a more reasonable concession than the one made to them; for we cannot suppose that the Catholic members will not insist on conditions conformable to the spirit and letter of the resolutions of the hierarchy; otherwise any further confidence in such a system would be delusive. But should the board not think it fit to continue their grants, then you have but the alternative of conveying the expressions of your grievances to the throne, reminding respectfully her Majesty that as you bear a fair share in the public burdens of the state, you hope for a fair participation in its benefits. The wisdom and benevolence, as well as the justice, of our gracious Sovereign will not lend a deaf ear to the respectful and numerous petitions of a large portion of her faithful people.

In this instruction we have confined ourselves, as seemed befitting the duties of our sacred office when addressing our flock, solely to the view of guarding your religion. We have not adverted to the plans now in contemplation, of giving such bodies

a power of taxing the people, by which it will appear that the small pittance hitherto granted under the show of gratuities were intended to lead to an extensive system of assessment for education, over which neither the clergy nor the people should possess much control. "Is a government (remarks a Catholic) who has bestowed much attention on the subject which should enlighten and *teach*, to yield to the prejudices and follies of a people *who are to be taught?*" It would seem as if he placed the government and the subjects in the same religious relations as the pastors and their flock. Never was the important question of education, with all its bearings, more deserving the attention of all the Catholics of Ireland. Similar, and as unfavourable to religious freedom is the despotic power which enters into the system of education recommended for adoption in England.

We trust we are not yet fallen on the unhappy times when "Men will not hear sound doctrine, but according to their own desires will heap to themselves teachers."* Such is the lot of those who have once "Passed the ancient bounds which their fathers have set."† Not so with the faithful children of the Catholic Church, "Who follow their shepherd, because they know his voice."‡ Impressed with a deep sense of the obligation of that office, we have thus addressed you, knowing that if through our neglect any of them should perish, their "blood would be demanded at our hands."§ "Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope in grace,"|| exhort your hearts, and confirm you in every good work and word.

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

* II. Tim., iv, 3.

† Proverbs, xxii, 28.

‡ John, x, 4.

§ Ezekiel, iii, 18.

|| II. Thessal. ii, 16.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. DOCTOR MURRAY.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF THE REDEMPTION.
APRIL 7, 1838.

MY LORD—A letter addressed to me, with your grace's signature, appeared last week in some of the Dublin Journals. Through whatever channel, public or private, your grace is pleased to convey any communication to me, it shall be always acknowledged with a respectful attention. By way of justification of this mode of address, your grace observes that no other kind of correspondence has hitherto passed between us on the subject of national education. It is true—not even when your grace thought it right to solicit, in a vague, separate, and private correspondence, the opinions of the other Catholic prelates of Ireland on a subject on which your grace was already in possession of the precise, collected, and public resolves of that venerable body. Previously to that period, I addressed an influential member of the government relative to the inherent defects in the principles and constitution of the board itself, which were more fully developed in the preceding report of that body, and of which it would be vain to expect a correction from the individual members. From these letters it will appear, I trust, that I have not transgressed the legitimate bounds of prudent vigilance and fair discussion that must be allowed towards all public bodies, especially one that was assuming such a despotic control over the religious education of the people as has been unheard of, from the days of the apostles, in any free portion of the Christian Church. I have discussed the merits of the board on the tenable grounds of facts and arguments. On some of its members I have not animadverted, but as far as their connexion with such a system was fraught with unavoidable danger to the religion of the people. I am, therefore, at a loss to account for the extraordinary sensitiveness which would mistake such arguments, in those or the subsequent letters, "for aspersions" on the board, or on your grace, by implication. On the contrary, that body is indebted to your grace for the long and extraordinary forbearance that has been extended towards them; and were it not that you happened to be a member of the board, its principles and its proceedings would have long since

been exposed to public animadversion. Now, when it stands much in need of an advocate, your grace steps forward in its defence, identifying yourself with the proceedings of men who, in the unnatural position in which they were placed, could never have any hold on the confidence of the Catholics of Ireland.

What, it may be asked, has swayed your grace's resolution at this particular period? Are all the members of that establishment quite at ease, or do they feel no apprehension at the prospect of a serious reform? Has the nobleman who is the Secretary for the Home Department recently made no inquiries into the gross mismanagement of the entire concern? and have the members of the government manifested no determination to make no alteration in the system? A satisfactory answer to those questions may account for the peculiarity of style you have been pleased to adopt in your late letter, which, if it be the "*stylus curiae*," is unquestionably not the one which is in usage at the court of Rome. It may also reveal the motives of your grace's charitable inquiries about the probable causes of my opposition. My applications to the board did not, I believe, amount to half the number of the few years it is in existence. But whether or no, it is a strange doctrine, if those who made but one solitary application, are supposed to be debarred from the right of exposing the mischievous tendency of a system which is more fully developing itself with time, lest, whether successful or not, they may incur the imputations of disappointment or ingratitude. Such idle and small insinuations shall never deter me from the discharge of an awful public duty. I know not what gratitude the mere trustees of public property are entitled to for its fair distribution. I am not a suitor for government favours, through the board or any other channel; the ears of the castle functionaries are not fatigued with my importunities, nor are their desks covered with my solicitations. And could I have any doubt of the propriety of the disinterested course which I have pursued, your grace's letter would read a salutary lecture to all ecclesiastics, not to suffer their apostolical freedom to be tramelled by secular obligations. Your grace observes that you now retire from the controversy. It is really a novel species of tactics to fling your missive, and then to retire before he whom your grace had "so courteously saluted" at all made his appearance in reply. It is a proof of the force of that letter, and I have no doubt but it will do more than all I have written to precipitate the fate of the board. As your grace has undertaken the defence of all the commissioners, may I be permitted respectfully to inquire whether any of their near relatives are quartered on the funds of that establishment, and whether any portion of their solicitude arises from the apprehension that any of them may share the calamities of its fall?

The appearance of the fourth report of the commissioners, with its important modifications at the time of the meeting of the bishops, the publication of the parliamentary evidence regarding the principles and working of the system a little before, together with the attention which was directed to the strange translations of the Scripture Lessons by the same evidence, would have spared your grace any ingenious conjectures, and sufficiently accounted for my exposure of many of the evils and the dangers which were only then revealed. If to those reasons we add that the question of education and the Scripture Extracts, was seriously discussed within your grace's diocese, as well as in other quarters, it will appear that its importance was felt before the late assembly of the bishops. The subject was put upon the minutes on the first day of our meeting. In deference to your grace's lamented indisposition, it was adjourned from day to day, with the consent of all the prelates, and other topics discussed, of which it had precedence. At length, when it was ascertained that you were unable to attend, it was introduced on the last day of our meeting by another prelate, who took a theological view of the subject worthy its solemnity and importance. If I took a part in the discussion, it was one which I shared in common with the other members. It would have been but justice to the public to state those circumstances, rather than leave it under the impression that any unfair advantage was taken of your grace's absence in discussing the merits of the system of education.

In that assembly, the question was discussed chiefly on its theological merits, and as far as it was likely to have a disastrous influence on the purity and freedom of the Catholic religion. The justice or unfairness with which its funds might be distributed I have ever considered as a distinct and secondary question—not that it is unimportant; on the contrary, it is one into which all prelates as well as people have a right narrowly to inquire. The marked unfairness that characterized the distribution of the funds of the board was a matter of loud complaint and general notoriety. It was also deemed (and that conviction is daily gaining further ground) that no proportion existed between the enormous expense of the machinery and the comparatively little benefit of which it was productive. I am free to confess that some of the manifest injustice of the board towards poorer districts arises out of some of its fundamental regulations. It only proves that they have no reasonable cause of jealousy when, instead of corresponding with them, we ascend to the source of those imperfections, by calling on the government to correct those as well as the other more serious evils, over which the members had not entire control.

Of late such is the pressing importunity of some of the

functionaries of the board, that there is more difficulty in resisting their solicitations than in obtaining their sanction to establish National Schools. Hence, it is clear our opposition springs not from any disappointment on that score. No; it has sprung from the unhallowed and unchristian conditions that are required in establishing and conducting these schools; and, as long as such conditions shall be insisted on, so long shall my opposition, and that of the clergy and people, continue without respite or mitigation. It really astonishes me that any board could be so regardless of the respect they owe to the deliberate sentiments of the Catholic hierarchy of Ireland, as to hold at nought their unanimous resolution; and it astonishes me more that your grace, who took so prominent a part not only in framing, but, what is more important, in duly and widely promulgating those resolutions, should now treat them with such indifference as if they were only matters of temporary expediency or convenience. I need not remind you of your correspondence on that subject with the Commissioners of Education Inquiry. Your grace recollects, too, that you conveyed them to Lord Killeen (now Fingal), in order that that respected nobleman would communicate them to the Catholic Association. It may be necessary, too, to inform the public that this body, then representing the Catholic people of Ireland, had many hundred copies of the pastoral and resolutions of the bishops then struck off, and circulated at their expense throughout all parts of the empire—such was the importance attached to those which your grace now calls “certain episcopal resolutions”—such was the earnest and unanimous solemnity with which they were promulgated—and such, too, the evidence that they were adopted in reference to the proposed system of education since tried; to serve not only as a control upon any commissioners, but as a guide and a light to the clergy and laity of Ireland.

Now, does it accord with the respect due to the majesty and inflexibility of truth, as well as to the consistency of those who framed them, to strive to fritter away the force of those solemn and duly circulated resolutions?—“A new era arose,” your grace states, “and it (the national system), was, therefore, allowed to be a substitute for them.” A substitute!! And is it a bishop of the Catholic church, himself a party to their adoption, who thus insinuates that they are not of force? I own, that there may be provisional regulations adapted to contingent circumstances, and which will not be obligatory when such circumstances pass away. But it would be worse than sophistry to rank those resolutions among such provisions. They are the simple and absolute expressions of a trust, which necessarily belongs to the bishops of the Catholic church. They may delegate it as they choose—it cannot be resigned. Why, then,

pretend that this right has been "renounced" by the bishops, or cancelled by a change of circumstances different from those under which it has been solemnly asserted?

There is no ground whatever for such an interpretation. The suffering of children to come together under a system of mixed education—here is the question of expediency, which may be permitted or prohibited, according to circumstances. But the conditions on which such indiscriminate intercourse, under a system of mixed education is to take place—here again is the question of strict and inviolable obligation, uniformly binding, in order that the faith or morals of the children may not suffer from the latitude allowed in the former case. It is through books and masters such a mixed system is chiefly liable to damage. And as it is the peculiar duty of the bishop, who is to watch, "as being to render an account of their souls," to preserve them from the danger or contagion, it follows he cannot permit such contact or intercourse, without retaining that power which would render it innocuous. Your grace, then, clearly perceives that the control over books and teachers in religious matters is one which a bishop cannot resign, and that the resolutions to which I have referred, so far from containing any distinct argument, are only the simple and unanimous assertion of inalienable rights, which cannot be contradicted.

Your grace refers to two illustrious prelates—now no more—Doctor Doyle, and my immediate predecessor. Are you aware that the former said, regarding the system: "We are not dumb dogs, that cannot bark?" and had he lived he would have given the alarm. The other, as appears from his examination, was stern and uncompromising, "insisting on the Hail, Mary, full of grace," and objecting to a harmony not "conformable to our version."

Why, then, the unnecessary trouble of referring to the separate correspondence of some of the bishops, for the invi-
dious purpose of weakening the effect of the unanimous resolves of the entire body. In the very effort you may find a fresh proof of the invariable consistency of truth. Not a word appears in the entire correspondence to controvert the irrefragable positions contained in their own resolutions. It could scarcely be expected, from what appeared to them, that they would have made any allusion to those important points. Like all despotic bodies, anxious to gain slowly and by stealth, an uncanonical or unconstitutional power, the board has cautiously abstained from giving umbrage in its infancy by any offensive exercise of the extraordinary authority of which it was laying the dangerous foundation. Hence it was all courtesy and condescension to local patrons, permitting them to exercise for a time a discretion contrary to the letter of the commissioners' laws. It is this insinu-

ating practice that has come generally under the contemplation of the public. The rigorous and jealous rules, that never would have been framed but with a view to their prospective enforcement, have been generally unheeded. Let it not be imagined, that I impute any carelessness to my venerable brethren. So far from doing so, it was only long after the period of their writing those letters that I happened to light upon the passage which I lately quoted, and which gave me an insight into those proceedings which I never anticipated. In their approval, then, of the system, they never so much as allude to those resolutions to which they were pledged, and which were supposed still to regulate the present system.

All, then, that your grace could gain from this partial correspondence would be, at most, that some of those prelates delegated to you their own rightful control over the books and masters. This, according to the axiom of canon law, each one may do at his own risk and responsibility. But why not give the entire correspondence of the bishops? Did none of them complain of the neglect of their own districts? Did any urge strong theological arguments against the system? I trust you will give those documents, with such a good grace as to show they were not wrung from you. From the tone of the commissioners, mistaking individual or temporary concessions for right, there is less disposition now to repose confidence in the body than before; and I shall candidly declare, for myself, that from the proofs of arrogant and unchristian assumption of power, on the part of the board, which we have experienced, I should think it most dangerous to surrender to it, or any such body, this temporary delegation. The resolutions, therefore, to which I have alluded are not temporary. The spirit that animates them is indestructible and eternal. And, as well might your grace attempt to make at once the bishops the creatures of the government, as strip them of that control which forms one of the most sacred portions of their functions. The faithful will not be deluded by invidious regulations.

The pastors chosen by the parents or guardians are "permitted," forsooth, into the schools to give religious instruction! What a mighty privilege, and extraordinary condescension, in Catholic Ireland! Yet, there are circumstances in which, according to your rules, the bishop might not be permitted to give religious instruction to his own flock. Talk, after this, of the perfect freedom of your system. It reminds me of the first and last attempts of Henry on the hierarchy of England. The title of head of the church was first merely nominal and innocuous. All the constituted teachers of religion were *permitted* their usual functions. They were not aware of the silent invasions of the tyrant until the bishops found that, under

the harmless name of the head of the church, which they had allowed him, in an evil hour, all their authority to preserve religion was gone. It will be so—no—but it would be so if the National Board were again permitted to have the leave of the Viceroy, and his alone, to revive and remodel the religious part of education for the youth of Ireland. Never, from the first persecution of the Church until this hour, has there been devised a system of religious education, from which the authority of the bishops has been more zealously excluded. Look through the whole scheme—from the government, its parent, to the humblest official—whether board, books, inspectors, masters, election, recommendation, dismissal, children, patrons, and guardians, not only is there not an allusion to the authority of the bishop of the diocese, who, in every Christian country on earth guides the religious education of the flock, young as well as old, but the jealous letter of the law excludes him from any control over those departments; nor is there anything wanting, save the power to enforce those odious regulations. Witness, for example, the exclusive control over the books, as set forth in the legal instrument quoted in the letter to the clergy and people of this diocese. “ Could you, beloved brethren,” your grace writes, “ could any one believe that I would keep out of the hands of Catholic children any book that would be really useful to confirm them in their religious principles, and to improve them in virtue ? ” May I not also inquire whether they believe that any Catholic bishop in Ireland would keep out of their hands any such publication ? If not, and they would answer in the affirmative, where is the necessity of multiplying your varied duties by such varied censorship ? or do the government imagine that their appointment to such an office, confers on the object of their choice, a monopoly of sound taste and discretion ? It seems they do, and commissioner Blake modestly states that he should be glad to have such a control over books for separate religious instruction, “ lest there might be political matters mixed up with religion, and political matters of an exceptionable nature.” Are the bishops of Ireland come to such a pass, that they should submit their books for religious instruction to such strange censorship ? *

To appease, however, as if, any alarm on this point, your grace states that the rule of the board at present is, “ If any other books than the Holy Scriptures, or the standard books of the Church to which the children belong, are employed in communicating religious instructions, the title of each is to be made known to the commissioners.” Surely a work of supererogation if they have not the power to exclude them.

* Parliamentary Evidence, page 44, question 546.

I am not surprised at the prudent celerity with which your grace attempted to despatch the important controversy regarding the strange translations, and the more obnoxious notes of the Scripture Extracts. They are a subject deserving of your most serious consideration. In a like summary manner, your grace has disposed of the argument as to the practical effect which the omission of the "Hail Mary, full of grace" was calculated to produce on children's minds. Had you stated the reasons of its omission, it would have enabled every reader to form a satisfactory conclusion on the subject. The Rev. Mr. Carlile avows that it was omitted, "because it did not appear to him to be a literal translation of the original Greek."^{*} Care, however, is taken to draw the children's attention to the passage by the question—"How did the angel address her (Mary)?" The answer suggested by their ordinary prayers would be as "full of grace," instead of which another form of phrase, call it translation, or call it paraphrase, is substituted. And why this hitherto strange explanation of the angel's words? Because, according to the testimony of one of the commissioners, the original Greek was unfavourable to the form which they were taught in their infancy. There is another and a strange reason suggested by the same individual for the omission. "Besides, this question as to the form of words, the commissioners were of opinion that connected with the doctrine of the incarnation there was that in the Scripture language which it was difficult or improper to *explain* to children."[†] Are not the masters, we are told, forbidden to enter into any *explanation* of religious or mysterious subjects? What, then, was there improper in this chapter of St. Luke to be put into the hands of children, according to the Douay version, more than any other portion of Scripture? Such a reason might have some force coming from those who think the indiscriminate use of the Bible in schools calculated to produce "irreverence." But I see not with what consistency could it be adduced by those who, in opposition to the Council of Trent, permit, without the leave of the ordinary, and at the instance of guardians, the children to range through the whole of the inspired volume, from Genesis to the Apocalypse. No, my lord, disguise it as they will, the true reason of the omission was that the "Hail, Mary, full of grace," consecrated by the reverence of the Catholic Chnrch, was unsupportable to the Nestorianism of some of the commissioners.

Your grace's singular mode of reasoning, with respect to the permission, allowed by the board, of reading the Scriptures, will not detain me long. "It permits (*that is, it does not prohibit*—

^{*} Parliamentary Evidence, page 66, question 914.

[†] Parliamentary Evidence, question 916.

how could it?) your grace remarks, the use of the sacred volume to those who may choose to avail themselves of it." What a pity that this felicitous exposition of the word "permit" was not thought of in the infancy of the board. It would have saved those long and stormy debates and remonstrances of the Presbyterians of the north, which shook the board to its very centre. Was it not the easiest thing imaginable to say to those mutinous men, "we do not prohibit"—how could we?—"the perusal of the sacred volume, and, therefore, as we have no coercive power, all may read it as they please." This would have been plain conduct, and intelligible language; and it is surprising that six years were permitted to elapse before the board had hit upon this convenient interpretation. But they were aware that such an interpretation would cut two ways, and that in opening the schools to a few Presbyterians, it would scare away the Catholics from their thresholds. The Catholics were taught to look upon the board as composed of gentlemen of truth and honour, who would not allow to any the means of tampering with the faith of the children, or the discipline of the Catholic church. It is prohibited by the Council of Trent, that the reading of the vernacular Scriptures be indiscriminately, and in public, conceded to all, although the reading of such books is permitted to those who can read them with fruit, and profit—those who have obtained the permission of the ordinary. Your grace appeared to throw some doubts upon the extent of the power which I assigned to the ordinary. On that score, you are at liberty to argue with the authority of a general council. Yet, without reference to this authority, to which we are all subject, this plenipotentiary board grants permission to read the Scriptures in the National Schools, merely at the requisition of the parents or the guardians. It is only in the separate, not in the mixed education. Who authorized your grace or the board to give permission in either case? You obtained his Excellency's permission to revise the religious portion !! The church recognizes no such authority. There was no "studied ambiguity" on my part, nor an insinuation that the Scriptures were permitted in the mixed system of education, but there was an open, simple, and irrefutable assertion that you were as incompetent to grant any such liberty in the one case as in the other. But it only not prohibits. Is this, then, the meaning of the solemn covenant tacitly entered into during the brief term of the experiment between the board and the Catholics of Ireland? Why were the Kildare-street and other kindred associations got rid of? Because they afforded facilities to bigoted and persecuting patrons, to force on the children of their Catholic dependents the perusal of the Scriptures, in defiance of the solemn sanctions of the Catholic Church. And does not the injurious exposition of the permission given under

the National Board afford the same facility? Cannot they now, as well as then, exercise their tyranny over the children, by telling them that, in despite of their bishops, they must read the Scriptures in the schools? and in doing so they would be acting within the rules of the National Board. A steady and inflexible regard to the fixed authority of the Catholic Church would have at once spared such embarrassment and danger. In one of your grace's letters you observed, that "from the moment of our first connexion with the commission, the Catholic members have never been allowed to feel their inferiority in number." This is an important admission, and will no doubt lead to the consideration of what confidence we ought to repose in the board.

I did imagine that many of the obnoxious regulations of that body were strenuously combated by the Catholic members, and that if they were unsuccessful we had the consolation of thinking that an improvement might be expected from an increase in their number. It seems now, however, that such a hope would be a fallacy, and that it is a matter of indifference whether it is composed of Catholics or Protestants. Against any of the acts of the board there does not appear to have been any remonstrance on the part of any member—nay, your grace, with a singular effort of generous intrepidity, takes upon you the responsibility of all the proceedings of your associates. I am then to understand that the mission of two Protestant inspectors into this diocese, contrary to the previously known instructions of the ordinary, and the published resolutions of its clergy, had your grace's unqualified sanction. I am also to understand, when those inspectors were refused admittance into schools, exclusively Catholic, pursuant to such instructions and resolutions, that a letter sent from the board to one of my clergy, requiring peremptorily the dismissal of one of their masters, in defiance of the command of his bishop, had your grace's concurrence. I am further to understand that the continuance of an unprincipled apostate in the office of giving religious and moral instruction to Catholic children, in direct opposition to the remonstrance of their parish priest, until he withdrew the scholars, had likewise met with your grace's approval. Now, my lord, permit me to observe that had these things been done, with the remonstrance of the Catholic members, which they were unable to enforce, then their inability would be a proof, that the system was disentitled to confidence. The case becomes worse if they were able, but unwilling, to interfere. If any other person, were he even a bishop, member of such a board, had, through the official organ of the body, lent his sanction to a letter addressed to one of your grace's clergy, requiring the dismissal of a master who acted by your directions, you would doubtless deem it an extraordinary and unwarrantable interference. Because

we would not submit to such arbitrary proceedings the grant is withdrawn. What then becomes of the appeal to the feelings of the Catholics of Ireland, when they find the members of their own creed concurring in acts and regulations which encroach on the liberties of conscience, and tend to encourage insubordination? The truth is, these inspectors have been sent in order to crush the spirit that manifested itself in this diocese; and if the board were to succeed in an effort as unconstitutional as it is uncanonical, the other parts of Ireland would find to their cost that its fate would be only a prelude to the encroachments which would be successively made on their own religious freedom. To be, then, explicit: in the reform which I meditate, and with less than which I shall never be satisfied, it is only a declaration of the pledge I have given in the solemn resolutions referred to, in union with your grace, and from which no change of circumstances shall induce me to recede. Any plan of education shall meet my unqualified opposition that shall not secure to every bishop the right which he has by the nature of his office, of being *de jure* the chief guide and director of any system of religious education intended for his flock, within the limits of his own diocese.*

In this resolution I am confirmed by the singular tone of your grace's last epistle. I have never made any remarks upon the pastoral instructions which you may deem proper to deliver to the clergy and the people placed under your jurisdiction. I know not by what authority you venture to animadadvert upon those which I have thought it my duty to deliver to my own portion of the fold. Nay, it appears that your zeal has kindled on this subject; for, not content with this extraordinary intrusion on the duties and office of another prelate, you hesitate not to say, that a "blush should have burned on his cheek" for the course he was pursuing. I can well understand, my lord, the zeal of Esdras "rending his mantle and sitting down mourning because the priests and the Levites did not separate themselves from the people of the lands."†—I can understand, too, the zeal of the apostle whose "spirit was excited within him when he saw the city given to idolatry."—I can understand that of the Redeemer when he drove the money changers from the temple.—I could understand, too, though it may appear harsh from an apostle whose habitual character and mildness were sweetened with old age, how St. John could interdict even the ordinary salutation to such as brought not the doctrine which he preached. But it was reserved for your grace

* The principle laid down in this sentence is vindicated and enforced in the letter addressed by the Apostolic See on this subject, to each of the four Archbishops. The instructions of the Holy See have been disregarded by this presumptuous Board no less than the remonstrances of the Bishops on whose right they strive to encroach.

† I. Esdras, ix, 1—4.

to have your “spirit so excited” as to hope that another prelate should have blushed, and on what account? For guarding his flock from the snares of the old enemies of the Catholic Church, now coming in sheep’s clothing; for labouring to prevent the danger of contagion from habitual contact with error; for preserving those fences of the faith, which, if we are to believe the Scriptural authorities I have quoted, as well as the testimonies of the ancient Fathers, are best secured by habitual remoteness from the chance of infection. Yes, you are right, and I must confess that zeal should be entirely extinct in my soul if the blush of a generous warmth were not to burn on my cheeks in witnessing power and corruption arrayed in propagating a system which, as it is now practically developed, is, first, dangerous to faith and morals—secondly, subversive of ecclesiastical authority, which, instead of promoting peace and concord among those of a different religion, is calculated to foment and exasperate religious strife among the “domestics of the faith;” and, finally, which, instead of binding more firmly the attachment of the people to the ruling powers, must, as in every other country in which it is enforced, propagate the seeds of civil contention.

The course, then, that I am pursuing is neither a dark nor a devious one; it is, on the contrary, plain and straightforward, and so far from being at variance with any canonical line of conduct, it is conformable not only with the rights and duties of my office, but also with the unanimous resolves of my venerable brethren. Of their wishes to cancel those solemn resolves, there has appeared no evidence, nor even any presumption. Nay, it might be as well expected that we could commit an act of apostolical suicide as attempt to abdicate rights which we could not yield without a surrender of our apostolical succession. But while my course is strictly conformable to the tenets of the Catholic Church, and the writings of its most zealous and enlightened bishops of every age, I must own that it is and shall be at variance with the course which the National Board is now pursuing. The object of their system is, that children of different persuasions should imbibe similar ideas. My object is, that while they are taught charity to all of every religion, they should not imbibe those similar ideas, that would gradually efface the strong and marked distinction of the Catholic creed. Their object is to prohibit books that may appear “objectionable to them as peculiarly belonging to some religious denomination.” My object is to prevent them or any such self-constituted body, from exercising a control that would thus wear down to one undistinguishable level, the prominent and dissimilar features of truth and error. In short, though it may not be their aim, the tendency of their system is to bring about an unnatural “fellowship between light and darkness,” and to create that musty sort of

theology—a chaotic compound of truth and error—which has long hung over the universities of Germany, and teemed with a monstrous immorality, the congenial offspring of such a mixed origin. Mine is to keep distinct from such admixture that light and order which were first ushered in by the “Sun of Justice,” which it has been the labour of the zealous pastors of every age to keep asunder from the surrounding errors, and which have never been more conspicuous in any portion of the Church than in our own. In short, following the Catholic Church for my guide, I dislike all such mixtures. In the moral and political world they are as fatal in their consequences, as they are unnatural. The Church dislikes a mixed education, as she does mixed marriages. Behold the recent and disastrous consequences of either in Belgium and in Prussia. What was it that drove William from the throne of Belgium? The despotic attempt to force upon the children of that faithful people, a system of mixed education. What is it that is filling Prussia at this moment with tumult, and turning the eyes of Europe to the sufferings of Drost, Archbishop of Cologne, the illustrious confessor of the faith, in the castle of Minden? Mixed marriages, together with the fatal pliancy of Spiegel, his predecessor, in yielding to the unprincipled requisition of the Prussian court. Not only did the unfortunate prelate become an instrument in the hands of the King in enforcing his anti-Catholic regulations, but succeeded, also, in obtaining the concurrence of the bishops of Munster, of Paderborne, and of Triers. What was the consequence? A solemn and penitential avowal of one of those prelates of the fatal condescension into which he was betrayed. “*Nunc vero, morbo dolorosissimo correptus, in vitæ discrimine versans, divina gratia illustratus, ex actis illis Ecclesie Catholicæ mala gravissima oritura, et Ecclesie Catholicæ canones et principia iisdem læsa esse perspectum habeo; quantum hac in re summi momenti, erravi, pænitentia ductus, libera mente et proprio motu retracto.*”* Such was the dying declaration of Joseph, the bishop of Triers. It is not a matter of remote occurrence. It does not belong to those olden times to which it would be refreshing, not only to ourselves but to our readers, to refer in this important controversy, in order that they might derive their knowledge from their unmixed and untroubled fountains. No, my lord, it is a matter which has occurred within these two years. Why refer to it? Because I am anxious for the

* TRANSLATION.

“But now, being in danger of death, from a most painful illness, and enlightened by the divine grace, I am fully convinced that those acts will be productive of the most serious evils to the Church, and that the canons and principles of the Catholic Church have been impaired by them; wherefore, seized with the sorrow, I, freely, and of my own accord, retract, as far as I have erred, in this matter of the greatest importance.—JOSEPH, Bishop of Triers.”

peace of the country, as well as the purity of the Catholic religion. From the extraordinary power now claimed by the State over a mixed education, it would soon claim a similar despotic control over mixed marriages, and strive to stretch its net over all our ecclesiastical concerns. It would never want subservient instruments. Some future Spiegel might arise from among the hierarchy of Ireland, who would attempt to favour the dangerous views of the government, and weaken the canons of Rome, as he had done, by sinister commentaries. I am anxious to meet the evil in time, and to save our National Church the exhibition of such scandals at a future day, as well as the necessity of humiliating retractions.

I have the honor to be, my lord, your faithful brother in Christ,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER LXXXIX.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, DECEMBER 16th, 1838.

“Sed ut res nostras prosequamur, hæreticorum, qui rem Anglicanam eo tempore administrabant, de Academiis corrumpendis cura erat; ut illis religionis ac disciplinarum fontibus infectis, facilis in universam Rempublicam manaret lues.”—SANDERS DE SCHISMATE ANGLICANO.

MY LORD—If the history of the past be justly deemed a prophetic picture of the future, the lines I have just quoted from the learned historian of the English schism, fully reveal the policy that has been pursued by the government in the establishment of the National Board. If philosophy teaches us that similar causes will produce similar effects, we may contemplate in the disastrous fate of the sister country, what might be expected in Ireland from a similar corruption of its religious and academic institutions. And if sound theology inculcates that errors in faith are like a contagion, that may be quickly propagated, it behoves the Catholics of Ireland to look with extreme caution to all the schemes of national enlightenment, that are now so industriously sent abroad.

Because shallow theorists and corrupt speculators are striving to occupy the public mind with a novel system, it is fancied there

is now felt a livelier zeal for education than in any former age. Never was there a greater delusion. When true philosophy was extinct among the ancients, a crowd of sophists, who only repeated its name, arose upon its ruins. When the spirit of ancient eloquence disappeared, it was succeeded by a plentiful but barren crop of rhetorical essays and commentaries. It is then natural that when penalties and proscriptions succeeded in extinguishing those legitimate lights that diffused the blessings of knowledge, a new race of education-pretenders should start up, who, leaving undone the great work for which their predecessors toiled, are eternally dissertating on plans of education.

For what your lordship has already done with regard to the National Board, I should express my acknowledgment, were it not that you might labour under an impression that we could be satisfied with any thing less than the complete remodelling of the whole system. The public attention is at length rivetted on the proceedings of that body. Your lordship's recent visit to Dublin, and the subsequent reforms, or rather revolutions, that have since taken place, will attest whether the board can well abide the public scrutiny. The wonder is, how any body invested with such vast influence over the moral and political destinies of any people, was suffered so long to exercise a species of irresponsible power. Whether it is contemplated in a religious, or political, or municipal point of view, it is an institution that should exercise the public vigilance. From what has already occurred, I should suppose the ministry are determined to spare us the labour of exposing its mischievous tendency. Should it last another year, your lordship will find, that, instead of being a bond of union among the sectaries, it will become a focus of civil and religious contention, and that the intestine spirit that has already rent the board itself, and scattered some of its members, shall soon extend to the entire kingdom.

The moral and religious education of an entire people is not a theme to be trifled with. I shall, please God, treat it with all the seriousness of argument which its importance merits as connected with the religion of the people and the interests of the State. But, before I resume that topic, I beg to point the public attention to this municipal corporation, affecting the freedom of the different districts of the country. Ireland is at this moment engaged in a constitutional struggle to achieve, among other objects, the destruction of those corrupt corporations, that have so long oppressed the liberties, and misappropriated the finances that were entrusted to their care. There is an active exertion now making for the re-construction of municipal bodies, which, under the salutary vigilance of parliament, will have power to direct their own local affairs. It is a question well worth the consideration of the Catholics, and, I will add, of the

Protestants of Ireland, whether at such an auspicious moment, when they are almost sure of municipal reform, they are to suffer another new corporation to spring up among them, more anomalous in its construction, vaster in its influence, and more dangerous to the civil and religious freedom of all classes, than any of the corporations whose annihilation is so justly sought. Nay, more, though ostensibly set up for the benefit of the poor of Ireland, on the principle of a fair and equitable appropriation of its funds, there has not been in Ireland a corporation, of which the funds have been more unequally distributed.

This, my lord, I pledge myself to demonstrate in my next letter to your lordship's full satisfaction, by minute reference to the published accounts of the board and parliamentary documents.

Some may not relish the theological discussion of this subject, as breathing too much of polemical asperity ; to others, its dangers to the State may appear too remote or problematical to fill them with any serious apprehensions ; but, to the intellects of all, the financial views of the subject will be quite accessible, and the least educated will not fail to understand that, under the guise of educating the poor, it is a system for providing for the retainers of the rich, and that while the former are comparatively neglected, the funds are swallowed up by a regiment of high-salaried officers.

This system of insulting delusion will no longer be endured by the people. Already are petitions against its continuance receiving hundreds of thousands of signatures. Can your lordship imagine that the people of Tuam, for example, will be contented that they are to have no share in the funds that are levied off them, in common with the rest of the empire, unless they submit to the obnoxious regulations of persons amongst whom there is not, and cannot be, any enduring principle of cohesion ? No, they will not be content ; and their discontent will go forth among their other grievances in loud remonstrances to the legislature, and their honest representatives will faithfully convey their wrongs to her Majesty's ministers. After I shall have submitted to your lordship and the public a brief abstract of the funds placed at the disposal of the board, and the manner in which they have been expended, you will form some judgment of the amount of public benefit that has been derived from this institution. In the meantime, I have the honor to be your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XC.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY,
DECEMBER 29, 1838.

“Sed quia viderunt hæretici, multa meliora ingenia, ex priori Catholica institutione in fide adhuc manere, ex Germania aliisque locis vicinis, homines ad fraudem magis exercitatos, quam primum accersendos censuerunt.”—SANDERS DE SCHISMATE ANGLICANO. *Lib. II.*

MY LORD—The coincidence between the unprincipled arts that were resorted to in seducing the English nation from the faith, and those that are now dexterously practised on the Irish people, is observable in a variety of instances. In nothing, however, is this perverse identity of purpose more manifest than in the similarity of schemes adopted towards both countries to poison the seats of learning, and pervert the minds of its professors. To exemplify this striking analogy I have already referred to Sanders, the accurate historian of the Anglican schism, and the same authority will furnish me with other illustrations. At present I need but cite the case of Germany, which then poured its errors and its profligacy over England. At this moment its universities are receptacles of the rankest heresy and infidelity, probably the most corrupt seats of learning in the civilized world. And yet, strange to say, these are the models that are proposed to the Catholics of Ireland, and by men called LIBERAL Catholics, to fashion the literary institutions where their children are to receive their education.

Reserving, however, this ample and important part of the subject for another occasion, I shall proceed to fulfil the pledge, given in my last letter, to direct your lordship's attention to the “distributive justice” that has guided the financial concerns of the National Board. From the theological positions which I have already laid before your lordship, it is unnecessary to state that, were justice itself to preside over the apportionment of its funds, I could never be reconciled to the dangerous practical principles regarding Church government and discipline, that have been recently unfolded in the proceedings of that body. Again, were it a Catholic board, composed exclusively of members of that body, it would disentitle itself to the general confidence of the people, if it were to exhibit the same utter disregard to equity and fairness in the relative allocation of its finances, that is discernible in its public and authentic documents. If on each of these grounds it be liable to serious objections, your lordship

may judge how insupportable it must be with the two-fold evil of religious danger to the entire, and obvious injustice to many parts of the kingdom.

Claiming the usual indulgence in matters of account of "errors excepted," I beg leave to refer to the documents that were ordered to be printed by the House of Commons in the course of the last session. In the year 1832 there was a parliamentary grant of £37,500 for the advancement of education in Ireland; in 1833, £25,000; in 1834, £20,000; in 1835, £35,000.* From the statement of estimates of miscellaneous services, page 3, it appears that in the year 1836 the grant was £46,653, and £50,000 in each of the following years.

These various items, transcribed from parliamentary documents, show that with the exception of a trifling deduction, the sum of £264,153 has been, within the brief period of less than seven years, placed at the disposal of the National Board. Of the first parliamentary grant, it seems that some small portion was applied to the Kildare-street Society, by way of "burying the synagogue with honor," and appeasing the sullen spirit of that fallen establishment.

Another parliamentary "return of the total amount of money, and of the value of other aids, actually issued by the Board of National Education to the several schools in Ireland, from the establishment of said Board, to the 15th of December, 1837," I find the following account of its expenditure classed under four different heads, in the several provinces:—

	BUILDING.	£	s.	d.
Ulster	6,875	12	11	
Munster	5,844	18	10	
Leinster	9,007	18	10	
Connaught	4,569	17	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	FITTING UP.	£	s.	d.
Ulster	3,033	14	1	
Munster	1,492	14	5	
Leinster	3,626	4	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Connaught	1,058	15	10	
	SALARY.	£	s.	d.
Ulster	18,126	8	0	
Munster	10,930	7	5	
Leinster	18,527	10	8	
Connaught	6,491	12	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	BOOKS AND OTHER SCHOOL REQUISITES.	£	s.	d.
Ulster	4,401	19	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Munster	2,758	2	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Leinster	5,121	7	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Connaught	1,384	16	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	

* Report, Education, Ireland, p. 13.

From this return, ordered to be printed last June by the House of Commons, it appears, that the sum of £103,252 1s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. has been publicly accounted for up to the preceding December, of the quarter of a million of money, that has been granted for the education of the poor of Ireland. It is unnecessary to detain the reader long in pointing out the marked inequality, nay, injustice, as to the several provinces, in the distribution of a fund, that was intended proportionably for the entire kingdom.

In exposing this manifest injustice, I shall not for the present go into minuter details than a comparison of the different aids to the provinces, content with observing that, should the smaller localities of the great districts be compared, some neglected parts of Leinster and Ulster will have as much reason to complain as Connaught has with regard to the preference shown to these two favoured provinces.

Far in advance of the other two provinces, even of Ulster, which comes next in favour, there has been expended in Leinster, on buildings, near double the sum that has been laid out in Connaught. If it should be conjectured that the local influence of the board in Leinster was at all exercised in its behalf, it would only prove the value of the extension of some like protection, to the remote and neglected provinces. The vast inequality in the first item of building might possibly be deemed the result of chance, if the same munificence and extravagant preference for the seat of educational administration, did not mark every feature of the expenditure. In the fitting up, Munster, with its immense Catholic population, is placed in nearly as low a scale as Connaught; while the latter province has not even a third of that outlay compared to Leinster, which is immediately placed under the fostering solicitude of the board. Again, in the contest for the prizes of salaries, we find the masters of Ulster and Leinster running nearly an equal race. Those of Munster are lagging far behind; but as for Connaught, it is left the same uniform pre-eminence in privation destined for it in every state measure, being treated with the same insulting neglect by all her Majesty's commissioners, whether of railways or of education. It is on the same principle, no doubt, that Connaught holds the same relative position with regard to books and school requisites; and for this the commissioners have my sincere acknowledgments: we shall thus be spared the necessity of purging our schools of some of their poisonous productions. In the commencement, the singular merit of their school-books was clamourously eulogized. Latterly there seems something like a prudent and studied caution on that subject. Perhaps the rich mines from which their literary treasures were extracted have been laid open to the curiosity of the world, with the additional discovery that the manufacturers of the books were no less destitute of originality,

than they were in gratitude in acknowledging the extent of their obligations.

The preceding parliamentary accounts of the board will show that up to the 15th December last, £13,505 3s. 2½d. is the amount of the entire sum that has been expended by that body since its establishment in all its items of outlay in this province. Should any additional expense have been incurred by the unnecessary training of a few of its teachers in a model-school, in Dublin, I cannot count it a benefit that they should be attempted to be laughed, as has occurred, out of their reverence for their patron saint by some anti-Catholic, Scotch school-masters. This sum of thirteen thousand pounds would, supposing their population equal, be nearly what each of the provinces would be yearly entitled to, out of the amount of the grant made by the parliament during each of the last two years. Connaught has received during the whole time of the existence of the board, but very little more than the portion it would be entitled to, within each year of that period. Whereas, instead of such an unequal pittance, it should have in justice received, even in the proportion of its actual population, about fifty thousand pounds of the sum allotted for education since the year 1832, when the board was established. Were the interests of each of the provinces protected by prudent, economical bodies, who would be bound, like the trustees of the College of Maynooth, to account to parliament for the outlay of every farthing, and who, like the same trustees, would perform their duties gratuitously, it follows that the poor of this province, for example, would have had the benefit which has been denied them, of the expenditure of near forty thousand pounds on the education of their children. And yet we are gravely told that we ought to be fully content with such a system, because some two or three Catholics happen to be members of that body. Whether Catholics, or Protestants, or Pagans, it is a matter of little consequence in such a gross inequality of the distribution of public funds, since no circumstance of religion or of infidelity can palliate such palpable injustice.

But Connaught is poor, and it is no wonder it should not share in the benefits of legislative aid to the same extent as the other provinces. No doubt it is; but I should draw from its acknowledged comparative poverty an opposite conclusion. It is like the argument of the commissioners of railways, who have wasted more than twelve thousand pounds of the public money on a report which calumniates the people of an entire province, and strives to exclude them from a just share in the outlay of the public revenues. If Connaught then is poor, what has made it so? The same neglect of the care of a fostering legislature which Ireland feels, compared to England, operates on the condition of this province in particular, compared to the rest of the

kingdom. It stands, therefore, the more in need of legislative interference to develop its resources. It is entirely left out of the contemplation of the honest and disinterested commissioners of railroads until it becomes prosperous!! Who ever heard of a patient being abandoned by a physician, and deemed unworthy of his care until he should recover his health? As the Education Board was established for the poor of Ireland, the poorer any portion of its inhabitants, the more they were entitled to the considerate regard of that body. Perhaps they went on the maxim, that to him that has much, much shall be given, and from him that has not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.

If, then, there happen to be some places so poor that they could not contribute in the same proportion as other districts, that regulation was a vicious one, which required in all cases a third of the sum to be contributed in the locality where the school was to be erected. But is it in reality from a want of zeal for education or a spirit to contribute to its support, that Connaught has been treated with such marked injustice by the board? It may be imagined that it has been neglected, because it refused its quota in the local contributions. If so, these local contributions must be small compared to the other provinces, in proportion to the small pittance of the parliamentary funds which it received. Now, instead of this being the case, it will be found that the sum contributed by its localities bear a greater proportion to the grants of the board than do the similar local advances in the other provinces.

From the parliamentary returns regarding education, above referred to, it appears that—

Ulster	has contributed in building, &c.	.	£4,030	12	5½
Munster	.	.	1,660	17	6½
Leinster	.	.	5,842	2	4
Connaught	.	.	2,295	17	9½

By a comparison of those items with the grants for building and fitting up, referred to at the commencement of this letter, it would appear that the local contributions of the province of Munster are less than the one-fourth; and those of Connaught nearer the one-half, than those of either Leinster or Ulster. In the case of Munster, where there is a large Catholic population, and many of them necessarily poor, the board, or any body of education trustees, would have acted wisely in not pushing the rule of a stated portion of local contributions to extreme rigour. The comparative statement proves, that in Connaught, the poorest of the provinces, it has been more sternly enforced than in any other part of the kingdom.

Allow me, my lord, respectfully to inquire whether it is the *bona fide* intention of the legislature, that the public money should

really be expended on educating the poor, or for multiplying the channels of ministerial patronage? If the latter, as is the general belief, better at once, like the late Lord Londonderry, who quartered a respectable incumbrance on the College of Maynooth, to fix the number of those retainers, as well as the amount of their sinecures, than to be amusing the nation with a show of funds that are not destined for its benefit. If, on the other hand, it is really intended for the education of the poor, that wisdom which adapts the means to the end will dispense with all superfluous machinery, and a strict sense of justice will not allow useless officers to absorb those revenues which, under a severer management, would be productive of a more diffusive advantage. In short, to use a scholastic axiom which must appear too old-fashioned to the numerous retinue of functionaries that are jostling each other at the porch of the national academy, "Non sunt multiplicanda entia sine necessitate." If your lordship wishes to conduct national education on principles at once safe and useful, I might refer you to the Jesuits, or to the biography of Joseph Calasanctius, as I would on the subject of poor laws to St. Vincent of Paul. Sure I am that the life and labours of the latter person alone would furnish your lordship and the legislature with more statesman-like views on the two paramount questions of poor laws and education, than all the crude and dangerous speculations of Messrs. Blake and Nicholls put together.

Adopting the principle of a just economy in conducting the national education, your lordship will get rid at once of the useless humbug of a metropolitan model-school, and the long suite of clerks and inspectors—an invention which our *liberal* theorists have imported from Prussia, and which really embarrasses, instead of smoothing, the avenues to knowledge. Though at the risk of lengthening this letter, I know it must be gratifying to my readers to learn what is the enormous cost of those incumbrances, and what a drawback they are on the funds that are said to be granted for the education of the poor of the kingdom.*

* In the "Estimate of the Expenses of the Commissioners of Education for the year commencing 1st April, 1838, and ending the 31st March, 1839," we find the following items for keeping up the aforesaid machinery :—

CENTRAL MODEL AND TRAINING DEPARTMENT.

Superintendent of Model Schools and Training De-					
partment ...	...	...	...	£300	0 0
Lecturer in History and Geography	...	...	...	150	0 0
Lectures to Teachers on Education, Chemistry, and					
Natural Philosophy ...	...	...	...	300	0 0
Masters of Male Model Schools	...	...	...	300	0 0
Assistants and Monitors in ditto	...	...	...	250	0 0
Mistress of Female Model ditto	...	...	...	130	0 0
Assistant in ditto	...	...	...	30	0 0
Master and Mistress of Infant ditto	...	...	...	200	0 0
Servants connected with training of Teachers and					
Model Schools	...	...	...	190	0 0

This is, no doubt, carrying on the education, if not of the poor of Ireland, at least of some of those of the metropolis, on a truly magnificent scale. The model and training department alone costs £2,490; £5,076 is the annual expense of inspection, besides £500 of an outfit this year to equip the superintendents with horses. The board office, with its whole train of functionaries, including a dozen of clerks, is a concern of £2,815 10s., the aggregate of which sums expended on the board office alone and its officers, amounts to more than the annual sum that is yearly granted for the professors, and every expense connected with the education of the Catholic priesthood in the College of Maynooth. Ten thousand pounds, under the judicious control of all the provincial bishops as trustees, together with a few others of the clergy and laity, who would account to parliament for the expenditure, would diffuse more of useful education in one province than is now produced for the fifty thousand pounds throughout the entire kingdom. It must, however, be confessed that this sum would not support at the same amount of salary the present establishment of sinecure and supernumerary retainers. When I consider how much of the funds is diverted from the useful purposes of education to mere government patronage, I can account for the golden philippics of the government press, sur-

Travelling Expenses to and from Dublin of Teachers
for Training—say four classes of fifty each, at

£2 per man	...	...	...	...	£400	0	0
Extra Masters in Training Department	...	...	...	240	0	0	0
General Superintendent	...	...	...	300	0	0	0
Assistants in Dublin	...	...	...	300	0	0	0

INSPECTION.

Twenty-five Superintendents of National Schools	...	3125	0	0
Horses for ditto, at £20	...	500	0	0
Lodgings for ditto, at £30	...	750	0	0
For extra Travelling Expenses	...	600	0	0

BOARD, OFFICE, AND GENERAL MANAGEMENT.

Resident Commissioner, per Treasury Minute	...	500	0	0
Secretary	...	500	0	0
Accountant, and Clerks of various classes, &c.	...	1085	10	0

BUILDINGS IN MARLBOROUGH-STREET.

For erecting of a Keeper's Lodge and Gateway in Gardiner-street, new Carriage-way, Walk in- closing Infant School, with Boys' and Girls' Schools, Gas-lamps and Fittings, Clock, &c.	...	761	18	0
Fitting up Lecture and Class-rooms, Museum, &c., and forming and levelling the Garden and Recre- ation Ground	...	1558	14	0
For completing the basement story of the Female School-house, to be used as Class-rooms; also Hot Water Apparatus for heating the Buildings, &c.	4893	4	4	0
Building a Class-room connected with the Infant School, Presses, and Flagging Yard, Recreation Shed, Fittings and Furniture, Heating Appara- tus, &c.	...	657	16	0
Miscellaneous	...	950	0	0

passing in vehemence the less courtly inspirations of the Tory journals. Look, for example, at the host of its clerks, all ready to attack any who will interfere with their occupation. When I reflect on the numerous cases of those learned crafts-men, all skilled to let loose their feathered arrows on their foes, it should not be wondered if those who had the courage to assail the system should have long since shared the fate of St. Sebastian.

Make special grants as large as your lordship may think proper to Marlborough-street, either as a diocesan or provincial school; but while it is enriched with all the elegance of architecture, let not the people of the provinces be derided, as heretofore, with the answer, "there are no funds." Establish there as many schools for infants, and academies for adults, as your lordship may find the parliament disposed to indulge your taste in; erect magnificent suites of saloons, and fill them with the most sumptuous furniture; build museums and flower gardens, and expend the public money in stocking them with exotics from the East and mummies from Egypt—they will be as accessible and useful to the indigent children of the provinces as the similar institutions of Oxford or Trinity College; dedicate one wing to the philosophers, another to the muses, and place their marble busts in all its niches, until you make it rival the villa of Adrian in the number and variety of its native and foreign schools. I trust, however, that no Chancellor of the Exchequer, in proposing such a grant, will be so wanting in gravity as to insult the sense of the legislature and the Irish nation by calling a grant so extraneous to such a purpose a grant for "the education of the poor of Ireland."

I have the honor to be, my lord, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER,
JANUARY 18, 1839.

“ Reocant ergo ex Germanie Martinum Bucerum insignem hæreticum, Petrum Martyrem et Bernardinum Ochinum, oliusque hujus farinæ.....quos partim in Academiis collocant ne ulla fraus de esset aut diligentia ad Inventutis deceptionem. Ampliora tamen stipendia Bucero at Martyri ut hæreticorum anteignanis assignarunt.”—SANDERS DE SCHISMATE ANGLICANO.

MY LORD—We are assured by the wise man that there is nothing new under the sun. The recurrence of the stated cycle of the stoics was supposed to bring back the events of the past in regular succession; and the enemies of the Catholic faith, whether under the deliberate influence of their own free will, or impelled, as they may fancy, by the stoical fatalism or predestination of the Calvinists, are now re-acting the same scenes of profound deception in Ireland which were exhibited three centuries ago on the theatre of England. Compare both epochs, and you will find the designs, the instruments, and agents of the one to be like regular transcripts of the other. Bucer, and Martyr, and Ochin, the professors of a foreign faith, who were brought from other lands to preside over the English academies, and to inoculate the rising generation with their own religion, are the prototypes of Whately, of M'Arthur, and of Carlile, those men of alien countries and an alien creed, to whom an anti-Catholic government would chiefly entrust the task of regulating the schools and conducting the education of Catholic Ireland.

As one of those gentlemen has retired to his kirk, and resigned for its humble cares the ostentatious title of Education Commissioner, I should forbear the introduction of his name, were it not that his address, on his return to his flock, as well as the legacy of professional instructions which he has left for the benefit of the teachers of Ireland, are of too much value to be passed over in silence. Those productions are now public property, and, in animadverting on them, I have no wish to canvass the reasons which must be best known to your lordship, of his retirement from a board where Mr. Blake said his services were so essential that they could scarcely be dispensed with. They

are, however, now dispensed with; and if, as we were led to believe, he was necessary for the very existence of the board, it follows that his retirement must be a prelude to its dissolution.

From the singular tone of the reverend gentleman's address, it would appear that the Catholic hierarchy and clergy of the country had done but little towards the regeneration of Ireland, until it had been blessed, like England on a former occasion, with the religious and literary labours of foreign sectaries. In a tone of singular self-satisfaction, he boasts how much the board has already done towards enlightening, and elevating, and tranquillizing the people of Ireland! Until this jumbled association of the professors of various creeds began their labours, it would seem that the people of Ireland sat in complete darkness, and were entirely ignorant of peace or order. How must not the Catholics of Ireland value the delicate compliments conveyed in the singular address of this guardian member of the National Board. So, then, the efforts of the clergy and laity of Ireland, to enlighten and tranquillize the country, were vain, until some English Bucer, and Scotch Peter Martyr, and next, some German Ochin, imported by Mr. Wyse from the orthodox universities of that country, are hired at larger salaries than the natives, to diffuse throughout this benighted land the benefits of religion, of peace, and civilization.

It is hard to say what should be the feelings of a people possessed of any national pride on witnessing such contemptuous insults towards their religion and their country. Amidst the most galling persecutions of past times, Ireland had at least one consolation, that it never could stoop to the religious yoke of the foreigner. The land that enlightened others with its learning and sanctity would never consent to receive its religious books from the pens, or its oral instructions from the lips, of persons sent from the seats of spiritual darkness and infidelity. And hence, the faith which is first received from that Holy See, "which heresy never infected," has been preserved as pure and as fresh as the national emblem that grows upon its soil. Whilst the faith of any people is free, they may well smile at the chains that may be forged for their civil liberties. But, woe to the nation that suffers the faith to be bound, either by force or the more dangerous fetters of court flattery and connexion. It has been well remarked that civil oppression deprives a people of only a moiety of its liberties, it is only when it seizes the soul, and binds up its religious energies, that then they are reduced to abject and irreclaimable bondage.

That this spiritual tyranny over the religion and consciences of the people of Ireland is now aimed at by the enemies of our faith, can no longer be disguised. Recent events have placed the matter beyond the reach of contradiction. Witness the rage that

has been given vent to in several quarters, because an important question, involving the faith and morals of the rising generation of Ireland, has been referred to the decision of the father of the Christian World. What! (we are publicly told by those who affected such anxiety for the education of the Catholics of Ireland) submit the affairs of this country to the decision of a foreign potentate! It is again in contemplation, another seriously avers, to restore the days of Hildebrand, because we are willing to recognize the voice of Peter in the person of his successor. Those who had it in contemplation to force masters into model-schools, and ultimately thrust their mongrel system of education down the throats of the people, are now in an agony of frenzy because we look for light and aid from that holy city which has ever been the fortress of religious freedom to every nation whose faith was attempted to be crushed. Relish the unpalatable truth, then, as your lordship chooses, the fact which the friends of the board were the first to publish is certain—the system of national education is referred to Rome, and the fate of the board hangs in the balance, depending for its existence on the decision of Gregory.

Mr. Grattan has, I understand, given notice of a motion to ascertain the *working* of the system of Ireland. We are now arrived, it seems, at the *mechanical*, in contradistinction to the *metaphysical* age. Formerly, schoolmen laid down certain and indisputable principles, from which they drew, by a fair process of reasoning, legitimate conclusions. Hence, if the principles on which a system was based were bad, they concluded, in a summary way, that its working must be vicious. For this they are reproached with dealing in phantoms, and it well becomes the advocates of a mere material and mechanical philosophy wholly to lose sight of principles, or, as they were called, “ideas,” in the formation of a system, and to confine themselves to its mere mechanical operation. To ascertain the benefits or evils of a system by the induction of facts, must always require time for its development—time, at length, unfolding the dangerous principles of the National Board, and in the same proportion, enlarging the numbers of those who tremble for the further mischiefs of which it may be productive. Until lately, but little attention was bestowed upon the subject. The growing assumption of the ministers of government to enlarge or abridge the powers of the commissioners relative to the religious portion of the system, at length created alarm, and opened the eyes of many to its designs on the religious liberties of the people. As yet the lectures of Mr. Carlile, to the intended masters or teachers of Ireland, were not known. They are deserving of the profound attention of the people of Ireland. Let, then, the system be tried even by its working, of which a zealous and mysterious secrecy is a portion.

They are printed—whether they are published I cannot say. As they are printed at the people's expense, they ought to be circulated for the people's benefit, unless it be a maxim with the board that the lectures that are whispered within the porch should, like those of ancient philosophers, not be divulged among the people.

It appears, however, that profound secrecy is one of their maxims, and that the instructions communicated, require that no officer of the board give publicity to any documents that may come into his hands, or any part of the business of the establishment that may come to his knowledge. Is it to masters receiving such instructions, the people of Ireland are required to confide the education of their children? One of the objects of some the great advocates of modern education is, to abolish the belief of mysteries, and to substitute a system of what is called *rational* Christianity. Yet, since the days of Pythagoras, I never knew of such an attempt to surround popular instruction with secrecy, and mystery so impenetrable, as those which are thus inculcated in the inaugural lecture of the late professor of education.

But for the present, I must forbear any further commentary on this singular production, as well as on its mysterious objects, attacked by the important report of the recent parliamentary debate upon that subject. It is said that your lordship stated it as your opinion that a system of education, emanating from a central board, formed of the professors of many creeds, was not at all suited to England. Nay, you are reported to have said that the established clergy should control education in that country. Why, then, does your lordship think it fitted for the people of Ireland? And why not entrust, for a similar reason, the education of the Catholic people to the Catholic clergy here? I fear there is something of the habitual policy pursued towards the two countries in this singular distinction. If there is in the world a country to which such a motley education as that of the National Board is peculiarly adapted, is it not England, with its *ameleon* creeds, reflecting every colour and shade of opinion, from the brightness of the Catholic faith to all the blackness of infidelity? And again, if there be a country which more than another evinced its dislike for fashionable varieties in matter of faith, and its utter abhorrence of religious innovation, that country is Ireland. Why, then, strive to force into one country a system so utterly unsuited to its people, and relinquish it on a soil so congenial to its cultivation? The pride of the establishment must be cherished, must be soothed in England, though it is a matter of notoriety that, with its gorgeous endowments, it has so neglected the great duty of the education of the people, as to have abandoned the great bulk of them to the most de-

plorable ignorance. It is the same spirit of reverential deference for the Established Church, and of a correlative hatred for the Catholic Religion, that so deeply engages the sympathy of some statesmen, and prompts them to push forward, at all hazards, the present detestable system. Finding with what tenacity the people cling to the Catholic faith, whilst their education was conducted by their pastors, who alone have a sincere and disinterested zeal to enlighten the people with the saving truths of religion, they have employed every engine to wrest this office from them, and entrust it to associations which must be under the control of the government. They are not ignorant of the effects of the saying—"Strike the shepherd, and the flock will be scattered :" and could they once succeed in paralyzing the exertions of the legitimate pastors in their respective dioceses, they could hope to make easy inroads on the faith of the unprotected people. This is the real object of all the mighty zeal that is now affected for the education of the people, and of all the projects of modern philanthropists and of all their literary tours, and scientific peregrinations, for the benefit of the human race ! I am not ignorant of the character of their boasted institutions, or of their practical working, with regard to the faith and morality of the people. And when the universities of Prussia and of Germany are referred to, they should be, at least, held up as a warning to deter from, rather than as models for, imitation. But it is neither to Prussia, nor Germany, nor Scotland, nor England, we shall ever look for models for the education of the youth of Ireland ; nor shall we ever resign the maxims of the wise and the virtuous who have gone before us, for the crude and dangerous speculations of some shallow or false-hearted men, who are panting for an opportunity of raising on the ruins of religious faith a system of infidel philosophy.

I have the honor to be, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE CANONICAL TITLES OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE
SEES.ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. GREGORY VII.,
MAY 25, 1839.

“If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye.”
(Acts, iv.)

MY LORD—With the privileges of the assembly of which your lordship is so conspicuous a member, it is not my purpose to interfere, content with confining myself to the published report of proceedings, for which neither your lordship nor I are responsible. From this report it appears that the archbishop and clergy of Tuam, professing the Roman Catholic religion, unanimously proffered to the House of Commons an humble and respectful petition, for the redress of a manifest grievance, and that this prayer of their petition was refused to be listened to unless they consented to subscribe to a proposition fraught with pernicious errors. It was required, it seems, as a condition of its reception, that the title of Archbishop of Tuam should be cancelled by the petitioners. Now, it is an unquestionable fact, that they are daily in the habit of performing solemn duties, of which the validity entirely depends on the essential jurisdiction that flows from the above title, and that, consequently, they could not renounce its assertion without submitting to the imputation of their own acts being null and sacrilegious. This they could not do without renouncing the highest authority in that church which God commands them to hear, under pain of being ranked among heathens and publicans. Whether, then, it is just to hear you requiring one thing, or God, through the authority of his Church, requiring another, I leave to your lordship's unbiassed judgment to determine.

But such is the prudent forbearance of the legislature, that it does not insist on the practical suspension of the exercise of the office, provided there be a deferential abstinence from the assumption of the name. Is the Episcopacy, then, an office merely suffered because it cannot be suppressed, and of which the title should be concealed under the shadow of ignominious toleration? If one incurs no guilt by being practically and in fact the bishop

of a see, or the metropolitan of a province, it is strange what guilt can attach to any authentic instrument which respectfully predicates the innocuous reality. Such policy reminds one of the language of Tertullian to the ancient persecutors, that their edicts were pointed not against *crime*, but against the mere Christian *profession*. It also resembles the cruel clemency of Trajan, who instructs his officers that the Christians should not be sought, yet punished if discovered. Why, continues the same apologist, not prosecute us if guilty, and, if not guilty, why punish us when discovered? To one of your lordship's clear perception it is unnecessary to prolong the parallel or press the application.

I may be told, however, in the lofty assumption of some deep-read senator, that no Catholic bishop exists *in law*. If so, every breath he draws in the country must be, as much as the signature of his title, an act of rebellion against the majesty of legislation. As your lordship is an advocate for an extensive course of education for all classes, I humbly hope that candidates for the senate will not be excluded from its benefits—that they, too, will have a training school, and that before they present themselves on the hustings they produce a certificate that they have read over, at least once, "Cicero's Treatise on Laws." If so, the future readers of the reports of the House of Commons may be rewarded for the toil of their perusal, and, instead of sometimes groping their way through a dark and confused chaos of bigotry and dulness, they will be instructed with the lore, and warmed with the eloquence of many a Lushington and O'Connell, who, having ascended to the pure fountain of justice, from which all law derives its force, will tell, in the language of the Roman orator, of that universal law, anterior to all covenants, and felt in every clime—a law not learned from man, but drawn from nature, and to which London now, as well as Rome and Athens of old, must bow in all the acts which they promulgate for the guidance of mankind.

There was in this country an important legal personage, who, finding the judicial sceptre in his hand, thought by its magic touch to annihilate the entire Catholic people. Accordingly, when seated on his chair of law, he issued his oracular judgment that there was not one Catholic subject in Ireland. In defiance of this mandate, he found, like an ancient monarch, that the wave of the growing multitude gradually flowed on, and had not death seasonably relieved him from his alarms, he would have feared that his seat would have been upset by the ascending tide of the disobedient population. Time has now fully revealed the folly of kicking any longer against the goad, or endeavouring to stay the force of laws to which all human ordinances must yield. Such grave maxims, then, should be suffered to sleep in the

tombs of those who uttered them. That they are now obsolete can be attested by the House of Commons itself, and whoever asserts there is no Catholic Bishop in law in Ireland might be scared by the apparition of so many Catholic members, who are evidence of the impotent mendacity of the law, which pronounced them dead, or of the more miraculous virtue of their political resurrection.

Whenever your lordship shall make the important discovery that the title or jurisdiction of a Catholic Bishop or Archbishop is derived from the state, it will be high time to threaten him with its vengeance, in cancelling that title or withdrawing that jurisdiction. For my part, with a dutiful and conscientious allegiance to our Sovereign, which no temptation shall ever sever, I shall never owe any obligation to the state for my office or my title, conscious that they are derived from a higher origin than any over which the state has control. You condescend, forsooth, to acknowledge us bishops in this or the other see in any part of Ireland, and so might be any travelling prelate from Asia or America, who might come on a visit to this country. I suppose your lordship would fain reduce us to the loose and unsettled state of the parsons of the established church, who are sometimes shifted to different parts of the kingdom. No, my lord, there is not in the world a hierarchy more fixed in its position and jurisdiction than that of Ireland, and instead of being, as our enemies would make us, a troop of ecclesiastical Arabs, ready to light upon the possessions of our neighbours, each has his defined and allotted sphere of spiritual jurisdiction, and each can present the title deed of his see with the grand seal of the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, to whom Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Do then, abridge, extend, annihilate, at your good pleasure, any and every portion of the Protestant prelacy; follow up next session the example already given, and take away, if you find them too numerous, ten more lamps of the churches of the establishment, until the last of them be totally extinguished. In all this the power of the state must be fully recognized over the creature of its own hands; but as for the Catholic Church, and the spiritual power of its bishops, allow me respectfully to remind you that it cannot be subjected to any similar operation. The hereditary title, at which such gratuitous umbrage is taken, is entrusted to me as a sacred deposit, which I would be more culpable in yielding, or in compromising, than your lordship would be in alienating the transmitted honors of your house. For centuries before the Protestant religion was heard of, and while the stem of many a lofty pedigree was yet springing from an humble root, it was borne by my predecessors, and it is not from any presumptuous reliance on the power of the world that I predict that the same title will

be borne, intact and untarnished, by my successors, when the laws which strive now to disown it, shall, like their penal and impotent predecessors, have passed away.

Whence, then, the untenable charge of assumption or usurpation? It is a novel discovery in law that the first possessor or his heir is a usurper. Following the plain and obvious principle of St. Augustin, the Catholics can prove the uninterrupted continuity of their faith, by revolving the uninterrupted series of their bishops. And of those bishops there is not one who cannot this day accost any rival claimant in the same emphatic language, that was addressed by the same apologist already quoted, who, after refuting the follies of Paganism, pointed all the force of his vigorous intellect against all who laid unauthorized pretensions to Christ's inheritance: "Who are you? Whence are you come? By what right do you fell my wood? By what authority do you cross my fountains? By what power do you shift my mearings? Mine is the possession—the old possession—the first possession. I have a sure footing set by them who were the original legitimate occupants. I am the heir of the apostles."

I cannot dissemble my conviction, that the reason why the petition did not find favour with your lordship, and many others, was more on account of its matter than its form. There was surely no want of respectful phraseology, which never should be forgotten, especially when addressed to such an assembly. I am, therefore, inclined to think, that were the petitioners, instead of complaining of the evils, to applaud the benefits, and solicit the extension of the system of education, the letter of the law would have been urged rather than its spirit, and the value of the material would have amply compensated for the legal deficiency of its form. Now that the system is, thank God, defunct in my diocese, I mean not, though I have collected a variety of important facts, illustrative of its spirit, to occupy your lordship or the public with the detail. Will your lordship believe that a schoolmaster in this diocese, if I am rightly informed, was fined five shillings for reciting at twelve o'clock, in conformity with the pastoral instructions of his ordinary, the "Angelus Domini," or the announcement of those glad tidings of salvation which the archangel brought to earth from heaven, and threatened with dismissal should he be guilty of its repetition? It is unnecessary to say that the substance of that holy message—the incarnation of the Divine Word in the chaste womb of the Blessed Virgin, forms the foundation of the Christian faith. Indulgences have been annexed by the Pope to its repetition. The guilt of its recital must, therefore, have been either in the obedience of a portion of his own flock to the instructions of their ordinary in a matter of religious instruction, or in the acknowledgment of

the power of the Pope to grant such indulgences, or finally in the opposition of the form of prayer itself to the elements of Socinianism, which some of the enlightened legislators of the present day are anxious to mingle in that system of "common Christianity," of which it would mock the powers of man to determine any specific form. From the unanimous petition of the numerous clergy of this diocese, faithfully conveying the feelings and sentiments of half-a-million of people, your lordship may learn that none hereafter shall again incur the penalty annexed to the guilt of the above prayer. Could any doubt have existed in our minds regarding the hostility meditated against our religion, it would have been dissipated by the recent proceedings. They have exhausted whatever little remnant of confidence was yet placed in some individuals, and removed the thin veil by which they disguised their hereditary and implacable enmity to our creed. Whatever may be the real or affected political feuds of Whigs or Tories, like the reconciliation of Herod and Pilate, they both meet on the common ground of hatred to the Catholic religion. Look to their conduct towards England and Ireland. Because they believe it will be fatal to the faith of the latter, they press a system which they are unwilling to adopt for the former, lest it should have the same fatal influence on the religion of the established church. This is the one object of all their crude and unheard-of experiments in education. For us we are resolved never to yield to a confederate band of shallow and infidel sophisters, the faith which persecution could not wrest from us. The vague phrase of Christianity affords no security, since errors as impious to the Divinity, and as dangerous to morals as those of Paganism or Mahometanism, have in ancient and modern times found shelter in the profession of the Christian name.

Many have ere now repeated the just and philosophical question, put in the reported debate—"Was it wise, was it prudent to reject on such grounds the petition of so large and influential a body of men, especially when it violated no law?" I trust we shall hear no more of clerical interference in polities, since the question is come to the defence of our clerical and spiritual rights and privileges, against political aggression. These it will be our duty to vindicate, and to their assertion we shall devote ourselves without fear of refutation. I shall leave the parsons to express their fears as to the effect it may have on the truce that was given to the campaign regarding their tithes or rent charges, or whether it may not hasten the expression of the feelings of the people, that the boasted extension was only a temporary shifting of the burden from one shoulder to another. But, my lord, I must conclude, surrounded as I am by the importunities of numbers in distress: this is a topic more worthy of

our joint consideration than a war about the phantoms of names or titles. Yes, my lord, for, after all, it is only against phantoms the hostility of our enemies is excited. The more solid property that once accompanied those formidable titles we do not covet—and hence, any secret fears that may be entertained by your lordship on that score will, I trust, be dissipated for ever. With this sincere announcement, I trust that our next petition in behalf of the hungry and starving poor will not be treated with the same insult as that which appealed in behalf of their intellectual necessities. We have had a meeting and subscriptions for their relief, as we had before to make permanent provision for their free and unshackled education. Our efforts have been blessed with success, and the state of education is at this moment more flourishing than it has been for a considerable period. No private funds, however, could be adequate to the mass of wretchedness that meets the eye in the hordes of poor mendicants, that are covering the highways, and a still more pitiable distress that is pining within doors through the shame of exposure. Allow me, then, to abjure your lordship, as well as the other members of the government, to turn your attention to the increasing distress of the large districts of Mayo and Galway, and, without weighing too scrupulously their religious faith, to consider the claims of their unimpeachable political fidelity. Let it not be said that the flock must suffer because the minister may not relish a title which their pastor is not free, even were he willing, to resign. The people are now conveying their petitions for physical, as they have lately done for intellectual, bread, and I trust no penal obstacles will be suffered to intercept their prayer, and that for the bread which they look for they will not grieve to have received but “a serpent or a stone.”

I have the honor to be, my lord, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
ON THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

ST JARLATH'S, OCTAVE OF ALL SAINTS,
NOVEMBER 8, 1839.

“Ab istis novis professoribus intra paucos menses formati permulti, per totum regnum desseminarunt ea quæ ab istis peregrinis preceptoribus paulo ante dederant.”*—SANDERS DE SCHISMATE ANGLICANA.

MY LORD—We are assured by the historian of the Anglican schism that the foreigners who were imported into that country, for the purpose of perverting its faith, found no means more effectual than to procure the training of the masters who would propagate their own religious notions. Such, too, has been the policy of every anti-Catholic government from that period to the present time. The incompetency of the teachers of the old schools has been the uniform theme of every projector of a reform of education, and hence the anxiety to subject them to a course of discipline which would gradually mould their minds to the formation of new opinions. On the necessity of a new order of teachers there is a wonderful coincidence of opinion between Bryce and Blake, and Knight and Jerod, and Morpeth and Muggeridge, those sapient guides to whom the Catholics of Ireland are now called on to resign the entire control over the education of their children.

Under the thin disguise of preparing masters, by highly literary and scientific acquirements, it is not difficult to perceive the more dangerous designs that the enemies of our holy religion have in view. One great object is to detach them from their dependence on the pastors of the people,—and to imbue them with a corporate spirit, or an “*esprit de corps*,”† which is to teach them to look upon themselves as a large and isolated class of functionaries, formed to give a proper direction to the minds of the people, and entirely independent, in their appointment or dismissal, or the discharge of their functions, of the bishops, to whom the religious education of the people should essentially belong. “My hope,” says the Rev. Mr. Carlile, in one of his training lectures to the assembled masters in the model school,

* “Having been trained in a few months by those new teachers, many spread throughout the entire kingdom those principles which they imitated a short time before from those foreign masters.”

† See page 41 of Report of Education, 9th August, 1839.

"is, that thus every officer in the establishment will be enabled to form some just estimate of the duties performed by his fellow-officers, and especially that *we shall all imbibe more of an esprit de corps*, that will render us all willing to do in our several places what lies in us to advance the great cause in which we are engaged." What is this great cause in which these officers, thus bound by an "*esprit de corps*," are engaged? Is it to educate the Catholic children of Ireland according to the models adopted by the Catholic Church in Catholic countries? No such thing. Protestant countries are the example set up for our imitation. "And while even Scotland (continues the learned lecturer) has fallen far behind Germany, Russia, and Holland, in this duty, England and Ireland are only now beginning to open their eyes to its importance." What a happy coincidence it was for Ireland that Whately and Carlile happened to land upon its shores, otherwise the eyes of its children would never have been opened to the blessings of education!! In the strain of modest complacency the Commissioners congratulate themselves on the result of their exertions. So true is the Scripture saying, that "others have laboured, and they have entered into their labours." He next tells them that copies shall be delivered to them of a pamphlet published by himself, entitled "Thoughts on the Mixed Character of Government Institutions in Ireland, with particular reference to the system of National Education."

Such is the pure fountain from which the masters of Ireland are to derive their knowledge on crossing the threshold of the training schools of the National Board: a pamphlet on mixed education, emanating from a Protestant government, written by one whose whole life was devoted to circulating calumnies on the Catholic creed, and who again returns to recruit the Biblical societies that are incessantly at work to pervert the faith of the people!! And lest one reading should not suffice, or lest the lessons it contains should be obliterated from their memories, they are furnished with copies to bring them as household books, that they may often refresh their minds with their perusal. Is it in publishing such vile and noxious tracts the funds of the people are to be expended for their perversion? Next comes another precious production, having for its title "Lessons on the Truth of Christianity." Whole parcels of those poisonous tracts have been sent "*On her Majesty's Service*," for the use of the National schools. What a precious cargo to be dispensed to the Catholic children of Ireland! The author's name is not appended, but, if report says true, they have come from the pen of one who has been designating the ministers of the Catholic Church as "adepts in priesthood," and their religion a "mystery of iniquity;" their sacraments "superstitious charms," and their public worship "a kind of magic incantation;" their practices of piety "a train of

superstitious observances worthy of paganism," and, in fine, the Catholic Church itself "the _____ of Babylon." Were our pious ancestors to be proffered a book on the subject of religion, written by a man capable of reviling their church, and faith, and priesthood, in such profligate terms, they would indignantly consign it to the flames. In the present enlightened days, such persons must be the compiler of the theological primer, from which children are to lisp the first rudiments of Christianity. What a guardian of the integrity of the faith of the Catholic children of Ireland ! This is truly the guardianship of the kite, which, in its impatience to sieze and devour the entire prey, scares off all rival vultures.

But, not to condemn from such prejudice, however just, the book is bad, and bears evidence of a latent hatred to the Catholic Church, and a disbelief in its most cherished and revered mysteries. No true believer should be brought up in the notion that Christianity was a sort of promiscuous state, in which every individual, provided he assumed the name of Christian, might claim an equal share. Such is the impression calculated to be left by the perusal of this contemptible little volume. All the different forms of faith utterly disappear, and all creeds, from the defined articles of the Catholic Church to the shadowy opinions of the wildest latitudinarian, may be merged together in the vague professions of Christianity. Jurie himself would have been deemed a narrow bigot by the author of these "Lessons." He excluded from the pale of the Church all who erred in "fundamental" articles. But here there is not a trace of "fundamental" or non-fundamental errors or doctrines; and our "*common Christianity*" —the fashionable and favourite phrase of the day—is represented as a sort of commonage, in which the legitimate inheritors of the true faith, as well as the roving hordes who are the followers of every error, may be squatted down together. Never was there a system more insulting to the understanding, or more delusive and treacherous in its consequences. No writer of any character that I know, whether Catholic or Protestant, has omitted, in adverting to the internal evidence of Christianity, the mysterious sublimity of its doctrines, by which the pride of the understanding is subdued. The omission of any allusion to its mysteries, in this treatise, is not a little remarkable. It would not suit the taste or policy of one who wishes to include all within the pale of a *reasonable Christianity*. Where is any reference to the mysteries of the trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead, and mysterious incarnation of the eternal and substantial Son of God in the womb of a virgin—the fundamental mysteries on which Christianity reposes ? You look for them in vain in the aforesaid Lessons. They pretend to discuss the evidence of the prophecies, that foretold the Redeemer of the world. Why is the celebrated

prophecy of Isaias, regarding the Emmanuel whom “the virgin shall conceive,” forgotten in this reference? No; to acknowledge that a virgin was the mother of the Eternal God would shock the intellect of the readers of this treatise of *Rational Christianity*, and would justify the exclusion of Nestorius from its pale. To allude to the co- eternity of the Son with the Father would be ruffling the smooth level on which all Christians were to meet, and justify the condemnation of the Arians by the father of the Council of Nice. Christ, therefore, must be talked of as a mere teacher of a sublime morality, as a wise legislator, and an extraordinary person who wrought a great revolution in the world. The Socinians, who deny his divinity, speak of him in equally commendatory terms. Nay, some of them, speaking of the Redeemer, would not use the language of this writer; for, though he was not, in the sense of the world, among the high born, and though his earthly parentage was humble, still the repetition of the “Jewish peasant” is not language in which the Redeemer of the world is to be characterized. It speaks more than the contemptuous language of the Socinian. But what wonder? The Socinians themselves are said to be represented in the board. Their opinions, then, and those of the Arians, are as much entitled to a place in any treatise of Christianity as the doctrines of the Catholic Church. The evident aim and tendency of this treatise is to destroy every distinction between the different classes, no matter whether heretics or not, provided they profess the Christian name. Not a word about the Catholic Church consecrated in the Apostle’s Creed, as if it were a body distinct from Christianity, whereas it is nought, but Christianity continued. It is in vain to attempt to distinguish between the Catholic Church and genuine Christianity. The era of their origin is the same; the boundaries of the one are co-extensive with those of the other; and though the sectaries may cast their shifting tents there during their fleeting hour, no permanent religious structure but that of the Catholic Church alone can ever be raised on the platform of Christianity. But the author must be consistent. Having striven to banish from his Christianity the belief of mysteries, and represented it as a scheme only partially and imperfectly revealed to us, he gravely adds, “that it may be that the gospel which has been declared to us may be but one small portion of some vast scheme which concerns the inhabitants of numerous other periods!!” Ever since the period of the Reformation it has been fashionable to represent the Christian religion as a system capable of fresh improvements with the growing enlightenment of each succeeding age. It was reserved, however, for the ingenuity of the author of those Lessons to give children a new idea of the sublimity of the Christian religion, by teaching them, that in process of time it may be found by some

new discoveries in philosophy to concern the inhabitants of the moon and the other heavenly bodies !!

As your lordship's solicitude is to be henceforward employed on the colonies, rather than the home department, I shall not direct your further particular attention to the question of Irish education; nor should I even now trouble your lordship, or any other of your colleagues, with this letter, as the vicious system is happily banished out of this diocese, were it not that I wish to warn you against the mischief that may be done by the crazy designs of subalterns in office, who seem anxious to restore the spirit of ancient persecution. It is not necessary to inform your lordship that the clergy of this archdiocese have unanimously, and with one accord, renounced all connexion with the detestable system of the government education, and that they further declared their solemn and firm purpose of withholding from its schools all the children under their spiritual jurisdiction. Your lordship, at least, will not forget this important fact; for, to your ill-disguised hate of our holy religion, couched though it be under a hollow liberality, we are indebted for the honor of having that petition rejected, notwithstanding your being opposed by the highest legal authorities in the house. Such an array of talent and eloquence in its favour proves that the ministry was not driven by any necessity to the rejection of that petition, but that they were rather indulging their natural feelings of aversion to our creed; and yet it is in compliment of such men, and lest we should embarrass their movements, we are called upon to acquiesce in a system of education, which that same spirit of hostility first called into existence, and which is displaying that spirit in proportion as it is developed. At first the system humbly recommended itself as a boon. Now, it seems the people are to be fatigued into its acceptance by a plan of the most importunate annoyance. Not only have the clergy of the diocese rejected it, but likewise the laity, including the most influential gentry, as well as the great body of the people, have in several meetings adopted the strongest resolutions against it as an engine of civil and spiritual despotism. And still the joint secretaries of the leopard-like board, who so happily combine in their own persons the various hues of religious opinions that are found among its members, are expending their time and stationery in insulting attempts to seduce or force some of those clergy and laity from the resolutions which they so solemnly recorded. Were it not for recent events, I might imagine that this persecuting system might have been pursued without the knowledge or concurrence of the Catholic members of the board. Still I will not lay it to their charge, though in candour I am not able to acquit them of a participation in a scheme which is carried on by the authorized sectaries of the body. I trust the Catholic members of the board

will pause ere they lend themselves to a system of religious persecution which strikes at the root of episcopal authority. Let them confine themselves to the duties of their families, or at least to such secular concerns as they may be employed in, but let them not venture, even upon obtaining his Excellency's permission, to dictate to any bishop what religious books he is not to put into the hands of the children, for their spiritual instruction. Such presumptuous interference will not be tolerated, nor will those gentlemen add to their reputation by their perseverance in such a course. I speak of such as may have been ignorant of the extent of annoyance to which the system has been pushed. As for those who would lodge all the educational powers in the crown, with them reasoning is useless, since, as long as they are the dispensers of the government grants, so long will they uphold the plan, were it even to prostrate all ecclesiastical authority. The promotion to office of one who is an advocate of the system will not secure to it support; on the contrary, it must have the effect of exciting distrust in the most confident, since he is the advocate of a system of education, which has deluged Germany with infidelity and its consequent corruption of morals. With the joint and unanimous concurrence of the laity, clergy, and archbishop of the diocese, this system is now banished from beyond its boundaries, and education is more flourishing than ever it could have been under the government board. If, after this solemn warning to desist from religious annoyance, these functionaries should persevere, we shall not fail to represent them as abettors of a worse than Julian persecution.

We are arrived at one of those perilous periods in the annals of the Church of God, at which, under the treacherous guise of peace, the most deadly hostility is aimed at our holy religion. It is a crisis in which it is the duty of the vigilant and zealous pastor to lift his voice and alarm his flock against the prowling wolves that are meditating the destruction of the fold. There is a wide-spread combination throughout Europe, arraying the hostile spirit of secular influence against the Scriptural powers of the Church, and a connivance at the wicked designs in many quarters where it should not be expected. Witness the atrocious persecutions that have raged against the illustrious Archbishops of Posen and Cologne. The same spirit that prompted those persecutions is at work in these countries, but checked by circumstances under a more mitigated form. Your lordship need not glory in the temporary advances your insidious scheme of education has made. Recollect, it was made silently and almost unwatched, while the pastors were lulled into a delusive confidence. I am only surprised, considering the weakness and corruptions of the world, that it has not received more general support. The Kildare-street system could reckon Catholic

supporters, although it was almost as bad as the national system. Your lordship is aware that the pensioning of the Catholic clergy had its advocates, and that the execrable veto, which would have annihilated the pure spirit of our hierarchy, had its courtly abettors among the high and influential of the land. Numbers of Catholics, panting for places and for pensions, began to mutiny against the zeal or the perverseness of the ecclesiastics, who refused to break down any of the fences of their sacred discipline, though the laity should be debarred from entrance into office but by the breach. What wonder, then, that the same spirit should be still active, and that some Catholics would view with indifference, nay, secret satisfaction, the gradual inroads of the government on the purity and on the independence of the spiritual authority of the Church. The veto has been rejected, it is true; so, thank God, has the proposition to bribe, by the gold of the treasury, the freedom of the Catholic clergy. Yet never were resolutions against those baneful measures more solemn or more unanimous than those by which we have pledged ourselves to withhold our concurrence and support from any system of education that would attempt to wrest from us our natural and inalienable control over the most powerful agents of instruction, for good or evil—the books and masters.

In my conduct, regarding the pernicious scheme of education, I am only redeeming that solemn pledge, and never again shall I suffer in any school in my diocese the erroneous books, and the apostate school-masters, that were there under the august sanction of the government. I am persuaded the Grand Turk himself would give us a safer system of education than any ministry, whether Whig or Tory, would be disposed to give us. Nay, compare the letter of the Sublime Porte to the Patriarch of Constantinople with the jealous and coercive regulations that issue from your educational offices, and your lordship will see how far the successor of Mahomet has left behind the ministers of your government in a truly enlightened respect for the rights and dignity of the religious teachers of a large portion of his subjects. No such liberal policy has as yet characterized your councils. The present ministry is beholden to Catholic support; it is a bad requital for such support to encourage a covert religious persecution against those who will not suffer its unhallowed attempts to abridge the rights of any portion of the hierarchy, over the entire religious education of their people.

I have the honor to be, your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCIV.

TO THE VENERABLE THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

ON THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. VUGELIUS,
1839.

DEAR AND VENERABLE BRETHREN—In perusing the eventful history of the Roman Catholic Church, you cannot but be struck with the spirit of holy enterprise by which it has been ever animated in extending the spiritual conquests of its Divine Founder. The force of the commission given to the apostles of being witnesses to our Divine Redeemer not only in* “Judea and Samaria, but even to the uttermost parts of the earth,” has been felt by their successors in the ministry. Hence, the rapid and successful propagation of the Gospel in the first ages throughout the provinces of the Roman empire; and hence, too, in latter times, the annexation of countries hitherto buried in the darkness of Paganism, to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Through the active exertions of this untiring zeal, the simultaneous Catholicity of the Church is always secured, and, when in punishment of the sins of the pastors and people, the Almighty suffers in some places the extinction or eclipse of the faith, the loss is generally repaired by the acquisition of new territories. By none has the spirit of zeal, in spreading the empire of Christ and his Gospel, been so signally and successfully evinced as by the Roman Pontiffs, the successors of St. Peter, who have inherited the plenitude of the apostolical ministry. With the power of the keys which they received, in the person of† St. Peter, they have shared, in a conspicuous manner, the same exalted privileges of proclaiming the divinity of the Son of God, and of manifesting their love for him, which distinguished the Prince of the Apostles. Is it not to the zeal of St. Celestine, Bishop of Rome, that Ireland was first indebted for the mission of St. Patrick; and, is it not the vigilant solicitude of his successors that has watched over our religion, and sustained the fidelity of the Irish nation in preserving that pure inheritance? Is it not the ardent desire of extending the empire of Christ, which burned within the breast of the first Gregory, that Britain was indebted for the knowledge of the Gospel which it has had

* Acts of the Apostles, i, 8.

† St. Matthew, xiv, 19.

the misfortune to have lost, but which, thank God! it is once more rapidly recovering. Without multiplying references to their successful zeal in conquering new kingdoms to the yoke of Christ, I need only point your attention to the sacred institution for the propagation of the faith, founded by Pope Urban VIII., and which, under Providence, has been instrumental in spreading the spiritual dominion of Rome, among regions to which her imperial eagles never reached.

Of all the associations that have sprung from the untiring zeal of the successors of St. Peter, this has been the most enterprising and successful. If the impiety of Luther severed a large portion of Europe from the vivifying stem of the Apostolical Church, it was a consolation to find that, as soon as these rotten branches fell off, it stretched its vigorous shoots over the most remote portion of the opposite hemispheres. Never, perhaps, at any period did the Catholic Church exhibit a more interesting spectacle than at this moment, combated on all sides by open as well as insidious enemies, and still, wherever you turn your eyes, "enlarging the place of its tents, and lengthening the cords, and strengthening the stakes of its tabernacles."* On the plains of Hindostan the bloody victims of the Juggernaut are giving way to the pure sacrifice foretold by Malachi, and the missionaries of China are rivalling the heroism of the first martyrs. Carthage is awakening again to the sacred eloquence of St. Cyprian, and the sands of Africa are watered once more with the rich fountains of the gospel. The Catholic religion is advancing fast amidst the young nations of America, and from Patagonia to the St. Lawrence, the accents of salvation are heard throughout the entire of its vast regions. Nay, some of the nations of Europe are now atoning for the apostacy of their ancestors. Scotland is beginning to revere the memory of St. Columbkille, the founder of its Christianity, rather than of John Knox, who was its ruthless destroyer. England is suffering from Ireland the generous retaliation of the gospel, and, for all the cruelties which the former inflicted on the latter, our country is exercising a noble revenge by filling England with its industrious Catholic emigrants, and silently bringing that fine nation back to the yoke of the gospel. Witness, too, the progressive resuscitation of Holland to the ancient faith, and the flood of light that is poured upon Germany by the conversion to the Catholic Church of many of the most intellectual of her sons; and lost France herself, recovering from its lethargy of licentiousness into which it had sunk after a revolutionary frenzy, aspires once more to the glorious prerogative of the most Christian kingdom, which it so long maintained. Yes, from its bosom are now coming

* *Isaias, liv, 2.*

forth some of the most zealous defenders of the Catholic faith; and to its ancient city of Lyons are we indebted for the establishment of a society formed like the congregation of the Propaganda in Rome, for aiding the pious missionaries who devote their lives to the propagation of the faith all over the earth. It is astonishing what success has already blessed their efforts.

Individuals of all nations of Europe are enrolling themselves under the banners of this society, and with their contributions have given such a strong and steady impulse to the propagation of the Gospel, that, with the Apostle, we may thank our God that* "the faith of Rome is spoken of in the whole world."

This laudable association is one of the objects in which we wish to interest you by the present letter. It has already received considerable support in Ireland, and the bishops of this province have come to the unanimous resolution of strenuously recommending its object to the clergy and faithful of their respective dioceses. It is in conformity with those resolutions that we now address you, exhorting you to contribute your mite according to your means to the glorious work of rescuing thousands of your fellow-creatures from the darkness of idolatry, and bringing them to the light of the Catholic religion. We, ourselves are indebted to the noble disinterestedness of the Propaganda, which contributed in the days of our poverty its pecuniary resources to sustain the struggling confessors of the faith in the wildernesses of Ireland.

For, when our predecessors in the ministry,† "of whom the world was not worthy, wandered about in want, distressed, afflicted, in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth," they experienced the cheering and seasonable assistance of those who are filled with‡ "solicitude for all the churches." Let us now, by our contributions, aid them in the holy enterprise of extending the Gospel, and entitle ourselves to a share in those spiritual treasures which the Father of the Faithful bestows upon those who assist in the meritorious work.

But whilst we thus lend our co-operation to the efforts that are making to enlighten and regenerate other countries, we must not be indifferent to the spiritual and intellectual necessities of our own.

After the repeated but abortive efforts that have been made to deprive us of § "the faith once delivered to the saints," it is consoling to witness in all parts of this extensive diocese the revival of those monastic institutions which once covered the land, and spread, wherever they were erected, sanctity and learning. For these signal blessings we have been already

* Romans, v, 8.

† Hebrews, xi, 37, 38.

‡ II. Corinthians, xi, 28.

§ Jude, 3.

indebted to the pious munificence of those true lovers of their religion and their country, Sir Michael D. Bellew, of Mount-Bellew, Bart., and Martin Joseph Blake, Esq., of Brooklodge, M.P., in the vicinity of whose respective residences, the people are reaping the benefits of a purely Catholic education, and are full of gratitude to their benefactors. The mercy of the Almighty has at length visited the Mayo portion of the diocese, and raised up a valuable friend to sound education, based on the Catholic Religion, in the person of James Hardiman, Esq., of Galway, who has enriched the native literature of his country by the publication of some of those minstrel reliques, with which our ancestors soothed their religious misfortunes, and illustrated its local annals by the elaborate and classic history of his ancient native town. Such seasonable interposition at a time when the enemies of our creed were anticipating that learning was doomed to languish here, only proves that the Almighty's will shall never be wanting to those who put their trust in him, and who are resolved to protect from any impure mixture, the integrity of the religious knowledge with which the artless minds of children are to be imbued. Besides the monasteries of Mount-Bellew and Kilmoylan, already alluded to, we have in operation, those of Roundstone and Clifden, which will soon scatter their pious colonies over the entire of Connemara.

Our monastery in Tuam, which is extending the blessings of religious education to about four hundred children, is, thank God, now in such a flourishing state as to serve as a model school, where such masters as may require it will be instructed in a course of mathematics and other branches of learning, as well as trained in all the practical observances of the Catholic religion. Besides the benefits which it will diffuse among the peasantry within its own immediate circle, we purpose to dedicate this new monastery to a similar object, that it may be a school of training in science, as well as the practices of piety, to those whom the clergy of that district, may place over the education of the younger portion of their flocks.

The immediate erection of this monastery, is an object deserving of your zeal and charitable contributions. I know the variety of claims upon you, but recollect, that in contributing to these institutions you will be reviving the best and happiest times of the Catholic Church, and affording unalloyed comfort to the children of misfortune. It is much better to contribute something voluntarily towards these pious institutions, which will be entirely under the control of yourselves, and regulated by the discipline of the Catholic Church, without any interference on the part of its enemies, than to be subject, as you otherwise would be, to an arbitrary and indefinite taxation, enforced by Protestant patrons, or some Catholics, perhaps, equally indifferent to their religion,

and who, as we have already seen in the brief period of the working of the systems of education and of poor laws, would show the most reckless indifference to the poor, in their anxiety to make extravagant provisions for expensive political retainers.

Not so with the humble followers of St. Francis, who are to conduct these establishments. Under them you will have no jobbing patrons, rivalling each other in their efforts to add to the local taxation, and to obtain the sanction of higher officers for the excessive imposts. Practising, with their other vows, that of Evangelical poverty, their habits, and mode of living will be so simple that, without any exaggeration, more than sixty of those meritorious individuals will be supported for what would go to one sinecure officer, under a system first recommending itself by treacherous gratuities, but which, like all such systems, terminate, after trenching on religious liberty, in grinding and compulsory taxation.* You are all animated, we are sure, by a pure zeal for protecting, at all hazards, your holy religion. You are anxious to suffer the little children to come to you, of whom it is particularly said that "of such is the kingdom of God."† Aid, then, those rising asylums of faith and piety. In doing so, you will be protecting not only your religion, but likewise your properties, from arbitrary imposts. So true is the saying of our Divine Redeemer, "seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."‡ You will not forget to offer up your humble and fervent prayers to the Almighty, that he may pour choicest blessings upon those individuals who have generously devoted a portion of their patrimony to the truly religious education of the poor, and the protection, as well as the propagation of the Catholic religion.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen."§

Your faithful servant in Christ,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

* To convince you of this important truth, I refer you to the Bill of the 11th of June, 1835, entitled "A bill for the establishment of a Board of National Education, and the advancement of elementary education in Ireland." I trust the spirited editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, devoted as it is to the interests of the Catholic religion, will publish the entire of this awful bill, that all may see the tremendous and despotic powers that are assumed, not only over the entire education, but likewise over the properties of the people.

† St. Mark, x, 14. ‡ St. Matthew, vi, 33. § II. Corinthians, xiii, 13.

LETTER XCV.

TO THE VENERABLE THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, MARCH 1, 1840.

VENERABLE AND DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—We are arrived at the annual period of Lent, set apart by the Church for the exercise of mortification, in order to make satisfaction for sin, and appease the Divine vengeance. Among the various enemies by which the Church of God is assailed, in her incessant warfare in the cause of truth and holiness, there are some who deny the necessity or existence of any atonement for sin, and others who would draw from the redemption of our Saviour himself a release from every moral restraint, and convert the very source of grace into a patent for the indulgence of sensuality. Guarded by the influence of that “Spirit of Truth,* which was promised to abide with it until the end of time, and to keep it from straying into the bye-paths of error,” the Catholic Church has ever maintained the fulness and efficacy of the † propitiation for our sins made by our Saviour, “that ‡ he might sanctify the people with his blood;” and deduced from that signal example of God’s justice, the necessity of avoiding any transgressions, by which his anger would be again enkindled.§ Had we not been “justified gratis by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” our penances, however austere, would be ineffectual in satisfying the Divine vengeance; and without the most strenuous efforts on our part to avoid sin, and to make penitential satisfaction for its commission, we might be unfortunately deprived of the merits of redemption. It is to this principle of the necessity of a correspondence in suffering between the faithful and our Redeemer, we may trace the cogent exhortations to penance, that are scattered throughout the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles of the New Testament. Such is the sentiment expressed in the following words of the Apostle||: “For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound.” From it has, likewise, sprung the institution of this penitential season, called Lent, which meets us at every step as we ascend in

* St. John, xv, 26.

† I. John, ii, 2.

‡ Hebrews, xiii, 12.

§ Romans, iii, 24.

|| II. Corinthians, i, 5.

the history of the Church, until we arrive at the apostolical times.

The observances of this, as well as other penitential periods, may vary, according to seasons and other circumstances; but the spirit of mortification and of penance shall not cease, in some form, to pervade them for ever. The reasons that have swayed us last Lent to relax the rigours of abstinence, with regard to flesh-meat, are, probably, still more cogent this season; and, yielding to their force, we have adopted the very same regulations which we published in our pastoral instructions of last year. Flesh-meat is to be allowed, except on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and the entire of the first and last weeks of Lent. Eggs are prohibited on Fridays, and milk and butter on Ash Wednesday, Spy Wednesday, and Good Friday. While this dispensation is granted, with regard to the abstinence, we must express our deep regret at the indifference that often prevails respecting the fast, in some persons who require no such indulgence. It is a grievous infraction of the precepts of Lent, for persons, who do not come within the ordinary exceptions to the rule, to take their full meals at their collations; and a still more glaring violation of it to use eggs (as we have reason to fear that some do), or even milk and butter, without any scruple, as at other seasons. You will, dearly beloved brethren, labour to remove this ignorance, or check this indifference, and admonish such as need it, that the relaxations now granted leave entirely untouched the general obligation of the precept of fasting.

At all times the precepts of charity and alms-deeds are mingled with those of self-mortification; and we are taught that the "retrenchments of abstinence should find their way to the relief of the miseries of the poor."* As yet they are labouring under much of the severe privations which have been occasioned by a scarcity of fuel. The mercies of the wealthy will, we trust, be practically exercised in mitigating the peculiar hardships of their condition during this very rigorous season.

But, above all, you will not fail to manifest a more than ordinary zeal and benevolence towards that class, at once the most helpless and valuable portion of society—I mean the rising generation. A few years only elapse, and the adult pass away,† as the shifting "tent of a shepherd;" the void is quickly filled by the next succession; and on the impressions stamped upon their tender and susceptible minds, depend not only their own religious destiny, but the prospective interests of faith and morality, for future generations, perhaps to the end of time. What an awful consideration for the pastors of the church! It is enough to make the most zealous souls to tremble. Well do

they merit man's chiefest solicitude, to whom* guardian angels are allotted in heaven, and for whom, on account of the untainted candour of their faith and simplicity of their hearts, is destined, in a peculiar manner, the kingdom of God.† On this chosen portion of the Church of God, its enemies have been ever making their chiefest assaults; and it was for the protection of the same the most heroic zeal and fortitude have been always displayed by its sainted pastors.

For a series of years we have had to combat a variety of such assaults, in alternate succession of force and fraud, until, thanks to your piety, seconding our exertions, we have been enabled to plant throughout the diocese schools of pure, unmixed, and unadulterated Catholic education. They are but yet in their infancy, it is true—you will not fail to bring to perfection those nurseries of piety and morality, which yourselves have erected.

There have not been wanting active emissaries of the enemies of our faith, who strove to render some discontented, because they were not sharing in the public funds granted for education. However, their false commisseration was easily seen through; and it was not difficult to perceive that, in their hypocritical pity for the poor, those interested agents were only lamenting their loss of a profitable, pecuniary speculation. It is unnecessary for us to state that we felt for your temporal necessities as much as faithful and affectionate pastors could feel; and that nothing but the dread of exposing that faith, compared to which gold is as dross, and the conviction brought to our minds, by subsequent acts of annoyance, that that dread was well-founded, could have induced us to give you counsel to rely on your own resources—trusting in that God who never abandons those that never change their faith from him.‡

Our just expectations have, thank God, not been frustrated. At the late meeting of the prelates of Ireland, overtures for an accommodation of this great controversy were made, into which we did not fail to enter, with the same charitable and pacific spirit in which they were proposed. The result is consolatory: after the subject was discussed, with all the patience which its importance required, an arrangement, such as could not fail to secure the integrity of faith and morals, as well as the free and full exercise of the episcopal authority, was unanimously adopted; but, as the public grants depended on the will of the government, it was deemed necessary to submit the adopted arrangement to the Lord Lieutenant, with the view that, as the prayers of a few Presbyterians had already found favor in that

* St. Matthew, xviii, 10.

† St. Matthew, xix, 14.

‡ Tobias, ii, 18.

quarter, the unanimous arrangement of all the Catholic bishops of Ireland would meet his Excellency's sanction. Four prelates from the different ecclesiastical provinces of Ireland waited on his Excellency, who, in a written reply, refused to accede to the proposed requisition. One paramount object, however, is gained—the unanimity of the hierarchy ; and that unanimity attests the wisdom, the justice, and the extreme moderation of the proposed but rejected arrangement.

Though we have been disappointed in our hopes of sharing the public grants on the proffered terms, it is no small consolation to us to reflect that nothing was wanting on our part which prudence or conciliation could suggest to secure to you, without any compromise of principle, a fair proportion of the parliamentary funds. We were always of opinion that nothing but a separate education of the people, left to the control of their respective pastors, could ensure the blessings of religious sincerity and social peace. In that opinion we are more strongly confirmed by the result of the late episcopal deputation. One could not but feel that, from the sort of control which his Excellency had over the public finances, he seemed to draw the conclusion that he should possess a corresponding control over the instruments, such as books and masters, by which the faith of the people was to be moulded. Such a natural prejudice, spontaneously springing from the principles of the Protestant church, could not excite surprise. From the confusion and embarrassment of Protestant divines, in fixing the limits of church authority accorded to the crown, it is hard to measure the extent of spiritual obedience that is expected ; but, from the singular tone of ecclesiastical admonition that pervades his Excellency's elaborate reply, it would seem as if he addressed us more in the capacity of representative of the spiritual, than as the viceregent of the temporal, head of these realms. Our arrangements required no more than perfect freedom in the fulfilment of the essential duties of our office, as well as the necessary guarantees to secure that essential independence, without being exposed to the caprices of changing administrations. We sought but protection for our flock from the contagion of bad books and immoral masters, in the control over both, which inalienably belongs to us. Next, we demand justice for all the districts by a provincial representation ; and security for the faith, by the appointment of four Catholic bishops as members of the Board of Education, who should be uniformly recommended by the suffrages of their own body. Yet, all these reasonable requisitions were denied.

We mention those things, venerable brethren, that you may understand that, in our anxiety to conciliate, we have gone to the last verge to which our trembling anxiety for the faith of our flocks could authorize us to go. Had we gone further, we would

fear the fate of the unhappy bishops of Russia, who were a stumbling-block to the people whom it was their duty to guide, and whose fall is pathetically deplored in a recent allocution of his Holiness, with which we most cordially sympathise. But the unshaken fidelity of the Irish Church to the chair of St. Peter forbids us to entertain any distressing anxieties; and the solicitude of the pastors and people to hear his voice in the person of his successor, is a guarantee that our faith will be as secure against the intriguing machinations of the present, as it has been against the persecutions of past ages.

The utter failure of the scheme that has been so insidiously and perseveringly pushed on, only shows more clearly the essential and eternal distinction between spiritual and secular authority. It exemplifies the truth and wisdom of the words of an ancient holy pontiff, Gelasius: "There are two powers by which this world is ruled—the sacred authority of pontiffs, and those of kings. As to their relative obligations, those of the priests are more weighty, since they must answer before the Divine tribunal for the rulers of men." Similar is the distinction drawn between the two powers by Pope Gregory II., in his letter to the Emperor of the East: "As the pontiff has no power of looking within the enclosures of the palace, and disposing of royal dignities, neither is it lawful for the Emperor to remove the veil of the sanctuary."

From those few references, so fraught with truth, you must perceive with what jealousy the secular and spiritual authorities were preserved in their respective spheres, without clashing with each other. Their wisdom is proved by experience. The less we concern ourselves with the political affairs of the court, the better for the purity of religion, as well as the peace of society. If we look into the enclosures of the palace, its inmates will, in return, remove the veil of the sanctuary, to intrude into its enclosures: there is not a step we take to its precincts for which more steps will not be taken by them towards the entrance to our temples; and not a personal favor will they ever confer, for which they will not strive to indemnify themselves, by a silent encroachment on the public and religious rights and duties of those whom they may succeed in laying under secular obligations.

But, though disappointed in our expectations, we are neither to indulge in discontent or despondency. Whatever be the treatment we receive, we are ever to keep in view the holy precepts of being* "subject to the higher powers, not only for fear, but for conscience sake," which the pastors of the Catholic Church have ever inculcated with inviolable fidelity. We are

* Romans, xiii.

also to cherish the well-grounded hope, that our rulers will not fail, in recompense for such unshaken fealty, to enable us to preserve, pure and unmixed, that religious education of the youth of our communion, to which the peculiar fidelity that characterises Catholics is to be traced. You will, therefore, send forth from every parish your humble, ardent, and persevering petitions, to obtain such reasonable concessions from the wisdom and justice of the legislature and the throne. It was by such legal and peaceful means we have obtained the other benefits we now enjoy ; and we are sure that petitions in favor of an arrangement, having the solemn, and deliberate, and unanimous sanction of the prelates of eight millions of loyal and devoted subjects, must be crowned with that success to which they are entitled. In this confidence we are strengthened by the experience of the past. Is it not consolatory to witness what an array has already gathered round the just cause of free and separate education, since this important question was first mooted ? To what is this owing, but to the providence of that God who never fails to watch over that Church which himself has founded ; and who, when it seems most bereft of human succour, interposes his seasonable aid ? There are in the Church thousands of pure and pious souls, whose secret aspirations, going forth to heaven, do more in procuring those blessings for the Church than any mere human instruments can achieve.

This is a season peculiarly set apart for the exercise of prayer, as well as of penance. While, then, your temporal petitions are sent to the legislature, let your spiritual prayers go forth to heaven, beseeching Him who freed his apostles, to preserve the sacred freedom of the pastors of his Church, and as the “hearts of kings are in his hands,” so to dispose them by his will as to lend a gracious ear to the just prayers of their people. In the meantime, you will allow no religious books into the hands of the children of the diocese but such as have our approbation ; and you will circulate, with peculiar care, the English and Irish Catechisms, which have been just published for their use, and which so correspond, that one, as far as the idioms of the two languages permit, is an exact version of the other. The monastic schools, already so flourishing under the peculiar blessings of heaven, will be special objects of your fostering solicitude. Into no school will you allow a master of corrupt faith or morals, recollecting the awful denunciations of our Divine Redeemer against those who “scandalize one of the little ones that believe in him.”*

In conclusion, dearly-beloved brethren, let us exhort you, in the words of the apostle, “to join with your faith virtue, and with virtue knowledge, and with knowledge abstinence, and with

* Mark, ix, 41.

abstinence patience, and with patience piety, and with piety brotherly love, and with brotherly love charity." "Wherefore, labour the more; that by good works you may make sure your vocation and election," for so an entrance "shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

[You are requested to read this from the altar, and explain it in Irish to your flocks.]

LETTER XCVI.

TO HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. DR. MURRAY.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, MARCH, 1840.

MY LORD—The auspicious unanimity among their bishops has been hailed with joy by the Catholics of Ireland. The same happy event diffused among all the rancorous bigots of the land feelings of corresponding terror and alarm. That the political section of the board, including Protestants of every creed, and what is called in courtly language liberal Catholics, should be deeply mortified at such a result, is what might naturally be expected; but never was it anticipated that a Catholic prelate should feel and express sympathy with those who, unless we concurred in their assaults upon our faith, would rejoice at our disunion.

It is now fourteen years since your grace appended your signature to a series of solemn resolutions, such as were adopted at the late meeting, differing only in this respect, that the experience of the awful evils which this monstrous system has already inflicted, required more explicitness in the resolutions, as well as a more defined legislative guarantee for their prospective enforcement. Your grace was the organ through whom our resolutions were then conveyed to the commissioners of education inquiry, as well as their communication to the assembled prelates. On that occasion your grace seemed to participate in the just and generous feeling, that pervaded the entire assembly on hearing

* II. Peter, i, v, vi.

the insolent reply of the petulant officials, "that they would not suffer the resolutions of the bishops to obstruct that which they were determined to pursue."

We could not then imagine that the day would arrive, when your grace would be found embarked in the same cause with some of the very same insulting officials, equally regardless, not only of the feelings but of the rights and duties of the episcopal body, and determined, with an obstinacy that appears altogether unaccountable, that no arrangement, however solemn or unanimously adopted by the bishops, will be suffered to cross that path which they are determined to pursue! Since that period, your grace has become the panegyrist of the most offensive calumniators of the Catholic creed, and the apologist of the insidious and poisonous productions that were tainting the faith of the flock, that were entrusted to our care. Support or opposition to the board seems now to be the only test of a continuance or disruption of the episcopal relations, and towards all who are prepared to do homage to that anomalous thing erected in Marlborough-street by an anti-Catholic policy, all the ancient and apostolical feelings of the bishop are forgotten, in the more recent and secular connexions of the commissioner.

Without such a strong feeling of sympathy with the enemies of our creed, springing no doubt from a confidence in their honor, your grace's last epistle would be altogether unaccountable. It pretends to be a commentary on a passage in my pastoral instruction to the clergy and faithful of this diocese; but though not forbearing in insinuations, your grace does not deny a single passage in that document which you were so studious to arraign. One paramount object, however, is gained, the unanimity of the hierarchy, and that unanimity attests the wisdom, the justice, and extreme moderation of the proposed, but rejected arrangement. This is the proposition that has elicited your "grace's displeasure." Yet, not venturing to controvert its truth, you studiously guard the reader against the dreadful inference of supposing that the prelates deemed such an arrangement *necessary*. It is not the first time, my lord, that your grace has attempted to trifle with the deliberate and unanimous resolutions of the bishops of Ireland. I am not surprised. Your grace no doubt would prefer, as you have done before, catching their opinions by the vague generalities of "confidential circulars than in the precise language that condenses" the result of collective and deep-thought deliberations. Another advantage would accrue from this system of separate catechising—that mysterious rumours of all being favourable to the board could be industriously sent abroad for some time, and that afterwards a few such opinions might be published, and the opposite opinions all fortuitously suppressed.

But we are told that the arrangement was not adopted, but *acquiesced* in, and that the latter was the term used. Yes, it was used in the repeated but frustrated efforts of your grace to have it substituted for the word *adopted*, which had passed the meetings, and which is recorded on our resolution book, with the signatures of the chairman and secretary. Nay, it is the word used in the copy published in that journal which conveys your grace's letter. The word *acquiesce*, on which you lay an italic emphasis, was not suffered to find a place in any of the resolutions, nor should I advert to this circumstance, were it not for the strange perseverance, now understood, with which you sought to have one word substituted for the other.

But this is not the only inaccuracy as to facts that is to be found in your epistle. Your grace insinuates that the suggestion for an arrangement came from the opponents of the board, in which the others *acquiesced*, in opposition to my assertion, that "we entered into the overtures of an accommodation of this great controversy in the same pacific spirit in which they were proposed." As your must have believed that such was the case, I would recommend an acquaintance with the facts ere you inadvertently publish such assertions. Your grace was absent from our meeting when the proposition was first mooted. During the entire of Tuesday, there was a total, and, as it were, a studied silence on the subject; and allow me to assure you, that if our meetings had continued since, we, as far as I could learn the sentiments of my brethren, never would have proposed any modification in the national board. This important overture was made by the primate of all Ireland, on Wednesday, the 12th; and, though we appreciated then, as we do still, the sincere and pure episcopal spirit in which it was first proposed, we, so far from signifying our readiness to rush into such a measure, observed that we did not think ourselves competent to bring now before our tribunal a weighty case, involving the faith and morals of a national Church that was referred to the Pope. It was only when it was mutually agreed on that our arrangement was to be subsidiary and subordinate to the deliberations at Rome, that we consented at all to entertain this question. As your grace has set the example of publishing our proceedings, at which I sincerely rejoice, allow me, in return, to add the introductory resolution, which may be considered the key of the entire proceedings:—

"At a general meeting of the Roman Catholic prelates of Ireland, held in Dublin, on the 12th of February, the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale in the chair,

"It was moved by the Most Rev. Dr. Crolly, and seconded by the Right Rev. Dr. Cantwell, that a committee of three prelates favourable, and of three prelates unfavourable, to the present mixed system of education, be appointed to confer together for the purpose of making an arrangement that would, if possible, establish unanimity in the system of combined education amongst the prelates of Ireland.

"† THOMAS FEENY, Secretary."

This clear and explicit resolution requires no commentary, since unanimity amongst the prelates of Ireland, respecting the system of national education, is its manifest and declared purpose. Accordingly, three prelates, on either side, with the mutual consent of all, proceeded to the task of making the proposed arrangement. The primate and the bishops of Limerick and Ossory represented the prelates favourable to the board. The bishops of Ferns and Ardagh, together with your grace's correspondent, formed the representatives of those who are adverse to its uncanonical constitution, and its most arbitrary regulations.

To show, further, that we were not the persons who signified any intention to modify the board, I beg leave to subjoin our proposition to the other bishops:—"The prelates selected by those who are opposed to the national system of education to confer with the others who are favourable to it, deem it their duty distinctly to state their conviction that a separate education for the children of their flocks is that which is most conformable to the laws of God and the Church, and the best calculated to make them pious Catholics and faithful subjects; and they feel no doubt that a grant would be obtained for that purpose from the justice and wisdom of the legislature, were the prelates unanimous in such a petition. They, therefore, offer this principle of accommodation, on which they were all unanimous in the year 1824, as appears by the petition which they then sent to parliament. It is not, therefore, without much anxiety for its results that they would concur in any other."

This proposition not being likely to meet with the general concurrence of the prelates, the primate undertook the task of drawing up an arrangement, which he prosecuted with zeal and efficiency, aided by the hearty co-operation of the entire committee, who conducted this important business with a spirit and temper worthy of bishops, and that breathed that love of unanimity for which they were selected. The arrangement was then submitted to the assembly, and, after the disposal of the verbal choice alluded to, unanimously *adopted*, for the purpose of being submitted to his Excellency's consideration.

There is no doubt, then, but the arrangement was one on which the prelates of Ireland were unanimous, as far as their opinions were concerned, and on which they would act unanimously, if his Excellency had not refused to sanction its requisition. This is rendered incontestible from another important part of our proceedings, namely, that the arrangement was not only submitted to his Excellency, but likewise to his Holiness, together with his Excellency's answer, refusing to ratify that arrangement. I am circumstantial on this subject, for the purpose of impressing upon all the weight and importance of resolutions which are attempted to be treated by the advocates of the board,

as they have been wont to treat all the resolutions of the Catholic bishops, with an air of indifference. Four prelates, from the four ecclesiastical provinces, three archbishops, and the senior suffragan of the province of Dublin, who represented likewise, in equal numbers, those who were favourable and opposed to the board, waited on his Excellency to present the arrangement which was unanimously adopted by their brethren. The signatures of the same four prelates authenticated to the Holy See the genuineness of those two documents.

Let, now, the Catholics of Ireland who feel, as they ought to feel, an intense interest in this great question, weigh all the solemn circumstances attending the arrangement lately adopted by their bishops, and judge whether it was too much to say, that their “unanimity attested its wisdom, its justice, and its extreme moderation.” They cannot surely suppose that the assembled prelates of Ireland would protract the discussion of a vital question from Tuesday to the Monday following (with only one day’s interval for the business of the College of Maynooth), in order to adopt a foolish, or an unjust, or an intemperate arrangement. When they consider, besides, that this arrangement was adopted for the purpose of being submitted to the two greatest authorities to whom they owed civil or religious obedience—namely, the representative of her Majesty on the one hand, and his Holiness on the other, they must be impressed with a still stronger idea of the wisdom of their deliberations, and the justice and moderation of their resolves. They cannot entertain the notion that their sittings were a farce, their arrangement a decent mockery, and their waiting on the viceroy a theatrical pageant to amuse the simple-minded, whilst some commissioners behind the puppets might be giving secret counsel to his Excellency not to listen to the counterfeit prayers of some of the episcopal deputation. As such an insulting idea could not for a moment be entertained, I must repeat my assertion, that the unanimity of the prelates attested the wisdom, the justice, and the extreme moderation of their arrangement. If I should wrong my brother prelates in so qualifying our joint resolves, I doubt if they should feel much complimented by any who, at the expense of their wisdom, their justice, or their discretion, would attempt their vindication.

But your grace fears that from these qualities I infer the necessity of the arrangement, and by a gentle insinuation that such could not be my meaning, labours to guard the readers against such an inference. I always mean what I speak and write, and I do confess myself totally ignorant of that diplomatic refinement, so beautifully painted by St. Gregory in our divine office as the boasted wisdom of the world, studied by wily politicians who strive to “conceal in the disguise of words the

feelings of the heart, and then give to this perverseness of the mind the name of urbanity." Yet let us consider this very inference of their necessity, to which your grace has been the first to point attention. Ireland is torn by religious dissensions which it knew not before, until in an evil hour a monstrous alliance of all creeds, unknown to this country or the Catholic Church, and imported by strangers, was striven to be established. As that alliance labours to gain ground, the reign of discord, of which it is the centre, is widening in the same proportion. The people are scandalized, and the prelates on all sides at length take the alarm. They deliberate for the purpose of adopting an arrangement, which, by securing unanimity, will arrest the progress of the disorder. That arrangement must be confessed to be wise, just, and moderate, or the prelates must be stigmatized with unbecoming imputations: the arrangement is deemed so necessary and essential by many, that without it they will never sanction the new system within their jurisdiction. If, then, the tendency of the evil complained of—the disunion of the prelates—be hopeless, without a measure which is deemed just, and wise, and moderate by all, I put it to your grace's candour, I put it to the good sense of every reader, whether it would be an inference at variance with sound moral reasoning, to pronounce such an arrangement even necessary to meet the just requisitions of a large portion of the Catholic bishops and clergy, to give confidence to the laity, and restore peace to the Irish Church?

Your grace, then, may have the full benefit of either acquiescence or adoption, I care not which, since the arrangement, use what expression you will, is the registered result of the free, the solemn, and the conscientious opinions of the Catholic prelates of Ireland on a question deeply affecting the interests of religion, and deserving, as such, the serious attention of any ministry affecting a regard for the moral weal of eight millions of loyal subjects, of whom these prelates are the chief pastors. Whether it was treated with the respectful attention it deserved, let those who are concerned determine; and then lay their respectful petitions for redress before the legislature and the throne.

Without expending any labour in reference to the divine or ecclesiastical rights of the bishops, to which his Excellency's reply is at variance, let any dispassionate person put in juxtaposition their propositions and his answer, and then ask which is best calculated to secure the sacred deposit of faith and morality. Catholic Ireland has already come to a fair judgment on that question. I am delighted, however, at the frank and unequivocal tone that marks his Excellency's stern refusal. There is no attempt to throw dust into the people's eyes, except through the thin sophistry of the passage regarding "the equal terms among all sects and denominations of Christians!" But such

phrases cannot impose upon any, while the unequal and unjust monopolies of Trinity College, and the Establishment, attest but too painfully the insulting inequality with which Catholics are still treated in the land of their birth. Grants for educating the poor of Ireland must then, necessarily, be almost for Catholics, especially in three of the provinces. To be thinking of Presbyterians where there are none, is a superfluous expenditure of paternal solicitude. They might have a fair share for themselves in the small corner to which their kirk is confined ; and as for the children of the establishment, they should be, in all conscience, suitably educated out of those enormous funds that are too ample for the vanishing section of the Protestant population. There is no error any longer about the right of appointing or dismissing masters, which some ecclesiastics fancied they could exclusively exercise. But how little they were to be under the control of the local priesthood, and how completely to be the servants of the board, appears from the interesting and instructive letter of the Rev. Mr. M'Swiney, in the diocese of Cork, well worthy of the attention of the clergy of Ireland. Nor is there any room for misconception about books, since his Excellency candidly lets the bishops understand, that they cannot use what books they choose in the schools in their own dioceses, though they might exclusively consist of their own flocks !! All this is plain, and manly, and dissipates much of that pleasing delusion, by which some good-natured and easy-minded persons persuaded themselves into opposite opinions.

In short, he reads us a lecture containing a summary of the rules for our instruction, and hopes that the light of it will flash upon our minds, will dissipate the darkness of our intellects, and work in some of us, at least, a more docile disposition. It matters to us little what such rules may be at any time, whilst there is no check over the legislative power of an arbitrary body that may change, and has changed them according to their own caprices. But as the climax of the consolation with which he thought to fill us, he dwells with rapture on the zeal that has characterized the members of our own creed, and wonders how, with such sentinels watching over the system, we could feel any alarm at the lectures that might be delivered in the model schools.

His Excellency may, no doubt, be a pious man ; but his piety is not the standard by which Catholic bishops are to square their notions of books, or masters, or model schools for their flocks. He eulogizes the Catholic members, and were any other Catholic members to be more liberal in their opinions, and to approximate more nearly to Protestants, they would not, on that account, sink in his Excellency's estimation. No doubt, Mr. Blake came in for a large mental share of his Excellency's panegyric ; and that

gentleman's anxiety to maintain Protestant ascendancy, and to abridge in Ireland the authority of the Pope, were not the least valuable claims to his Excellency's high and flattering consideration. "I am myself a friend to Protestant ascendancy in Ireland" is his solemn declaration; and on being asked, "Is it not the interest of the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland to have as little to do with the Pope as possible, and to connect themselves as much as possible with the established government—the government of the country?" "I think it is."* It is to such political sycophants, then, holding such opinions regarding the entire of Catholic unity, the bishops of Ireland are told to hand over the divine trust of the instruction of their flocks; and they are treated to a courtly homily to rest secure, and leave the pastors to the selection of such guardians.

I am not now surprised at the reluctance that was felt in referring this question to Rome. But, after such stubbornness on the part of the board to submit to any Papal interference, it may excite surprise what has brought Mr. Hamilton Dowdal to the eternal city at this seasonable juncture, as secretary for foreign affairs, whilst his brother secretary presides over the home department.

The overgrown influence of the Holy See has been long the theme of the enemies of the faithful in Ireland. To circumscribe it first, in order eventually to crush it, has been the study of their sinister policy. The eventful history of the past twenty years teems with facts illustrative of those designs. Hence, the quaint observation of Cobbett, a shrewd observer of events and characters, regarding the schemes of some men to erect a little political Papacy in Ireland. What might have been but the crude conceptions of others, the politicians of the board are labouring to realise. It is no wonder—the men of many creeds cannot well endure that power which is ever at war with error, and I can well conceive how in that academy of Babel opinions, the teachers of only one faith, and one way of salvation, must be peculiarly obnoxious. Of this one thing I have now sad proofs, that if there are any who have been remarkable for their bigotry and hostility to the Catholic faith, the board is become with them an object of peculiar predilection. I need but name the notorious Achill colony, that is spreading the foulest falsehoods regarding all that is holy in our religion. The patrons of this body would feign be the patrons also of the national schools, for the same identical hatred to our creed, and actuated by the conviction that the national board and the Achill colony are leagued in one object, the gradual corruption and extinction of the Catholic faith in Ireland.

* Minutes of Evidence, House of Lords, 1825.

Your grace concludes by observing, "that you abstain from adverting to other passages in the letter which it would be painful to notice." How I must appreciate your grace's forbearance. It would be more satisfactory to point out those passages in the pastoral letter, than thus wrap up your insinuations in vague generalities. There can be no dispute about tastes. I trust, however, that the most fastidious will not find there a phrase opposed to Catholic discipline or Catholic orthodoxy. You, it seems, felt no pain in recommending strenuously erroneous books that are reprobated at Rome. We know not whether your grace felt pain at the scandalous doctrines that were published by one of your priests, insulting to the Apostolic See, calumnious of the Catholic priesthood of Ireland—which were tearing the unity of the Church, and filling the faithful people of Ireland with sorrow, and to check which the interposition of the same Apostolic See became necessary. Had you felt and manifested more pain about those errors, so near home, you might have been spared your superfluous solicitude about the flocks of other pastors, or about the instructions which they may deem it their duty to dispense, in order to guard them against the insidious and daring assaults that are making on our holy religion. Do then, my lord, confine yourselves in future. "to the care of that flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed you," and listen no longer to the counsel of those who would feign give your grace a commission, which they have not themselves, of interfering in the religious concerns of others. To none but one is the "solicitude of all the churches" confided. After the Supreme Pastor of the fold, none will now be allowed the title of a *universal* bishop, more than in the days when it was attempted, under the shadow of the secular power, to be set up in Constantinople.

If I thought my advice would be effectual, I would adjure your grace, in the name of thousands of pious Catholics in Ireland, to retire from a connexion that has brought nought of consolation, and that is inflicting fresh evils of incurred religious discord on the country. You have now an opportunity of showing the influence for good that is yet in your hands. If you leave the vessel, down it goes—the faith is safe—Ireland will rejoice—the education of its youth will be free and flourishing—and as for those aliens to our creed and country with which it is being filled, they will, by a timely flight from the sinking concern, provide for their own safety. I do not yet despair to see this happy consummation. Let us then all labour to cement rather than loosen the unanimity that has been effected, and strive to confirm it for ever. If we do, the generous clergy and laity of Ireland will not be wanting in seconding our exertions. Your grace is aware that the sole argument—I might say the

only sophism—now in favour of the board is, that if its funds were withdrawn, the youth of Ireland would be uneducated ! Never was there a more foul or a more insulting calumny. Ireland was in high literary character long before it was cursed with the false religions of the Scotch or of the English. Even since, it has risen in its intellectual might, and by the learning, the eloquence, and the other high moral attributes, as well as to the growing wealth and numbers of its children, it has achieved a bloodless victory over the bigotry of religious foes unexampled in the history of the world. And is it at a period like this, after passing from bondage and arriving at the goal of triumph, the Irish Catholics must put themselves in leading-strings to lisp the elements of literature, and morality, and religion, under the tutelage of Scotch and English as well as Irish sectaries, who would not scruple to give a niche to Mahometanism in their polypistic temple, provided it gave them a share in the catering of the public money. The petitions of the clergy and laity of Ireland, already so successful in obtaining important concessions, will be crowned with equal success in demanding the just right of separate grants for education. No matter what some interested individuals, opposed to justice, may assert to the contrary, the rightful petitions of the people must ultimately prevail. But should our hopes be disappointed for some time, the people will liberally provide for their schools, especially when they learn that by so doing they will not only secure the faith and morals of their children, but will save the districts from a grinding power of arbitrary local taxation which would, under the management of corrupt patrons, some of the bigoted landlords of the country, be a bitter source of fresh oppression to the poor, and of sorrow to the clergy, who, under the terror of the King's Bench, would find themselves constrained, as some have been already, to tolerate corrupt teachers in the very bosom of their flocks.

I have the honor to remain, my lord, your obedient servant,

 JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCVII.

TO HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. DR. MURRAY.

WESTPORT, MARCH 25th, 1840.

MY LORD—It is then true, according to your grace's own admission, that the arrangement which was submitted to his

Excellency by the bishops, and to which he was pleased to give a stern refusal, was in pursuance of a resolution "unanimously adopted, and was the positive act of all;" that the unanimity of the hierarchy was obtained on that important point, can no longer be contested. It is equally unquestionable, since their resolution to submit the arrangement was unanimous, that his Excellency refused to acquiesce in the unanimous prayers of the Catholic bishops of Ireland. This appears clear from his Excellency's answer, who feels himself "bound distinctly to state to the deputation of bishops that no such changes can be made as they desire." It may, however, be more satisfactory to the reader to be furnished with genuine copies of the text of our *acts*, and the document now referred to, than to be detained by any tedious or conflicting commentaries. I shall set down the resolutious in the same order in which they were adopted:—

"At a general meeting of the Roman Catholic Prelates of Ireland, held in Dublin, on the 12th of February, the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale in the Chair,

"It was moved by the Most Rev. Dr. Crolly, and seconded by the Right Rev. Dr. Cantwell, that a committee of three prelates favourable, and of three prelates unfavourable to the present mixed system of education, be appointed to confer together, for the purpose of making an arrangement that would, if possible, establish unanimity in the system of combined education amongst the prelates of Ireland.

"† THOMAS FEENY, Secretary."

"At a general meeting of the Roman Catholic Prelates of Ireland, held in Dublin, on the 14th of February, Most Rev. Dr. Crolly in the Chair,

"It was moved by the Right Rev. Dr. Coen, and carried unanimously, that the arrangement which was agreed upon by the above committee, consisting of the Most Rev. Dr. Crolly, Right Rev. Dr. Kinsella, and Right Rev. Dr. Ryan, on the one side, and the Most. Rev. Dr. MacHale, the Right Rev. Dr. Higgins, and the Right Rev. Dr. Keating, on the other side, be adopted by this meeting, for the purpose of being submitted to his Excellency's consideration.

"† THOMAS FEENY, Secretary."

Then the following document was laid by four of the prelates before his Excellency:—

"At a general meeting of the Roman Catholic Prelates of Ireland, held in Dublin on the 14th of February, 1840, the Most Rev. Dr. Crolly in the Chair, the following arrangement was proposed and adopted:—

"For the purpose of receiving the unanimous co-operation of the Roman Catholic Prelates, in diffusing the advantages of National Education, it was agreed on, that the subsequent regulations be respectfully submitted to the consideration of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant:—

"1st. That in every National School for the mixed education of Protestant and Roman Catholic children, the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese, the parish priest, or the Roman Catholic curate of the parish in which such school is situated, may be a patron of said school, in order that he may prevent the appointment of any teacher whose moral or religious conduct should be found objectionable, and, if necessary, direct the dismissal of such teacher from so important a situation.

"2nd. That no book or tract whatsoever for the religious or moral instruction of the Roman Catholic pupils shall be admitted into a National School without the previous approbation of the four Roman Catholic Archbishops of Ireland.

"3rd. That in every National School where the pupils are all of the Roman Catholic persuasion, the Roman Catholic Bishop of that diocese, or the Roman Catholic pastor in whose parish the school has been established, as patrons of said school, shall have power to appoint or dismiss the teacher or

teachers, whether male or female; and that said bishop or pastor shall have access to the school at all times, for the purpose of giving religious or moral instruction to the scholars; such instruction to be given by the clergy themselves, or by persons appointed by them for that purpose; and further, that every book used in the school for the religious or moral instruction of the Roman Catholic pupils shall be composed or selected by the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese.

“4th. That in future, for the satisfaction of the Roman Catholics, and for the greater security of their religion, the Lord Lieutenant be respectfully requested to select two lay Roman Catholic members of the Board of National Education from each of the four ecclesiastical provinces, and that, on the recommendation of the Roman Catholic Bishops of each province, one of their body be appointed a member of the Board of Commissioners by his Excellency.

“5th. That the Lecturer in the Model Schools, appointed to instruct the Roman Catholic teacher of National Schools the principles of religion, morals, or of history (which is capable of being explained in an irreligious or offensive manner), should be a Roman Catholic, with satisfactory testimonials of religious and moral conduct, signed by the Roman Catholic Bishop under whose spiritual jurisdiction he previously lived.

“6th. That it would be very desirable to have a Model School in each of the four provinces when the funds of the National Board of Education might be found sufficient for that purpose, as such an establishment would inspire the inhabitants of the province with greater confidence in the system of national education.

“W. CROLLY, D.D., Chairman.”

To which his Excellency replied:—

“MOST REVEREND AND RIGHT REVEREND SIRS—I have considered your memorial with the attention which I am always disposed to pay to any representation from your respected body, and with a sincere desire to secure, if I could consistently with what is due to other parties, the unanimous co-operation of the Roman Catholic prelates of Ireland in diffusing the advantages of a national education.

“You must, however, bear in mind that the diffusion of these advantages, on equal terms, among all sects and denominations of Christians, is the fundamental principle of the system administered under the sanction of the legislature by the National Board; and that any departure from that principle would be a violation of their duty, and a perversion of their trust.

“In conformity to that principle, the National Schools are equally open to Christian children of all denominations, and opportunities are equally afforded to their respective pastors to provide them with religious instruction, subject only to the condition of their not attempting to interfere with any, except those of their own church.

“The Board has nothing to do with the selection of patrons, who are locally chosen by those persons whose funds have been subscribed, or whose land has been given for the establishment of schools.

“With them rest the appointment and dismissal of the masters, over which the Board exercises no control, except what is absolutely necessary to secure them being morally as well as intellectually qualified for the duties which they have to perform.

“No books are allowed to be used in any of the schools, at the time of joint instruction, except such as are published by the Board, or such as have been sanctioned by their authority, in cases where they are provided by local patrons.

“The model schools at Dublin are under the immediate superintendence of the Commissioners, subject to their frequent inspection, a duty which I well know is not more assiduously performed by any portion of them than by those members of your own church whose services have been devoted to the cause of national education, with such honor to themselves and such benefit to their country.

“This, surely, ought to be a sufficient security to you that the lecturer appointed in these schools to instruct the Roman Catholic teachers in the principles of religion, or morals, or history, would never explain them in an irreligious or offensive manner.

“ In thus briefly setting before you the manner in which, on the chief points referred to in your memorial, the Board have carried out the great principles of the national system, I cannot but express my regret at the opposition which has been given to them by some of your body ; and greatly, indeed, should I rejoice if that opposition can be removed by a closer examination or more intimate knowledge of their proceedings.

“ But, after the best consideration that I can give to the subject, I am bound distinctly to state to you that no changes such as you desire can, in my opinion, be made with advantage to the public, either in the constitution of that Board who have hitherto worked so harmoniously together, or in the general regulations under which they have acted, and which have enabled them successfully to make head against all obstacles, and to diffuse more and more widely, in each successive year, the blessings of moral and intellectual improvement, founded on the precepts of Divine truth, among all religious denominations of the people of Ireland.”

Such are the *acts* of the Catholic bishops of Ireland in their annual meeting of 1840. They are now matters of national record, and belong as much to the annals of the Irish church as any on which the historian is entitled to pause. They are not only the faithful transcripts of the zeal and piety of the prelates of that period, but they will serve as so many landmarks to guide their successors through the various perils which they will have to encounter in their assertion of the faith. On those historical *acts*, then, duly authenticated as the resolves of the bishops, and not on contending glossaries, do I confidently rest in vindicating the few and simple assertions that have been so strongly impugned. For that “ *paramount object*,” the unanimity of the hierarchy, which gave such umbrage to the advocates of the Board, I refer the reader to the second resolution, unanimously adopted, which has now for the first time been laid before the public. To vindicate the “ *wisdom, the justice, or the extreme moderation*” of an arrangement which was “ *unanimously adopted* for the purpose of being submitted to the consideration of his Excellency,” nay, which was afterwards laid before his Holiness, would be no less offensive to the exalted authorities to whom it was submitted, than to the character of those by whom it was adopted ; and that no *intimation* came from the opponents of the Board of a wish to enter into any such arrangements, “ *but that we entered into the overtures that were made for such an accommodation by its supporters*,” is placed beyond the reach of cavil by the first resolution. Those acts remain untouched, bearing testimony to the unanimity of the prelates in opinion, whatever may be the diversity of their sentiments about their immediate practicability, or the expediency of waiting until they may obtain his Excellency’s *sanction*. His grace of Armagh may entertain the opinion that there was as little of unanimity at the end as at the commencement of our meeting. The Bishop of Ossory may “ *agree on the terms of an arrangement which he pronounces ‘unnecessary and unattainable.’*” Why his lordship deemed them unattainable, he has not taken the trouble to explain. Of this, however, no doubt can be entertained, that whenever the bishops were unanimous,

in earnest, they, in union with a faithful people, obtained more unattainable concessions from administrations apparently more hostile to our holy religion. His lordship of Cork may be impressed with a becoming sense of what the Lord Lieutenant owed to his own dignity in publishing his reply to the episcopal deputation; and no doubt the Bishop of Limerick thought your grace accurate in your sentiments until contrasted with the authentic resolutions. The reader must still be at a loss to ascertain how those and the like extracts can at all affect the weight of the genuine acts of the bishops, or the truth of my assertions, with which those acts are identified. Those prelates are determined, until they obtain a purer system, to remain in connexion with the board. Does this impugn their unanimity respecting the arrangement which they submitted to his Excellency, or the wisdom, "the justice, or moderation" of that requisition? It proves nought but the same sad necessity, or expediency, or convenience which induced some prelates to tolerate to the last hour of its extinction the Kildare-street Society, long after the general sense of the Catholics of Ireland, as well as the petitions of the bishops to parliament, had pronounced its condemnation. It only demonstrates that while a better is refused, they submit to a bad system, and that they are content to retain the troubled waters of the board, until they are carried away by the purer flood of an unmixed Catholic education. With this determination of some of the bishops I have no concern. That is a matter between them and their conscience. Since I am referring solely to the arrangement which was the result of their deliberate and unanimous resolves, I cannot then but wonder at the asseverations of pain with which your grace parades such innocuous passages, and your repeated declarations of an unwillingness to wound or betray the secret apprehensions of one who seems to be conscious that in the puny effort to inflict what he affects to deprecate, he only hurts the hand by which such instruments are wielded.

But as the Bishop of Cork thought his Excellency called on to publish his reply, it will not, I trust, be deemed presumptuous on our part to think that the rest of the proceedings should be entitled to a like privilege. A resolution of secrecy was talked of; the idea of carrying it could not for a moment be endured, from the conviction that it would be but a cover for the worst misrepresentations. Besides the duty we owed to our respective clergy and flocks, of making known to them proceedings so intimately connected with their spiritual interests, it was observed that the frequent and flagrant calumnies relative to our proceedings might require vindication. Whilst engaged in our public sessions, some of those journals that appear to be the hired advocates of the board, published such gross falsehoods as to demand prompt exposure. Witness their unblushing slander regarding the letter

that was read in the meeting, and their studied silence relative to the significant passage about the books of the board, which it is no longer a secret are denounced in Rome. Scarcely were we returned to our respective sees when the same shameless distortion of our proceedings was repeatedly exhibited ; and though the advocates of the board appeared anxious for silence, its organs strove to turn it to their advantage, by boasting that this very silence was evidence of the triumph of the system. But why detain the public with an apology for adverting to this topic in my pastoral instruction, when my apology should be for such long silence and forbearance ? Had I, however, half the knowledge of the intrigues, the deceit, the covert manœuvres, nay, the persecution connected with this infamous and unhallowed scheme to pervert the people of Ireland, that have come under my knowledge during this visitation of my diocese, I should not have been silent for an hour. Is your grace aware of any correspondence from any quarter, connected or pretending to be connected with the Board, with any one clergyman in this diocese, obviously intended to make him unfaithful to his free, solemn and recorded pledge of breaking off all connexion with the Board ? Is your grace insensible to the obvious tendency of such conduct to interfere with the reverence and obedience of the bishop of the diocese, promised at ordination ? Were the spirit that presided over the publications of the board to continue, no doubt the next suggestion of Mr. Commissioner Blake would be to expunge that passage out of the pontifical, like the obnoxious passage in Challoner's Works, as interfering with the high authority of the board, and to send down the expurgated edition at half price on her Majesty's service, in order effectually to banish all the good old editions from the land.

Is your grace aware of the fine imposed by this Christian board on a schoolmaster, for the crime of following the instructions of his ordinary regarding the pious practice, so generally spread, of reciting the Angelus Domini at mid-day ; or of the clergyman's letter to the board, breaking off all further connexion or correspondence ? Perhaps your grace is ignorant that Mr. Duane, a pious and respectable Catholic in Connemara, was next written to, to conduct or manage the school under the same board, with which the parish priest became totally disconnected. Mr. Duane, like a good Catholic, not infected with the leaven which it is the study of this treacherous Prussian system to propagate, wrote back that he would not lend his support to any plan of education of which his spiritual superior did not approve. Here, then, are obvious attempts to set laymen against their clergy, and the clergy against their bishops, and to violate all the sacred relations by which the pastors and the people are religiously bound together. It is high time for all, then, to lay before the

constituted authorities their just complaints for such unhallowed encroachments on their mutual duties. The rights of the people, as well as the religion of the children, are all involved in those manifest aggressions made on the sacred rights of their pastors. His Excellency may listen with perfect indifference to the prayers of the bishops of Ireland, as many of his predecessors did before, but the petitions of the people declaring their want of confidence in any administration that will not respect such prayers for the protection of their rights and duties, will bring about the same salutary change of sentiment of which they were often productive. The other instances of a disgraceful and stealthy interference with some school-masters to put themselves under the bondage of the board, as well as their disinterested fidelity in resisting the temptation, must be reserved for a special and more circumstantial instruction. They are not, my lord, intended for any personal correspondence with your grace, for they would, doubtless, be as painful as any of the other topics connected with this subject, into which you have shown such reluctance to "wander." From the commencement of this most serious discussion until this moment, your grace has exhibited a peculiar unwillingness to stir from your new position, to take a view of the principles or practice of the past ages of the church, in order to form some estimate from that true standard of the strange maxims that are striven to be now propagated. This may be called wandering, but it would be a delightful and instructive excursion, and well remunerative of the toil it might cost you in thus traversing past ages. We should then get out of the mists that are collected round us by the passion of the present generation, to stand on an elevated position unobscured by their influence, thence contemplating those holy sages, the disinterested champions of the faith, who are renowned in the church of God, and inquiring what were the pious maxims of their times. Among those who from the days of St. Peter to the present epoch, were eminent for faith and sanctity in every gradation of the church, your grace will not find one solitary individual to advocate such a monstrous system of ecclesiastical Spinosism, as that of the *common Christianity* of this speckled board, in which Catholics and Sectaries, truth and error, faith and heresy, are all huddled together in hideous confusion. In the mean time allow me to observe, that I was not the first to obtrude any correspondence on your grace, and I am ready to close it as soon as you abandon the system of gratuitous interference with my fold. In this controversy if it has given, as I am sure it must, aught of disquietude to the faithful, I deem it my duty to proclaim to the whole world that I have not been the aggressor. My task has been confined to a defence of my own rights, that are essentially correlative with the defence of the religion of that flock that has been confided to my care. Un-

willing to trespass on any one's jurisdiction, civil or spiritual, I, too, must be permitted to ask of my encroacher : " Why do you fell my wood, and why cross my fountains ? " I subscribe to the proposition that all prelates should adopt this maxim. But if any should be parties to an uncanonical system, that strives to supersede the episcopal authority, they cannot be released from the heavy responsibility of such unchristian annoyance. Twice your grace has ventured to interfere with my duties : first, by your personal correspondence, and again, by your equally unwarrantable and incorrect commentaries on my pastoral instructions. Let this unhallowed attempt to disturb the order of my diocese cease, which, under the specious guise of education, has for its object the support of an anti-Catholic and corrupt corporation ; and then neither your grace nor the public shall hear more of my personal correspondence. I shall then leave it to the people to assert legally and peacefully their claims to a just share in all such public funds. I shall confine myself, in discharging my pastoral duties, to the clergy and faithful of my own diocese. But if your grace, or any other unauthorized person, should directly, or by lending yourself to an hostile system, come in the way of the discharge of my solemn duties, it will not be expected that I should be wanting in the becoming courtesy of a similar salutation.

I have the honor to remain, my lord, your grace's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER XCVIII.

TO THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE DIOCESE OF TUAM.

ARRANMORE, FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI, 1840.

VENERABLE AND DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—Though in the course of our recent visitation through the diocese, it was our lot to share some of those perils by sea which the apostle had encountered, we have been more than compensated by the consolation, deep and lasting, which that grateful labour has afforded. It has given us not only the opportunity of witnessing the salutary effects of those habits of temperance, which through the special interference of the divine mercy, are now spreading throughout the land ; but also of refuting some of those calumnies which the indefatigable enemies of our religion, are neither tired nor ashamed of promulgating. When we raised our warning

voice against the hateful and pestilential novelty of the National Board, and you, impressed with the force of our reasons, withdrew the children under your care from the foul contagion of the deadly errors which that very board has been solemnly circulating, it was natural to expect that we should be assailed, by unsparing and continuous effusions of harmless vituperation. Accordingly, we were not only denounced as the foes of education, because we would not surrender its direction to the enemies of our creed, but we were likewise accused of letting in worse errors, if worse were possible, in our attempts to ward off the evils of the national system. It could scarcely have been imagined that persons with any pretensions to veracity, should rely for the support of their cause on the notoriously lying reports of the Hibernian Bible Society ; yet the advocates of the National Board have appealed to such testimony, and, mortified at the exclusion of their own pernicious system, have represented the province of Tuam as teeming with scholars, who frequent the schools of the Hibernian Bible Society. Having now traversed every district of this extensive diocese, we have it in our power unequivocally to state, and we owe it to your zeal and piety to manifest the truth, that never, as far as this diocese is concerned—and we have reason to believe the same of the others—has there been promulgated a fouler calumny. In the greater number of the parishes of this diocese, such a thing as an Hibernian school is not to be found, and where, as in the case of the few wretched national schools, fraud and menaces were resorted to, to bring over Catholic children, their efforts were completely abortive.

With copious and authentic evidence now before us of the state of education in this diocese, we can assert, without fear of refutation, that out of its immense Catholic population not twenty children frequent the schools of the Hibernian Society. In Westport, on the suppression of the nuisance of the national schools, some of the old and irreclaimable bigots of that town, thought to seduce a few children to some obscure schools of the bibliicals, but, thanks to the zeal of the clergy and the people, their attempts were a complete failure. At their joint request we sent some of the monks of St. Francis, whose pious labours were already crowned with such success in Mount Bellew, Brooklodge, Tuam, Roundstone, and Clifden. No sooner were they arrived than they were hailed as a blessing by the inhabitants ; the second day after its opening witnessed the school crowded with two hundred scholars, and instead of languishing under the withering influence of either of the congenial systems of the Board or the Bible Society, the schools are flourishing in the freedom of a pure Catholic education, where the children will not be tainted with the breath of heretical teachers, or the poison of heretical productions. Such is the enthusiastic piety which the people of the vicinity of Castlebar

feel regarding the coming ceremony of laying the foundation of the monastery at Errew, that they have thronged in numbers to cut down a steep hill in order to smooth the way to its approach. These are but few instances of the gratifying progress of pure education in this diocese ; and it must be as consolatory as it is creditable to you to learn that, notwithstanding all the discouragement thrown in the way of Catholic instruction in Ireland by some few mistaken fanatics, and a greater number of calculating and mercenary political schemers, we can number in this diocese alone more than *thirteen thousand five hundred* Catholic children, partaking of the blessings of an untainted literature, and an unadulterated Catholic education.

We trust that the success which has already crowned your exertions, will stimulate you to still further zeal in eradicating every vestige of error from your respective parishes, and replacing them by nurseries of faith and piety. We feel it the more incumbent on us thus to renew our sacred admonitions, on account of a fresh announcement of future hostility from those, who have hitherto sought, under the specious guise of education, to throw down the fences of your faith, by striking at the authority of your pastors. We allude to the last report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland. Never has a document of more undisguised and portentous menace, if its authors had but the power of mischief, been laid before the Irish public. We shall pass over, for the present, the insidious calculations and prophetic delusions—elaborate evidence of a sinking cause—with which that document abounds. We shall not dwell on its manifest tendency to mislead, and to impress upon readers that the board have flourishing schools where they have utterly failed. Nor shall we point your special attention to the clumsy device of talking of grants which shall never be accepted—of schools which shall never be established, or of thousands of visionary pupils, who will never enrol themselves under the spotted banners of the board. Of such shadowy things, however, consists much of their boasted and *unostentatious* progress throughout some portions of our diocese, as well as of their recent bounty, which, it must be confessed, they are lately forcing upon the people, but which they are so perverse as not to receive. This is like the bounty of the parsons of the established church, who say that they are ready to grant spiritual aid to the people, if they but receive it. These are but a part and parcel of every scheme of delusion hitherto devised for the purpose of filching their faith from the Catholics, and enriching their deceivers with a portion of the public money. Those self-constituted teachers, or who, rather, deriving their mission from the Lord Lieutenant, labour to supersede every bishop who contravenes their will, are pleased to take special notice of us, and modestly insinuate that passion and prejudice are the grounds of our opposition. Neither their assertions

nor their covert insinuations, shall deter us from the discharge of our solemn duty. Were we to assert, in return, that those men are not the obsequious tools of an anti-Catholic court, sharing its temporal patronage as the reward of their servility, their assertions and ours would be probably received with the like suspicion. It is only right to inform you that, already, under an affectation of zeal for foreign missions, some political intriguers, never tired of mixing themselves in our ecclesiastical affairs, are labouring to sacrifice the interests of the Irish portion of the Catholic church to the cause of the Hindoo colonies, and to hand over, were it in their power, the entire control over the religious education of the youth of Ireland, to the governor of the day. For let them couch their designs in the most specious and captious language, is it not manifest that this supreme control is the object of the system, after the Lord Lieutenant's explicit declaration to the three archbishops and senior suffragan of the province of Dublin, that not a single change in the system sought by them in the name of the episcopal body should be conceded? Never since its origin was cooler or haughtier contempt shown to the Catholic hierarchy of Ireland. So far from feeling regret, we sincerely rejoice at the publication of this singular manifesto, since it unfolds more clearly than ever the secret venom of the system, and avows, though with singular caution, the persecuting spirit of Stanley, from whom it took its origin, and whose address to the Duke of Leinster finds an appropriate place in this congenial composition.

With regard to the schools in this diocese that have severed all connexion with this unholy thing, they say they are only waiting until they appoint some other patrons. So, then, we have but a truce or cessation of hostilities. Again, the campaign of persecution is to open with renewed vigour; and, with the new-born zeal which additional salaries, and a prospect of rising in their graduated classes, will infuse into the newly recruited corps of masters, they hope, no doubt, to bear down all opposition in this diocese. Let them make the experiment. Little do they know the energies with which a love of the pure faith of their fathers inspires the Catholics of Ireland. Let them continue to send round again and again their vagrant officials, as they have done—all they will gain is weariness from their journey. Let them employ a whole troop of clerks in importuning the pious Catholic by their circulars, they will receive the noble answer with which some of the laity have already rebuked their rash and irreligious interference. They may succeed in forming a connexion with some old bigots, whose days have been worn out in the persecution of the Catholic faith and its pastors. When they shall have failed in procuring the aid of any one Catholic of character, perhaps they may at some future time add to the number of their patrons or managers some two or three individuals, Catholics in name, but whose public morals would be well suited to the

licentious tenets of the worst sectaries of ancient or modern times. From efforts such as these no harm can be dreaded; for such schools would be looked upon as rocks of warning, not to approach them, rather than as beacons of light to guide the young in the paths of religious education. What a ludicrous spectacle, if there was not something more melancholy connected with such a farce, to see Catholic masters, the future teachers of Catholic children, receive their inaugural lecture on the duties of morality in the model school from the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges of Ireland! France reads a melancholy lesson of the evils that were poured upon it from the lodges of freemasonry. Our teachers shall never imbibe their faith or morality from such a source. The account that has just reached us of the providential escape of our beloved Queen from the murderous attempt of a fiend-like assassin, has filled our hearts with alternate feelings of horror and gladness. We hasten, therefore, to conclude this brief address by an earnest request—a request which will be most grateful to your feelings of affectionate loyalty—to offer up in every chapel throughout the diocese public thanksgiving, for being rescued from all the horrors which the success of the meditated stroke would have entailed upon the land. Catholics, ever loyal from duty, even to those by whom they may be persecuted, must feel additional joy in testifying their homage and their fealty to so good and gracious a monarch, as now sways the sceptre of this empire. Never shall Catholic education, regulated by its own pastors, nerve the murderer's arm against the "anointed of the Lord." It is in the Germanic schools that the youth have been trained to systematic treason and murder. Well do we recollect the time when, under similar circumstances and with the hope of cutting off the inheritance to the throne, one of the royal family of France fell beneath the hand of one of those systematically educated regicides. He avowed the deed, and was armed to its perpetration by the influence of the spirit which he imbibed at those fountains of literature, which are frequently pointed to as models for our imitation. We shall be content with those schools that are placed under the control of their own beloved pastors, into which none of those exotic impieties, such as the Chartists of England are intoxicated with, shall ever creep; sapping the foundations of morality as well as of social order. No, the children in our schools shall be taught to "Fear God and honour the King" *—"To give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." †

We remain, venerable and dearly beloved brethren, your ever faithful servant in Christ,

JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

* 1 St. Peter, ii. 17.

† St. Matthew, xxii. 21.

LETTER XCIX.

TO THE HONORABLE LORD CLIFFORD.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. LUCIA, 1841.

MY LORD—Through the kindness of a clerical friend in England, a recent post conveyed to me a small pamphlet addressed by Hugh Charles Lord Clifford, to the Right Hon. Lord Alvanley, on his lordship's recent production regarding the measures necessary for restoring tranquillity to Ireland. What a rare and rapid, as well as auspicious succession of literary lights, has thus recently arisen on our country, to guide its unhappy destinies!! One is not suffered to set, when another is seen in the same quarter lending it a kindred twinkle; and again appears a third of the same class, threatening to eclipse his twin-brothers in his own solitary splendour. There is something in this unusual conjunction of strange and distant bodies that ought to forewarn, if not to alarm. Three peers of England, suddenly seized with a nervous solicitude for the Irish Catholics and their hierarchy, are running a race of benevolent zeal to come to their assistance! And what seems to be the danger that has so excited the fears of your lordships—and what the remedy that is again to restore you to the blessings of repose? The fear of an *irresponsible power* in Ireland—a power which has no existence save in the heated imaginations of our enemies—is the phantom of an evil which has put your lordships on a cruize of discovery for a remedy, whilst the real and palpable evils of our country are fastidiously and insultingly passed over.

On the existence of this *irresponsible power* in Ireland, and on the necessity of its coercion, there appears to be a wonderful harmony of sentiment between your lordship and the other noble writers. After some pages of prefatory observations, you thus proceed:—“This being premised, I will commence with the first page of the subject matter of your lordship's (Alvanley's) pamphlet, and agree with your lordship, that some *new* and *more efficient* line of policy must be adopted, which shall repress and put under control irresponsible power. I understand your lordship—I think I do not *misunderstand* you, to mean that the power now wielded in Ireland by Mr. O'Connell, and by a certain portion of the Irish Catholic clergy, which refuses to make the wise and unanimous declaration of *all* the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland, assembled together in 1832, the rule of its conduct, should be repressed and put under control. In

other words, that Ireland should keep the peace of Queen Victoria, not of Mr. O'Connell, or of Archbishop MacHale."*

Here is your lordship's deliberate and authentic coincidence in opinion with Lord Alvanley of the existence of an extensive and irresponsible power in Ireland, as well as of the necessity of some *new* and *more efficient* measures to bring it under subjection. After an attentive perusal of the entire of the pamphlet, this appears to be the only master-grievance which, in your opinion, requires redress. As for the tedious preface and appendix, which, as is sometimes wont, are far longer than the book, they shall not occupy much of mine or of the reader's attention. The latter consists of extracts from the writings of Mr. Beaumont, and the early letters of Hierophilus, in which your lordship discovers, or affects to discover, a marked difference between the opinions then advanced by me and those of my subsequent writings. The former is devoted to the laboured refutation of those enemies of the aristocracy who have asserted or insinuated, that the House of Lords has recently undergone the metamorphosis of the companions of Ulysses. With such extravagant opinions, or the superstition of the poor English, who believe them, I have no concern. The laws which were gravely passed in the houses of parliament against witches might possibly have contemplated the transfer of Circe's Wand to that proscribed race, and its exercise on the inmates of those houses, in some such changes as those alluded to by your lordship. However, I will not question the success of your arguments on this topic; nay, I will add, that your lordship has made it equally clear that the same body is equally poof against any other transformation. Nor is it to be expected that I should dwell on all the knightly courtesies that are so profusely addressed to my Lord Alvanley. The palm of chivalry is carried away from Scotland, and if I am to judge from the array of knights, and squires, and palfries, and gloves, and bugles, with which your letters are crowded, its reality is again to be revived, and if the rains of heaven were not as effectual in quenching its spirit as the ridicule of Cervantes, the next tournament must be resigned by Lord Eglinton, in order to grace the plains of Lancashire.

Yes; Catholic and Protetant peers of Britain, call on each other to forget their ancient differences, and to adopt a new language unknown to the ancient church, and the price of this new and unnatural reconciliation is to be the perpetuation of the misery of Ireland, the oppression of its people, and new and more effectual fetters to trammel the spiritual freedom of its hierarchy. It would be more in accordance with that ingenuous and lofty bearing which your lordship affects so much to admire,

* Letters, &c., page 13.

to announce to the world those feelings of enmity to Ireland, which cannot be disguised, than to be screening them under the cloak of a friendship, in which it is impossible we should any longer confide. The same dark insinuations run through the repeated assertions of an *irresponsible power*, as well as the *new* and more *effectual policy* by which it is to be kept under control. What is the meaning of this irresponsible power, on which so much of unmeaning solemnity is wasted? As irresponsible has not reference to another life in the pamphlet of Lord Alvanley, it must mean the existence of some power wielded in the state, and placed beyond the pale of those sanctions of rewards and penalties, by which society is bound together. I know of no such body in this country; nor do your lordships, with the most capacious credulity in strange things in Ireland, believe in its existence. Are not the Catholic clergy amenable to the laws of the country? Why then studiously propagate among the crowd those vague and ambiguous phrases which, left to their crude fancies to define, are sure to be shaped into the most hideous and spectral forms? The plain and obvious meaning of such language is, that within Ireland there is a large body bidding defiance to the laws of society. Nay, more, your lordship pointedly and offensively contrasts the influence of that body with the subordination that is due to the authority of our gracious queen. The duties of the Catholics of Ireland, lay and clerical, may be comprehended in the allegiance which they owe to the queen as their civil ruler, and the Pope as the head of their church, and successor of St. Peter. Will your lordship point out on the map of the world a priesthood and a people who more clearly discriminated, or who more faithfully fulfilled the relative duties which they owed to those authorities, than the people and the hierarchy of Ireland? And yet your lordships flippantly talk of an irresponsible power, an agitating priesthood, and the necessity of some more stringent state machinery to keep the orders of society in their allotted places. Perhaps you would find ample scope for the benevolent application of your lectures at home, without wasting them on a country which needs not their advantages.

The ecclesiastics of Ireland did not of old surrender their spiritual rights to the throne, content to receive them back again as its hired stipendiaries. They did not give unto Cæsar the things that were God's; nor were they, in punishment of their courtly subserviency, doomed to walk through all the dark and rugged ways of corruption and of error, tossed to and fro, as they were moved by every popular breeze, and every legislative impulse, until the honest and sincere among them, deplored the wayward course which their predecessors ran, are now seen sighing for a re-union with that rock, from which the anchorage

of Ireland's priesthood was never torn. They gave, at the same time, unto Cæsar what belonged to Cæsar, and whilst the soil of England was stained with the blood of one monarch, and strewn with the fragments of the throne of another, Ireland exhibited to the world the heroic spectacle of a nation, faithfully struggling for the worthless member of a race, whose cruelty was yet fresh in the extermination of one province, and in the confiscation of the fortunes of a large portion of the people. Well does it become the inhabitants of a country familiar with such strange, political, and religious revolutions, to lecture us on a political priesthood, and an irresponsible power!

But why withhold so long your kind commisseration and interposition? Some new light must have broken on the intellects of the English Catholic peers since the memorable period of the Catholic Association, when the Irish nation, laity and clergy, embracing almost the entire mass of the people, were leagued in one great constitutional confederacy, to wring from the injustice of England the rights of Emancipation.

Were your lordships' remonstrances heard against the agitating spirit of the priesthood? O, no! they were then hallowed exertions, as long as their object, or at least effect, was to restore to their parliamentary honors some few members of the English peerage. I wonder how soon your lordships forgot the noble and peaceful exertions of those men, who, under the championship of him who guided this moral movement, lifted the prostrate peers from their degraded condition—infused into their inert souls a political vitality, of which they seemed unconscious—loosened the fetters in which they were bound—undid the rusty bolts that debarred them from their hereditary honors, and flung them forward among the lords, who were frightened by the sudden intrusion of so many strange apparitions. During this heroic and eventful struggle, not a whisper escaped your lips about the existence of an irresponsible power, or the necessity of its control. But scarcely are you fixed in your seats, and your Protestant companions restored to the propriety from which they were disturbed, than you turn upon those to whom you owe your seats and honors, and enter into overtures for an offensive alliance with our ancient foes to fee the Catholic clergy to keep her Majesty's peace!

Does your lordship forget the fate of Mr. Canning's bill for your contemplated admission into the House of Lords, or the contumelies on your creed, which accompanied the rejection of that measure? You must be aware of the offensive oath that is still taken by some of your lordship's companions on the same benches, associating with our holy religion the guilt of idolatry. Yet, with these facts staring you in the face, you must adopt a new and accommodating phraseology; and, instead of styling

yourself a Catholic, your letters are to be considered as "addressed by a British Christian, in communion with the See of Rome, to a British Christian not in communion with the See of Rome!"

I, too, am for burying in oblivion the angry remembrance of ancient bigotry, not, however, at the expense of altering the ancient and apostolic language of the Church. Catholic is a term hallowed in that creed which we lisp from our infancy ; it was considered by St. Augustine as one of the most effulgent of the characters of the Church. Your lordship will not forget, that in Italy, of which you are so fond, Christian and Catholic are so identified that to him who is not the latter, the phrase applied by the people generally is "non e Christiano;" and lest your lordship should not deem popular phrases correct theological standards, allow me to remind you of the language of St. Cyprian, that "he who is not in the Church of Christ is not a Christian." Far be it from me to dwell upon this topic for the purpose of any exasperating controversy. Social intercourse may be observed, and the duties of benevolence fulfilled towards all, without disturbing the ancient landmarks. The old standard language of the Church, like its ancient liturgy, have been to many the palpable hand-rails which led them to the temple of truth, through the confused labyrinth of errors by which they were surrounded. You ensure no respect by their abandonment ; you conciliate no friends by their surrender ; as you obtrude your officious concessions, your stubborn companions will recede until they are propitiated by fresh sacrifices, and at length, when you think you have given them the whole vocabulary of your consecrated theology, they will turn round and claim the name of Protestant as the proudest title in their creed, and refuse you the name of Christian, as a person immersed in idolatry.

When the Catholic peers and gentry, who, with a few noble exceptions, were the most tardy and inert in their exertions for Emancipation, are put in possession of the political advantages which they did not earn, the people, who bore the brunt of the struggle, are to be abandoned ; and what was the most hallowed exercise of zeal in procuring for the aristocracy a feather or a bauble, must be a violation of the sanctity of their priestly office, if directed to the improvement of the condition of the humbler classes. In aid of a selfish sophistry, too clumsy to impose upon the most shallow intellect, are called in resolutions which were passed in 1832 by the bishops of Ireland. What veneration is affected for resolutions when they can be bent to a sinister purpose ! How conveniently, nay, how slightly, are the stronger, nay, the unanimous resolutions of bishops got over, if they stand in the way of political designers. Surely those

often-repeated resolutions are not treated with the disregard which your lordship imagines ; and, if they never passed, the spirit of peace, and of abstinence from political intrigue and turbulence, which they inculcate, is the uniform spirit that animates the Catholic priesthood. When the bigotry of the civil functionaries forbids the use of those edifices that should be devoted to the benefit of the people by whose moneys they are erected, the meetings that are held for petitioning parliament are sometimes held in the chapel-yard under the canopy of heaven. Surely there is no treason in that, or any approach to civil commotion, which, under a constitution like ours, could annoy the most fastidious. They are never held within the chapel walls ; and were a meeting held in a chapel after the performance of the solemn duties of religion, where resolutions would be adopted to relieve the poor, or not to vote for one of those cruel exterminators of the tenantry, who would again renew the penal laws against our priesthood ; or not to sell his vote, his country, or his religion for money, or not to desile his soul with the foul guilt of perjury : there are many of opinion that it would be as much in accordance with the high and holy ends of religion to devote, in cases of great urgency, the house of God to the above purposes, as to make it the centre of those fashionable and ambiguous assemblies, where the spectator is at a loss to know whether he is in a theatre or in a temple, inclined to the former supposition from the group of disreputable females who are denied the sacraments of the Church, and yet are heard and seen mingling in parts of the solemn service. It is not from the simple and touching music of the Vatican, that those incongruous accompaniments to our liturgy were borrowed. No, they were, with other things of worse taste, imported to us from England ; and, should the rage of rivalry for their introduction spread, the beautiful and majestic melody of the Gregorian chaunt will be utterly banished from our temples, or buried under volumes of unsuitable symphonies, whilst the performers illustrate the epigrammatic reproof of the French poet :—

Le matin dans l'Eglise, et le soir au theatre.

After thus learning my opinions upon the indecency of turning the house of God into an arena for politics or theatricals of any kind, and after my solemn approval of the spirit of those resolutions to which your lordship refers, the reader, and probably yourself, may wonder at the delusion under which you must have penned the following passage : “ Never was there an occasion in which a Catholic Archbishop so foully and mischievously belied the sentiments of the head of the Church, as Archbishop MacHale belied the sentiments and feelings towards England of Gregory XVI. at the Galway dinner, where he flew in the face of the unanimous resolutions and of the published

exhortation of *all* the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland, *himself included*, to the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland, in 1832. Had Gregory XVI. suspected, in the most remote degree, that the sentiments of Archbishop MacHale would have been so diametrically in opposition to the sentiments of "Hierophilos," Dr. MacHale would never have been coadjutor bishop, or afterwards Bishop of Killala, still less would he ever have been Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam."*

There is a deeper meaning in this brief passage than apparently meets the public eye, and as far as I am personally concerned, I should scarcely deem it worth while to unravel all the gross fallacies of which the few lines are composed, were it not for the unwarrantable, and unconstitutional, and unchristian terror which, perhaps as unconscious engines in the hands of the oppressors of the land, you and some other officious and intermeddling English gentlemen attempt to exercise over the legitimate freedom of the Catholic clergy of Ireland. Yes, the destiny of the Archbishop of Tuam is disposed of; but let all the young clergy of Ireland beware lest they forfeit all hope of those dignities to which their virtues and habits might raise them, if they should adopt similar political opinions. Perhaps, you were not aware of the extent of your accusation, or the numbers of characters it embraced. Having assumed that I would have been excluded from any see, had my subsequent sentiments been known to be so diametrically opposite to my earlier writings, your lordship should have, in justice, stated in what this opposition consisted. It would have been but right to set down distinctly what these altered sentiments are or have been; and to mark the language, that the public may not be left to their own imaginations in fancying any want in that duty of allegiance to the throne, which, if it existed, should, I will allow, exclude any individual from the episcopacy. If your lordship cannot succeed in this, though you seem to have paid sufficient attention to much of what I wrote, or was reported to have spoken, you unwittingly charge the Supreme Pontiff with a disposition to exclude from the episcopacy, on mere prejudice, without the existence of any sure ground of political impeachment. And finally, when it will mock your laboured ingenuity, or that of such accusers, to find in my whole life or writings the least tinge of disaffection to my sovereign, or disregard of the laws, what is the consequence? That Lord Clifford tells the people of this country, and tells the world, that the Catholic clergy of Ireland must compromise and dissemble their conscientious opinions regarding political questions, with which faith or loyalty have nothing to do; because if they entertain those free and legitimate opinions from a love of that country, which is dear to them, they

will be excluded from the high offices of the sanctuary in punishment of their attachment to their religion, and their affection for the people. Apostacy from everything dear in our country, has been well pronounced to be the necessary qualification for civil honours, and your lordship would fain extend the application of the words of our immortal bard even to the dignities of the sanctuary :—

“Unprized are her sons till they learn to betray—
Undistinguished they live if they shame not their sires ;
And the torch that would light them to dignity’s way
Must be caught from the pile where their country expires.”

But, no—your lordship’s prophetic anticipation of the future is as illusive as your historical relation of the past is erroneous.

First, then, my sentiments now are not diametrically opposite to those of “Hierophilos.” This is an unfounded and gratuitous assumption.

Secondly—I did not fly in the face (the polished phrase is your lordship’s) of the unanimous resolutions of all the bishops, *myself included*, on which phrase you are pleased to leave an Italic emphasis.

Thirdly—I was not at the meeting in 1832, at which those resolutions were adopted, either personally or by proxy, nor did I authorize any individual to attach my name to the resolutions or published exhortation. My sentiments regarding the resolutions I have already stated: and as for the exhortation, I will candidly own there are passages in it which never had, nor never would have, my sanction. These objections, however, may be a matter of mere taste that do not affect the just principles of the resolutions. I refer to those terms of extraordinary eulogy that were lavished on the Duke of Wellington for his exertions in our emancipation, whom I consider to have been a mere instrument in the hands of Providence, to achieve a measure, to which the whole tenor of his political life and sentiments were in direct opposition. When one owns that he does a great national service, on account of the blessings of which it must be productive, then he is entitled to merit and thanks for his good actions, though he, too, is an humble agent in the hands of an over-ruling Providence. But when I find an individual confessing that nought but necessity would have induced him to consent to a measure to which his life was opposed, he may deserve the praise of prudence in yielding to that necessity, but he has just as much claim to public gratitude for positive benefits, as many of those recorded in Scripture, whom God made reluctant instruments in bringing about his own measures. The Duke of Wellington was such an instrument, as some other powerful and influential politician may shortly, in a crisis of great difficulties, dissipate all the small sophistries that

now cloud the intellects of English lords regarding a Repeal of the Union, and restore her own parliament to Ireland, in order to fix the stability of the throne and consolidate the strength of the empire.

Fourthly—When that meeting was held, to which your lordship refers, I was sojourning in the Eternal City; and allow me to add, that I had to labour to remove many erroneous and dangerous impressions, which some officious gentlemen from your country endeavour to fix there, to the disparagement of the Irish hierarchy. Some of them, having no consideration at home, strive to make themselves important, by an overweening officiousness in the business of their neighbours. Perhaps, you are not ignorant what a distorted meaning is given at Rome by those itinerants to the popular phrase—*Liberal cause*, so often used in those countries, and what misrepresentation is heaped on the supporters of “civil and religious liberty.” With a dexterity of which none but dishonest intriguers could be capable, they seize upon the ambiguities of language; and, because the infidels of France wore the mask, and used the language of liberality, and because civil and religious liberty, in the mouths of the monsters of the Revolution, meant nought but anarchy and Atheism, the poor Catholics of Ireland, lay and ecclesiastical, must be accused of meditating the same confusion, if, in the language of the first Christians, they claim civil and religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, against the atrocious persecutions by which that liberty has been crushed. Never, in the annals of national hate and logical disingenuity, have such discreditable artifices been resorted to, to mislead and to injure. Because, too, the press has been abused in France, to the injury of religion and social order; a similar discredit has been attempted to be thrown on what is called the Liberal press of those realms: although it is well known that it is resorted to as a necessary engine against the religious persecution so long directed against the Catholics of Ireland, and in carrying on which, the English press was enlisted as a cruel auxiliary. But, thank God, those misrepresentations are losing their force, and the busiest in political scandal may now wear out their organs in the “Eternal City,” without making any serious impressions.

Fifthly—I was appointed coadjutor bishop in March, 1825; in February, 1831, his Holiness was raised to the throne of St. Peter. You may perceive, then, that your lordship indulges a little in the license of poetical anachronisms, in confidently stating that a fuller knowledge of my sentiments, as opposed to those of “Hierophilos,” would have prevented the present Pontiff from conferring on me the episcopacy.

Sixthly—From that period, when I was appointed Bishop of Maronia, no new appointment was necessary to the see of Killala,

the bulls for the appointment to the one, and the right of succession to the other, being expedited at the same time by Pope Leo XII., between whose reign and that of his Holiness Gregory XVI., there was an intermediate Pontificate. The reader must excuse those details, apparently personal, into which your lordship has obliged me reluctantly to enter, but which are important, as showing with what careless flippancy as to facts noble peers can weave whole tissues of fallacies.

Seventhly—Your lordship will not infer, because I assign the credit or the responsibility of my appointment to the Sees of Maronia and Killala to him who conferred them, that I am unmindful of the deep obligations I am under to the present Supreme Pontiff. It will be a consolation to the virtuous and loyal ecclesiastics, whom you are anxious to terrify, though they aspire not to honours, that my opinions were not unknown to his Holiness when he raised me to the Archiepiscopal See of Tuam. It is not necessary to recal to your lordship's remembrance, at least, that some officious persons did, on that occasion, exhibit, not my real sentiments, but a highly-wrought caricature of them, and that an attempt was made to alarm the Propaganda from the promotion of a person, who was represented as not averse to civil commotion. I shall forbear from entering farther into the history of the distortions of sentiments that characterized that intrigue. It was soon, however, set at rest; genuine copies, and not the distorted pictures of enemies, were demanded and produced. No sedition or disaffection to the high legitimate authorities of the land appeared. The result I need not follow up; the busy intermeddlers were unheeded or rebuked—the legitimate and canonical channels were alone consulted—and in thus ruling a principle of suffering no interference, save that sanctioned by the rescript of Rome itself, the Pope had, in despite of your lordship's insinuations, won the confidence of the Catholics of Ireland.

As this subject is now disposed of, allow me respectfully to suggest the prudence of forbearing from such frequent allusions to the court of Rome, or the line of policy pursued by its authorities. If his Holiness has condescended to extend to me, too, some small share of his apostolical regard, I value it too highly to be parading it with indecent levity in every circle. I feel the distance between our relative positions in the church and in the world, requires that I should not be using insolent familiarities with his station or his name; and, above all, that I should not affect such confidential knowledge of the secrets of his soul, as to pronounce dogmatically what would have been his line of conduct in certain contingencies.

Leaving, then, to your lordship the task of amusing yourself with that conjectural knowledge of possibilities, which the divines call *scentia media*, I content myself with the sober realities of

unfeigned occurrences. As a great portion of your appendix is taken up with passages from the letters of "Hierophilus," to justify your charge of a change in my sentiments, I may be permitted to state that I then inculcated an allegiance to the throne from which even misrule in its occupant should not release the subject. I held the same opinions when promoted to the Archbishopric of Tuam—I hold the same opinions now, and shall carry them with me to the grave. In these letters I registered my distrust in the motives, and my abhorrence of the schemes of the successive proselytising societies that have been set on foot, under various specious disguises, to pervert the faith of the Catholic people. I held the same opinions at the period to which you allude; time and subsequent experience have only confirmed me in my earlier convictions. Never was that hostile spirit to the faith of Ireland more active than at this moment. It is assuming the shape of persecution, and as long as a Protestant establishment continues to be quartered at an enormous expense on a Catholic population, it is clear its employment must be idleness, or, if active, it must be in the work of perversion. Yet another Catholic peer gravely asserts that the Catholics of Ireland have now no religious grievances to complain of, and affects to wonder at their impatience under the weight of this establishment. Does he forget that the priest cannot wear his stole in the very churchyard without a penalty, when sent for by a Catholic to assist in depositing the remains of his relative with the ashes of his fathers? Our wrongs are, then, forsooth, fanciful, and should never be felt as realities by the people, if the exciting harangues of Mr. O'Connell did not kindle their susceptible imaginations. It is not enough that the privations of the Irish peasantry are so severe, but their misery must be still aggravated by those who hesitate not to assert that their wants are fanciful, merely because their own wants may be of their own impatient creation.

Neither at Galway, nor on any other occasion, have I swerved from those sentiments, nor compromised the steady principles of the Catholic Church. If I am guilty of transgression, it is for too stern and rigid an adherence to its tenets, too unyielding an assertion of its holy authority, and an utter aversion to that easy flexibility of temper and of interest, which, under the name of liberality, is ever ready to turn with every change of political expediency, or of popular delusion. When your lordship names a Galway dinner, in order to give the appearance of authenticity to your statement, it would have been but just that you should have designated the time, for the when, as well as the where, is necessary to mark an identity. On more than one occasion I had the honour of being a guest at public dinners in Galway; twice, I recollect, when he who deserves to be honoured, the present Lord Mayor of Dublin, came to accept the hospitality of

the people of Galway, as well as homage of the heart, which the oppressors of the country cannot bear, because they are not the marks of factious delusion, suddenly and artfully excited, but the well earned tribute of long services which his country shall not cease to appreciate. Yet, on none of these occasions have I given utterance to any sentiments regarding his Holiness's feeling towards England; and as your lordship has referred to the columns of the *Freeman*, I trust you will not fail to name the date and number of that invaluable journal, in order to verify the accuracy of your reference.

Whenever, and that was but seldom, I alluded to his Holiness, it was in such terms of sincere commendation as his exalted character as head of the church, as well as his policy as a wise monarch, justly challenged. Allow me, then, for the removal of the impression which your lordship's vague reference is calculated to produce, to transcribe a genuine version of what I said at one of those Galway dinners:—"The princely saloons of Torlonia will not this year be thrown into confusion, by the sudden and unseasonable apparition of a British envoy, nor will their splendid festivities be saddened by the apprehension, that unless the Tory chief rushes by forced marches to avert it, the mistress of the world is to be again inundated from the north by a tide of Radical barbarians. They will be left sufficient leisure to explore the sacred city, and to compare the character of its Pontiff, and the influence of his reign, with the pictures which their own scribes have drawn of his Holiness, and when they will have contemplated the pleasing panorama of all that is splendid in science, fascinating in the arts, cheering in social intercourse, and heart-lifting in religion, which it exhibits—all the creatures of its slandered sovereigns—they will, no doubt, supplicate the forgiveness of the Holy Father, and will experience his indulgence, notwithstanding all the calumnies with which they have caricatured him. Humbled by the contrast, they will be the first to own that the establishment in Ireland was not only useless, but pregnant with mischief. Those evidences of the beneficial influence of the Catholic Church on social happiness, will guide many a convert to the truth which they so long combated, and, no doubt, they will be the first to write the legislative epitaph of an establishment which is already nodding to its fall by the subtraction of the tithes, which are its only foundation. Its melancholy fate is a proof that enormous wealth is not the means which its Divine Author intended for the propagation or sustainment of true religion. The flourishing condition of the Catholic Church, spreading in the midst of poverty, is evidence of its being supported by a different power. We require not the patronage nor the wealth of the treasury, and I trust the day shall never arrive when the ministers of the Catholic Church in Ireland, or

the faithful Catholic people, shall consent, by any pecuniary connexion of the former with the Exchequer, to sever that holy and affectionate bond that has hitherto connected them together, and cheered them, by mutual sympathy, amid their most disastrous fortunes."

Such were the sentiments which I uttered at the Galway dinner, which, without any reference whatever to the feelings of his Holiness to England, do but justice to the wise policy with which he rules his own states. The opinions which I then held of the danger to our holy religion from any connexion whatever with the British treasury, I still hold, with this difference, that time is only confirming my conviction of the evil with which such a measure would infallibly be accompanied. It is, fortunately, a measure, which would not give satisfaction to any party, and which if Lord Roden's recent pamphlet may enable us to form a correct opinion, would be viewed with as much aversion by the high Tories as by the Catholics of Ireland. Lord Alvanley's labours, then, and those of his associates, for pensioning the Irish priesthood, as a panacea for the evils of Ireland, may be consigned to the same fate as those of many of his political predecessors, who lost themselves in endless imaginings about a cure for our grievances, whilst they closed their eyes to their obvious source. It is not a fanciful, but a plain and practical grievance, that any nation professing one religion should pay an enormous amount of the national income or revenue to the teachers of an alien establishment. It is not a visionary, nor an unreasonable project to demand for Ireland, the same protection of national legislation to which the most prosperous countries in ancient or modern times are, or have been, indebted for their prosperity.

Nor have I, as your lordship would fain insinuate, advanced opposite opinions in the letters of Hierophilus. The question of a Legislative Union or its Repeal I did not at all discuss in those writings. My object was to vindicate the fealty of the Irish Catholics to the British government, against the repeated calumnies of their accusers, and I insisted then, as I do now, that the mutual interests of both countries are identified under the sway of the same monarchy. This is the obvious meaning of the words:—

“Non equidem hoc dubites amborum feedere certo
Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci.”

To prove any opposition between the opinions which I then promulgated, and those more recent ones to which you allude, it is incumbent on you to show that I then advocated the identity of our legislatures, or that you since discovered an adoption of the dangerous doctrine of a separation of the two kingdoms. Either supposition will elude the keenest search, and to show that I wrote with a wish of having nothing to erase, and that I

have no fear of having my sentiments on the subjects which I discusssed put in *juxta-position*, your lordship will soon have an opportunity of comparing all the published letters,* and of reconsidering your hasty judgment on the supposed opposition or inconsistency of the opinions which they inculcate. Our opinions, however, are matter of little weight on a question in which the happiness and prosperity of a great nation are involved. Whatever you or I may think, justice and sound policy, and the deep and silent workiugs of the national intellect, as well as the steady course of events, will not be retarded ; and as well might those peers who are writing pamphlets, imagine that their combined weight would keep down the lordly oak of the forest, as check the people of Ireland from peacefully aspiring to their native rights, and of enjoying, under the security of an imperial monarchy, the blessings of an Irish legislation.

It is astonishing what admiration of the ancient priesthood of Ireland, has seized some of the most rancorous assailants of their successors. It is not difficult, however, to appreciate the value of those posthumous panegyrics. If the lives and virtues of those men were so much admired, it should be expected that they should have received the meed of their services at the hands of their cotemporaries. But, instead of any gratitude while they lived, they passed through a fiery ordeal of calumny and persecution ; and now that they are no more, the most lavish encomiums are heaped by their enemies on their memories. No one mistakes the motives of those invidious contrasts of departed worth with living virtue. The noble assertion of religion and of country, which distinguished many of the older race of ecclesiastics, and annoyed the bigots of their time, is not now felt ; and all the vituperation that was heaped upon them, is now reserved for the priesthood of the present day, who have improved the sacred inheritance which has been left them. Let, then, those hypocritical scribes continue to eulogize those virtues which, had they lived at the time, they would willingly have rewarded with the same exile or martyrdom which then awaited them. The present race will feel rejoiced that their predecessors were such men, as to extort tardy and reluctant praise even from their enemies. The persecutors of the living St. Thomas of Canterbury, were the first to acknowledge his intrepid zeal and fidelity after his death ; and the shades of turbulence and pride with which they strove to darken his character, were softened into features of a calm and unconquerable courage, which a deep sense of duty never fails to inspire.

The passage in which your lordship does justice to the invaders of our country, presuming that they were the barbarous portion of the Irish population, does credit to your candour.

* The letters referred to will be found in this volume.

Were the same tone of historical accuracy to mark the entire of your small pamphlet, it would not have called forth any serious animadversion. There is no doubt but the English invasion plunged Ireland into anarchy and barbarism—a state which has been since more or less continued, by the persevering denial of those equal laws and rights which, if first extended to us, would have spared the historian the ungrateful task of characterizing the annals of Ireland, as an epitome of the uniform misrule of one country, and the uniform sufferings of another. Your lordship has also exposed another historical blunder, which some of the recent pamphlet-writers have omitted—namely, that Ireland was indebted to Spanish or other foreign missionaries. Our language alone would have been an impediment to their success; as it was an insuperable barrier to the progress of the ignorant and rapacious fanatics who were sent over by Queen Elizabeth to convert the Irish people! Those early miscalled Reformers were loud in their denunciations of having divine service performed in an unknown tongue. But they did not escape the caustic ridicule of the Irish people, whose playful humour forsakes them not amidst all their suffering, and who reproached them with the folly and inconsistency of striving to make converts by reading service in a tongue more strange to them than the Latin language. Thanks to the same penal policy, which has withheld from us equal laws and equal justice, for the full preservation of that venerable language which has been the vehicle, through which our religion has been so purely transmitted. A more conciliating policy would long since have consigned it to decay: it is not therefore unlikely that it will continue to flourish for many centuries. As your lordship appears to have a very literary turn, perhaps like Cato or Valancey, you might be induced, at an advanced age, to turn your attention to a foreign dialect. If so it will reward the task of acquiring it, for even in its ruin it yields not to any other language in Europe. I may be allowed to place before the reader, in our native tongue, the entire of the beautiful passage referred to in this letter, regarding the apostacy from principle, of which honour must be the price:—

‘**Τό ημαρτί δ’ α ἐπὶ αλιγή, τὰ α κατέπειτη να λιγέσε,**
 ‘**Σ αν ερούσε ερόδα βημέτε ναρ βρειδήν α κλαούθεαδ.**
 ‘**Σαγέριδ έαζοιν α τιοη-γιοέτ βειτ κολατζτε ο’η τ-ραοζαλ,**
 ‘**Οηι ιη βαρ-θηειτ α κοραντ’ ή νι βρυιλ’α κομαι γαη βαοζαλ.**
 ‘**Τα α κλαν γαη εαη κεαηαρ μηι η-δεαναιδ γιαδ κεαλ,**
 ‘**Σ μηι δ-τηιααλιζιδ α γηηρεαη αιζ ιομρο ζ λε γαλ,**
 ‘**Σ αη τηηηλρεαη α τα αιζ λαραδ γιηζε κειμε γαέ λα,**
 ‘**Ωαέ γιηοβέαι δ’η γ-καηη, αηι βρυιλ Εηιε δ’α εηαδαδ.**

It is amusing to see with what zeal some lords of every shade of creed and politics are coming forward to denounce the present agitation about Repeal, whilst in reality they are pushing it

forward. Restlessness is a state of which but few are ambitious; and if the people of Ireland were to have a prospect of justice they would gladly enjoy the blessings of repose. Whatever may be their destiny, they know that hitherto they have been but little indebted to the sympathy or the support of Englishmen; and whilst they will keep a steady eye on that duty which shall ever bind them to their beloved sovereign, they will take care to discard the officious counsels* of those men who, under the guise of zeal for us, are labouring to promote their own selfish purposes.

I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER C.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE DESTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST,
JUNE 24, 1842.

SIR—It would be criminal to delay any longer to call the attention of the Prime Minister to the starving condition of a large portion of her Majesty's people. I have during the last month passed over many pressing applications to appeal to the government in behalf of their suffering subjects unheeded. Fearing there might be exaggeration in some of the harrowing details that reached me, but fearing still more to excite hopes that might not be realized, I was unwilling to add to their misery the bitterness of disappointment. However, to the cries of hunger and starvation all such prudential calculations must give way. The people from almost every district have become the

* Of the officious meddling, rebuked in this letter, the Irish people have had often just reason to complain. My remarks have been less directed against the noble lord than against some of his countrymen, who have, much to our injury, indulged in such intriguing propensities. Lord Clifford is a benevolent and charitable nobleman, and I have reason to know that he sincerely regrets his interference in the ecclesiastical affairs of Ireland, into which an utter perversion of truth on the part of his clients, had betrayed his too kind and confiding disposition. His lordship's virtues I respect; but we cannot suffer English travellers who loiter at Rome, to trade any longer upon the most sacred interests of religion in Ireland.

heralds of their appalling destitution. Hunger has found organs for proclaiming its suffering and its power, far more eloquent than any language could convey. Already have its irresistible instincts been reducing to practice the theories of learned jurists, on the community of property, in cases of extreme distress; and though there is no friend to social order that must not deplore that necessity which would break down any of its fences, it is but justice to the mass of the sufferers to declare, that on the face of the earth there is not, I am convinced, any other people who would endure the torments of hunger with such religious resignation. Such magnanimous patience ought not to be abused. It is a bad and dangerous practice to habituate men to the idea of appeasing the cravings of nature by means beyond the laws; yet, at this moment, such is the pressure of famine, that those violations are committed. But what is still worse, if the dire distress that prompts them is not relieved, others will resort to the same mischievous practices, without any plea of necessity to offer in extenuation.

Their sufferings are, alas! but too manifest. It is not necessary to be coming at those facts by the slow and solemn process of a commission of inquiry. Numbers in this very neighbourhood go to bed without tasting a morsel of food during the entire day, and some pass the second, doomed to the same experiment. In this sad statement there is not a word of exaggeration on my part, nor have I been the dupe of delusion. No, I have made myself conversant with the details of misery, and though even a sense of duty would excuse my absence at this season, I have thought it a more imperative duty to stay at home, even to encounter all the importunities of distress, and to soothe those pangs of suffering which it is impossible to appease. There is no deception. It is not on the awful tale which the tongue may sometimes frame to deceive that I rest the evidence of this unexampled destitution. No, it is on the tottering steps of groups of creatures returning from the fields where they have been plucking unwholesome vegetables: their jaundiced and livid looks bearing testimony to the scanty and poisonous nutriment by which they are necessitated to sustain their wretched existence.

Amidst this heart-sickening misery the poor are denied the negative comfort of the poor-houses, notwithstanding that the public funds have been so profusely expended on their erection. They are to be opened, it seems, after the pressure of this hard season shall have passed over. Have the enormous salaries of the Poor Law Commissioners, with all the accumulated perquisites of travelling, &c., been also adjourned to the same period? If we can rely upon the published accounts of the disbursements, it seems that some sixty or seventy thousand pounds have been

already expended on those functionaries, and that other subordinate officers are entitled to pay, whilst, in many instances, not one particle of charitable relief has reached the poor of some of the most distressed localities. Other bad institutions required time for their development. The poor-law system is realizing its unhappy fruits before its full maturity. In those munificent asylums, which the spirit of the Catholic Church was wont to rear for the alleviation of human misery, never was it customary to make the comfort of the masses subsidiary to the interests of some few individuals. As yet the poor-houses are untenanted, or in some places where they are inhabited, they have become theatres of religious dissension. Alas! that a measure cannot be passed for the relief of the children of misfortune without having mixed with it the bitter ingredients of religious annoyance! Who would have thought that it would have entered the heads of these commissioners to force the consciences of the Catholic inmates, by striving to make them work on holidays? Yet such is said to have taken place—nay, some of them, and men who wore, when it was fashionable, the uniform of *liberality*, are said to be so solicitous for the health of the Catholic youth, that unless they consented to drink milk on Good Friday, they should practise the rigid fast of the Catholic Church!! No doubt they are emboldened to proceed in their career of bigotry by the experiments that have been already made by similar bodies on the religious freedom of the people, and if not met by a seasonable vigilance, and constitutional resistance to their religious assumptions, they would soon revive the worst realities of the charter schools. It is no wonder, therefore, that many, seeing them productive of but little physical comfort, and much moral danger, have come to the resolution of a passive resistance with regard to the payment of the rate, letting the law take its course. Indeed, here such a resolution is unnecessary; for, with the best dispositions to pay that rate in the coming month of August, not twenty persons in a district—exhausted with famine prices of provisions, aggravated with the burdens of usury—could meet the tax, nor would the amount be sufficient for the employment of men and horses necessary to carry away the heavy pledges taken from the peasantry in lieu of payment.

With such rapidly recurring seasons of death and famine, in a land teeming with exhaustless fertility—with measures totally opposed in their practical operation to the benevolent preamble by which they so often impose on the unthinking—can it be a matter of surprise that the Irish people would constitutionally exert all the energies with which nature has gifted them, to remove such anomalies of perpetual starvation in the midst of plenty, and of perpetual small and teasing persecution under the insulting names of enlightenment and liberality? Those who

are continually reproaching our people with their discontent, do them much wrong, whilst they suppress the cause of this restlessness. Is it just to expect that any people would be content, who must part with the produce raised by the labour of their own hands, and often, as just now, experience at the close of the season, all the horrors of starvation?

They may be, and are, thank God, almost to a miracle, religiously resigned under their unheard-of privations. That is a question into which I do not now enter—a question between their conscience and their faithful pastors—a treasure which they are enlightened enough to prize before all the animal comfort so valued by the English people. Still, as a people, constituting an important portion of the political strength of the empire, conscious of the vast resources of their country, and of the little of its choicest produce which is left them to enjoy, they would be unworthy the name of a free people, were they content to become annual national mendicants. Why should that which constitutes the pride of the man become dishonorable to a country? No man with a spirit becomes a mendicant until every source of industry has failed, and until all the honorable means by which his fortune could be retrieved are exhausted. Why, then, should Ireland consent to be a stated mendicant on the bounty of England, imploringly stretching out her arm to send back some of the superabundant produce which she imported, if by quiet and constitutional energy in improving her legislative condition she can spare herself the degradation of such eleemosynary requisitions? Behold, then, the unfailing spring of what is flippantly called the agitation for a domestic legislature. It is one issuing from the best, and purest, and most virtuous principles of the human heart—a love of just and most honorable independence, respectful to the rights of others, and equally jealous of its own, and which must ever exalt the nation, as well as the individual by which it is cherished.

Affect, therefore, no surprise at the deep-seated anxiety of the Irish people for an Irish parliament under the undivided sway of an imperial crown. In their anomalous condition it would be more surprising if they did not steadily persevere in asserting their rights to their only protection against ever-recurring scarcity, in despite of every discouragement. No honest politician can wish the country to be doomed to perpetual beggary. Were it blessed with ten times its present produce, and all the discoveries of chemistry already applied to agriculture to be exhausted on its cultivation, its only effect would be, by increasing our exports, to increase the number of our absentees, who, by coping in luxury with the proud patricians of England, are rendered so needy, that no increase of rents or price of produce can satisfy their rapacious demands; and thus, while the dishonest

financier would be deducing from the exports of Ireland proofs of its prosperity, the looker on might, alas! as at this moment in many parts of this district, have to weep in silent pity over the slow, but certain starvation of the people.

The ordinary forms of such applications might require a delay for an answer before publishing this communication. But the awful necessity of the case must supersede those ordinary conventional forms. Besides, were I to judge from the cold and unfeeling manner in which his Excellency answered a pressing application made to him from Castlebar, I could have but very little hope of aid from the Irish government.

I must even candidly own that I could not look upon that answer as an exponent of the policy which her Majesty's government would think it most wise to pursue, in telling a starving people to wait for the showers and the seasons. The extent of the distress will not, I trust, render callous that sympathy which, in individual instances, it is sure to awaken.

I have the honor to be your very obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE UNCANONICAL BEQUESTS BILL.

DUBLIN, FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN,
JULY 2, 1844.

SIR—If further proof were wanting of the hostile spirit that dictates the legislative enactments for Ireland, it would be found in the treacherous and atrocious bill, entitled, "An act to provide for the more effectual application of charitable donations and bequests in Ireland." It is treacherous, because the Catholics of Ireland have been taken by surprise, hoping that, if there should be any new law on this important subject, it should be in accordance with Mr. O'Connell's bill, which has been read, it seems, a second time, in the House of Commons. It is atrocious, surpassing, in its odious provisions, the worst enactments of penal times, and developing a maturity of wicked refinement in legislation,

which the more clumsy artifices of the anti-Catholic code would, in vain, attempt to rival. The penal code plundered Catholics of the accumulated charities of their pious ancestors. This bill strives to strangle the rising spirit of Catholicity in Ireland.

Why, I may be permitted respectfully to inquire, were not the Catholic bishops of Ireland consulted on a measure so vitally affecting the civil and spiritual interests of the people committed to their care? Or why were not drafts of the bill forwarded to them, or to the eminent Irish Catholic lawyers, for their opinion? Not only courtesy, but a regard for the public interests, dictates such a course, when there is a question of any material alteration affecting the rights and interests of any great municipal or commercial bodies. Are the Catholic bishops of Ireland—the most efficient guardians of the public peace, and the teachers of a pure morality to eight millions of people—to be overlooked in the framing of a law that reaches the very consciences of that vast body; nay more, to be insulted with a preamble of a bill utterly at variance with its provisions, since, instead of being an amendment of a bad remnant of the penal code, it becomes a frightful aggravation of its enactments?

Fortunately, the publication of the bill, which renders it now accessible to all, spares me the necessity of any tedious commentary. No, I shall let the world peruse it in the manner that Protestants recommend the perusal of the Bible, quite assured that it requires no elaborate construction to come at the conclusion, which, on the consideration of this document, must fill every religious man with horror, who has any concern for the interests of his immortal soul. Yet even the preamble, calculated as it is to mislead, reveals enough of the spirit in which this measure is conceived, being, forsooth, to enable grants and devises to be made in trust for Roman Catholic ministers in Ireland. Roman Catholic ministers in Ireland!! What a sapient, and decorous, and respectful designation of a body of men, the rightful and hereditary owners of Christ's imperishable priesthood, having the uncontested impress of its sacred character in the continuous and unbroken succession of their order; and standing forth in Ireland at the present moment as the most astonishing moral miracle the world ever witnessed, and proclaiming the impotency of penal laws and brute enactments, to strip them of the inheritance of that priesthood, which in vain has been attempted to be usurped by others.

Roman Catholic ministers!! Pray, appropriate that designation to the officers of the Kirk, or the parsons of the Establishment—the one being the elected ministers of the state, the other of their congregations; but do not call the Catholic bishops or priests of Ireland by a name, under which their faithful flocks could never know them, being imported with that alien establish-

ment, with which they have been taught to associate the worst evils of Ireland! What a torturing process does this inchoate, and, I trust, frustrate, enactment resort to, which, instead of naming, as it should, the Catholic bishops and priests of their respective dioceses or parishes, resolves that "minister" shall include all persons in holy orders, and "district" shall extend to any ecclesiastical division, according to the laws and discipline of the Catholic Church!! But who are to be the judges of the canonical qualifications of those new-fangled ministers? Is it their canonical superiors who are to attest, as in Mr. O'Connell's bill, the authenticity and continuance of their title and claims to such charitable bequests and devises? Let the recent melancholy cases of the colonies answer the question. Yes; no matter what might be the apostacy from the faith—no matter what might be the scandalous profligacy in morals—a secular and anti-Catholic tribunal would decide upon the claims of the "registered minister;" and though the authentic instrument of justly-inflicted canonical censures might be produced, no matter, it would be a document of which the ministers of British law could not, forsooth, take cognizance; and those who, if I am rightly informed, are now, in defiance of "the constitution," invoking the interference of Rome, to exercise even a temporal authority, to further their own ends, would be the first to expose to ridicule, nay, to visit with penal infliction, the assertion of a legitimate spiritual authority, derived from the same hallowed source.

I shall not pause to animadvert on the strange effusions of insolence and folly, to which Lord Beaumont is reported to have given utterance. Not content with an utter forgetfulness of what his lordship owed to gratitude and religion, he becomes the parliamentary proxy of the Apostolic See, and labours under the load of his delegated responsibility. Poor man! I fancied that those strange visitations, to which some of the peers of England were subject, had long since passed away. It was to be hoped that the idea of Saxon ascendancy should yield to the conviction, that it was an Irishman that restored the degraded peer of Britain to the privilege of insulting the nation of his deliverers; nor could it be imagined, that the emancipated slave could so soon affect the airs of insolent patronage towards those, to whom he owed such vast obligations. But as his lordship is evidently uneasy under a burden of gratitude, which he is unwilling to acknowledge, let me warn him not to attempt to associate the Head of the Church with his own turbid schemes, nor let him pretend to the least confidence on the part of the successor of the apostles. Neither he nor any English junta must any longer pretend to any influence at Rome, that would hurt the interests of Ireland; and, doubtless, his own mind will whisper to his

lordship, that were the Apostolic See in want of a confidential adviser, Lord Beaumont would be the very last that would be consulted on the spiritual concerns of Ireland, or any other portion of the Catholic Church.

Imagine not to impose on the Catholics of Ireland, by the insidious proffer of putting some "discreet and proper person" on the commission. What those "discreet and proper persons" may be, we may learn from the history of every apostate in religion, as well as politics, who is ever ready, for the patronage of the court, to barter the best interests of his country and his faith. Of such "proper and discreet persons," you might possibly find a few among the trading politicians of Ireland, and, perchance, among the ecclesiastics, too, whose "propriety and discretion" would not fail to be secured by the "seasonable provision" that, if they were to dissent from the Protestant commissioners, or to favour any great question involving the best interests of their country and religion, their further services would be dispensed with by the crown. Ireland already knows too well the evil effects of such Machiavelian policy. This game of delusion must be played no longer, to the injury of the country, as well as of the Catholic religion. I have spoken to several of the Catholic bishops of Ireland on the subject of this execrable bill. Among them there is but one uniform feeling of alarm at its hateful enactments. Let not my Lord Wharncliffe hope, as he is reported to have expressed a hope, that the appointment of certain "proper and discreet" Catholics would win confidence in that measure. What! win confidence for a bill, which outrages all maxims which the wisest jurists and holiest divines have laid down as the laws that should regulate property and conscience. A bill which would go to forbid the restitution of plundered property, and would consign the death-bed penitent to all the horrors of despair. A bill which would annul the testamentary dispositions of the youngest and healthiest disposer of his property, if he were seized by death before three months had elapsed after the perfecting of such an instrument. A bill which, contrary, to the sacred principles laid down by St. Paul himself, requires a transfer of testamentary property before the death of him who bequeaths it; and, thus, its hatred of Catholicity pursues man to the other world, and attempts to set aside the great and sacred maxim of all wills, which the apostle applied to the great mystery of our redemption, that no will becomes valid until after the death of the testator.

Protestants, and Protestants alone, should be entrusted with the management and appropriation of Protestant charities. Dissenters, and Dissenters alone, should have the management of their charitable devises. And, by the same rule of equity and fairness, Catholics should have the exclusive management of

their charities—all under the salutary influence of the High Court of Chancery. I must respectfully, then, adjure you, as you value the interests of justice and of religion, not to pass a measure so fraught with injustice, and so abhorrent to the feelings of Catholics. Nothing shall ever reconcile us to such a bill. It is my firm conviction, that no ecclesiastic, possessed of the least regard for the interests of religion, would ever consent to become an agent in working a bill of such infernal machinery; and, if I could suppose such dereliction of duty to be possible, that person who should be guilty of it would infallibly earn the reprobation of all the Catholics of the Christian world.

I hope I have done my duty, in conveying, by this public address, to the first minister of the crown, my own conviction, and, I believe, that of all the bishops, clergy, and people of Ireland, of the evils which would result from such a measure. Nay, more, I write to as many members of the House of Commons as the urgency of the time will allow, requiring of them, in the name of their constituents, of their country, and of their religion, to arrest a foul measure, which would be as unworthy of the boasted freedom of the age, as it would be insulting and injurious to the people of Ireland.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE SAME BEQUESTS BILL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, JULY 24, 1844.

SIR—Through the zeal and kindness of some of the members of the House of Commons, I have been just favoured with copies of the “amended” bill of charitable donations and bequests in Ireland. That the original bill should have excited the strongest alarm among the friends of freedom of conscience cannot be a subject of wonder. It is equally natural that it should have been welcomed as a boon by those who were jealous of the

spread of the Catholic religion, and who recognized in the hideous features of the projected law, a lineal descendant of the despotic enactments by which it had been preceded. But that the bill, amended in its present form, should have any admirers or apologists among the honest and devoted friends of the Catholic people of Ireland, is impossible, or if some friendly-disposed persons affect to admire it, it must bespeak a shallowness of intellect, quite on a level with the shallowness of the changes, which it has only superficially undergone.

Has one fundamental principle of the obnoxious measure been altered? Not one. The uncanonical, and, I will add for the sake of the true liberties of misguided England, as well as of misgoverned Ireland—the unconstitutional viciousness of that bill—is, that it hands over the rights, the privileges, the freedom, and the property in trust of the Catholic church, and of every gradation of its hierarchy, to the jurisdiction of a board of control, essentially hostile to the religion of that hierarchy, and essentially jealous of any, the least accession of property, by which its charitable institutions would be extended, and the decency, if not splendour, of its worship of the Deity maintained. I am not surprised. Lord Wharncliffe—if we are to credit his lordship's reporters—reveals the true principle on which the bad measure is founded. It is as good a measure, we are informed, as is consistent with the maintainance of the ascendancy of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. Pray what has the ascendancy of the Protestant Establishment to do in controlling the natural, and civil, and religious right of every Christian, and every British subject to dispose of his property, according to the dictates of his free-will and conscience?—or what claim can that unhallowed ascendancy put forward, to set aside the equally natural and rightful fences, which the dying Christian recognizes in the trustful pastors of his own faith, for the realization of his testamentary dispositions?

It is, alas! this unjust and unnatural spirit of religious monopoly, that has so long cramped every effort at generous legislation for Ireland, and still vitiates all its enactments. Instead of the first inquiry that should suggest itself to every legislator, what are the measures accordant with justice and beneficial to the people?—the question is, what will be their influence on the Protestant Establishment? and thus the interests of a nation are uniformly sacrificed to the monopoly of a small section of its population. Are you to wonder, then, at the origin and progress and strength of the Repeal movement in Ireland? The ministry is the most powerful force by which the action of that body is propelled, and it is to the measures of that ministry its most signal success is

owing. We were promised an extension of the franchise, which practically meant its restriction or annihilation. We were promised a measure for the relief of the poor, which practically means the appliances of military force in the abortive collection of an odious impost which the people are unable to pay. A system of education, called national, is yet so anti-national, that it is converted into an engine to repress those aspirings after legislative justice from a national parliament, which nothing but that justice can ever effectually subdue. Witness the war of the Repeal symbol, now so fiercely waging between the contending parties, that the buttoned urchins of those government schools will be utterly triumphant, or must share the fate of the Roman pupils, who were bound by their heartless pedagogue, and handed over as hostages to the enemies of their country. I must remark that to wear the Repeal button, or to study Irish history, there is no interdict whatever in the schools, which we sanction in this diocese; and allow me to add, that in the universities of Oxford or Cambridge, or in any other schools, the children would not be more ready, than here, to lay down their lives, if necessary, in duty to their beloved sovereign. The national mind has outgrown the penal bandages, in which its infancy has been swathed.

Since, then, this series of analogies warrants the supposition that the practical construction of some parliamentary preambles is by contraries, it is not a rash inference to deduce from the title of this "bill for the more effectual application of charitable bequests," that in its practical result, it would be, to a great extent, "for the effectual misapplication" of all such charities. This is not a hazardous, or an unwarranted assumption. No, it is borne out by the melancholy evidence of the past, as well as by the evidence of the transmigration to our own times of the anti-Catholic spirit which dictated and fostered our worst enactments. Else, why not adopt Mr. O'Connell's bill, and entrust to the Catholic parish priests and bishops of Ireland, as a corporation of constructive perpetuity, the bequests, donations, and hereditaments, with which, for the benefits of their respective parishes and dioceses, the pious benevolence of living or dying Catholics may invest them. Were Catholic ecclesiastics found unfaithful to the trusts reposed in them, by the pious of former times—had they been less scrupulous and less faithful, they would not have transmitted, for the benefit of the poor, such ample funds, as to tempt the sacrilegious rapacity of the chief agents in the miscalled Reformation. What, then, but the hereditary hate of the Catholic religion can be brought as a palliation, for the subjection of an ancient and apostolic body, who so invariably and uniformly fulfilled their

trust, to shifting and fluctuating boards, the ephemeral creatures of a day, or of an administration; and who, forsooth, are to be relied on, because they are legally a responsible body. We have had, to the great misfortune of the country, but too much of inefficient legal, and too little of efficient moral, responsibility. This is a position well worth the attention of statesmen to ponder; and if, while they retain the antiquated terms of *intendment*, &c., they brought back a little of the spirit of ancient legislation, too, the country would not be involved in its present accumulating difficulties.

The Protestant bishops and clergy of England and Ireland form a legal corporation, enjoying and transmitting to their successors their rights and privileges. And yet you deny this right to the Irish people, in favour of an hierarchy, who, while faithful to them, have never been wanting in fidelity even to the powers that oppressed them. Nay, this "amended" bill—the theme of the interested eulogies of hollow statesmen and false patriots—thus registers its respect for Catholics and their institutions:—

"Provided always, that every such deed, will, or testament shall be duly executed three calendar months, at the least, in order to pass and to give a title to any real estate, before the death of the person who shall execute or make the same:—" "Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to render lawful any donation, devise, or bequest to, or in favour of, any religious order, community, or society of the Church of Rome, bound by monastic or religious vows, prohibited by an act, passed in the tenth year of the reign of George IV., intituled, 'An act for the *relief* of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects,' or to, or in favour of, any member or members thereof."* So far for the spirit of this bill towards the monastic orders. Had any still existed, or been suffered to revive, the country would not be groaning under the weight of those horrid Bastiles, the poor-houses, which frown as monuments of Whig legislation, and which must frighten that treacherous party from looking for the confidence of Ireland.

Now, let the reader see whether, if it is not mitigated towards the secular clergy, that mitigation be not the effect of a necessity to which bigotry was forced to yield.

"And be it enacted, that it shall not be lawful for any such priest, or person, in holy orders of the Church of Rome, to alienate, set, or let, or in any manner demise, for any period whatever, such lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or any part thereof, or in any manner whatever to charge or encumber the same, or any property enjoyed by him under this act; but that

* Section 13.

all charges and incumbrances upon such lands, tenements, and hereditaments, or other property, and all conveyances, gifts, grants, demises, or subdemises of the same, or any part thereof, made, or to be made by any such priest or person, shall be absolutely void."*

Had such a clause restricted the progress of agricultural improvement in olden times, the possessions of the house of Bedford, and others of the English aristocracy, would not now have been so valuable. The recent debate in the House of Lords, on the motion of the Bishop of London, revealed the lamentable state of ecclesiastical properties in the metropolis, respecting nuisances which the apostle forbids us to name. The nature of the tenements with which those properties, especially in Westminster, were encumbered, filled some few of the members with sorrow, while it drew forth, it is said, at the expense of the Protestant Establishment, which it is sought to exalt by this bill, the convulsive merriment of the major part of the assembly. In Ireland, the land of periodical famine, ecclesiastical fortunes have been heaped on each other, to such an unchristian and scandalous amount, that any minister, anxious for the prosperity of the country, should have long since let loose, for the common weal, those hideous monopolies, which the Establishment has detained in injustice, and of which the ruinous condition of the towns which they oppress, bear sad attestation. Nay, on a late occasion, the auction programme of a dignitary of this Establishment exhibited such rare and curious specimens of foreign animals, as might, in their description, give employment to the genius of Cuvier himself. No change is to be effected in the London ecclesiastical property, of which the effects are deplored by the grave, laughed at by the profane, and attested by all. The parsons of the Irish Establishment may transmit those hereditaments, so fruitful in exotic animals, that they would be an accession to the menagerie of Dublin, and, no doubt, illustrate some of the zoological lectures, with which the Protestant archbishop occasionally seasons his orthodox addresses to the disciples of his own schools. Yet, while the ample funds of Catholic testators of past times are thus squandered, without scruple on the one hand, or complaint or correction on the other, the incipient bequests of real property, which Catholics, just emerging from poverty and persecution, are enabled to make, are to be clogged with such penal conditions, that their value must remain stationary for want of a tenure to stimulate industry, and their occupant must not have the franchise which the tenant of every other property may enjoy.

Yet this is the measure which Lord Normanby and others hail

* Section 14.

as a boon to the people of Ireland!! A boon, indeed! The Catholics of Ireland would be unworthy of the important position which they occupy, by their numbers, their industry, their property, and their intelligence, if they were not to repudiate, from whatever quarter, such an officious and unauthorized sponsor of their sentiments. In the scale of a nation's feelings and convictions, such light and fluttering opinions are scarcely a feather's weight, for they are sure to move in the direction of the political breeze of the moment.

Is not the bill, in its amended shape, infected with much of its original viciousness, requiring three months before death for the validity of testamentary deeds bequeathing landed property? Thus the most important period of a man's life—the short interval that may be left him, to atone for his past injustices—is attempted to be snatched from the mercies of the Almighty, by a penal despotism, which inexorably forbids reparation, plunging its tortured victim into all the agony of despair. Yet this is called a boon! Nothing but a deadly hate of the holy influences of the Catholic religion could inspire a clause, which thus deprives a dying man, guilty of injustice, of the ordinary condition of pardon. This is manifest from the comparison between the proportion of Catholic and Protestant charities within the last year. In favour of the Catholics, it was nearly in the proportion of four to one; and as, no doubt, many of those bequests were the fruit of dispositions, having reference to the awful considerations of judgment and eternity, the benevolence (!) of the law attempts to interpose, to secure to the living, perhaps, some ill-gotten goods, at the peril of the salvation of him, by whose frauds and injustices a portion of the property may have been put together. It is a frequent and malignant charge made against Catholic priests, that they dispense pardon for sins, without reference to the disposition of the penitent; and yet if they require, at the approach of death, the condition founded on reason, and laid down by St. Augustine, that, "unless restitution be made, the sin is not remitted"—thus guarding the penitent against a fatal delusion—they must be accused of troubling the repose of the infirm with vain and superstitious terrors. No doubt, it is the alarm felt at this disproportion between Catholic and Protestant charities, that has suggested this execrable bill, for the purpose of staying the current of a benevolence, as useful to society in alleviating the misfortunes of the forlorn, as it is conformable to religion and to the inspired writings, in expiating, by alms' deeds, the sins of the benefactors. However, the Establishment should feel no jealousy on this account, practised, as it has been, in a shorter and more summary way of acquiring such possessions. Of the ancient Catholic Church, the only portion

that appeared sacred in its eyes was its gold. Its penances, and its purgatories, and its masses, were thrown aside as the stubble. The parsons, therefore, very astutely appropriated the one, and relieved themselves from the other, thus revelling at ease in all the benefits of the sacred property, and throwing upon the priests the heavy burden of all of what they called its superstitious obligations.

Though I have read the amended bill with some attention, I must confess I sought in vain for any valuable improvement, such it seems as to have cast some of the Liberal peers into ecstacy. The offensive word, "minister," is, it seems, set aside, and the bill recognizes the clergy as "priests" of the Catholic Church. There is something even in an approach, however tardy and reluctant, to the language of truth and urbanity towards the Catholic clergy, which was in vain to be looked for in the detestable enactments of former times. Beyond this philological improvement, with which it were to be wished some "*arbiter elegantiarum*" had more profusely seasoned legal documents, for the sake of the legislators themselves, I find nothing in the amended bill deserving of any commendation.

But there is another, it appears, far more valuable modification: it is the accession of five "discreet and proper Catholics" to the commission!!! It is this insidious, and, I will add, insolent, modification against which I beg most solemnly to protest, not only in my own name, but in the name of the insulted rights, and privileges, and liberties of the Catholic Church, which no member of its sacred hierarchy is free to surrender. Is not Lord Beaumont called a Catholic? What a precious commissioner his lordship would make, in deciding the rights of the clergy and the poor to testamentary property!! They would as soon have the Dey of Algiers on the commission. How many such "discreet and proper Catholics" would not her Majesty's minister find this moment in Ireland, who, with the pliancy of Sir Lucas Dillon, of former days, would not fail to find for the crown, or the majority of Protestant commissioners, against the legitimate claimants, and who, like him, would deserve to be "extraordinarily well dealt withal," by giving them a reversionary interest in the ample possessions which, so "properly and discreetly," they might consent to alienate? Not one Catholic in Ireland, lay or clerical, would, for a moment, enjoy the confidence of the Catholic body, who would consent to become a member of a board so ingeniously adapted to all the purposes of religious annoyance and persecution; and I care not who or what he might be, I should look upon every such person as a traitor to the sacred interests of the Catholic religion.

If the public weal be the object, as it ever should be the

object, of legislation, instead of having the Catholics in a minority, while the amount of Catholic charities for the last year was four times that of Protestant bequests, why not leave the one and the other to the management and control of the pastors of their respective creeds? It is not sought to elude legal vigilance and responsibility; on the contrary, it is courted. Let the Protestant bishops and clergy manage their charities, under the sanction and control of the legislature. Let the parish priests of Ireland be incorporated for the same purposes, under the same legislative control. If it should be deemed too great a trust to vest in the parish priest, you can enlarge it to diocesan trust, under the Catholic bishop of the diocese and his clergy. If that still should seem too narrow a basis, you can widen it to the boundaries of each ecclesiastical province, constituting the bishops of the province, with a portion of the parochial clergy, a corporate body for the management of their respective charities. You can thus so extend its foundations, as to secure the most rigid and conscientious exactness in the application of the funds, and preclude all objections on the score of sufficient responsibility. Are the funds of the College of Maynooth mismanaged, or not properly accounted for? The only charge preferred against their management has been an economy, which many have pronounced sordid, and to which they scruple not to assert, the decencies of that establishment have been frequently sacrificed. At all events, the strict integrity of its trustees, mostly Catholic bishops, and of the bursars of the establishment, stands unimpeached.

The fatal error of your policy, as well as that of the Whigs, your predecessors in office, is a continual effort to encroach upon the essential and inalienable rights and jurisdiction of the bishops and clergy, in order to subject them to political combinations of motley influences, which it would be a dereliction of duty to recognize. This you have attempted, and are, no doubt, meditating, on a more enlarged scale in your enlarged schemes of education. Allow me, however, to inform you in time—especially as your recent speech has given us a glimpse of your contemplated policy, regarding academic education—that nothing but separate grants for separate education will ever give satisfaction to the Catholics of Ireland, and that whatever certain individuals may report to the contrary, the prejudices against your government scheme, called national, are justly deepening, instead of passing away.

Nay, it is turned by bigoted patrons and other functionaries into an engine of dire persecution. Having revealed enough of your contemplated measures, to test the public feeling, I am anxious to apprise you beforehand, that you miscalculate much, if you imagine that we shall ever suffer the education of the

people of Ireland to be planned or conducted by those who seem to have taken upon themselves the exclusive office of the directors of the national mind, and to whom—so well have they yet accorded with your views—you seem anxious to entrust the guidance of the youth of Ireland, and the laws and regulations by which its academies, colleges, and universities are to be governed. Before the next session of parliament we will have petitions, with thousands of signatures, praying for a share of the public funds for our people, in proportion to their numbers, and their services to the state. We shall also petition for the erection and endowment of Catholic provincial colleges, as well as diocesan seminaries. It will be well to meet our just wishes, for an average of two thousand pounds a week to the Repeal Association shows the mighty resources of a people resolved to be free. The yearly amount would throw into the shade your increased grant for education. If the present contemplated bill for a Board of Charitable Bequests, exceeding in anti-Catholic spirit all its predecessors, be persevered in, after those solemn, urgent, and repeated remonstrances, in the name of numbers of the hierarchy and people of Ireland, it will meet with that distrust and execration which it well deserves. There is no pressing exigency for immediate legislation on the subject. On so vital a measure the country should not be taken by surprise. Spare, then, I implore of you, the faithful members, who are ready to contest every inch of ground, by resorting to all the forms of delay, the necessity of fatiguing a weary senate by such necessary expedients for the safety of their country, and adjourn the consideration of the bill to the next session, when the collected deliberations of all classes of the clergy and people of Ireland will enable the minister to form a more correct estimate of the nature of the law which would best promote the interests of religion and of the state, and be most in accordance with the paramount rights and duties involved in the legislative measure.

I have the honour to be your very obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE BEQUESTS ACT.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, AUGUST 12, 1844.

SIR—Amidst all the fatigues and anxieties of office, you must, doubtless, be cheered by the retrospect of the recent victories which your policy has achieved in the House of Commons. Not only have you subdued the mutinous members who, on the sugar question, presumed to dispute your supremacy, thus reducing them to a worse slavery than that of the Indians, for whose lot they affected such hollow commisseration, but you have been also so successful in taming the fiery patriotism of the Celtic Whigs as to make them put on with the utmost equanimity the ignominious yoke of the Saxon Tories. By what magic can a minister evoke such power as to overcome those formidable difficulties, it would be beyond the range of my present object to inquire. I know not whether there are any such romantic believers in the mere influence of unassisted oratory as to ascribe your success to your rhetorical powers of persuasion. Some think Pitt is the great idol of your political idolatry. Others fancy they can trace a nearer resemblance in yours to the policy pursued by Walpole. But be the prototype what it may, it is certain that with all the dexterous distribution of the treasures of the state, which they so profusely squandered among their retainers, they could never rival you in the winning ways in which you can make converts, and rule an obsequious senate.

Never was the observation better verified, that “no one can serve two masters,” than in the universal execration which the Irish members have earned and called forth on this occasion. They may have risen in ministerial favour, but they have proportionably sunk in the estimation of the people. They were sent to sustain, and not to sell, their interests. In provoking the vengeance of ruthless landlords, by the exercise of their franchise, to which devotion many of the once comfortable farmers of Ireland have become victims and outcasts upon the world, they fancied at least they should have the consolation of returning Catholics to parliament who would watch over their interests and protect their religion. They never dreamt that whilst voting they were to be doomed to the two-fold misfortune of being

driven themselves from their houses, and betrayed by their false representatives. Yet, such are now the bitter reflections of thousands of the honest freeholders of Ireland in witnessing the recent apostacy of the Irish members. Their conduct admits of no palliation. At the tail of the session, verifying the ancient proverb of being fraught with poison, a measure clearly and incontestibly bearing on the face of it evidence of hatred to the Catholic religion, is introduced into parliament, and, instead of meeting with opposition from the professing Catholics of the house, is hailed as a boon conferred on the Catholics of Ireland! They might have delivered their own individual opinions, and poured forth their gratitude for the showers of ministerial patronage for which they thirsted; but they had no right to misrepresent and insult the Catholic people. No time was allowed for petition or remonstrance; but even during the brief interval in which the bill was hastily precipitated through the house, there was more than sufficient of the public feeling manifested to convince them, if they were not deaf and blind, that the bill was universally execrated. Numbers of the Catholic clergy and people petitioned against it. Many of the Catholic bishops from the provinces, some in union with their clergy, and others assembled in synod, sent forth in explicit terms their remonstrances and their reasons against this atrocious bill. The Repeal Association, the best and most unequivocal organ of the feelings of the Irish people, denounced it. The public journals that reflect faithfully the national mind were equally unsparing of their condemnation of this penal measure. The son of the great and revered individual who is now paying the forfeit of loving his country and his faith too well, found it necessary in defence of his father's insulted honour, whose name was attempted to be treacherously mixed up with this odious transaction, to come forward and repel the idea of any, even a constructive identification, with a bill of which the accursed object is, to rivet again the fetters which he was so successful in breaking. Thus, through every channel from which the feelings of the people usually find vent, was poured indignant condemnation of the measure, and yet the recreant members for Ireland, it is unnecessary to point out the exceptions, persevere to welcome as a boon a bill so universally stigmatized. Amidst the numbers of bishops and priests who opposed it, not a solitary voice was raised in its favour. Let it not be insinuated that any half or qualified consent, such as might be construed into an index of political coquetry, was whispered from any quarter. The insinuation on which some members rest as an apology must be a downright calumny. The Irish bishops are not, thank God! so timid or time-serving as to suppress their opinions upon any great public question vitally affecting the interests of their religion. This was

one; and so manifestly unreasonable, irreligious, and persecuting were the provisions of that enactment, that not one member of the house, however disposed to trifle with episcopal authority, would venture to affirm that it had the suffrage of even one solitary bishop in its favour.

Never was the loss or absence of the Liberator of Ireland more felt or to be lamented than on this unfortunate occasion. It was a master-stroke of a terrible policy to strike first their great political pastor, in order by the easy seduction of their other more pliant representatives, to prostrate once more the civil and religious liberties of the people. Had the ever-faithful and watchful sentinel of Ireland been suffered to be at his post, you would not have attempted, or would have attempted in vain, to bribe the venal, and then bind in shackles the Catholic Church. His seasonable letters would have conveyed lessons of awful warning to the Catholic people. The tones of his indignant denunciation would have rolled dismay along the benches of the treasury, and checked the terrified minister from profanely handling the sacred ark of our religion. His glance would have rebuked into sullen duty the disposition to desertion, which often before appeared among his own unfaithful troops. Time, which at last does justice to all, is, even during his life-time, throwing light upon his policy; and when we consider the nature of the instruments with which he had to work, we must wonder, not that he was unable to effect much good, but that he was endued with sufficient power to resist the course of evil legislation, into which his political allies must have been perpetually dragging him. And yet, heedless as they were of episcopal remonstrance against this execrable bill, those Catholic members were most anxious for episcopal aid in working out its provisions! True, the bishops might not understand it; but though they could not understand it in principle, they were for that very reason the more fitting instruments to work it in practice. These gentlemen are wise in their generation. It was not convenient to attend to the remonstrances of the bishops in the debate, for they well knew if attended to, the bill would have never passed into law. But it was more convenient to share with bishops the odium and the disgrace of working it, and to set up two or three episcopal targets to intercept the execration which was sure to fall upon the practical agents of so anti-religious a measure. We were told until the repetition tired, that the board could not give satisfaction, if it only consisted of laymen. Did it then follow as a matter of course that it would give satisfaction, if managed by crown-created episcopal commissioners? As Catholics, they should know that the objection against the one held equally against the others, and that bishops cannot, more than laymen, derive from the crown or parliament any power or com-

mission to manage and reduce to practice a law that strikes at the root of the holiest principles of our faith, that blights with its deadly poison the goodliest fruits which religion ever produced, and aims at producing schism, anarchy, and disorder in the church of God.

These are the three positions to which I shall confine my present letter. Why, it may be asked, introduce and persist in retaining the damning clause of invalidating the will of an unjust spoliator, should he not be fortunate enough to "redeem his soul by alms," by disposing of his landed property three months before his decease? Let not the abettors of this bill affect to be shocked at the epithet with which it is qualified. In the hands of God alone is left the lot and judgment of all his creatures; but as he has revealed to us that a reparation of injuries, the restitution of ill-gotten property, and the liberal distribution of alms-deeds are, in the dispensations of His mercy, among the most ordinary channels of conveying the graces of pardon, I will calmly inquire of the reader, who is it that is most disposed to trench upon the prerogatives of the Almighty, and the strict right of all his sinful creatures, he who would dry up, or he who would leave untouched, those channels of mercy? Hitherto they were sacred; some of the poor of Ireland have been refreshed with the bounty of those channels. It is to be hoped that like the alms-deeds of Cornelius, those benefactions were the means of drawing down on their donors the grace of pardon and salvation. And yet the heartless framers of this clause, expect that Catholic bishops will become parties in closing the doors of comfort against the poor, and of salvation against the wealthy. Perhaps you are not aware of the strange expedients to which vanity prompts numbers, in order to purchase property. To acquire what is called a political position, or parliamentary influence in a county, some scruple not to raise moneys, and plunge themselves into embarrassments, in order to purchase an estate. If, in such cases, debts should have accumulated,—if there were left no personal or chattel property to meet these obvious claims of justice; and if besides—as often happens—there were no near or immediate kinsman to whom injustice could appear to have been done, what must be thought of the horrid cruelty of a law which would forbid a poor sinner, in such circumstances, from disposing of his property at his death in a manner which would fructify in the blessings of charity or education? Think you that bishops will be found to put a seal on the insulting calumny, that the death-bed of the wealthy is too often besieged by sinister influence? It may be useful to inform you that the reverse is often the case, that the ministering priest is the best friend of the broken-hearted widow and the orphan, and whilst he exhorts the heirless wealthy to aid the institutions raised for the fatherless, there are found number-

less instances where the pious and considerate clergyman is the protector of the claims of the children and other kinsmen.

After thus striving to sever the religious links that bind God and his creatures at the awful moment of death, it naturally enough pursues those religious orders which have sprung from the holy influence of those doctrines. And think you that the bishops will subscribe to the unchristian policy first conceived by a Portuguese minister, that dooms to annihilation some of the noblest orders that ever flourished in the Catholic church? Is it thus you deal with the best promoters of public instruction? Are you really an advocate for free and enlightened education, or is the profession of zeal for it only a mask to hide the ministerial despotism which aims at the subjugation of the mind and intellect of the people? I well recollect the parliamentary depositions of Mr. Anthony Blake regarding the religious orders. The perfection of every character requires consistency, and, as he would be no doubt a fit instrument to manage the new board, he could not be forced to encourage those orders, of the value of which he had given such creditable testimony. Besides, as you have taken the National Board under your protection, it must have no rival. The board is yet supported by a grant out of the consolidated fund, until, like the military barracks or the pauper Bastiles, the country is covered with the government schools, where it is sought that no national sentiment should be lisped, no national feeling cherished, and no national emblem worn. By-and-by John Bull will begin to growl at the abstraction out of his pocket of such an enormous amount of the consolidated fund, and then to appease him the grant must be raised in the shape of a county cess from a ground-down tenantry. Such shall be the bitter fruits to the Irish people of your gratuitous education!! These are not conjectures: the written plans of some of those embryo ministers of public instruction are now before me. They have been already realized in the plans by which the constabulary of the country are supported. The soldiers were paid out of the consolidated fund; but when John Bull protested against paying for the troops, the peasantry have been oppressed with the payment of half the tax which came before out of the imperial revenue.

To feed the poor with the spontaneous fruit of charity never would have done without a mercenary staff of gentlemen paupers to annex to the concern, and to enforce taxes for their relief. To rear edifices for public instruction, and to endow them with the spontaneous benefactions of the pious and the wealthy, would not have answered the purposes of those who are aiming at creating in Ireland the educational despotism that is crumbling in France. Hence no religious orders are to be tolerated. Hence no pious bequests, or charitable donations to sustain them. Were

they suffered to rear their heads in the country, and were they to receive any support from legalized charities, the National Board and its schools would become nuisances ; and all the employment of its ministerial and mercenary agents would be for ever gone. Therefore, the best instructors that ever reared and matured the mind of a nation must be proscribed with penalties ; and the sons of Ignatius, who have left no science unexplored, and no field of literature uncultivated, whose zeal has travelled through every clime, and to whose healing benevolence no human woe has been a stranger, must be sacrificed to a ruthless, penal, and inexorable law, which blows its pestiferous breath over the fairest fruit that ever gladdened the Christian vineyard. Think you that bishops can be parties to the diffusion of such a pestilence, or that the Roman Pontiff could relish such a participation in the proscription of one of the best of the religious orders ?

But the more frightful, and daring, and revolutionary, portion of the bill is yet to be noticed and execrated. Those crown commissioners, no matter whether laymen or bishops, are to adjudicate by their signatures on rights, privileges, liberties, and duties, on which they have no more right to adjudicate than the Emperor of Morocco. Think you that any bishops will, at the bidding of the crown, undertake thus to usurp the rights of their brethren, and of the Roman Pontiff ? The bishop alone, under the Pope, has the necessary and inalienable right to adjudicate who may be the legitimate pastors and dignitaries in his diocese ; the Pope alone, who are the bishops and archbishops ; and to attempt a decision on these points, without the consent of the parties, would be an encroachment on their authority, and a subversion of the essential discipline of the Catholic Church. It is not difficult to imagine (other fresh instances, not yet alluded to have occurred in the colonies) that the bishop would defend the rights of the canonical pastor, and that some contumacious pretender would appeal to the crown or the board of commissioners. What would such an appeal be but the bringing of a case from the sole, rightful judge to an uncanonical tribunal ? If it should be urged by the Catholic slaves, who love the measure for its patronage, that such a collision of judgment between the episcopal commissioners and the ordinary, would not be probable, and, therefore, should not be feared ; the answer is, the interests of the Catholic Church do not depend on the contingencies of personal feelings. What is wrong in principle must be wrong in practice. To him, certainly, the volume of history would be like an old almanac, who would not pronounce with certainty that many such collisions would soon take place, and shake the repose of the Catholic Church to its centre. Think you that bishops will be found to lend their aid to such a schismatical concern ? The principle is wrong, essentially wrong, and no one can advo-

cate a false doctrine in theory that is not prepared, if beset with temptation, to carry it out to the most pernicious consequences to which such a false doctrine can lead.

Having thus disposed of those principles of the bill, its interference with the practical freedom of the most salutary doctrines of the Catholic church, next its blighting influence on religious education and morality—the fruits of those doctrines—and, finally, its tendency to schism and anarchy in the Church, I must adjourn some further considerations, illustrative of the bad spirit in which it originated, and the incalculable mischief of which any Catholic sanction of it would be productive.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CIV.

TO THE VERY REVEREND AND REVEREND THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

ON THE BEQUESTS ACT.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT, 1844.

VENERABLE AND DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—Appointed by Divine Providence, and the favour of the Holy See, to rule,* under the Supreme Pastor of the Church, this portion of his fold; and impressed with the severe account we must give of our stewardship, so awfully set forth in the liturgy of this day,† we beg to turn your attention to the imminent danger in which our holy faith is involved, from the open and unblushing assaults that are now made on its sacred discipline. Its discipline is one of the most sacred fences by which the faith of the Catholic Church is guarded and secured. When any serious inroads are made on the one, the other suffers, and is often eventually destroyed. When a false step is once taken, the descent is easy and natural;‡ one abyss leads to another, and it is God alone that can arrest the body rushing downwards in its fatal career.

You are not, beloved brethren, strangers to the various attempts that have been successively made to introduce ruinous changes into the discipline of our Holy Church, and to bring its pastors under the unhallowed control of the ruling minister of

* Acts, xx, 28.

† Luke, xxi.

‡ Psalm xli.

the day. The change was once proposed in the form of a Veto, to be given to the crown in the nomination of our bishops; another time, in the insidious offers of pensioning our clergy, under the hypocritical pretence of relieving, as was pretended in the case of the poor laws, the necessitous from the burden of their support; and now, under the treacherous guise of a Charitable Bequests Bill, a similar, but more dangerous inroad, is attempted to be made on our holy discipline. Each and every one of those projects had clamorous advocates among some professing Catholics, members of the Catholic Church in name, but who, for the base patronage of the ruling powers, were ready to surrender the most sacred rights of their Church into the hands of their enemies. Nay, such was the importunity of that noisy and unprincipled class, and so plausible and flattering were the professions of the courtiers of the day, that some of the venerable prelates of the Church, fond of quiet, too confiding in others, and unable to cope with wily and unprincipled diplomats, were lured into a temporary support of some of the same measures—a fatal mistake which they afterwards sincerely confessed and deplored.

Of all the insidious schemes that have been yet proposed to change the discipline of the Catholic Church, to corrupt its pastors, to alienate from them the affections of their beloved flocks, and thus to subdue that Church which ages of persecution could not conquer, none has been framed with a more elaborate ingenuity than that of the Charitable Bequests Bill, and none of the other schemes has ever called forth so promptly such an array of Catholic authority to seal its condemnation. Though stealthily introduced, and hastily forced through the parliament, it met prompt opposition from the people and clergy. After passing into law, it was forcibly and numerously protested against by all classes of the hierarchy. Two of the archbishops petitioned against the bill, and more than half the other prelates of Ireland, with about a thousand of the clergy from different parts of the kingdom, have expressed their decided, unyielding, and persevering opposition to this iniquitous penal law in a variety of forms.

You may judge, then, of the continuous and deadly assaults which the Catholic Church is destined to sustain, when notwithstanding such a host of opponents to this execrable bill, a rumour has been industriously set forth, that some professing Catholics—nay, that some of the Catholic prelates, are ready to become commissioners to carry such a law into execution! This must be a gross calumny on the members of that body; nor should we on this occasion allude to this report, if this were a measure in which any lay Catholic or any prelate, according to the dictates of his conscience, could do so without invading the rights, usurp-

ing the authority, and encroaching on the essential and apostolical jurisdiction of every Catholic bishop in Ireland.

We will not dwell with any lengthened detail on the several enactments of this law; suffice it to say, that its penal tendency and anti-Catholic provisions have been set forth by one whose zeal for his religion, and whose legal knowledge, are equally beyond our praise; and that so slight are the alterations which this cursed bill underwent in passing into a law, that the strongest objections urged against the bill remain in their full force. Notwithstanding the manifest desire and interest of the government to give to this penal law a more popular complexion, no lawyer of name has ventured to combat the opinions given by Mr. O'Connell to the venerable Bishop of Meath, the faithful guardian of the sacred trusts that have been confided to him, on the enormous and gigantic hold which this law gives through an obsequious and dependent board, to an anti-Catholic government, on all Catholic trusts for pious uses not as yet decided by a decree in chancery.

This law transfers, or rather labours to transfer, to a board dependent on the government, the power of adjudicating on who is parish priest of such a parish, bishop of such a diocese, questions sometimes involving such a train of canon law, that it is only the bishops, with regard to their own respective sees, and the Pope with regard to all, that can finally decide them. Surely the rumours cannot be true, that any bishops would undertake an office so intrusive and usurping, especially in defiance of the solemn and repeated remonstrances of so many of their brethren.

This law restricts every Catholic in this diocese from bequeathing at his death-bed so much as one acre of land for any pious or charitable purpose. There is not a Catholic in this diocese who could not bequeath his whole estate, if not affected by deeds or settlements, for any purpose, however profligate, or profane, or impious, so little is the natural right of disposing of property interfered with by the civil law; it is only to intercept charities towards the advancement of religion, as in his case, it interferes. You will not, dearly beloved brethren, easily credit the rumour that any Catholics, much less Catholic bishops, would become parties to such an odious distinction regarding property, which aims at the destruction of religion.

Finally, it follows up, with a persecuting consistency, the odious enactment framed in the Emancipation Bill against the religious orders, and renders null and void all bequests and legacies made by the dying Catholic for some of those institutions that have contributed much to support and adorn the Catholic Church. We cannot credit the rumour that any Catholics, much less prelates, would lend themselves to the persecution of the religious orders, and become, in the hands of their

enemies, the legal executioners of their unjustly proscribed brethren.

But we will not pursue with fatiguing minuteness, the odious particulars of this penal law, satisfied that, however odious and cruel, it would, like its abortive predecessors, become utterly harmless, on account of the public hatred, if it were not for the unnatural machinery by which it is attempted to bring it into operation. Yes, our enemies wish to make a reality of the disgraceful proverb so expressive of the readiness with which Irish Catholics assist in the ruin of each other. The worst feature, then, in this horrid law, compared to which its special enactments are innocuous, is the construction of the board itself—bad in principle as the former board, but framed so as to disguise in part its destructive operation. Yes, it is the association of Catholics—nay, perhaps, of Catholic bishops, with the old and inveterate enemies of our faith, detached from their brethren, and acting against the interests of their religion; dependent on the crown, fearful of its displeasure, and fawning on its caresses; hearing the language of their new companions, and adopting, with the zeal of proselytes, many of their perverse opinions; forming, in short, a new and anomalous connexion in alliance with those influences that have been ever exercised for the destruction of the Catholic religion in Ireland. Oh, this is the frightful and humiliating part of this law—dividing a body which, were it not for the acid of the court, would have remained united; and exhibiting that hierarchy, once a goodly spectacle, which was “beautiful as the tents of Israel, and terrible as an army in battle array,”* now about becoming disjointed, weak, and deformed—an object of sorrow to the faithful, but of triumphant derision and scorn to the inveterate foes of Catholic Ireland!! But no, in despite of court intrigue, the Catholic Church in Ireland will be united and triumphant.

We feel it our duty, dearly beloved brethren, in this hour of darkness, of peril, and dismay, to raise our voice with all the energy which the nature of the crisis requires, and to send forth our warning to our beloved flocks, to arm themselves with vigilance and fortitude, and to combat with success this fresh enemy of their religion. Times of difficulty require more than ordinary courage—times of seduction an unslumbering vigilance. Not only is the wolf abroad,† but he is abroad in sheep’s clothing. Oh, yes, as in France previous to the Revolution, a host of infidels—some flushed with fresh enthusiasm, and some hoary in practical indifference for religion—is threatened to be let loose upon the country in the shape of collegiate instructors, mocking the most venerated institutions, and setting up the vagaries of

* Canticles, vi, 9.

† St. Matthew, vii, 15.

their own shallow intellects as the idols of their adoration ; and it is at a moment like this, when all the champions of faith, morality, and science, should be banded together to avert the same horrors that followed in the train of the licentious literature of France, you are called on to confide in a law conceived in the spirit of persecution, annihilating the orders of the Jesuits, the most faithful auxiliaries of faith and morality, as well as of literary and scientific education, the bishops ever had, in order that impiety should run its unchecked career ; and yet bishops are expected to be active agents in this league against religion and social order ! “ The abomination of desolation ”* is not yet in the “ holy place.”

These calamities we are called on by the nature of our holy office to labour to avert, mindful of the words of the prophet : “ If the watchman see the sword coming, and sound not the trumpet, and the people look not to themselves, and the sword come and cut off a soul from among them, he indeed is taken away in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at the hand of the watchman.”† This law is a calamity which, worse than sword or famine, would bring a blight upon the land, by controlling the living energy and freedom of the Catholic Church, which never can be cramped in its benevolent activity, without social misery and national wretchedness, as well as a languor of the moral virtues, following as a disastrous consequence.

It is certainly painful to reflect, that while the people are peacefully asking for bread, the legislature should give them a stone ; and that, instead of a relaxation of the odious remnant of the penal laws, the reward of their heroic fidelity should be, to bind their religious freedom with heavier fetters. However, you will not, under any provocation, forget the lessons of peace recommended by our Divine Redeemer, or those of allegiance to our beloved monarch, so strongly recommended in the writings, and illustrated in the lives, of the first teachers of our holy religion. With the same noble freedom, however, that characterized their conduct, you will petition, remonstrate, and petition and remonstrate again, against the continuance of this injustice, and impress strongly, but respectfully, on our rulers, that it is a violation of the laws of good and impartial government to deprive faithful subjects, as in this case, of their civil rights, from a hatred of their religion. Implore, entreat, adjure all of your own body not to be parties to those penal inflictions on their fellow-members. Impress on them this duty by the bonds of our common faith, by the memory of the common persecutions which we have all sustained, and by the hope of the common triumphs which, if we are still faithful

* St. Mark, xiii, 14.

† Ezechial, xxxviii, 6

to our holy religion, must crown them. Pray that the reign of our beloved monarch may be long and happy, and let all the people recite on their knees a Pater, and an Ave Maria, and a Creed, imploring of the Father of Mercies, through the intercession of the ever glorious and blessed Virgin, Mother of God, to send down on us, clergy and people, at this trying crisis, an ample effusion of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost*—“wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord.”

Your very faithful servant in Christ,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE BEQUESTS ACT.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. TIMOTHY,
JANUARY 24, 1845.

SIR—While you survey with singular satisfaction the wide extent of spiritual bondage over Great Britain, you are, doubtless, mortified by the painful contrast of the spiritual freedom of Ireland; and, anxious for the diffusion of this religious thraldom, you fear that its reign cannot be permanent or secure until the light of its Catholic faith is extinguished in a country so contiguous as to be likely to become contagious. It is not the first time that Ireland, an exception to the surrounding servitude, roused the envy of the despots who doomed its liberty to destruction. Such was the policy, which we are told by Tacitus, Agrippa had in contemplation. He despaired of establishing the dominion of the imperial arms over Britain and Caledonia, as long as Irish freedom was, in the language of the ancient historian, within view. And you, too, improving on his policy, despair of perpetuating the worse despotism of heresy, under which the once-favoured land of England groans, as long as the light and freedom of the Roman Catholic faith burns with such steady strength and lustre in the neighbouring island.

* Isaias, xi, 5.

Hence the untiring exertions of that Protestant ascendancy, still so hostile, to extinguish a religion which is a living reproach to the revolting errors that disfigure the face of England. Witness the lamentable fruit of those errors in the entire disorganization, of what is termed the Church of England, and in the hideous intestine discord by which the crazy frame is falling asunder. Witness, too, the dreadful immorality which is their offspring, and the prevalence of those unprovoked and gratuitous crimes, which, in despite of the insolence of its journalists, and the homage which wealthy nations are sure to extort, even unto the palliation of their vices, have made the moral condition of England, a word of warning over the civilized world. Are you ambitious to sink Ireland to the level of the same degrading social materialism? Should you succeed, instead of the occasional outbreaks of revenge which humanity abhors, and which would have been frequent were it not for the incessant influence of religion and its priesthood, you would witness a fierce spirit of national indignation, which not two, nor all the spare legions within your command, could repress. So much is the tranquillity of the country and the stability of the throne, beholden to the pious and disinterested exertions of its calumniated priesthood.

The lamentable state of social disorganization to which I have alluded, is felt and deplored by many of the English prelates, who confess they are unable to apply a remedy. Witness, for example, the ludicrous embarrassment of his lordship of Exeter—to-day issuing his episcopal mandates for ecclesiastical uniformity, and revoking them again, it is said, at the imperious requisition of the minister of the crown. Such of the members of that body as possess a tolerable share of learning, whose intellect ranges beyond the small pale of the Anglican establishment, and the brief period of its disastrous schism, surveying the social happiness enjoyed by the nations when the Church was not the chained hand-maid of the crown, are in a condition the most pitiable. While their zeal is animated by the heroic fortitude of the ancient champions of the freedom of the Church, they fancy for a time that they can imitate their example. No sooner, however, do they engage in the attempt, than they are obliged to own that from the establishment, though retaining some of the material features of a church, the spirit that animated and informed it is gone; and instead of the holy vigour of an Ambrose or an Anselem, who arraigned the cruel delinquencies of royalty itself; they are silent on the crimes of the nation, because they must regulate by the nod of a political minister the nature of their pastoral instructions.

No doubt you are anxious to bring about a similar reform in the Catholic Church in Ireland. If so, you must expect it will be productive of the same disastrous results upon morality and

order. It is as a step to this complete subjection of the Catholic Church to the state, which no doubt is your aim, you have introduced that fatal measure of the bequests bill, and by its fruits you may judge of the wisdom of the policy which, in an evil hour, you have adopted. You have avowed that your difficulty was Ireland. Have you not increased and thickened those difficulties by this disastrous measure? Never, within the memory of the oldest of its inhabitants, was Ireland in a state of more frightful excitement. And why? From the encroachment you have striven, but I hope in vain, to make on the freedom of the Catholic religion. And allow me to tell you in all sincerity, that as you are now about meeting the parliament, your first measure must be the repeal, the total repeal of that penal law, root and branch, if you wish to restore tranquillity to Ireland. I will not fatigue you or the public attention with the detail of any of the arguments against this iniquitous law, that are now as familiar as they are forcible. Whoever can resist the evidence adduced by Sergeant Shee, and principally by Mr. O'Connell, of the ruinous effects of that law, if unrepealed, on the best interests of the Catholic religion, must have an understanding steeled by prejudices which no argument can approach. The question has been so far argued that persons the most illiterate, as well as the more enlightened, are in possession of those arguments, and hence an intellectual and religious opposition to the measure, deep, wide—embracing all orders and all classes—laity, clergy, priests and bishops, gentry and peasantry; in short, spread over the entire country, and fast as the hold which their faith has on its people.

When it was announced that three estimable and venerable prelates were associated to the commission to carry this odious act into effect, the public mind was stunned, and a sudden grief fell on the heart of the nation. Their sorrow was intense; they felt that, by the novel connexion, the freedom of their church was in manifest danger; and the appointment, like a dam chafing and fretting the current which it was intended to check, raised it still higher and gave it further force.

There are not in the world a people who feel more veneration for their prelates than the Irish people, and, therefore, you must suspect that the measure must be bad which could produce dissensions in a body, the members of which the spirit of Catholic faith and concord keeps, in general, so closely compacted. It requires no extraordinary sagacity to perceive that you, in looking for the aid of Catholic bishops, sought not to support the Catholic religion, or to exalt its priesthood; but rather to buttress the tottering fabric of Protestant ascendancy. If you meant, as in policy as well as justice you should have done, to legislate on a principle of common fairness towards the Catholics, why not

recognize in law those canonical rights and apostolical jurisdiction, on which this penal law incontestibly encroaches. Yet with the attempt to injure and degrade, you and a few hollow encomiasts take credit to yourselves for acknowledging, for the first time, the rights and titles of the episcopacy in Ireland ! Yes, you acknowledge them to insult them, and even the honor you show has in it all the bitterness of scornful derision. How do you honor even those venerable prelates whom you have made members of your ministerial board ? By giving them the titles of bishops, without Sees, and emblazoning over their heads the sole and exclusively legitimate titles of others to the same Sees which their sainted and heroic predecessors would never have consented to acknowledge.

There cannot be two lawful bishops of the same See. The respective epithets of Catholic and Protestant might, if compromise could be at all admitted, mark the distinct sources of their apostolical or parliamentary jurisdiction. But instead of this the Protestant prelates are blazoned forth as the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, without any qualification, while, in insulting and subordinate contrast, the Catholic prelates are announced as archbishops—of—no where. But you give them a precedence, a rank in society ! Yes, you strip them of their rights, as far as in you lies. You amuse them with the shadow of ceremony, which is unmeaning, but as far as it is significant of substantial rights and duties ; and you humble them with the condescension of your insulting patronage, such as you would exhibit to some exiled and fallen dynasty, fixing on them more strongly the gaze of pity, by the mockery of a homage of which you disown the legitimate foundation. What would her Prime Minister think of the respect of any individual for royalty, who would allow her Majesty the name of Queen, withholding her rightful titles of Great Britain and Ireland, on which it is founded ? Surely, the recognition of her name could not disguise the want of fidelity necessarily included in any such omission of her rightful title. Of what inconsistency and confusion is not bigotry productive ! You would fain confer on some of our bishops a parliamentary jurisdiction which you are incompetent to give, and deprive others of their apostolical jurisdiction, which you are as incompetent to take away ! And, by way of indemnifying the one for the indignity of master slaves, to which you labour to degrade them, you give them a ministerial license of making a similar invasion on the apostolical rights of their brethren. You expect that they will do all this to prolong the existence of the anti-national and odious establishment, some of whose prelates, their fellow-benchers, poured forth but the other day their usual contributions of orthodox hatred on the idolatry and tyranny of the Church of Rome. But no ; more valuable by far than the degrading

honors of the oppressors of the faith, are the confidence, the attachment, and affection, of the devoted Catholics of Ireland, who, instead of denying the titles, or the jurisdiction, of their beloved bishops, will revere them as the only legitimate occupants of the thrones, which some of the most eminent of the successors of the apostles have adorned.

Immediately connected with this subject is the affectation of a new-born reverence among the hereditary enemies of Ireland for the rights of the Roman Pontiff. If you really revere the centre of Catholic unity, why endeavour to strip the Catholic bishops of their titles, which his Holiness has conferred, and without which, and the spiritual influence they confer, none of those bishops would be deemed worth a moment's negotiation to relieve the embarrassments of a prime minister. Perhaps this feeling is like the prodigal's appreciation of virtue, from the habit of sinful courses, springing from the evidence of the disorders into which a privation of that light which issues from the Apostolic See, has so long plunged the population of England. If so, then we should hail such a feeling, and help their faint and tottering steps in returning to the light and merciful consolations of that paternal home from which they have been so long straying. Oh, no! it is the envious feeling of the fallen spirit at the happiness springing from truth and union; and their tongue, like his, strives to dart forth in glozing flattery the venom of destruction. They may spare themselves their officious solicitude about the conduct of the Catholics of Ireland. In their fight for their faith, the Irish Catholics are no raw recruits. Thanks to the persecuting policy of England, and the atrocious code of her sanguinary edicts, the Irish Catholics, in defending their faith, have been made the most practised champions upon earth; and they have not combated so triumphantly and so long without the conviction that they owe their signal triumphs to their unexampled fidelity to that Holy Chief, whom their Master placed over the Church for their guidance. They will then cling—as their pious ancestors have done—to the rock of Peter; they shall labour, too, for the peaceful recovery of all those rights, of which, on account of their attachment to the chair of Peter, they have been deprived—nor shall they suffer any power of parliamentary creation to intercept one particle of that homage we all owe his Holiness, or of that spiritual jurisdiction, of which he is the best guardian. And allow me to ask you who are they who in reality are making inroads on the power of the Pope, and striving to make a mockery of his jurisdiction? Is it we who constitutionally labour for the repeal of the bequests act, which is repugnant to the canons of the Church, and not in accordance with the principles of the Catholic religion; or those, who, without consulting that Holy See, strive tyrannically to enforce so penal

an enactment? Before the commission was named we sought, as was the duty of Catholics, that this question should be referred to the decision of the Holy Father. We were told—why refer to the Holy Father a question regarding temporalities? Such was the unceremonious way in which the authority of Rome was treated. The people meet, resolve, denounce the unconstitutional encroachment on their civil rights. They are told that they violate the obedience due to their spiritual superiors, by their deliberating and resolving on a matter which they should leave to a spiritual tribunal. Thus the Pope must not decide, because it is a temporal matter; the people must not decide, because it is a spiritual concern; and during this unprincipled and sophistical shifting, the prophecy of a celebrated writer is sought to be realised by the erection of a ministerial and political papacy in our own kingdom, directed by the nod of the premier, disregarding, on one hand, the authority of the Pope, and on the other striving to crush the religious and political rights of the people.

Whoever reflects on the career of Mr. Anthony Blake—his evidence before a committee of the House of Commons, and his being a member of this commission, must, unless the commission be speedily dissolved, entertain serious fears for the continuance of the Pope's substantial authority in Ireland. When I consider that he has been the old advocate of the Veto, and of every measure for fettering the freedom of the Catholic Church—the pliant and dexterous follower of every successive administration, whether Whig or Tory—the self-appointed patron of Maynooth College, in order to project, I suppose, with Mr. Thomas Wyse, how far it may be feasible, by a little domestic concordat, to effect some change in the system of the teaching of its faith, for an increase in its finances—in short, the concoctor of a scheme of a royal commission of bishops, to manage the payment of the Catholic clergy, and to inflict the penalties of misdemeanour on the others, who should not yield to the usurped powers of political bishops of the parliamentary commission; when I consider how, on that occasion, he trifled with the authority of the Pope, recommending a course of penal legislation, and then leaving the Pope to shift for his own authority the best way he could; when I reflect that much of what has been suggested has been already done in establishing the commission of the bequests act, I am only consoled by the reflection that the mischievous projects of the man will be defeated by the pious zeal of the Catholics of Ireland, in procuring a total repeal of the law; and were it not for this their zeal, I fear that as a public and political character, history would have to record, that, since the disastrous advent of Protestant ascendancy, a worse importation, or one more fatal to the Catholic religion, than the same Mr. Anthony

Blake was never wafted back to Ireland. To Lord Stanley this gentleman would be a most valuable acquisition in the colonies. How humiliating the prospect of the once glorious church of Ireland, when its pastors allow their holiest rights and duties to be invaded and usurped by such scheming political adventurers!

I cannot, therefore, but deplore the misdirection of the patriotic feelings of some ardent Irishmen, combating the phantom of a foreign temporal power, while they are heedless of the enemy that is threatening them at home. Instead of being alarmed at the exercise of any undue power from abroad, what is desirable is, to prevent any encroachment on the Pope's hallowed authority in protecting our church. Some are also in ecstacies rather immoderate at the diplomatic announcement that no negotiations are going forward on the affairs of the Irish Church between the Holy See and the British government. Even should there not, what grounds are there for congratulation? What need you require a concordat, if, even without one, you can erect your commission at home, and delegate to it a parliamentary jurisdiction to invade the rights of the Catholic hierarchy? What more do you require? Lord Heytesbury hopes, indeed, that the Catholics of Ireland will, therefore, be contented! Yes, they will be less suspicious when the bequests act is repealed, and the bequest board dissolved; otherwise, his Excellency's proposition amounts to this:—"Be not alarmed; we have only made a breach in the walls of your church; hold, forbear your meetings; put confidence in us, your old and trusty friends, and we will pledge ourselves to halt at the gates, and make no further advance on your religion."

It is also made a subject of similar congratulation, that should a concordat be negotiated, all then would assist in averting such evils from the Catholic Church. Instead of wasting our solicitude on distant and contingent dangers, we should be alive to the imminent evils of the commission now established at home, and labour to close the breach which has been recently made in the bulwarks of its holy discipline. It will be enough to say:—"Allow the present incipient usurpation of the rights of the bishops to be firmly established, and in future they will obtain every necessary assistance in repelling further aggression." Such is their mode of dealing with the evil, who talk of amendments in the act, and the removal or modification of this or that objectionable clause, while they allow the encroaching and invading principle of the commission itself—the vigorous root of the evil—to remain. No; the successful step of letting any portion of the act remain, would only prompt you or any other minister to invite other prelates to join him in a fresh assault on our liberties, by another new commission still more penal. The

example once given by good and enlightened men, of joining one commission, in disregard of the known wishes and feelings of, in general, the people, the clergy, and the majority of their brethren, might be successively adopted, at some future day, by others, improving on their models, until the citadel of Catholicity would thus be surrendered, and almost all the sacred functions of the hierarchy be usurped, by motley aggregations of political and parliamentary commissioners.

Let, then, your first recommendation to parliament be the repeal of an act, which the mischief already produced should be a warning of the more awful calamities with which it is fraught. A law so penal to religion, and so utterly repugnant to the interests and declared will of the entire people, would, according to all sound civilians and jurists, be downright tyranny to enforce. You feared, if we are to judge by the mighty combinations of law and armaments, to which you resorted to crush them, the display of popular power exhibited by the monster meetings. The malignant spirit of your bequests act has evoked a far more formidable agitation. Yes; the people of Ireland and its clergy love their country. They are solicitous for its prosperity, and will give every aid, compatible with their respective duties, towards the restoration of a native legislature. But they love their religion more—the one being a temporal and the other an eternal interest. Indeed, so much are Ireland and the Catholic religion bound up together in the system of English domination, that it would be difficult to separate the interests of one from the other. To the spoliation of their country's rights, religion has often reconciled the Irish people. Their history has attested that they are a nation who, for that holy religion, are ready to sacrifice their lives.—I am your faithful servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CVI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE INFIDEL COLLEGES.

TUAM, JUNE 7, 1845.

SIR—The infidel, the slavish, and demoralizing scheme of academic education which you scruple not to proffer to the faithful

people of Ireland, is a proof that we should be more apprehensive for the faith and liberties of this country during a period of political cajolery, than during one of avowed persecution. Of the imminent danger springing from rash and mistaken confidence, the history of our unfortunate country furnishes a variety of melancholy examples. Never was a more fatal blow aimed at the rights and the prosperity of the Irish people, than when the Duke of Portland, affecting to sympathize with our national feelings, proffered, on the part of government, the vice-regal residence in the Phoenix Park to Grattan, who humbled that very government by the declaration and the achievement of Irish independence. In the delirium of the national joy, the deep designs of the viceroy were not sufficiently seen through, and though the insidious boon was not accepted, yet the simplicity of some of the diplomatists of that time was so over-reached, and the cupidity of others was so dexterously assailed, that the enemies of Ireland ceased not to push forward their first advantage, until they at length succeeded in wresting from her all the benefits which that illustrious patriot had gained.

We are now arrived at an analogous epoch. Often had petitions been forwarded to the government for an increased grant to the College of Maynooth, and as often were the eyes of statesmen, now so open to its wants, closed to the destitution which they so pathetically deplore. At length the peaceful and legitimate remonstrances of the clergy and people of Ireland, conveyed through those safe and constitutional channels within which they have been uniformly confined, brought to the ministry a conviction of Irish wrongs to which before they were utterly insensible. I need not remind you of Sir James Graham's declaration, that concession had reached its limit, and yet such is now his new-born affection for the Irish people, that concession has only just issued from its starting-post. Let it not be imagined that I wish to diminish the grace of the Maynooth endowment. Far from it; there is a conventional courtesy due to statesmen even for the tardy justice which it is not longer in their power to deny; and there is a refinement, as well as a generosity, in the Irish people, which will not withhold a suitable expression of such conventional acknowledgments for this trifling restitution of their plundered rights.

It is from your miscalculation of the just standard of Irish feeling regarding the Maynooth grant, that you have in an evil hour been betrayed into the adoption of the scheme of infidel education. You fancied that under the shadow of the Maynooth endowment, you could steal on the country a disastrous and demoralizing measure, which would have neutralized all the advantages of the other. And what is still more strange, it appears you were sorely disappointed when this "gigantic scheme of

godless education" met its merited condemnation from the Catholic hierarchy. The country is indebted to Sir Robert Inglis for so felicitous a description of this huge impiety—a description so just and characteristic, that it will become as memorable as the description of certain trials by jury—"a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." You could not, however, be so surprised at the unanimous condemnation of the Catholic prelates of a measure so dangerous to faith and morals, if you had not been imposed upon by some of those unprincipled professing Catholics, by whom the minister is constantly beset—who conceal their selfish ambition under an affected concern for the interests of the state, and who not only misrepresent the sentiments of the Catholic people and clergy, but are willing to lend themselves as the ready instruments of any enactment, however odious, for en chaining the liberties of the Roman Catholic Church. Some of those faithful counsellors have borne evidence of their desire to thwart and embarrass the Pope himself, by the measures of legislation which they recommended; and some of them are proving the sincerity of that evidence, by their unhallowed attempts to trample not only the authority of bishops, but that, too, of the Supreme Pontiff, on the question of education. The spiritual sword, which has been already drawn in defence of the freedom of religion and education, and which henceforward will be more extensively wielded, is now the fittest weapon for the times, "reaching as it does into the division of the soul and the spirit," and distinguishing the genuine practical believers from the mass of "common Christianity," in which it is now esteemed the glory or the shame of all its discordant sectaries to be huddled together. It must be some confused idea of this unsightly amalgamation that took possession of your mind, and that of the Secretary for the Home Department, when you could fancy that it might find favour with the sworn guardians of the Catholic faith. In the discharge of all the moral, social, and domestic duties towards their fellow-men, Catholics will never make any invidious distinctions; but the guardianship of their faith is a sacred trust confided to their pastors, "and having nothing to do to judge them that are without," we have been, and shall be, contented to confine our solicitude to the protection of the religious faith of our own.

Every reader of the reports of the parliamentary debates has been struck by the marked change which seems to have come over the mind of the secretary, from his altered tone towards the Catholic bishops. All the fervour of his former eulogies have evaporated and cooled down to a smooth and polished affectation of regard, of which the value, coming from such a quarter, cannot be mistaken. While a few of our prelates unfortunately lent their aid to the minister to carry out an uncanonical bequest law,

which is, and as long as it is unrepealed shall be, reprobated by the Irish Clergy and people, language could scarcely furnish the two right honorable baronets with adequate expressions to convey your sense of the value of such episcopal support. But again, when those same prelates are found in the compact array of their brethren, condemning the ministerial scheme as dangerous to faith and morals, you are alarmed and confounded—nay, you confess your astonishment at what you deem their defection, but what others must deem to be the discharge of what their solemn duties require. While they were but a few opposed to the great body of their brethren, their conduct was the theme of ministerial eulogy ; but when they demand protection for Catholic education in union with the same body of their brethren, then their resolutions became absurd—their requirements became unreasonable, and the entire of a body, of which a detached fraction was so precious, loses all favour and estimation in your sight. Truly this piece of the ministerial drama is not less fraught with wisdom and with warning than many such incidents which history records. It shows that no one can serve two masters—it shows the dreadful extent of servitude, which the world requires of its votaries. “To have done” is nothing, as long as any fresh demand upon further service is resisted : in vain are religion and duty offered as an apology, and those who have not the fortitude to make a seasonable stand, are often doomed to lament, with the celebrated Wolsey, the world’s ingratitude, which cast him off in his latter days, after having wasted health and life in its service.

With no regard, then, to those necessary fences with which the bishops of Ireland are resolved to secure the faith and morals of the flocks confided to their care, you are determined to force through the legislature your godless scheme of education. Nay, in a tone, of which the irony is too transparent to be mistaken, you tell the Catholics of Ireland to confide for the security of their faith in the impartiality of her Majesty’s ministers !! Nay, more, you refer to Belfast, and to the system of its Presbyterian professors, and deduce from the example of that establishment an argument for enlightening the minds and quieting the apprehensions of the Catholic bishops of Ireland. You mean, then, to convert those anomalies in education, which persecution has engendered, into a rule for general adoption. The Catholics of Belfast, and other parts of the North of Ireland, are entitled to great praise for the laudable zeal with which they have kept the faith, amidst the terrible temptations to which it has been long exposed. Because some have escaped unhurt, are we to throw the youth of Ireland into a state of continual warfare, and are we to bring others into contact with moral disease, because some have been proof against the contagion ? No, the education im-

parted by the Catholic Church to its children is guided by more ancient laws, and guarded by a holier discipline ; and never shall the mulish mongrel theology which has flowed from the Presbyterian college of Belfast be the standard by which the clergy and people of the Catholic province will regulate education. Disguise it as you may, your scheme of academic instruction, coupled with your repudiation of the resolutions and memorial of the bishops, is only a fresh attempt, similar to that of the charter schools, to bribe Catholic youth into an abandonment of their religion. In the present state of religious feeling in Ireland, we are plausibly told, that you have no other alternative than to exclude from the sanctions of the law all religious discipline and all religious instruction. Uneducated you must fancy the Irish people, indeed, and entirely bereft of all intelligence, if you could persuade yourself they were unable to penetrate through the veil with which you affect to conceal the bigoted hostility of your designs.

Were the irreligion of the plan to be impartially extended to all, surely that would be no reason to justify the Catholics in its adoption. But in reality, they are the only portion of the Irish laity systematically in this novel piece of penal legislation. The Protestant laity are amply provided with an education uniting science and Protestant instruction at Trinity College. The Presbyterian laity are to have ample opportunities of being educated in science and literature in the College of Belfast ; for, by a mere accident, no doubt, the scheme is to be affiliated to the old Presbyterian institution. But in the colleges in Connaught and in Munster, where, from the paucity of persons of either persuasion, there could be but few Protestants or Presbyterians, if any at all, the Catholics must be content with science, entirely divorced from religion or its holy discipline. Such is the boasted impartiality of your plan, extending, as was the wont of English policy, to the favoured few also the advantages of their creed, and proscribing the religion of the great body of the people.

Yet you will find some unprincipled traders in politics and religion the eulogists of such a dangerous and irreligious scheme. The wisest statesman deemed religion and pure domestic morals the best security for the stability of kingdoms. Now, even the bitterest of their enemies yield to the Irish people the praise of being unsurpassed, if not unequalled, in the practice of those moral virtues by which human nature is exalted and refined. Yet, instead of improving this state of things by an extension of that religious education out of which those virtues have grown, you would introduce an experiment which has been found in other countries to spread like a cancer over the surface of society, gradually destroying the vitality of the moral virtues by

which it is sustained. And you do this to second the selfish schemes of mercenary infidels, who are springing up in the country, and who, under the affectation of zeal for education, would not hesitate to advocate Mahometanism, if it gave them access to the patronage of the lords of the treasury. How solicitous you are for providing for the comforts and social condition of the clergy! Yes, but through the channel of some board or commission by which you would effectually control their freedom. How solicitous to subsidize, under the pretence of facilities for education, a knot of noisy and turbulent socialists, who are beginning to be a source of annoyance to the state, until quieted by a share of the ministerial bounty. Yes, amidst all this affectation of concern for Ireland, the people, the great foundation of the social edifice, are neglected; and though your own commissioners have attested that their destitution and patience are unexampled, yet no legislative provision is made to protect them from a heartless tyrant, or to provide for the increase of their comfort. As they are the first in importance, they are sure to be the last to be considered in the legislative scale. It is because the Catholic clergy feel intensely for their condition, and labour for its improvement, they have arrayed their enemies in a determined combination to undermine their influence and injure their religion, by those exotic schemes of infidel education which they are striving, even with penalties, to enforce. But they will not succeed. The public money may be squandered for a time in the lavish distribution of useless or noxious patronage, as is the case of the poor-houses, but the infidel lecturers will be shunned, and their halls, like the same poor-houses, will be deserted. The Catholic faith in Ireland has already come unhurt out of the most fiery trials, and through the zeal of the clergy and the devotion of the people, it is sure to triumph over this last and deadliest of the persecutions it has yet been fated to endure.

I have the honor to be your very obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CVII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ON THE INFIDEL COLLEGES.

MAYNOOTH COLLEGE, FEAST OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL,
JUNE 29, 1845.

SIR—It is difficult to reconcile your professions of respect for the Catholic hierarchy with the pertinacity with which you are pushing on your “godless scheme of academic education,” in defiance of their solemn resolutions. To every reflecting and impartial mind it must appear evident that you are utterly indifferent to the opinions of that body, or that you hope gradually to win over a passive and unresisting acquiescence in a scheme, of the infidel and demoralising nature of which, they have unanimously recorded their emphatic condemnation.

Whether you are swayed in your purpose to persevere, by the first supposition you alone are the most competent judge. But if you entertain the hope of enforcing your Pagan plan, in despite of the resolutions of the Catholic bishops, allow me respectfully to predict that you will experience a sad and humiliating disappointment. I am enabled authentically to inform you, that not only have the prelates stedfastly clung to their recent resolutions, but that they were unwilling to petition parliament on the subject, lest they should again experience the repetition of the contemptuous indifference, with which their appeal to the executive has been treated.

If, with such a formidable opposition, backed, sustained, nay, encouraged onward, by the zeal of an enlightened clergy, and the piety of a devoted people, who never will endure the infidel project, you fancy that you can sap the foundations of the Catholic faith in the youth by the establishment of a system so universally execrated, I must remind you that you have read history, and especially Irish history, in vain. In this very brief letter I shall not dwell on the variety of convincing arguments, that should persuade the most intrepid and stubborn statesman to cast away for ever, all thoughts of endeavouring to vitiate by the deleterious sophistry of infidel and inexorable empirics, the hearts and understandings of a people who, amidst the infidelity which now threatens to overrun some of the nations of Europe, stand in the same proud and enviable isolation from its corruptions, as did their ancestors formerly, when unreached by the calamities that convulsed the entire continent.

It is impossible for a Catholic prelate to touch upon the sacred subject of academic education, especially in a college where the hallowed influence of religion has been uniformly felt mingling with all its exercises, and enlivening, hallowing, and exalting those sciences, which, properly cultivated, are but as its so many handmaids, bearing testimony to its evidence, and doing homage to its dominion, without being pained at the anticipation of a possible divorce between sciences which the Author of Truth has so intimately connected. It is not for the clergy alone that religion has been ushered into the world. No; it is for all mankind, and never does it appear with a more winning or attractive grace, than when the sciences are seen, nay, felt, by a young and susceptible auditory, to be captives to that heavenly influence, whose service alone is the most perfect freedom. Let, then, the Catholic laity, as well as Protestants and Presbyterians, have their respective colleges, and the sciences taught by their respective professors, under the sanction of their respective pastors. You will find this more serviceable to religion, and far more propitious to the public weal, than any attempt to draw out to almost an infinite series that long and dismal succession of charter-school projects, now of persecution, and again of fraud, by which the inhabitants of Ireland have been so long and so cruelly worried, and of which the uniform failure, affords striking evidence that they never can succeed.

I have the honour to be your very obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CVIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. AUGUSTINE,
AUGUST 28, 1845.

SIR—Were we not assured that there is nothing new under the sun, and that the most extraordinary events of the present, are often but like a transcript of those of the past times, the Catholics of Ireland would be sorely perplexed, if not dismayed, at the calamitous position, and more appalling prospects, of the church in this country. The silence of a sudden surprise has

come upon the nation, at the strange rumours that are industriously sent abroad, that the godless scheme of education is to find favour even from those, by whom it was condemned as dangerous to faith and morals. The condemnation of this impious scheme, formed the primary and emphatic resolution of the assembled hierarchy of Ireland. The proposed conditions were the provisional safeguards to be insisted on against the obnoxious system—rather necessary securities, in case of being arbitrarily enforced—than the free conditions of any arrangement mutually entered into between the bishops and the legislature—for on that, as on the penal bequests act, the bishops were not consulted.

But how little the feelings of the bishops, or the interests of that religion, of which they are the constituted guardians, were consulted on the occasion, is manifest from the contemptuous insolence with which their resolutions were received. No sooner was it announced, that no regard should be paid to the remonstrances of the Catholic bishops, than a shout of exultation, if we are to believe the reporters, is said to have shaken, with prolonged and contending loudness, the rival parties of the senate-house.

The provisional securities were embodied in a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant unanimously adopted. His Excellency was emphatically told that Catholic colleges for the Catholics of Ireland, would be the institutions most in accordance with their religion and their feelings; and that, in any contingency, the securities specified in the memorial were the minimum of safeguards, with which we could be content. And are we now to be told by those busy and secret emissaries of some mysterious influence, that are traversing every town and city of any note, for the insidious purpose of seducing advocates to the unholy scheme, that it is one that will have the sanction of some of the hierarchy of Ireland? The only amendment, the wicked act has undergone, is one of a more stringent and comprehensive penal operation. Until now the inmates of all good Catholic families, with the freedom of citizens, might frequent any school or college without any government license. Henceforward they are to be placed under the surveillance, not of the bishop or of the parochial clergyman—they must have a licence from the government, in order that the faith and morals of Catholics should be secured by such a pious Protestant as the Secretary for the Home Department! I will not pause to animadvert on the political despotism or encroachment on civil liberty involved in this hateful enactment, which would appear to reconcile some to the impiety of the entire measure. I will not stop either to point out its obvious and perfect analogy to some of those foreign infidel schemes of mixed education, of which the harmonious

effects are at this moment developing themselves in social and religious contentions that are breaking up the very framework of society in Germany—no, but I will confine myself solely to the religious value of this police espionage to the interests of morality and domestic virtue. Surely a Protestant government cannot be more solicitous for virtue and morality, in the large cities of Catholic Ireland, than it is in Protestant England. The public has not yet forgotten the awful details of profligacy connected with one of those cities in which the universities are situate. I trust you and the Chief Secretary will turn your attention to a radical reform in those localities, before we can rely on the magic virtue of a government license, in purging away all the moral putrefaction, which repeated and accredited lectures on materialism or pantheism, now so fashionable, are sure to propagate.

Why not then, at once, with the boldness of Cecil, propose to our gracious Sovereign to wage an open, instead of a covert war, on the Catholic religion in Ireland? You appear to possess all the craftiness of that wily minister, without his courage; and were your policy against the freedom of the Catholic hierarchy to be successful, you would render our beloved Queen as odious as ever Elizabeth was, to the Irish people. Hence all the unprincipled shifts that have been resorted to in carrying out this and the hateful measures of the bequests act, and that are still made use of to impose on the Catholic people. No design in the vague appellation of the “west” to decoy some of the inhabitants of its various towns and cities to enter into a competition for colleges as far as they might be safe; and then turn round and bring up the unwary and unsuspecting suitors as witnesses in favour of your godless scheme of education which they never contemplated! No coincidence between the holdings of those meetings and the profuse distribution of the honours and patronage of the treasury! Some gentlemen are tempted by these amphibious honours that deprived them of the privileges of commoners, without investing them with the judicial or legislative prerogatives of peer, and ecclesiastics are flattered with the compliment that they are near, and that this very proximity will be quite sufficient to banish all strange and heterodox doctrines from within their jurisdiction. All these schemes may be authorized by the canons of political casuistry, to which statesmen are trained; but surely the abettors of the infidel project have no right to drag the hierarchy and priesthood, at least the body who are unwilling to go with them, into their unhallowed confederation. Your project stands condemned, irrevocably, irretrievably condemned, by the solemn, deliberate, and unanimous suffrage of the assembled prelates of the Irish church—that recorded judgment which is beyond your power to reverse. You may encourage speculators in the prices of town plots and farms, as well as speculators in the funds, to

hold their meetings, and pass their resolutions, and forward their memorials for the preference of one of those colleges, of which the fundamental principle is, the banishment of all religion. All this can be well understood. It is the management of business in a shrewd and business-like way ; and it is long ago that such people were pronounced wise in their generation. But all this bustle and all this mercantile and academic speculation combined, are questions into which faith and morals never enter. Their advocates have other game in view, and seldom are faith or morals suffered to cross the path of their speculations. Let them, therefore, pursue their object without industriously spreading sinister rumours, that the Catholic Church of Ireland cheers them on by a revocation of its most solemn decisions. Whatever may be their other charges against the Church, let them, at least, spare its reputation for a dignified consistency, in adhering to those resolves which it has maturely and deliberately adopted. Are its fixed decisions to be blown away as if they were chaff, and their framers held up to the ridicule of the world, as so many weathercocks, veering round with every change in the political compass ? No ; you, and every other political functionary, will find, that the Church of Ireland is not composed of such materials, as to be fashioned to his purposes by the plastic hand even of a Prime Minister. The bishops and clergy of Ireland stood by their faith and by the Catholic people, to whom it is dear even beyond liberty and life, when it was assailed by persecution. You will find them no less watchful against the machinations of fraud which its ancient enemies, aided by the accession of apostate allies, are carrying on against it. Were the bishops and clergy those inconsistent persons they are represented to be, rescinding, to-day, the resolutions of yesterday, and promising or courting patronage in those godless colleges, they would not justify all the consequence that is now attached by politicians to securing their political co-operation—their accession to one side would be as valueless as their loss to the other would be unimportant. No ; they have influence ; they possess confidence in acting in unison and in accordance with the Catholic Church, and in carrying out, in despite of opposition or defection, those inflexible principles of attachment to the chair of Peter and the centre of Catholic unity, which have made Ireland the envy as well as the pride of Europe, and which will still secure her against her present difficulties, far more formidable than any she has yet sustained.

I have the honor to be, sir, your very obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CX.

TO THE VERY REVEREND AND REVEREND THE CLERGY
AND FAITHFUL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEBRUARY 20, 1846.

VENERABLE AND DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—Having so often and at some length laid before you the nature of the institution of Lent, and the duties it required, we should have been content, on this occasion, merely to refer you to the regulations of later years, if it were not for the awful visitation of famine, with which the Almighty threatens to punish the sins of his people.* This calamity has been long threatened. But the very frequency of the warning has had the effect, as it often happens, of rendering some heedless and callous to the danger, until the fearful reality begins to make itself felt in hunger and starvation over the land.

As the time of Lent is peculiarly set apart for the exercise of penance, to appease the Divine anger which our sins have kindled, we are bound in the coming season to increase our austerities, and to redouble the fervour of our prayers, that the faithful may not die “by the grievous arrows of famine with which the Lord threatens to destroy them.”† No matter how scientific men may be occupied in tracing the causes and explaining the symptoms of this disease; we are taught by wisdom from a higher source, that every such calamity is a portion of that vengeance which God has in store, and occasionally discharges on account of the infraction of his holy laws. “There are spirits that are created for vengeance, and in their fury they lay on grievous torments. In the time of destruction they shall pour out their force, and they shall appease the wrath of him that made them. Fire, hail, famine and death, all these were created for vengeance.”‡

It is not necessary to dwell longer on the illustration of a truth so urgently enforced throughout every portion of the inspired writings. If this famine and pestilence are a portion of the vengeance which God inflicts for sin, faith teaches us that the most effectual means to avert them, must consist in those penitential exercises of fasting, of humiliation, and of prayer, by which the arm of the Almighty has been so often stayed. When such

* Ecclesiasticus, xlvi, 2.

† Ezekiel, v, 16.

‡ Ecclesiasticus, xxxix, 33 and 34.

calamities become so general as to overspread an entire nation, they are usually inflicted for some great national transgressions. "Justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable."^{*} Of signal chastisement brought on whole tribes and kingdoms on account of national guilt, the inspired writings furnish us with numerous and dreadful examples: "Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth in it shall languish, and they shall eat and not be filled, because they have forsaken the Lord in not observing his law."[†]

How similar the visitation with which our people are menaced! —the land mourning, the people languishing, their usual food so diseased, as to have lost its usual power of nutrition, so that those who eat of it are not filled, and literally verifying the awful threats of the same prophet, "And I will be like a moth to Ephraim, and like ROTTENNESS to the house of Judah."[‡] Those and the like punishments were inflicted on the people occasionally for idolatry, but more generally for having mixed up, with their own worship, the impure rites of the neighbouring nations. And is there not an analogy between them, and those who mix up with the pure doctrines of the Church, some of the false maxims of the sectaries? The people of Ireland have not, it is true, yet reached this dangerous and daring impiety. But individuals have, and unless seasonably checked, there is a manifest forward tendency to that LIBERALITY, which would discard their legitimate wardens from the watch-towers of Israel, and resign their custody to mercenary apostates and to strangers,[§] who would soon infect with foreign mixture the faith, the worship, and the morality of the Catholic Church.

Yes, there is spreading abroad the same jealousy of the holy influence of religious orders, and the same rage to transfer from them to laymen—nay, to heretics and infidels, mixed up with apostate priests, if they can be purchased, the education of the rising youth of Ireland, such as preceded the melancholy catastrophe of the French Revolution. There is ringing on our ears the same jargon of liberality, and the same denunciations of a distinct and exclusive creed, with which the true faith was then sought to be annihilated. The consequences we need not detail; they are written in blood, and the courtiers and the ecclesiastics who hailed the advent of this liberal education, and joined in the condemnation of the bigotries of ancient times, lived to see their own folly punished, in the ruins of the throne of a great kingdom, and in the desecration of its altars.

The duties of charity—of an active, benevolent and practical charity—you will, I trust, fulfil towards all, whatever may be

^{*} Proverbs.

[†] Osia, iv, 3, and 4.

[‡] Osia, v, 12.

[§] Ezechiel, xliv, 7, and 8.

their religious creed. For true faith enlarges and invigorates, instead of contracting or enfeebling the practice of charity. But listen not to the false and deceitful accents of those, who, under the guise of liberality, would strip you of the precious inheritance of your faith, and persuade you to expose it to peril, by evil associations. Talk of the indiscriminate mixture of the education of youth, without confusion of their respective creeds ! You might as well pour forth different liquids into a common vase, and expect they would remain distinct, as that faith and heresy, truth and error, would not be co-mingled, when, by an indiscriminate education, all the sluices by which they are kept asunder, are taken away. Nor will you suffer yourselves to be deluded by the specious and deceitful sophistry of those, who will tell you that the difference in faith between your children and those with whom they are invited to mix, may be but small, and that Catholic Ecclesiastics may be found conducting this speckled and leprous system of education. In neither circumstance is there any security. There has been no schism, however inveterate—no heresy, however deadly, of which ecclesiastics were not found the abettors, from their infancy to their consummation. And as for there being little danger on account of the proximity of creeds, we may apply to faith what moralists apply to chastity, in any taint of which there is seldom any lightness of matter to plead its extenuation. No ; faith is the root of morality ; it is the head : and hence some of the expounders of Scripture tell us, that as the serpent guards his head when attacked, leaving his entire body exposed, so Catholics ought to be particularly alive in watching and averting the slightest assaults upon their faith, deprived of which, the whole body of their morality would soon expire. You may be surprised to hear that St. Augustine, one of the brightest ornaments of the Christian Church, compared schism to idolatry—nay, he asserts that it surpassed idolatry in the enormity of its guilt. After this can you think it harmless, to have your children indiscriminately associated with those, who are divided by an inveterate schism from Rome, the centre of Catholic unity—nay, educated, formed, fashioned, in their notions of religion by schismatical masters ? And such are often more dangerous than avowed infidels. Open infidelity inspires a degree of terror that may forbid a confiding familiarity. The infidel may be brought to feel more alarmed by a sense of his own danger ; whereas heretics or schismatics, who approach the confines of Catholic unity, may feel no alarm, and become obdurate by their sins ; whilst the Catholic, seeing in their counterfeit faith an imperfect image of his own, may on that account be more easily caught in the snares of seduction.

Were I to refer you to the ample volume over which the records of the Catholic Church are spread, you would find it

proved beyond the shadow of doubt, that in cases of heresy or schism the Catholic found no particular security for his creed, nor no toleration for its profession in the circumstances of the nearness by which the sectaries approached his faith. Cross but once the gulf which divides the kingdom of light—the Catholic Church—from all the varieties of error that lie beyond it; they all become agitated as the elements of chaos, with this difference, that those which are on the very confines, are always the most mutinous and the most aggressive. Does not Providence, for the instruction of the Catholics of Ireland, furnish a striking example of this truth in the direful persecutions lately endured by the consecrated virgins of Poland. The most heroic martyrdom recorded in the Church, not excepting those of St. Agatha or St. Cecilia, do not furnish such evidence of atrocious barbarity on the one hand, and heroic endurance on the other, as is furnished by the revolting or edifying tale of those recent victims of Russian persecution.

From whom did it come? From persons who approximate in faith and doctrine more nearly to us, than those to whom you are desired to entrust your children for their education. And who were the chief agents of those hideous, and cruel, and countless enormities, which must shame the pretensions of our age to superior civilization? Apostate ecclesiastics, who sold their country, their faith, and their God; and who knew no law, and acknowledged no obligation, but the ruthless and savage will of a persecuting emperor. After this example set up as an awful warning, will it be said that faith and morals are not endangered, because the professors of your children may not be altogether infidels, and because among their number, there may be found some pliant and apostate ecclesiastics. Oh, no; for you will invariably find, and there are abundant proofs of it in the present age, that ecclesiastics, so far from affording any protection against the dangers of a bad system, are uniformly, like Siemasko—the persecutor of the religious orders of Poland—the most inveterate against their former brethren in the faith, and the most unscrupulous in pushing forward the encroachments of the secular power, on the sacred liberties of the Catholic Church.

But what shall we say to those who advance, as an apology, the money which such colleges will diffuse among the people? Surely it is not meant to justify Judas for selling the faith for thirty pieces of silver. If arguments like those be deemed sufficient to justify the endangering of our faith, they must bring the reproach of folly upon our ancestors, who sacrificed money, lands, nay, life itself, for its preservation. What strange and humiliating inconsistencies! The land mourneth, the people are on the verge of famine, in punishment of the sins of their infidelity, and the remedy that is suggested to heal the evil, and

the means to which they have recourse to appease God's anger, is to lend themselves to an active co-operation in that very infidelity which so signally brings on them the chatisement of heaven! What will the expenditure of a college avail to avert the coming famine? It would be as a drop in the ocean; yet for this drop, like the drop of honey,* which was almost fatal to Jonathan, some, doubtless, may risk the death of their immortal souls.

We are now arrived at a period in the history of our Church, in which apostacy or any faltering of our faith, would be doubly criminal. Many ecclesiastics in the sister country, eminent for their wisdom, talent, and integrity, are now returning to the bosom of the Church of Rome, tired of the "difficult and troublesome ways"† in which they so long have walked. The bishops of France, the glorious successors of those men who earned for that kingdom the praise of "most christian," are now repairing the fences which impiety cast down. They are withdrawing their flock from the fetid and poisoned fountains of the university, of which those who drink, are inhaling death, and slaking the thirst of the rising generation with the pure waters of life, unmixed and undiluted with any error. And is it at a period like this that we are to hand over the faith of the children to be corrupted by apostate and infidel or profligate masters? Of these nations who are making such noble efforts to rescue the faith from the dangers to which it is exposed, the sainted men of Ireland were once the instructors. We must, therefore, hand down to those who come after us the virgin faith, which in Ireland has escaped contagion.‡ Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and God, who provideth food for the ravens of the air, will not suffer you to perish. Invoke his aid with fervent prayers during this holy season. "Rend your hearts and not your garments,"§ in sincere sorrow for having offended him. The regulations regarding the use of flesh meat on Sunday and three days in the week will be the same as last year; on Fridays there will be abstinence from eggs, and the last week is not only to be devoted to entire abstinence from meat and eggs, but likewise on Wednesday and Friday, milk diet is to be abstained from—a slight privation when we recollect the bitter chalice drained by our Divine Redeemer.

Should the famine become terrible in its ravages, as it, alas! portends, send forth your humble and strong remonstrances to your rulers, adjuring them to check the exportation of the food that is daily sent away from your shores—use all legitimate means to avert the horrors of pestilence and famine; but whilst you ask for bread accept not a stone,|| and do not for a paltry

* Kings, xiv, 109.

† Wisdom, v, 7.

‡ Luke, xii, 31.

§ Joel, ii, 13.

|| Matthew, vii, ix.

relief derived from the erection or endowment of infidel colleges, suffer the worse religious pestilence and famine described by the prophet* to desolate a land whose faith was hitherto untarnished. If you do the consequences will, we fear, be too awful to anticipate. Some of the priests will be seduced from their obedience to their bishops, to become the hired and mercenary conductors of the system; some of the bishops, backed by political power, will disregard the remonstrances and invade the jurisdiction of their brethren. Town after town will declare (as did recently Tesina, a canton in Switzerland), that education is entirely to be withdrawn from all spiritual control, and placed exclusively under secular jurisdiction; and a foul stream of literature, darker than those that have been said to flow through the infernal regions, will, as now from the University of Paris, continue to issue from those putrid sources, the infidel colleges, covering your clergy, your convents, and your hearths, with their irreligious outpourings, and defiling, as far as they can effect it, the sanctuaries of domestic life, and the altars of God's temple.

In a portion of this diocese, and in a few days, it is said, that the sacred solemnity of Lent is going to be broken in on by the strife and tumult of a contested election. We trust not. Such scenes are only tolerable or justifiable when the conflicting opinions of voters are supposed to be doubtful, or nearly balanced. But in this case, there is no doubt or ambiguity, regarding the convictions of the great body of the people. Those convictions are fixed and steady, and cannot be shaken but by bribery, or perjury, or coercion. All those are illegitimate weapons. They are strongly condemned by the laws of God, and no one can be an agent in bribing or coercing the people, or making them commit the horrid crime of perjury, without being guilty of grievous transgressions which no temporal honor or emolument—not even the possession of a kingdom—could outweigh. All the voters are freemen—not lots to be driven to a political market. Their suffrage is and must be their own free, moral act, uncontrolled by any sinister influence of bribery or coercion. It is our solemn conviction, that many of the public evils that we have already traced to national sins, such as famine and pestilence, are much aggravated by the crying sins of fraud and of bribery, of force and of perjury, that are committed before heaven at those elections. Nor is this conjecture; for if any profane persons be sceptical on the subject, we refer them to the book of Kings,† where it is said that a famine, not of a year, but of three successive years, came on the land of Judea on account of the wickedness of Saul, who, in despite of a covenant ratified by an oath, had put to death the people of Gaba.

* Amos, viii.

† Kings, xxi, 1.

We trust, therefore, that scenes so pregnant with proofs of the Divine wrath will not be often repeated. Should a contest, which is to be deprecated, take place on this occasion, it will be the duty of all to oppose perjury, violence and bribery, and to vindicate for the voters that complete liberty of acting and of conscience, to which, as rational and responsible creatures, as well as free subjects, they are entitled.

In conclusion, let us exhort you to conduct yourselves on this, as on all occasions, without blame and without reproach, to seek in your suffrage, like the peaceful and pious Simon, "the good of your nation,"* and to offer it, as St. Paul recommends the offering of all our actions, to the honor and glory of God.†

We are your very faithful servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CXI.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, FEAST OF ST. PETER AD VINCULA,
AUGUST 1, 1846.

MY LORD—Among the many and obvious grievances that press upon the people of Ireland, requiring prompt and vigorous measures for their redress, there is one which cannot brook delay, involving, as it does, the lives of thousands of the inhabitants. I have read with surprise, and with somewhat of dismay, the report of a speech attributed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announcing the fearful intelligence, that the relief which, through the means of employment on public works, had been in some instances tardily meted out to the people, was, from the 15th of August, to be withdrawn. That auspicious day has, since the introduction of Christianity into this country, been a festival, bringing joy and gladness to the people. Suffer it not, then, to be dreaded as a monument of national mourning. You might as well at once issue an edict of national starvation, as stop the supplies which the feeble creatures are striving to earn with the sweat of their brows. The scenes of jealousy and discontent that are of daily occurrence, on account of the real or fancied preference which some claimants for employment receive, are evidence of the pressure of hunger; and never did a mutinous crew pant more eagerly for the partition of a rich booty,

* Maccabees, i, 14.

† I. Cor. x, 31.

than the starving inhabitants of Ireland do at present, for the miserable pittance earned on the public roads.

Allow me, then, in the name of a faithful and suffering people, to implore of you, not only to stretch the present relief on an enlarged scale into the middle of the month of September, but not to suffer the great council of the nation to rise, without adopting prospective measures for the similar but severer calamity of the coming year.

Some member of parliament is said to have remarked, during the discussion to which I allude, that a people was not to be familiarized to the practice of depending on government for their sustenance, and that aid during an extraordinary season was not to be converted into the rule of ordinary years. Nothing could be more just than this principle, nor is it overlooked by those who now appeal to the legislature for the extending of its protection. Visitations, such as that we are passing through, are not always confined to one season. Nay, they sometimes continue for two or three successive years. That the disease in the potato is of that character, is now, alas! too evident from the melancholy occurrence of the reports, attesting a more fearful failure in the crop than that of the last harvest. But these are not vague reports. Having recently passed through extensive tracts of country, and made a minute examination into the state of the potato, I can bear testimony not only to the premature withering of the stalks, and consequent decay of the roots; but under stalks of which the leaves were still green and sound, the roots were diminutive in size, and in a state of rapid decomposition. The fact is then so, and to throw a people, accustomed for some time to meal diet, on potatoes, that are some rotten and almost all unripe, would be to aggravate all the evils of famine, with the horrors of pestilence.

It is not, then, on the miserable and peddling scale of levelling hills on a mail-coach road, that the physical wants of a numerous people are to be relieved, but by those extensive and necessary improvements which, while they mitigate distress, will afford to the government an adequate remuneration—such as the erection of quays and piers along the southern and western coasts, by which the existing misery would be relieved, and courage given to the hardy natives along those coasts, to explore and cultivate the rich and abundant fisheries, on which any benevolent statesman could draw for supplying the wants of the people. Those are public works which the people have a right to expect, in return for the ample revenues with which their industry enriches the exchequer. They know they are improvements which an Irish legislature would not delay. You may perceive, then, how the natural calamities of the country are furnishing arguments in favour of justice, and as if rebuking the reluctant

tardiness of statesmen to consult for the prosperity of Ireland. The pittance doled out this year for their relief, would form but a small item in the millions abstracted without any return, by absentees whom an Irish legislature would have kept at home, to fulfil the duties, as well as to enjoy the benefits of property. Are you, then, surprised, that while a nation is brought to the verge of starvation, they are panting for the peaceful accomplishment of a measure, which, even in years of scarcity, would supply them with abundance, and in years of plenty, would enable them to devote their surplus revenue to the cultivation of the arts, the encouragement of science, and the foundation of beneficial institutions.

The trying ordeal out of which the people are now passing with such patience, notwithstanding the severe privations which they still endure, has had the effect of imprinting more deeply on their souls the necessity of a domestic legislature. Fear not, however, that they meditate for that purpose either violence or insurrection. No; the weapons of their warfare are peaceful, constitutional, and persevering remonstrance. They are resolved to make known the hideous injustice with which they are still treated, and determined to proclaim that the peace or discontent of an entire nation, are interests too grave and too sacred to be looked on as mere political signs to measure the degree of the elevation or decline of the Whig or Tory factions. With the advocates of physical force and sanguinary revolution, we disown all sympathy. The impure sources from which they have imported their dogmas of infidelity and disaffection we abhor. It may be well worth the while of a profound statesman to pause and consider whether, for the sake of vitiating the Catholic religion, and weakening the influence of its priesthood, it is not hazardous to erect infidel colleges for the propagation of an infidel and revolutionary mania, which, should it succeed in overthrowing the altar, will not spare the throne in its career of demolition. Far wiser is it to provide for the starving and faithful people, than propel such mischievous institutions—the hot-beds of every moral and political vice, and waste the public revenues on the sinecure salaries of professional idlers. Consequences must be traced to their principles. The turbid stream is easily known from its kindred and congenial source. The peaceful advocates of Repeal are not for making experiments of violence or war. They argue on the justice and necessity which even this year illustrates, of a people being protected from hunger and starvation by the care of a native and paternal legislature. This is a just principle, and they rely on its progressing, in spite of every effort to crush it. All connexion with the mischievous men, who are for forcing into the country the educational despotism of France and Prussia, with the dangerous dogmas which they strive to

spread, they entirely repudiate. Their confidence is in the patriarchal patriot of half a century, who, with the peaceful principles of the Catholic Church to guide him, has already advanced Ireland to a pitch, to which no military success could have raised her in the same time. In the same peaceful course, and under his leadership, the people of Ireland are determined steadily to push on their claims, until the monster evil—the frightful anomaly of the Protestant Church Establishment, is annihilated by the tardy justice of the legislature, and until no obstacle remains to prevent the cordial union of all classes, in bringing about a peaceful achievement of the Repeal of the Union. This consummation may be delayed by the followers of Mazini and Voltaire, but cannot be prevented. It well became those who were clamourous for infidel colleges, to be next the constant advocates of force and insurrection. The most profuse and dexterous application of Whig patronage cannot divert the people of Ireland from Repeal—the necessary goal of all previous reforms, nor could the most inflammatory effusions of the parodists of “Young Italy” ever drive them into rebellion. Repeal they cherish; their country they love; but there is another affection which winds closer round their hearts than either—that of their religion. Between country and religion, hitherto united in their love, a divorce is now insidiously attempted by the enemies of both; they will find themselves bitterly disappointed. For though the Irish people, free from bigotry, and anxious for justice, will practise the social virtues towards all, without distinction—nay, will not refuse the alliance of those who, on perfectly fair and peaceful grounds, will advocate the public good—they will still jealously watch the movements, and sternly sever the partnership of all who would attempt, under any guise, however specious, to debauch the principles of attachment to the throne and to the Catholic religion, which, through all its vicissitudes and disasters, have formed the chief glory of Ireland.—I have the honor to be your very faithful servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CXII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, AUGUST 21, 1846.

MY LORD—The brief interval that has elapsed since I found it my duty to address your lordship on the frightful prospects of the potato crop, has, I am sorry to say, more than realised our

worst and most desponding anticipations. The failure—nay, the utter, the general, and undeniable destruction of that crop—the only support of millions of human beings—is now a subject of irrefutable notoriety; and the only subject of doubt or speculation is—what may be the short period within which the celerity of the potato rot will work its entire annihilation. This is a tremendous crisis to contemplate. It has had already the effect of unnerving the courage of the people. Something akin to a feeling of despair has fallen on them; and, like mariners becalmed in the midst of the ocean, whose provisions are gone, whilst they are many days' voyage from any shore, they look forward through the terrible period of an entire year, without hope from the ordinary resources of an abundant harvest. It is a prospect at which humanity sickens, to see the people's hopes thus entirely frustrated, and the period which generally consoled them for the privations of the preceding summer, turned into a season of sorrow and despair.

It is, no doubt, a chastisement of the Almighty, and it is the duty of us all to bow in submission to the chastening dispensations of a just God, and acknowledge the divine power by which we are stricken. Yet, far from sinking into apathy, we are all bound to redoubled exertion, and our guilt will be only aggravated if we fail to administer relief to a perishing nation. I am rejoiced to find, that the report of the late parliamentary debate, regarding the approaching famine, furnishes some faint hope to the people. It is, however, but a faint hope, for if the measures for our relief were to be restricted to the votes already passed, they would prove utterly powerless in averting the threatened calamity. I will not, for the present, dwell on the delays and embarrassments which must render a portion of the projected relief utterly unavailing. I merely content myself with acknowledging that those votes, such as they were, proved the awful truth of the approaching famine, as well as a certain degree of sympathy for those who are its threatened victims.

But allow me respectfully to impress on your lordship, that hunger and starvation are already at the doors of hundreds of thousands, and that an enemy like this will not be subdued by distant and doubtful measures of relief. The British empire boasts, and with justice, of its measureless resources. Now is an opportunity of exhibiting, as well the extent of its humanity as of its resources. And what is the available sum that has been voted by the munificence of parliament to avert the starvation of millions? Fifty thousand pounds!! Ten placemen partition between them a larger portion of the public money. Let it not be said that they are as valuable in the scale of humanity, or even of policy, as three millions of industrious inhabitants. Fifty thousand pounds for a starving people!! It is not many years

ago since four times the sum was squandered on the pageant of a king's coronation. Fifty thousand pounds !! It is still fresh in our memory when a few parsons were allowed twenty times that amount—a million of money—from the public purse, to sustain an artificial status in society ; and yet but the twentieth portion given to that body to keep up their rank, is to be doled out to keep multitudes, who are the sinews of society, from perishing. Your lordship does not forget when twenty millions were heaped out from the public treasury, to give liberty to the negroes of the West Indies, a liberty which your political opponents accuse you of jeopordizing by your recent measures regarding sugar. And are the lives of the people of Ireland so much depreciated in value below the liberties of the Negro Indians, that but fifty thousand pounds—the four hundredth part of the sum allotted to the redemption of the former from slavery, is to be given for rescuing the latter from certain death ? One hundred thousand pounds are voted for infidel colleges, condemned by the bishops, priests, and people of Ireland ; and while a double sum is wasted on an object that will only poison the minds of the people, and subsidize apostate professors to do the work, will half the sum be deemed sufficient for saving an entire people from starvation ?

I have not time, nor have I any inclination—it is too melancholy a topic—to expose the heartlessness of the sordid and unfeeling economists, who complain that Irish misery is to be relieved out of the English Exchequer. No. We only demand that Irish misery should be relieved out of the Irish resources, that are profusely and unfeelingly squandered in England. If there be a real Union between England and Ireland, it should have the reciprocal conditions of all such covenants—mutual benefits, and mutual burdens. We want, then, no English money. We want but a fair share of the other portion of our produce, I mean the wheaten one, with which Ireland teems in abundance. Had we our parliament at this moment, it is certain we should be free from the apprehensions of starvation. It would infallibly supply us with plenty out of an Irish Exchequer. We have, then, a right to demand, on the score of the Union, without being beholden to England, that support in our destitution which our own parliament, if not merged in that of Great Britain, would not fail to grant. If, then, those economists persist in a course of political casuistry, as wrong in principle as it is inhuman in practice, let them, even now at the eleventh hour, vote back our parliament, and we will dispense with their votes of money. There is no evasion from either alternative ; the lives of millions are not to be sacrificed to the sordid speculations of a few political economists.—I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CXIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, OCTOBER 7, 1846.

MY LORD—Short and rapid as is now the medium of communication, yet ere this brief letter shall meet your lordship's eye, hundreds, I fear, of the suffering people of this district will have fallen victims to the horrors of famine. This will assuredly be their melancholy fate, if not provided with employment and with food. And yet, while starvation thus stalks through the land, marking its progress with the victims it has already made, the public is amused or insulted with cold and heartless dissertations on the future consequences of the failure of the potato.

Parliament has legislated, in order to save the famishing people. Magistrates and cess-payers have presented, in conformity with its seasonable and humane requisitions; and yet, by a strange and unaccountable fatality, the people are perishing, as if no legislative measures had been interposed for their protection. The people's hopes have been sustained by assurances of prompt and efficient relief: their patience has been stretched to a degree of endurance to which human nature is seldom subjected; yet, when they find the enactments of parliament in the presentments of the sessions still abortive of relief, it is to be apprehended that their suspicions of being made the dupes of underhand intrigue, will goad them on to violence and outrage, which may mock the powers of the clergy—who are preaching patience—effectually to control. While we preach patience to them, it is our duty to adjure their rulers not to suffer such a tension of that virtue, as to endanger its breaking under the pressure of hunger.

The question is not now about the preference to be given to the constructing of roads, or to the most remunerative labour. The question—the pressing—the imperative question—is, about saving the lives of famishing thousands. All the other speculations are unseasonable, nay cruel, as long as the people are eagerly stretching out their hands, and, in the name of humanity and of religion, crying out to be snatched from instant death. All your works, whether productive or unproductive, are only the means to save the people's lives, which are more valuable than any property, and should not be sacrificed to the caprices of those cruel speculators, who value property more than the people's lives.

Similar was your fatal error, and that of your colleagues, in leaving the providing of food to mercantile speculations. This would be just in the ordinary circumstances of society ; but, when the price of provisions rapidly rises, as it is doing now, to famine height, not to provide government depots, would be to abandon the people to the merciless exactions of commercial cupidity. But I must close, lest, while witnessing the famine that baffles description, and menaces the uprooting of all social order, I should be betrayed into anything like discussion of theories, when the times call for the promptest and most extensive measures for relief. I care not, while the people must otherwise starve, what may be the nature of the works by which their lives may be sustained, until time is afforded for further deliberation. Better they should be making holes, and filling them again, than that they should die, and in their death scatter pestilence among those who may have no pity for their misfortune. Food is the first requisite, and then employment—productive, remunerative employment, if you can, but, at any rate, employment, to save the lives of the people.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

LETTER CXIV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM, DECEMBER 15, 1846.

“Dignus imperio.....si non imperasset.”—TACITUS.

“Had he not the misfortune to rule, he would have been deemed deserving of empire.”

MY LORD—This sententious contrast between the hopes of the aspiring Caesar and the disappointment inflicted by the reigning emperor, is but too applicable to those statesmen whose talents, so hopeful in opposition, seem to be blighted on their attainment of political power. Within the brief interval of twelve months, two remarkable letters have appeared, bearing your lordship's signature. The one boldly promulgated the sound doctrine of free trade, and expressed a generous sympathy with the destitution of the Irish people, which was but light, compared to

the famine with which they are now afflicted. The other was so chilling, as to have filled those with despair whom it would have been wisdom to console—among whom hunger now rages with such terrible activity, that it is consigning to the grave its daily victims. The one was the studied essay of a popular candidate for the distinctions of office—the other was the cold and conventional language which was borrowed from the political ritual of preceding prime ministers. It was on the buoyant hopes inspired by the language of the first, your lordship was borne to your present responsible position; and, should you persevere in a line of policy, towards a suffering nation, accordant with the cold-hearted sentiments contained in your second letter, it requires no extraordinary prescience to predict that it will assuredly prove the precursor of your political fall.

By one of those awful calamities with which Providence sometimes visits states and nations, five millions of people, forming an integral portion of a flourishing and mighty empire, are entirely deprived of food, and consigned to all the horrors of famine. The prime minister is naturally and rightfully appealed to, to relieve the suffering part with an equitable application of the wealth of the entire body, and he replies to them, to look to themselves, and to rely on their own resources. Self-reliance is a fine theme when sufficient for any crisis; but to tell a people to supply themselves with food, when both food and the means of procuring it are gone, appears like the requisition of the Hebrews, to make bricks without materials. And does your lordship, too, advocate, by this singular letter, the nullity of the imperial union? For forty-six years the people of Ireland have been feeding those of England with the choicest produce of their agriculture and pasture; and while they thus exported their wheat and their beef in profusion, their own food became gradually deteriorated in each successive year, until the mass of the peasantry was exclusively thrown on the potato. New improvements in agriculture were projected—scientific reforms in the rearing and feeding of cattle were discussed and adopted; but to the mass of the people the practical fruit of those improvements was a fresh interdict of the use of flesh-meat or of flour, and a further extension of the dominion of a less nutritive kind of that same vegetable, to the exclusive use of which they were inexorably doomed!

No matter—a cry of Irish prosperity was raised by those who were enabled to subject the growers of corn to the uniform consumption of an inferior quality of food; and the same cry was re-echoed from the shores of England, gladdened with the abundance with which its inhabitants were supplied, careless of the misery of which that abundance was productive in Ireland, and losing sight altogether of the dietary destitution which, during

the spring and summer months, its people were uniformly fated to endure. The English legislature was not ungrateful to the Irish landlords for those exporting services, so beneficial to the English population, and in return for the increased quantity of the nobler food, which alone they would condescend to make use of, it furnished them with facilities of seizure of crops and ejectment of tenantry never known before the Union ; so that if any of the peasantry should become too fastidious for the use of potatoes, or aspire to the interdicted food of flesh-meat or flour, destined to swell the rent-rolls of the one, and feed the petted population of the other, they were sure to be summarily driven from their tenements, for not raising further food for export, and reproached with utter ignorance of the very elements of agriculture. On the expulsion of the tenantry to the skirtings of the moor, cattle shows became all the rage in Ireland, and meetings were held to witness and applaud the successful zeal with which Irish graziers could supply with still larger quantities of beef, and pork, and mutton, the increasing demands of the English people. The animals were exhibited—not such an exhibition, however, as when the animals passed in review before him, who was constituted by their common Creator, the owner of the earth, as well as of all its animal productions. In these exhibitions this order appeared reversed, and whilst the neglected condition of the poor peasantry showed the estimation in which they were held, the unnatural dimensions of those pampered brutes would indicate that they were looked on as the beings which shared, to the greatest extent, the kindred sympathies of their owners. Such, with a few benevolent exceptions, was the spirit that guided those cattle exhibitions.

As long as the people of Ireland were thus draining it of its necessary food into England, and enriching the landed proprietors with its price, the blessings of the Union became a theme of their joint commendation. Any allusion to the solicitude which an Irish parliament would naturally exhibit for the Irish people, was treated as a topic that indicated folly or sedition. More produce and finer stock, according to these speculators in money, were the only wants of Ireland ; at the same time that it was certain, if the prudence and stock were four-fold, the millions of the people, irrevocably doomed to the potato, would be equally debarred from their participation.

At length their cries have reached to heaven ; and he who has created the poor and the rich has answered : "Now I will hear ; the time of retribution is come ; vengeance is already sweeping the land ;" verifying the words of the inspired writings : "By reason of the misery of the needy, and the groans of the poor, now will I arise," saith the Lord. In a great national chastisement all must in some degree be involved ; and though many of

the poor are made victims, perhaps from their want of due resignation, and to teach them that there can be still deeper misery than that which they endured, the entire destruction of the potato crop reads an awful lesson of the cruelty, of which that aliment has been made an instrument. It was intended by the Almighty as a valuable adjunct of human sustenance to his creatures—it has been abused by man as an instrument of rapacious wealth—of dire oppression, and of national degradation. Its destruction shows what some seemed ignorant of—that the interests of all are identified; that one class cannot permanently flourish, and another be abandoned to decay, and that the people cannot be pushed to the verge of starvation, without landlords and rulers sharing in all the perils of their position. The perishing potato is the most formidable agitator, the oppressors of the people had ever yet to wrestle with. But though the transition to the full harvest will be severe, it will become in the hands of Providence, that caused the decay, the fructifying seed of our national regeneration.

Such is now the frightful state of this country, brought on, as it were, by a systematic collusion between the Irish landlords and the English legislature, and to which Ireland never would have been reduced, had she the protection of a native parliament. The famine has not, it is true, directly sprung from the Union. But severe as it is, it would not be so fatal, if Ireland had not been rendered too feeble to cope with the calamity, by the emaciating process to which it had been previously subjected. In the year 1800, the first year of the disastrous Union, the potatoes sold for 18d. a stone, and meal brought even a larger price than it is now sold for. Yet there was no starvation in Ireland, nor any necessity to appeal for relief to the imperial exchequer. No; because the constitution of the country was yet sound. It was not exhausted by the drainage of near half a century; and the vitality and vigour which it received from the free trade of 1782, not only sustained it through that trying crisis, but were felt to a far remoter period. Let any dispassionate person contrast those two years—the people during the former calamity sustaining themselves, notwithstanding the pressure of higher prices—and the people now as feeble and powerless as children, faltering on the public ways, and many of them sinking beneath a lighter scourge—and he must come to the conclusion, that the only safety for the Irish people is the restoration of their own legislature. Had we not, preceding this disaster, three or four seasons of unprecedented plenty and prosperity? Where are their fruits now to meet the present exigency? The temperate habits of the people refute the slander that they were improvidently wasted. No: the fruits of the first seasons were forced from the tenantry in lieu of the arrears which preceding years

of distress had accumulated ; and allow me to tell you, that though, in all equity, the loss of a crop should be proportionably sustained by the proprietor and the tenant, there is not a farthing of arrears which might grow during this famine, that would not hang over the poor tenants, even for ten years, to be rigorously exacted, when heaven might bless them with a more plentiful harvest.

This will account for the utter destitution in which this calamity was to be encountered, notwithstanding the propitious harvests of the preceding seasons. Alas ! there was no Joseph to store the abundant produce against its recurrence of distress. There was no responsible body solicitous for the misery of the Irish people, to lay by a portion of the revenues when they might be told by the English minister to look to themselves and to rely on their own resources. As it is, then, an incontestible truth that it is to the Union our present unprepared and destitute condition is to be traced, we have a strict right, without any imputation of injustice or of mendicancy, to large grants, proportioned to the crisis, from the imperial exchequer. Whilst we supplied you with our abundant produce, we were as dear and as cherished a portion of the empire as Yorkshire, or any other shire in England. Nothing could exceed the indissoluble closeness, nay, the affection of the Union. But when adversity comes upon us, in consequence of this legislative identity—when famine—walks, like the destroying angel, through the land—and the instances of death are now too many and too familiar to select one for peculiar commisseration—then we are to be told—“ You have no claim on us—we have no connexion with you—sink or swim, look to yourselves, and rely on your own resources.” Would such be the language to Yorkshire, in the days of a vengeful visitation ? Is it thus the minister would repulse the cries of the starving people of Northumberland ? Oh, no ; he would not have heart to give utterance to such a sentiment—or, if he should, Yorkshire and Northumberland would not tamely forego their constitutional right to a share of the common Imperial Exchequer, to the funds of which they had contributed. It is only Ireland that can be flattered with the name of a Union, when giving her heart’s blood to the prosperity of the empire ; and then, in her inanition, to be abandoned to starvation.

But, perhaps, I do not read your lordship’s letter right. If I am doing it any injustice, I shall furnish the glossary of a congenial and unprejudiced commentator—it is that of Sir Randolph Routh, of commissariat celebrity. Perhaps your lordship is not aware that he was waited on, in behalf of the starving people of Achil, by the Catholic clergyman of the parish, who happens to be as ignorant of the callous lessons of political economy as he is versed in the warm and practical charity of the Gospel. His

object was to press the necessity of establishing government depots for food in that remote district, where not only the staple food had perished, but where remoteness rendered any other substitute almost inaccessible. The result of the conference was, it seems, that, after the clergyman was lectured on free trade and mercantile immunities, it was signified to him, that if he had studied Edmund Burke he would not make so unreasonable an application. No doubt this Sir Randolph Routh is a well-paid officer; and, to do justice to that great political party —called the Whigs—they are never wanting in striving, by the most profuse patronage, to atone for their delinquencies to the just requisitions of the people.

Should we complain of such a lavish expenditure of the public money on multifarious bands of officers without employment, such as professors without colleges, and engineers without public works to employ them, no doubt this learned member of the commissariat would tell us that our impatience of such a staff of pensioners proceeded from our ignorance of political economy, and of the blessings of taxation. And no doubt he would recommend the same Edmund Burke as his authority, who gravely tells us that those enormous pensions of which the people so ignorantly complain, are like the exhalations that gradually rise from the earth, and are seen floating in masses of vapour through the atmosphere, until they descend in golden showers to gladden and fertilize the land that gave them. I doubt whether the shrewd commissary could reconcile his own countrymen to starve, by parading those rhetorical blessings of enormous pensions and grinding taxation. But I am sure that he never can reconcile the people of Achil, or of any portion of Ireland, to the unchristian doctrine that the lives of the people are to be sacrificed, rather than interfere with the cruel speculations of mercantile monopoly. If your lordship, and your commissary, have been so tender of the interests of that class, it is high time to take a wider view of the more important interests of the great mass of the people. The merchants had sufficient time to realise large fortunes wrung from their distress. There are among them some few men of the most enlarged benevolence; but it is well ascertained that, with the instinct that guides the sea birds to the wreck, mercantile men are in the habit of speculating on public calamities. Allow me, then, respectfully to tell your lordship that it is the duty of government promptly and vigorously to interfere between their cupidity and the lives of the people. Your lordship is not ignorant of what occurred at the late siege of Antwerp, in consequence of not interfering with commercial monopolies. Its merchants were selling ammunition to the French whilst its walls were bombarded. They obtained a higher price from the enemy than they could obtain from their own

citizens ; and if the towers of Antwerp were demolished with its own balls, and the people slain with their own ammunition, they had no right, it seems, to complain, since it was done on the principle of not interfering with free trade or political economy.

But it is sickening in any Christian country to pursue and to refute, either with seriousness or with irony, such cruel and insulting paradoxes. Let the people starve if you will, but let not their understandings be mocked by such hollow subterfuges, which can impose upon no one. The people are heartily tired of the shuffling of the public functionaries, to whom the preservation of their lives is entrusted. The legislature enacts measures for relief ; after several delays are interposed, the conditions are complied with ; employment—specific employment—is promised and guaranteed in the most solemn manner ; the clergy preach patience until they see people dying around them ; and at length some of the public officers hesitate not to acknowledge that their object is delay, and to save the property too rashly taxed—thus interposing between the legislature and the suffering people, and sacrificing the latter to their ill-timed solicitude for subordinate interests.

We value property, but we value the peace of the country and the lives of the people more. Nay, the most efficient guardians of property are those who are solicitious for preserving the lives of the people. They are not ignorant of what the instincts of nature suggest, and the axioms of jurists lay down on the rights of property, when life is becoming the victim of starvation. For the patience they evince, society is indebted to the sacred influence of religion. Yes, it is to the hallowed teaching of the Catholic clergy the peace of the country is due. What is their requital ? The exhibition of a rancorous bigotry, which has been infused into the composition of relief committees from high quarters. The curates, forsooth, are not persons of sufficient consideration to be put on relief committees ! Yet more than once, when all the influence of armed men and stipendiary magistrates had failed, have those very curates been selected and sent forth to calm the stormy masses of the people rushing for food with all the rage of hunger, chafing with any opposition to their terrible instincts—instincts which it would have failed any other influence on earth to appease. I need say nothing of the marked exclusion from the benefit of the public works of those sacred edifices from which such humanizing influences go forth. It is better that they should rise and be sustained by the poor people themselves, and, like the priesthood who officiate in them, stand aloof as sacred monuments, free from the desecration with which an official anti-Catholic patronage would be sure to soil them. It is fortunate for the country that its priests and temples are in this state of holy independence.

For should your infidel colleges ever flourish, or the promiscuous education which you patronise bring forth its natural fruits, you would find that lectures on the rights of property *in extremis*, would scarcely be listened to with the grave and qualifying commentaries of the bench or the pulpit.

Your protracting to assemble the parliament can scarcely be accounted for on any other supposition, than total ignorance of the awful extent and intensity of the present famine. Every village witnesses, and every day records instances of persons dying of starvation. The tragic end of the young girl, only sixteen years of age, which lately occurred, is but one of the many extraordinary deaths with which, in all their frightful diversity, our ears are made familiar. Prompted by the cravings of hunger, the poor creature tottered her weary way to a neighbouring mill; regardless of the wheels being at work, she incautiously stretched her hand for a little meal. She was instantly caught, and torn to pieces by the machinery; and, more fatal than the drop of honey was to Jonathan—she found death in the little meal with which she sought to prolong her life.

Your lordship has now a great destiny to fulfil—the rescuing an entire people from the jaws of famine; for nothing less than millions from the imperial exchequer can avert the doom that hangs over the Irish nation. Be prepared, then, to advocate such an enlarged measure; or, since your humanity would shrink from the spectacle of a nation perishing by famine—you will doubtless retire from the helm which you may find yourself unable to guide. Such a measure of relief from the imperial exchequer will be indispensable, notwithstanding all the aid which may be lent by the Irish landlords. Their apathy and listlessness, their want of counsel and concert at a moment which requires their united energies, are not among the least melancholy of the misbodings, which our awful condition forces on every reflecting mind. It would seem as if there were no aristocracy in the country, or as if the confusion of “the great ones of Tanis,” were come upon them. They seem altogether unmanned, and shorn of those national attributes with which some of their ancestors were endued. Their property is shifting away from under their feet, and they seem seized with an utter inability to arrest the ruin. They are clamorous for reproductive works, in order to be relieved of the labour rate. They talk much of remunerative labour, but little of remunerative tenure, utterly forgetful that it was the tenant’s want of permanent security to enjoy in substantial food the fruit of their improvements, that consigned our population, as if they were wandering tribes, to such a precarious root as the potato, and that without a tenure which will make the labour reproductive to both tenants and landlords, no agricultural improvements, such as the crisis de-

mands, will ever be achieved. Let the security of tenure, then, and a fair remuneration for improvement, form an essential part of any amendment of the labour act, and it will be seen what a magical effect it will have in drawing away the people to the seasonable cultivation of their own little farms. The landlords are continuing too long with their arms folded. They seem unwilling to meet in Dublin, and take counsel of each other. Perhaps they are apprehensive lest some mighty conjuror in the assembly should scare them away by evoking the unwelcome apparition of a Repeal of the Union. Such fears afford sufficient evidence that they who entertain them, whilst they listlessly look on the ruin of their property, are not the persons who would bring much of wisdom to the deliberations of a national legislature.

But whether they meet and aid you by their counsel, or whether they remain aloof in their isolated helplessness, the prime minister cannot be absolved from the high responsibility of providing for the public weal. The period that is assigned for the meeting of parliament may appear near to the children of opulence, and amidst all the charms and solace of society it will soon pass over. But it will be a dreary and a long period to the perishing inhabitants of Ireland. Deep snow is at this moment covering the earth, and even the miserable day's hire, which could not afford half a meal in the twenty-four hours to all the members of a wretched family, is, in many instances, withdrawn. I shudder at the consequences. It is too painful to contemplate. Unless you adopt more enlarged measures than throwing the relief of the people on the landlords, who, whatever be their sins, should be corrected and reformed rather than annihilated, your ministry will be memorable in Ireland ; and if you are ambitious of a monument, the people's bones, " slain with the sword of the famine," and piled into cairns more numerous than the ancient pyramids, shall tell posterity the ghastly triumphs of your brief but disastrous administration.

✠ JOHN, ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

THE END.



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