

kindred feeling among them throughout the whole empire. The doctrine of Baron Parke, and the decision of the Jury, strike a deadly blow at the freedom of the press, and give a legal impunity to the enormities of the national Priesthood. The case which led to the trial was this, a person named Gathercole, an English Congregationalist Minister, had become a recreant to the cause of Congregationalism, and joined the State Establishment, and being "exceedingly mad" against his former religious associates, he spared no means to endeavour to destroy the faith which he once upheld. Among his labours in this department was a Tract entitled "18 reasons for not being a Dissenter"—which breathes the very spirit of the devil, but which was deemed so excellent by his new allies that it has been circulated far and wide, and but lately was being handed from door to door, in the streets of this city, by the more zealous of the Puseyites. Such zeal sought for reward, and Gathercole soon obtained it by being inducted into an English vicarage, with about £2,000 sterling a year. On entering upon the parish, his first aim seemed to be to break up all public intercourse between Dissenters and Episcopalians, even in societies of a purely benevolent kind, and it was the publication of some strictures on such conduct in the *Nonconformist* newspaper which led to the prosecution, and through an ignorant or packed Jury to a conviction. The fine imposed was £200 sterling and costs. The friends of religious freedom in England, Scotland, and Ireland, at once, by penny subscriptions we believe, not only paid off the fine and costs but gave a banquet in honour of Mr. Miall, the talented and uncompromising Editor of the *Nonconformist*, besides a purse of gold for his eminent public services. Since then, however, the same Gathercole has entered an action for damages against Mr. Miall, on another plea, which will be tried at Ipswich, in March next. The British Dissenters are thoroughly awake, and will give the clerical Despots, who are making a tool of the unhappy Gathercole, a warm reception at that trial, and will determine the question whether the Press is or is not to be muzzled by the State Priests: whether Britons are or are not to be their slaves. "The Court of Exchequer (says the *Suffolk Chronicle*), by supporting the *dictum* of Baron Parke, have decided that the Priests are a privileged sect—privileged to act the part of the blackguard, the knave, the fool, the cheat, the ruffian,—in short, to do anything to others that they would not like to have done to themselves—and that the Press has no right, power, or authority whatever to interfere as conservators of the public morals, or as censors of priestly tyranny and bigoted intolerance." If Baron Parke's doctrine be law, the public conduct of every one, from the monarch on the throne to the beggar in the streets, is liable to the animadversions of the public press, with the exception of the State Priest! that is, the swearing and gambling Rector; the swindling and incestuous Vicar; the drinking and whoring Priest, are all to be protected against the criticisms of the Press!: the administrators of British Law are henceforth to be required to spread the shield of their special protection over the clerical criminal, while all others are to be exposed, condemned, and punished! What does all this indicate? that THE DOOM OF CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS IS HASTENING ON! The spiritual ignorance, presumption, and folly of the national Priesthood could never bear the test of Divine Truth, and the increasing immoralities, the enormous crimes, the utter disregard, even for the laws of public de-

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