

of the proselytisers. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass assisted at by thousands of Faithful on the hill-side, and thirty-four paid attendants at the Protestant church hard by! Let not this consoling fact, however, diminish the ardor of the Faithful or the zeal of the Missioners, as most assuredly it will not. The Catholic Faith is assaulted by dangerous enemies in this country, but, by the blessing of God, they will be overthrown.

SHYLOCK'S POUND OF FLESH.

The atrocious things that are done in the name of religion are a fearful argument in the hands of the infidel. The worship of God is, sadly often in our every-day life, made the pretext of the most sinful offences. In his name have been committed the greatest crimes that disgrace humanity. For the ugliest vice, for the lowest meanness, for the darkest pride, for the most disgusting hypocrisy, religion is made the cloak; and there is hardly one worldly excuse which men would dare to quote for the offences which they hesitate not to commit *ad majorem Dei Gloriam*. And if the sacred cause of religion has been made a pretext for the worst kind of vices of our nature, at all times and in all countries, we venture to say that the unenviable distinction is ours, that in no other nation is it made the groundwork of equally disgusting practices. As example, we need only point to the vile system of Soup Proselytism, by which some of the most unhappy portions of our singularly unhappy island are disgraced and disturbed. We cannot fancy an uglier picture to paint the set of well-fed mercenaries of English bigotry who prow about the country, tempting and corrupting the starving poor, abusing and belying the creed in which they worship, attacking and villifying their priests, exciting immorality and irreligion, and sowing discord, heart-burnings, and anger, wherever they put their foot. When we think of the glorious labors of the first preachers of Christianity—when we reflect on the toil and suffering, the voluntary poverty and mortification—the gentleness, charity, and angelic patience of the missionaries who have carried the cross to all ends of the world—and then picture this well-fed, sleek-coated, pampered, insolent set who violate peace and love, and propagate falsehood, malice, and evil passions, under the name of religion, we cannot help feeling a loathing for the one side of the picture as unbearably as our admiration for the other. If all liberal men could know the condition of the famine-stricken districts where this unholy system is now in operation—the sufferings of the population—the temptations that are held out to their miserable stomachs through the scent of their nostrils—the remorse and often reckless immorality, the fruit of conscious sin of those who yield to the temptation, they would abominate this Soup proselytism as a loathsome plague.

One of the latest examples of its working is shown in an incident which took place in Tralee the other day. The case was a shocking mixture of the horrible and the ridiculous; and it would be irresistibly laughable if it were not painfully disgusting. A wretched starving boy had been induced, by the appeal which the tempting food that the apostles of soup are so well supplied with by their fanatic dupes in England made, to his gnawing hunger, to abjure his faith. But after some time a troubled conscience appears to have overcome his animal appetite, and he returned once more to the religion in which alone he believed. It seems the Soup missionaries had supplied him with some rags, he having been almost naked when he joined the confraternity; and as they could not get back from him the food he had devoured, they resolved to punish him by prosecuting him for running away with the clothes he wore. The rev. apostle, who had exhibited such singular regard for the welfare of the poor wretch's soul and stomach, brought him up before the magistrates at petty sessions. The account says that the clothes which were made the subject of dispute would not do credit to a respectable scarecrow: a bench of magistrates exceedingly favorable to the proselytising parson, valued them at half-a-crown! The extraordinary case was tried; it was acknowledged by the witnesses for the prosecution that they had attempted to detain the defendant by force; but the magistrates ruled with the apostolic litigant and sentenced the wretched boy to a fortnight's imprisonment, and a fine of 2s. 6d., the price of the rags with which he had absconded.

Here is a specimen of apostolic charity. Does it not carry us back in imagination to the days when the lowly twelve received their mission, and wandered forth amongst the gentiles, to meet the contempt and cruelties of the world with the patience and gentleness of charity. Does it not remind us of the early martyrs who bowed meekly before the sword of the persecutor, and when they were smitten on the one cheek turned the other—who prayed for those that imprisoned, and punished, and tortured them, and repaid their executioners with a smile of inexhaustible love? Fancy one of these dragging up a poor, famished, reluctant convert before the Roman magistrate, to punish him for running away with the rags they had thrown him to cover his nakedness. Ah! surely this meek, sleek, comfortable 'Jumper' of Tralee, fattening on the gold of his English employers, and rigidly exacting his pound of flesh from the shoulders of the starving boy, is a worthy successor of those who bore the cross through the fire of persecution, and freely shed their willing life-blood under the pagan sword, 'to make a Roman holiday.'

But hear the sequel. This wretched lad had a mother. When he was thrown into prison, 'the poor woman,' says the respectable priest of the place, 'looked anxiously forward to the day on which she was told that her son was to return, and on that day, last Wednesday, a day of mercy for the Christian, she went to Tralee, a distance of 34 miles going and coming, dressed as I have described her, I could use the expression "dress"—when rags hardly covered her attenuated limbs—without the power of purchasing one farthing's worth of bread. To make her case worse, the poor creature appeared to be near her confinement. Imagine her affliction, on being told that her son should remain in prison until the 4s. 6d. would be paid—and all this for the sake and in the name of religion.'

Such is the system for the propagation of which the gold of England is poured out in a continuous tide—for which sleek parsons and pious old dowagers lift their hands and praise Heaven—for which every relation of life is disturbed and the courts of justice made scenes of miserable strife—the system, which we are told, is to elevate and regenerate the country and make the people happy. Heaven save us from the demoralising monstrosity, and may its speedy extinction be the harbinger of peace and good will between all sects and parties in this distracted land.—*Ulsterman*.

GREAT BRITAIN.

CARDINAL WISEMAN AND THE BRITISH REFORMATION SOCIETY.—The British Reformation Society—a body, no doubt, of considerable piety and utility, but which has hitherto made its converts and its collections in commendable humble obscurity, has suddenly emerged into publicity, in a singular manner. Wherever we walk we see a placard, contending for place with the announcements of cheap hats, cheap pills, cheap clothes, and all sorts of cheap improprieties, which informs us that this active secret society has been playing Box and Cox with Cardinal Wiseman, asking his Eminence if "he fights," and on receiving a reply in the "negative," inviting him to 'come on.' A poster of enormous magnitude, which extinguishes for ever the glory of whole hosts of secular advertisements, first informed us of the fact that two discreet gentlemen, of one of the varieties of our manifold Protestant 'persuasions,' had offered to advance against the imperturbable Goliath, if only a meeting would assemble to see these conceited little Davids have their sling. The proposition would really have been tempting had his Eminence cared as much for victory as did his insect antagonists for fame. But he, known to literature and to the world, who might combat Whately with his own weapons, and deal back sarcasms to him of Exeter, as well as logic to him of Dublin, could have cared little for his personal dignity, and less for his official character, if he had entered the lists with these contemptible adversaries, who invited his hostility in the consciousness that they were beneath it, and with the intention of proclaiming themselves conquerors, if, as they foresaw must be the case, he would not stoop to administer to them their due meed of curative castigation. He did not, of course, notice the petty annoyance of which he was the subject. He may possibly have seen some of our May meetings with their seething crowds of pseudo-pietists engaged in crotchet, for the most part, and, at intervals, refreshed with sherry and biscuits, careless of the dull routine of virtue, but ever and anon brightening up into a cheer at some dash of religious vituperation, or deafening with applause some rev. Orangeman, who has been most bounteous in his dealing of damnation to all religions in Christendom save that special form of fanaticism represented at the meeting. His Eminence may have entertained doubts as to whether the religion which he deems true could be advanced by the bandying of its most august mysteries among a passionate and ignorant assemblage, to whom they were signs of contention, not symbols of belief. He may only have wished to reprove the presumption of those unknown persons, who, without authority, without being delegated, either, by any dissenting body, or by the Established Church, called on him—the representative, in this country, of the principle of Catholicism, to debate and to discuss his faith, and, without the hope of making one convert, to open his heart to an unsympathising audience, and to state to controversialists, thirsting for display, what men of his religion feel, as well as what they think. Most properly he declined; and what is the consequence?—The meeting at which the Cardinal might have presided, railed off, like a wild beast at a show, into a compartment of his own, has been held; the anticipated audacious interpretation of his absence has been made, and an audience has come to the charitable conclusion, that what arose from scorn, is attributed to pusillanimity. Resolutions have been passed, surely in contradiction of the Third Commandment, expressing a valueless, but decisive opinion, on questions which have been subjects of Christian controversy for ages; and clergymen—we trust self-ordained—have pandered to this lust for religious excitement, and have taught professed Christians to sit in judgment, where, as our own faith teaches, they should only kneel in hope.—In the name of common decency, let us shape against such proceedings. Blasphemy in any shape is odious enough, but hypocritical blasphemy—blasphemy in a white tie and on a platform—blasphemy, talking with glib disrespect, 'wagging the tongue with dexterous acceptability' on matters of the highest import—such blasphemy outrages decency, and not merely religion, and is as offensive to the good taste of the unbeliever, as it is revolting to the honest conscience of the faithful. The British Reformation Society may be a useful institution, conducted upon Christian principles; its directors are, very possibly, as honest as they evidently are misguided; but at present, we warn them, they are missing their mark, and damaging the cause to seek to prosper. Let them import into the management of their affairs, in addition to that zeal which is their present characteristic, a little gentlemanly feeling. A very little would suffice to have prevented the pitiable, blundering folly into which bad taste and ignorance have just betrayed them. For want of it, they have rendered their faith ludicrous, and this protest necessary. Their conspicuous folly has made Catholics think more highly of the solemn sanctity of their own religion, and has taught Protestants to blush for a faith which, though they believe it to be true, they feel to be, just now, thanks to the British Reformation Society, ridiculous. Let promoters of May meetings take warning; let them remember, that propriety is not inconsistent with zeal, and that polemics are but a poor substitute for Christianity.—*Leader*.

ELECTION EXTRAORDINARY.—In consequence of the resignation of the Rev. J. Clebury, the perpetual curacy of Piddington, Oxon, is vacant. The presentation rests with the inhabitant householders of the village. The living is worth £300 a year in addition to the residence. There are no less than 100 candidates for the office, and but 60 voters. The election is to take place on the 23rd of June. Active canvasses are making, and to give the inhabitants an opportunity of judging of the ability of the aspirants, there are three services on each Sunday, at each of which a fresh clergyman is trotted out, and put through his paces. The unusual occurrence has put the place into activity and commotion.

OUR ROYAL RELIGIONS! MORE CLERGY RESERVES!—The London *Times*, supplement, April 21, contains an advertisement, in which the advertiser offers for sale "the finest living" or church parson's income in all Worcestershire—that is, offers to sell it to whoever will give him most money, and the buyer to have the right to select any person in priest's orders and put him in the place of the present rector, whenever that incumbent, who is very old, shall die. The income is ten thousand dollars a year. This splendid income is not to be given to the man of most merit, but to him whose relative or friend has the longest purse! The Queen is the nominal head of this disgraceful traffic, but the real managers are the nobility and gentry, who manufacture a priesthood that do not preach or teach, but hire curates, and consume the fat of the land, giving nothing in return.—*Mackenzie's Weekly Mes.*

OWEN CONVERTED!—Robert Owen, the Socialist chief, who has hitherto been impregnable to arguments in proof of a future state, has avowed himself a believer in the spiritual manifestations, and the thumping tricks of the American 'Rappers.' His conversion is referred to the influence of an American lady residing in Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, London.

It has been announced that the Government intend to propose a measure with regard to the management of savings banks. A similar promise, it will be remembered, was repeatedly made by Sir Chas. Wood a few years ago, when heavy losses were being sustained almost daily by the poor from defalcations in all parts of the united kingdom. Nothing, however, was done after the immediate excitement had passed away, and hence, as the connection of these institutions with the Government was allowed to continue without the slightest protection being afforded to depositors, who were deluded by it into the belief of perfect security, the remedy still remains to be applied.—*Times*.

HORRIBLE DEPRAVITY IN LONDON.—SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST A PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN.—At the Lambeth Police Court, last Friday, a surgeon named Cunningham, of Slough, but who also went by the name of Smith and other aliases, and Surgeon Currie, of Norfolk-street, Middlesex Hospital, were charged as principal and accessory in procuring premature child-birth (or infanticide, it being not as yet known which the offence amounts to). The unfortunate young lady whose shame it was thus attempted to conceal is a Miss Mardon. Neither her mother, the servants in her house, nor any of her friends seem to have entertained the least suspicion of her actual condition. Mrs. Mardon was persuaded that her daughter was suffering from a polypos. Change of air was recommended—lodgings were taken for her at the other side of London (at Camberwell), and there she was attended by Dr. Smith (Cunningham), who pretended to operate for the cure of Polypos. The lady in whose house Miss Mardon lodged, however, had her suspicions excited. She communicated them first to Mrs. Mardon, who authorised her to call in her own doctor, Dr. Greenwood, and upon his report to the registrar of births and deaths the police were put in motion. It was found that Mr. George Thomas, a chemist, of Leather-lane, Holborn, had recommended Miss Mardon to Dr. Smith's giving his address at the house of Dr. Currie; and evidence was given to show a knowledge on the part of Currie of Smith's mode of practice in such cases of concealment by means of an instrument. The body of the child not having been found, the two surgeons were remanded for further examination. On Saturday the chemist was brought up in custody, and remanded also, Mr. Norton refusing to accept bail in all the cases. The unfortunate young lady is still in too delicate a state to be removed, or brought up for examination. The *Times* of Saturday has the following reference to the principal actor in—or, rather, author of—this horrible tragedy:—"Neither during the present examination nor that which had taken place on the day before had anything been allowed to transpire, though the name had been mentioned, touching the principal actor in this disgusting affair—namely, the reputed father of the infant prematurely destroyed, and who has up to the present eluded the vigilance of the officers. In the statement made by Miss Mardon to Mr. Lund, and also in her admissions to Mr. Greenwood, she made no secret of the name of her seducer, and it is much to be regretted, on the grounds of public-decency, morals, and religion, that he is a Clergyman and a popular preacher at one of the most extensive parishes in the city of London. That this Clerical delinquent was aware of what had been going on there can be no doubt, as it appears he was instrumental in procuring the lodging for the young lady at which the operation had been performed, and had repeatedly visited her there. It is also stated that after Mr. Greenwood had been called in, and he became aware of the fact, he waited on that gentleman, and entreated that he would keep the matter secret, begged of him to consider the unfortunate position in which the *expose* would place him and the young lady, and unequivocally hinted that he might name his own price for his services. Mr. Greenwood indignantly refused compliance to the entreaties of both the Clerical delinquent and his solicitor, and, finding all means to hush up the matter futile, the Reverend seducer exclaimed—"Then I shall be like a fallen star from the firmament of Heaven!" He left his residence immediately after, but, strange to say, he had the audacity, as late as Sunday last, to ascend the pulpit and preach a sermon to a crowded congregation. To conceal his name is hardly just, but there is very little doubt that before many days are over it will be sufficiently public."

INFANTICIDE IN ENGLAND.—In our late London papers we observe several notices of deaths by infanticide. This horrible practice prevails to a much greater extent in England than would be credible here, and is apparently increasing, with the most frightful rapidity. Generally the crime is committed by perfectly sane parents, who wish to avoid the expense of supporting their offspring. In other instances the infanticide is perpetrated in order to secure the premium paid by the burial club to parents. Of course these atrocities are confined to the poorer classes. But what a heathenish state of feeling such acts reveal! We can indeed conceive no condition of humanity more brutish than that of parents who thus voluntarily take the life of their own offspring. It is almost impossible to realize the possibility of such degradation. Yet the statistics prove the fact beyond a doubt. It is consoling to reflect, however, that in no other Christian nation are such practices believed to exist. England divides with India this great atrocity. Where infanticide occurs in other civilised countries, it is the result of temporary insanity produced by shame, and is not, as in England, a mercenary act, the profit of which is deliberately calculated beforehand. The pauper population which yields fruit like this, must be inexorably brutalized, must be, beyond conception, degraded.—*Phil. Gazette*.

EPISODE OF THE POOR AND THE DEPRAVED IN EDINBURGH.—Destitution, crime, squalor, in terrible sameness; dim narrow closes, heavy with pntudity; beggars, thieves, harlots, everywhere. Great, lowering, gloomy, piles of buildings; long, steep, misty alleys, where only a grey, uncertain twilight, that sickens the eye, can penetrate; small, dull, miserable courts, hiding themselves from the sight, in out of the way places, and known to few but its inhabitants and the police: tottering chimneys, tumbling roofs, cellars like pit-falls; ragged clothes, drooping heavily from windows high up in the air; impurities everywhere, stench insufferable; pawn-shops, dram-shops, low eating houses, sheltered archways and passages, nightly tenanted by the homeless. The blue heavens over all—God above, hell beneath.—*Nelly Armstrong*.

An "American Sister" writes a sensible letter to the *Times* suggesting that the 562,848 Englishwomen who signed their names in Mrs. Stowe's book be requested to call again and append to their signatures the sum of 4s. 2d. each, equal to \$1 America, to be used in assisting the emigration of the manumitted.

INTOLERANCE IN SCOTLAND.—It is a not uncommon custom on the part of farm-laborers in the Lothians to relieve the tedium of the winter evenings by amateur representations, or rather recitations, of Allan Ramsay's beautiful dramatic pastoral—"The Gentle Shepherd"—a practice innocent in itself, and sanctioned by long usage. Will it be believed that a party of farm laborers, who lately indulged in this harmless amusement, were actually summoned before the Kirk session of Ratho, to answer for doing what was "unbecoming their position as professing Christian communicants?" That such however, was really the case, the following copies of the official documents will prove:—

(Copy of first summons.)

"By order of the Kirk session you are desired to attend at the sessions house immediately after divine service, on Sabbath, the 30th current, in reference to information which has reached the session of your having taken part in certain theatrical representations in the neighborhood, which they judge to be unbecoming your position as a professing Christian communicant."

(Copy of second summons.)

"I, Charles Logan, Kirk officer of Ratho, by virtue of a warrant from the Kirk session of Ratho, hereby summon you, —, to compare before the said session on Sabbath first, the 6th day of February, in reference to a 'fama' of your having been recently engaged as an actor in theatrical representations and scenes of dissipation connected therewith."

It will be observed that in the second of these formidable documents a very serious additional charge was made: and while the parties concerned—with a highly proper sense of their own position, and a much better notion of their duties and responsibilities than the Kirk session seems capable of entertaining on their part—took no notice of the first summons, to the second they made reply in the following very suitable terms:—

(Copy letter sent to the session.)

"Ratho, February 5, 1853.

"Gentlemen,—We the undersigned respectfully to inform you that we decline appearing to-morrow before the Kirk session of Ratho, to answer for the charge of having taken part in theatrical representations; but as to the grave charge of having committed a series of acts of dissipation, we beg to inform you that we are quite prepared to meet you upon that charge, and that, as our characters hitherto are unimpeachable, we hesitate not to remind you they must not be assailed in a groundless way without proper redress.

"We are yours very respectfully."

(Eight signatures.)

They appeared accordingly, but were only charged with "contumacy" in not answering to the first summons, while the charge of drunkenness was carefully evaded, and the other quietly dropped. The whole proceedings, however, have naturally caused considerable talk in the district—the more so when it is recollected that not only has the practice of such recitations remained unquestioned, probably ever since the original publication of Ramsay's admirable poem, but that on one occasion, some years ago, a recitation of the comedy was got up for the benefit of the Sunday School, when the funds collected were thankfully received and gratefully acknowledged at the manse!—*Scotsman*.

MINISTERIAL DISCLOSURES.

Those who had paid any attention to the disgraceful disclosures connected with the administration of the late Board of Admiralty, were naturally inclined to regard Mr. Stafford, the late Secretary, as the mercenary scape-goat of still greater offenders. It was impossible to conceive that any man of position could equivocate and utter deliberate untruths in the House of Commons, who was not impelled by stronger influences, than those which usually actuate a subordinate member of the Government. The Committee which has been appointed to investigate the whole affair met on Thursday, April 28, and it will be seen from the following questions and answers, who were the parties behind the scenes prompting Mr. Stafford to incur all the odium which has since fallen upon his devoted head,—odium so intense that it will probably drive him from public life:—

By Sir B. Hall—I understand you to say that on the 5th of April you had an interview with Mr. Stafford, and had an argument with him on the alterations taking place with reference to the circular of 1849, and that Mr. Stafford stated his political friends were dissatisfied; that he would cancel that circular, and that upon your pointing out the evils that would result from it, Mr. Stafford said, "there was no use in blinking the question—he was so pressed with the government he could not help himself." Now, when Mr. Stafford made use of that expression, did he mention the name of any member of the Government who had pressed him to take this course?

Sir B. Walker—He did.  
Sir B. Hall—Whose name did he mention?  
Sir B. Walker—He mentioned the name of Lord Derby, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.  
Sir B. Hall—What did he say with reference to these gentlemen having pressed him?

Sir B. Walker—Perhaps the term "Government" was a wrong term for me to use. His expression was, "It is of no use blinking the question, and I am so pressed by Lord Derby and the Chancellor of the Exchequer that I cannot help myself." This was again repeated in the presence of Admiral Parker during the interview I had on the subject of tendering my resignation.

Sir B. Hall—Did Mr. Stafford appear to imply that he received orders from those members of the Administration you have named to adopt the course he had then taken?

Sir B. Walker—I came to that conclusion. It is quite clear, from the whole of the evidence which was given on Thursday, that, bad as this case appeared to be in the House of Commons it will be made still worse by the facts which the committee will bring to light. Such a cluster of the most serious charges,—the destruction of important public papers, the suppression and withholding of others, with all the trickery and untruth which distinguished the affair, and the Prime Minister in the back ground, winking at the business, in order to strengthen his power in the House of Commons,—has had no parallel within the present century.—*European Times*, April 30.