

CARDINAL WISEMAN, DR. CUMMING, AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC EPISCOPAL OATH.

(To the Editor of the Acadian Recorder.)

DEAR SIR,—In the "Willmer & Smith's European Times," of Nov. 30, which arrived in Halifax by the steamer on this day, an article appears on the subject of the Oath taken by Roman Catholic Bishops and Archbishops at their consecration, which is calculated to mislead the public at large, and to impeach the sincerity and good faith of His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman. Though it is morally certain that a complete and satisfactory refutation of the statement and ungenerous insinuations of Dr. Cumming has been already published in England, I deem it of some importance that these charges should be met directly on their appearance on this side of the Atlantic. The article in *Willmer* may be reproduced in a thousand different forms throughout this continent; and as I happen to be the first Prelate in British North America under whose notice it has come, perhaps you will be good enough to allow me, through the medium of your journal, to place the question in its true light before the American public. I am the more induced to do so on the present occasion, when I remember that a very few years ago one of the journals of this city published an atrocious version of the Episcopal Oath in the Church of Rome—accused me by name of having sworn it at my consecration, and held me up to the execration of my fellow-citizens. This, and similar charges of equal improbability and falsehood, I passed over in silence at the time; but as, at present, an attempt may be made to corroborate it by the narrative of Dr. Cumming, I proceed at once to dispose of the calumny by a simple statement of facts.

The article alluded to is as follows:—

"CARDINAL WISEMAN AND DR. CUMMING.

"At one of his late lectures at the Hanover-rooms, relating to the oath taken by the Romish Archbishops on their receiving the archiepiscopal pallium, Dr. Cumming remarked:—

"First of all, let me presume, that when the cardinal was made an archbishop, he received the pallium, before receiving which he repeated a solemn oath which will be found in the *Pontificale Romanum*. I have the book, and carefully examined all that he has said; it is the edition of Clement VIII., Antwerp edition, 1627. One clause of the oath is as follows:—"Hæreticos, scismaticos et rebelles, Domino nostro, vel successoribus prædictis, pro posse persequar et impugnabo." This is, he solemnly sworn on his most solemn oath (I wish thus to prepare you for his reception): "All heretics (that is, Protestants), schismatics (that is, members of the Greek Church, that separated, as they say, from Rome,) and rebels against our Lord, or his aforesaid successors, I will persecute and attack to the utmost of my power." The correct translation, I believe, of *pro posse*?

"On reading the above, Cardinal Wiseman invited Dr. Cumming to inspect at his house in Golden-square, the oath which he had taken, stating, at the same time, that the said persecuting clause, 'is omitted in the oath taken by all bishops and archbishops subject to the British Crown. Dr. Cumming, in a letter to the *Times*, gives the following account of the interview:—

"I accepted the invitation, and this day, in company with Sir J. Heron Maxwell and Admiral Vernon Harcourt, I inspected the cardinal's *Pontificale* submitted to me at the episcopal residence, Golden-square. In the *Pontificale* thus laid before me I found in the bishop's oath the very words I quoted, and in bold type, but with a line of black ink drawn over the passage with a pen, apparently very recently used, leaving the words disclaimed by the cardinal sufficiently legible, but without any initials or other verification of any sort. On the fly-leaf at the beginning of the book I found the same oath in MS., without the persecuting clause, and without initials or other verification, and apparently very recently written. But the startling fact remains. On referring to the oath required to be taken by an archbishop (Dr. Wiseman having been recently made one) on receiving the pallium, as given at page 88 (Paris edition, 1664) on the *Pontificale* thus submitted to me by order of the cardinal, I found the persecuting clause—"Hæreticos scismaticos et rebelles Domino nostro vel successoribus prædictis pro posse persequar et impugnabo," printed in bold type without any alteration, emendation, or correction whatever, constituting in the Archbishop of Westminster's own *Pontificale* part and parcel of the oath which every archbishop on receiving the pallium, as I have already stated, must take. The discovery needs no comment beyond my expression of surprise that the cardinal should have had the temerity to invite me to inspect his *Pontificale Romanum*."

Now, I have taken the same Oath at my Consecration as Dr. Wiseman. I have a copy of that Oath in manuscript, taken several years ago from the Roman original in possession of His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, and authenticated by him. Having been consecrated by Dr. Murray, the Oath was sworn before him, and I can assure your readers—any one of whom may have ocular demonstration of the fact—that the manuscript which contains it is not even "apparently very recently written." In this Oath the obnoxious clause does not appear, because it was never sworn by me, nor has it been sworn since 1791 by any Catholic Bishop under the British Crown; nor before that period in the obnoxious sense attributed to it by the enemies of the Catholic Church.

The reasons for its omissions as well as for the addition of a final clause to the Catholic Episcopal Oath in the British Dominions, were transmitted with the revised form of the Oath itself to the Irish Primate on the 23d of June, 1791, by the then Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda.

His Letter testifies that a Representation had been made by the Irish Metropolitans to the Holy See, "that from the ignorance or dishonesty of some persons (*quorundam inscitia aut improbitate*) certain expressions in the form of the Oath prescribed by the Roman Ritual to be taken by Bishops at their consecration, and by Archbishops on receiving the Pallium have been distorted into a false meaning (*in alienum sensum detorque*), &c. Wherefore they humbly requested, if it should appear expedient to His Holiness, that he would vouchsafe to apply a remedy by some act of his Apostolical vigilance."

And accordingly the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary of Propaganda testify that at an Audience of His Holiness Pius VI. on the 9th day of June, 1791, he was graciously pleased to grant that the Bishops and Archbishops might use the same form of Oath which was taken by the Archbishop of Mohilow, in Russia. This Oath is then recited at length without the obnoxious clause, which was perverted from its natural meaning by ignorance and malice, and as if, to prevent all further calumny on the subject, the Form of

the Oath concludes with these words:—"Hæc omnia et singula eo inviolabiliter observabo, quo certior sum, nihil in illis contineri quod fidelitati meæ erga Serenissimum Magnæ Britanniæ et Hiberniæ Regem, ejusque ad Thronum successores debite adversari possit: Sic me Deus adjuvet, et hæc sancta Dei Evangelia. Ita promitto et spondeo; que is, 'I will observe all and singular of these things the more inviolably, as I am firmly convinced that there is nothing contained in them which can be contrary to the allegiance I owe to the Most serene King of Great Britain and Ireland, and to his successors to the Throne. So help me God, and these Holy Gospels of God. This I promise and engage.'"

I should hope that this explicit and open declaration would fully satisfy every unprejudiced mind that the ignorant or wilful charge respecting the Episcopal Oath has no foundation whatsoever, and that it may be classed with the long catalogue of similar accusations which are published from time to time by persons who affect to know what we believe better than we do ourselves, who ascribe to our language a meaning which we disavow, and who repeat their odious assertions with as much confidence as if they had not been solemnly disproved over and over again throughout every part of the British empire.

Of course, the Continental Editions of the *Pontificale Romanum* which have been all published in Catholic countries contain the original Oath whose obnoxious clauses are understood in their natural and obvious meaning by Foreign Governments. No Edition of the Book has been published in England or Ireland; and hence the necessity of drawing the pen over the disputed clause, and of inserting in the fly-leaf the Oath as amended and permitted by Pope Pius, in 1791. I have seen this done myself in *Pontificales* which were used by Prelates who were subjects of the British Crown.

The sneers and insinuations of Dr. Cumming in his Letter to the *Times* are thus disposed of; the unsullied integrity and high honor of Cardinal Wiseman are vindicated, and the virtual impeachment of the allegiance of the Catholic Episcopacy, who by teaching and example have proved their loyalty to their Sovereign even in those times when the reciprocal duties of the Sovereign were violated or forgotten, is denied and refuted.

With regard to the obnoxious clauses themselves, I shall be brief, but conclusive. I shall not load your columns with copious quotations from ancient Latin writers on the literal meaning of the verb *Persequor* which is understood by every classical scholar, but I shall give the signification of the word in the former Episcopal Oath as it has been explained by the authority and command of his Holiness in the Letter of the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda in 1791, to the Bishops of Ireland.

"The words *persequar et impugnabo* are maliciously interpreted as 'a signal of war against heretics,' authorising persecution and assault against them as enemies, whereas the pursuit and opposition which the Bishops undertake are to be understood as referring to their solicitude and efforts in convincing heretics of their errors, and procuring their reconciliation with the Catholic Church. His Holiness has graciously condescended to substitute for the ancient form of Oath, one which was publicly sworn by the Archbishop of Mohilow to the great satisfaction of all the Court of St. Petersburg, in presence of the Empress, and which we transmit to you in this Letter."

From the same remarkable document I transcribe the following Declarations of the Holy See, which ought to have put an end for ever to those unchristian calumnies.

"The See of Rome has never taught that faith is not to be kept with the heterodox;—that an Oath made to Kings separated from the Catholic Communion can be violated;—that it is lawful for the Bishop of Rome to invade their temporal rights and dominions. We also consider an attempt, or design, against the life of Kings and Princes, even under the pretext of religion, as a *Horrid and Delectable Crime*."

So much for the genuine interpretation of the Oath, even as taken in the olden time. All pretext for clamor on the subject has been, however, removed for the last sixty years.

I shall say little of the crusade now preached up by the Leader of the Cabinet, and the highest functionary of the Law, against so many millions of Her Majesty's loyal and faithful subjects at home and abroad. Their motives for so unusual a departure from the proprieties of Executive and Judicial prudence, I forbear to scrutinize. The letter of the Premier is but a poor specimen of consistent character, or political foresight. As for the lawless and deplorable threat of the Lord Chancellor, with all its theatrical accompaniments, my pain on reading it was mitigated by the remembrance that in other days England produced another CHANCELLOR, who was the ornament of his age, and the glory of his country; who, in times that tried men's souls, preserved unspotted the judicial ermine; who, uninfluenced by the frowns of power, or the blind passions of the multitude, pursued the even tenor of his honorable career even to the shedding of his blood; and whose most glorious and appropriate eulogy may be found in the following golden words of his, alike illustrative of the tenderness of his heart, and the genuine principles of the still persecuted but ever indestructible Faith for which he died:—

"Of all who ever came in my hand for heresy, so help me God, else had never any of them any stripe or stroke given them, so much as a *flip on the forehead*."

What a contrast to the undignified threat against Cardinal Wiseman's *Hat*! I suppose, after many years' experience of the ability of the Head which so deservedly wears it, in the various controversies which His Eminence has conducted with so much literary skill, profound erudition, and polished courtesy it is now found to be a more easy task to "trample on the Hat" than to refute the Head; and hence the great and solemn enquiry after Religious Truth, upon which depends the eternal salvation of the English people, has been transferred from the sanctuaries of learning, and the Temples of the Most High, to all the turbulence and clamor of the Market-place, and all the unreasoning prejudices of an excited populace. It is, in my mind, a poor travesty of a similar appeal once made in presence of the World's Redeemer by a well-known Judge, who, when he asked "what is Truth?" would not wait to receive an answer from the lips of Truth himself, but transferred the decision of

"To the Most Serene Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and her successors, &c., in the Oath which I took.

"Apology" of Sir Thomas More.

the case to an infuriated multitude, who, in answer to his appeal as to what he was to do with Christ, with loud shouts demanded his crucifixion. For the honor of Christianity, and the nineteenth century, I am ashamed to add with sorrow, that the conduct of the merciful but timid Pagan Judge is much raised in our esteem, when contrasted with some recent examples. I have no doubt, however, that the "arbitrium popularis animum" will, at no distant period, appropriately reward those unwise Statesmen who are now borne along so smoothly in its treacherous current.

Come what will, it is consoling to believe that the Catholics of the British Empire, even in the midst of persecution and calumny, will always continue loyal to their Sovereign, charitable to their fellow subjects, and faithful to their God.

Hoping you will find a place for the above in your interesting columns, believe me to remain, dear sir, very truly yours,

WILLIAM, Bishop of Halifax.

St. Mary's, Thursday, 12th Dec., 1850.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S INSULTING LETTER, AND THE PEOPLE OF MAYO.—By reference to the numerous and respectfully signed requisition of the members of Parliament, landed proprietors, deputy lieutenants, justices of the peace, Catholic Clergy, merchants, freeholders, and other respectable residents of this great county, it will be seen that a meeting of the indignant people of Mayo will be held in this town on Monday next, for the purpose of showing the noble Premier of England that Catholic Ireland has the power and the inclination to spurn the gratuitous insult of her Majesty's first adviser. From the preparations being made, there can be no doubt the forthcoming meeting will be one of the largest held in this part of Ireland since the last glorious, memorable, and triumphant entry of our lamented Liberator into the town of Castlebar. The High Sheriff, we find, has refused to call the meeting; we will not now call him to task for his non-compliance—the meeting will not be the worse attended for all this. Oh, no—the people of Mayo are not men easily damped by disappointments of this nature—nay, they were prepared for it, and have made their arrangements accordingly. Remember—The meeting will be held on Monday next. Hurra for liberty of conscience!—*Castlebar Telegraph*.

THE LIMERICK CORPORATION.—LORD J. RUSSELL'S LETTER.—At the meeting of the Limerick Corporation on Monday last, Mr. O'Donnell, pursuant to notice, moved the following resolution:—"That the insolent and audacious letter of the English Minister to the Bishop of Durham, is a deliberate and unprovoked insult to the people of Ireland; that we treat with scorn his threat to re-enact the penal code in these kingdoms; and that we demand from our representatives a pledge to use every effort to drive him from a position which he disgraces." The resolution being seconded, and put, was declared carried. On the motion of Mr. Cullen, it was then resolved to send copies of the resolution to Lord John Russell, to Lord Grey, to the Lord lieutenant, and to every corporate body in Ireland.—*Limerick Reporter*.

TENANT LEAGUE.—On Thursday last the people of Louth assembled in the town of Dundalk, for the purpose of declaring their determination to support the principal of the Tenant League. A vast number of the tenant farmers and peasantry were present on the occasion, and expressed, in the most emphatic terms, their warm approval of the various resolutions submitted for their adoption. A considerable number of horsemen headed the processions which arrived from the surrounding rural districts in the course of the morning. The meeting was held in the vicinity of the new chapel; and long before the hour of meeting had arrived, the space around the platform was crowded by thousands of persons. The chair was filled by the Rev. Mr. Bannan, P. P., Louth.

THE REPEAL ASSOCIATION.—At the meeting of this Association on Monday, Mr. John O'Connell announced that the committee had come to the determination to add the word "Catholic" to the present name of the association, "until the intended persecution of Lord John Russell and the bigots of England was repelled." He announced the pecuniary aid as £9 19s. 1d.!

MAYORS FOR 1851.—Alderman Thaddeus McDonnell was elected Mayor of Limerick; Alderman James Shirling was re-elected Mayor of Belfast; Mr. Joe Kenny was re-elected Mayor of Clonmel without a contest.

THE MAYORALTY.—CORK.—Mr. Jas. Lambkin has been unanimously elected Mayor for the year 1851.—The Town Clerk was voted a fixed salary of £250.

Edward Howard Verdon, Esq., proprietor and editor of the *Sligo Champion*, has been elected to the office of Mayor of Sligo for the ensuing year.

Mr. Anthony Keappock has been elected Mayor of Drogheda.

The Hon. David Plunket, son of Lord Plunket, ex-Chancellor for Ireland, has resigned the office of Master of the Court of Common Pleas, in consequence of serious ill health. The salary of this office is £1,000 per annum. The retiring allowance of the honorable gentleman is to be fixed by the Treasury.

ABDUCTION OF A POOR LAW GUARDIAN.—At the Johnstown, county Kilkenny, petty sessions, on Thursday week, six persons were summoned for an outrage committed upon Mr. Keefe, a Poor Law Guardian, under the following circumstances:—There was an election of a medical officer in Urlingford, at which Dr. Greene, Dr. Delany, and Dr. Thompson were candidates. One of the prosecutors, Mr. Green, is brother of Dr. Green, and he and Mr. Keefe were in a gig, on their way to Urlingford, where the Guardians were sitting. When at Balief, some men, who they alleged, were those summoned, met them, stopped the gig, dragged Mr. Keefe out, and detained him at the Spahouse (where some refreshments were provided) till a late hour in the evening, in order to prevent him from voting at the board-room. No other violence was used. The case having been sufficiently proved against four of the defendants, who were fully identified, they were each fined one pound.

On Saturday the Lord Chancellor ordered the committal to prison of a minor named Ball, for having obtained from the Court a sum of money, upon a representation of his intention to emigrate to America, and then having remained in Dublin, and applied the money to other uses.

THE FLAX MOVEMENT.—The annual meeting of the Society for the Promotion of the Growth of Flax in Ireland, was held at Belfast on Friday. Amongst those present were, the Earl of Erne, Earl of Roden, Lord

Dufferin, Lord Jocelyn, the Lord Bishop of Down, Sir R. Bateson, Sir J. Strange, Mr. Sharman Crawford, M. P., &c. The report gave a very favorable account of the proceedings and prospects of the society; after an expenditure of £1,300 in forwarding the objects of the society, in the proper growth and culture of the flax plant, they have a balance in hand of £365. The Lord Bishop of Down proposed, and Mr. Sharman Crawford seconded, a resolution of thanks to the Lord-Lieutenant for his Excellency's fostering care and unceasing activity to promote the objects of the society. Scotch mills and steeping concerns are about to be established in many places, and there is every prospect of a large breadth of flax being cultivated in most of the southern and western counties next year, which, if well managed and properly prepared for sale, must lead to a steady increase year after year, until the crop is grown on all suitable soils as a regular part of the farming rotation.

The Liverpool, Glasgow, and Sligo Steam-boat Company are having soundings made of the river Mayo, at Ballina, with the view of placing a boat to trade between that town and Liverpool.

It is said that on a scientific examination of the lead-mine discovered lately near the town of Galway, it has been found not only to be of a very valuable and rich quality, but to be far more extensive than was at first imagined.

ATTEMPT TO BURN A POORHOUSE.—On the night of Saturday, the 30th Nov., about two o'clock, a.m., the inhabitants of the town of Enniscomorthy were thrown into a state of alarm by the ringing of the church bell and the cry of "Fire;" and as the flames were seen rising in the direction of the workhouse, the general impression was that it was on fire. However, upon our arrival at the scene of conflagration, it was found not to be the workhouse that was on fire, but an unoccupied dwelling-house and out-offices, the property of a respectable inhabitant named Michael Doyle, of Church-street, in which was at the time a valuable cow, a large rick of hay, a jaunting car, together with several other articles of valuable property, all of which were consumed. Of the origin of the fire, nothing was known until seven o'clock, a.m., next morning, when two street females, about twenty years of age, named Catherine Barrow and Catherine Burns, presented themselves at the police barrack, stating that it was they who set the house on fire on last night, and they were induced to do so in consequence of not having any place to sleep, and for the purpose of being sent to gaol—that they had been in the workhouse, but, from the persecution they received, were obliged to leave it, and, in revenge, had set the house in question on fire, thinking it was that part of the auxiliary workhouse occupied by the infirm females. The prisoners were committed for trial at the next assizes.—*Waterford Mail*.

"THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE."—The neighborhood of the Rotunda at Cavendish-row was not a little disturbed on Tuesday evening by the yelling and hallooing of a not very respectable looking concourse of people, assembled in one of the upper rooms of the above-named building. The information obtained on inquiry was, that a meeting of the "Evangelical Alliance" was being held on the premises, for the purpose of denouncing "Popery" and "Popish aggression," and for adopting measures of a prompt and energetic character, to establish and bring into full operation a Protestant, or rather an anti-Popery, Alliance in this city. Not only the room in which the meeting was held, but also the staircase leading to it, was crowded with people, chiefly of the humble class; and the greater number of these, so far from seeming to participate in the spirit of the intended proceedings, appeared inclined to a display of feeling of a directly opposite character. A large body of the police force (thirty constables) was stationed "on duty" at the doors, on the landing, and within the room of meeting. This precaution evidently was the more necessary, inasmuch as the original intention of admitting a favored audience, by means of tickets, was abandoned, and it was determined, as if for the look of the thing, to get an audience on any terms. The display presented by the No-Popery enthusiasts present was much the same in character as those which once gave name and fame to the now abandoned Alhambra of the Groggite Association. Peal after peal was given of the Kentish Fire, but the great volley of this *brutum fulmen* was reserved for the appearance on the platform of a group of the speaking performers. This group comprised (though not very numerous) professors and ministers of various shades of religious opinions. The proceedings commenced with a prayer, which was followed by a chorus of yelling and screaming, and cries of "No Popery," "No Popish Cardinals or Bishops," &c., alternating with an *obligato* accompaniment of the Kentish Fire. The gentleman in the chair was stated to be a Mr. Turner. The crushing and the confusion were terrible; and angry yells, intermingled with shouts of laughter, consequent on occasional suggestions from the anti-No-Popery part of the audience, were all that could be heard, save now and then. A reverend gentleman, whose name was stated to be Dill, addressed the chair in moving a resolution. He dwelt on the evils of Popery, and denounced all sorts of unpleasant consequences against the aiders and permiters of it. During this reverend gentleman's speech several alarming interruptions occurred. Some expressions of dissent or disgust on the part of persons present were followed by a simultaneous rush on the hapless vindicators of the right to differ. Were it not for the police, one young man would have run a fair chance of *extempore* martyrdom. Amidst terrible din and confusion, another gentleman, stated to be a Wesleyan Independent Minister, proceeded to address the meeting. His address was filled with ribald allusions, intended to be witty, at the expense of the Pope and Papal Bulls. He put his fingers projecting from his forehead, to show how the Papal Bull puts on its horns, &c. Thus matters progressed till late in the evening, when the interruptions became more noisy, and clamor indescribable followed, to the great annoyance of the neighborhood. Whatever might have been the precise objects and purport of the meeting, it seemed to have signally failed, unless those objects were to excite uproar and disturbance in a respectable locality.—*Freeman*.

A report has been in the mouths of all men in Dublin during the last few days, which has at length assumed a consistence and shape that prevents the possibility of its being passed by unnoticed. It is said that the proprietors of a weekly newspaper called the *World*, published in this city, performed certain services for Lord Clarendon, for which his Excellency did not show himself so grateful as was expected, although a large sum of money—we have heard £1400—was paid on foot of the account. An action "for work and labor done" was accordingly had recourse