

rible calamity which has visited their faithful flocks, it may possess its uses as well.

The letter is dated Listowel, March, 1847.

The gentleman having given an "outline" of the condition of the unfortunate people, whose many woes and wretchedness bid defiance to either the poet's or the painter's art; woes which, as he says, make the head giddy, the brain swim, and the sight vanish even faintly to describe; which suppose so wide spread and so desolating a calamity as already, to make it manifest even to the most heedless that the energies of whole provinces are emasculated; a calamity too, which has made, and continues to make, the air pestiferous with the lifeless remains of its almost countless victims, proceeds:—

"Next to the poor, our clergy should be placed in the scale of human suffering. In appearance they closely resemble each other. They each want flesh and blood. The clergy are much worse clad than our workhouse paupers. They are enveloped in threadbare cloaks or top-coats, covering wretched, scant articles of dress that your servants would cast away. Their horses are cut up for want of oats, bran, or meal;—In fact, they are only fit for dogs' meat. The clergy are afoot nearly seventeen hours out of twenty-four every day. Their money, watches, furniture, clothes, are gone, and hundreds of them, I fear, must fall victims to their clerical duties.

"I went to a farm yesterday, about two miles from—. Having learnt that the priest would be there, I wished to see him, that he might prepare a young woman of seventeen, a child of one of my labourers, who was in fever, and for whom I found it impossible to procure space for a bed in the hospital of Listowel, or in that attached to the workhouse. The house—(no—it deserves not the name!)—in which the priest was stood before me. I entered. Two children of, I should think, the ages respectively five and seven, were crouching over a few lumps of peat. I asked one—When did the priest leave? The child said—He is not gone—he is with daddy. Then the child handed me a splinter of lighted bog-wood, and with it I found out where the priest was. There I saw five fever patients; the father and mother, the two sons, and a daughter. All lay stretched on dirty straw, and the priest, a young man of twenty-seven years of age, lay likewise stretched between the husband and wife. Here was this faithful child of the Church found ministering consolation to the poor dying man, and receiving into his ear and mouth, as he heard his confession, the infectious poison of his latest breath! He told me to take a handkerchief from his top-coat pocket. I did so. It contained meal. He then told me to prepare a drink for the creatures. A pot, water, and turf were procured. A drink was made, but this poor father of this

wretched and helpless family was a corpse before it could be ready.

"Before I left this abode of pestilence and death, the priest took the dead man in his arms, and laid him in a corner. He would not allow me to assist him. The top-coat became his winding-sheet? He told the oldest child he would call for it next day, and he assured me it had been converted to that use frequently before.

"As my case was not urgent, he differed it until evening; and he set off in the teeth of as sharp and piercing an east wind as has blown in this quarter for the last twelve months, with five pounds of meal in his kerchief, the kerchief on his stick, and the stick across his shoulder. This meal he had to divide between two other families, at least.

"About seven months ago this priest was one of the finest young men in our parish. He is five feet eleven inches in stature. He was then proportionably stout, but he is now an actual skeleton, with something in his pale and haggard face so wild, so woe-begone, that the cabin scene did not take such a strong hold of me as his look of distress. After giving me an affectionate shake of the hand, he went forth on his weary mission with his threadbare clothes."

The gentleman adds:—

"I have not penned the above narrative for the purpose of giving you an idea of the state of our peasantry. No; for if I wished to harrow up my feelings I could have recourse to scenes twenty times more frightful. My object is attained should I succeed in giving you the means of forming some faint notion of the state of our faithful clergy from the pen of an eye-witness, on whose veracity you can rely."

Well may the priests be the beloved object of a devoted and suffering people, when such scenes as the above may be witnessed. And when has it been otherwise in Ireland? For ages have this generous people drunk deeply of the lessons taught in Bethlehem, Gethsamani, and on Calvary; and always have their faithful pastors been at hand to risk all for the sake of Him who died for both.—War, and intrigue, and false hearted treachery and fanatic zeal, and the strong arm of the powerful, and foul mouthed calumny, each in turn and in common attempted the destruction of the people's Faith, and their devotedness to their Clergy. But the amiable and glorious reciprocity and ardent attachment endured and yet endures. And although a wiler method, perhaps, and a more comprehensive scheme than has as yet been attempted seems now on foot for the accomplishment of this two-fold object, with God's blessing the people and their clergy shall triumph.