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## ON THE UNJUST TREATMENT OF CATHOLIC SOLDIERS IN INDIA: ATTEMPTED PROSELYTISM OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Let the Catholic inquirer cast his eyes into any part of the British empire at the present time; let him examine each department of the public service; and let him observe the secret workings of Protestant private society, and he cannot fail to see a scheme of proselytism universally spread over the entire domain of England's political and social framework. A well-conceived plan, and perfectly organized, has been adopted within the last half century to corrupt and Protestantize the Catholic generation thro' the agency of a vicious system of education: and in order to execute this plan, the entire power of the State has been called into zealous activity: and a peremptory demand for simultaneous co-operation has been made for labor, for money, for help, in every department subject to the Crown. Millions of pounds sterling, the highest names, the loftiest station, the most brilliant learning, the most powerful influence, the most grinding pressure, have been summoned as auxiliaries in this anti-Catholic warfare: and seduction, and intimidation, and bribes, and threats have been mustered and pressed into the service of this education phase of "the Second Reformation." Besides the forces already described, they are aided by false history, by libellous novels, by slanderous literature, by lying sermons, by newspaper misrepresentation, and by Parliamentary calumny. Never before in the history of the last three centuries have mankind witnessed such a mighty engine of religious apostacy put in motion against Catholicity. This attack was made simultaneously throughout the entire British empire: and the defenders of the Catholic Church had to meet the foe from the Mississippi to the Ganges: from the Orkneys to New Zealand: and it is true to say, that after a fierce conflict of nearly half a century, the fearless, invincible children of St. Patrick have, in every instance, aided only by truth and zeal, resisted, and conquered the apostate followers of Luther.

Any one who has studied our system of governmental education in Ireland, could not fail to note the various attempts that have at different times been made through dangerous books, thro' bye-laws, through prejudiced teachers, and thro' local patrons, to introduce a poisonous element into our national schools. The aim and the intent of the framers and the advocates of this system could be clearly seen in several unmistakable proofs on the points just referred to: and if we at this moment have escaped the danger to which other dependencies of England are painfully subject, the present and the future generations of our country are solely indebted to the theological learning, the indomitable energy, and the Irish Catholicity of the world-wide renowned Dr. McHale. During his resistance to the crafty rules, the suspicious liberality, the dubious orthodoxy of the early establishment of the Board of Education, how often has he been condemned by the half-bred theologian; how frequently has his doctrine been declared too bitter for the modern taste of the new gospel: his discipline too rough for the polished progress of the religion of our times: and his official language too stiff, or rather unpleasant, for the pliant and fragrant morality of the Castle. But the whole world has, since those days, formed a correct judgment on this point: and now universally admit, that the Lion of Juda has never in his unrivalled strength protected the fold from a more disastrous catastrophe, than when he stamped the first acts of the National Board of Education as an inroad on our faith, and a departure from the cherished discipline of the ancient Church. Like a steam engine going too fast, tending to run off the rails, and endangering the lives of the passengers, he alone has regulated the temperament, checked the career, and adjusted the movement of a system which might otherwise end in scandal, or civil contention, or both.

I shall now present the reader with extracts from the *Madras Examiner*, and from a letter written by Dr. Fennelly, the Bishop of that Presidency: and the public at home and abroad will see at a glance the grinding persecution to which our poor brave Catholic soldiers are exposed from the military Soupers of our Indian armies. The farther from Ireland these poor fellows are situated the heavier is the iron despotism of fanaticism placed on their shoulders: and the weaker they are, being comparatively removed from all remonstrance, the more cruel is the conduct of their relentless enemies in religion. A singular fact connected with this kind of persecution in England is, that the legislature pass laws of unexceptionable liberty, and even kind generosity: while the working of these laws is always frustrated through the malevolence or the bigotry of the inferior local officer whose duty it is to have its provisions enforced. Thus fine legislation is paraded on parchment before the world, while in practice these laws are ignored, and the worst species of petty tyranny substituted in their stead,

at the caprice or the malice of the underling in office. Hear the *Madras Examiner* of the 10th of last April:—

"Thanks to the dilatoriness of the Supreme Government, and to Lord Harris's want of confidence in himself, the bigots have still power to trifle with the feelings of our European soldiers, by threatening to enforce the Army School regulations of 1855.—Two years have not sufficed to determine the question, whether Catholic soldiers are to be punished by a fine of Five Shillings a month for each of their children between the ages of four and sixteen years; because practically this is the only question to be determined. The Schools which our Government would force Catholic children to attend, are so managed that no Bishop in India could think for a moment of tolerating them; and that the Bishops have just grounds for condemning these schools, is indirectly at least, if not openly, admitted by the Governor General in Council in the resolution of the 28th of February, 1856, but that resolution is defeated in this Presidency by those whose duty it should be to give it effect. It may be very convenient for the President of the Board of Control, from his seat in Parliament, to refer to the very liberal policy of Lord Dalhousie's Government with regard to the Catholics. He may refer to para. 15, of the memorable resolution, which provides for the maintenance of Catholic children in a Catholic Orphanage on a footing hitherto unknown, to wit, on a footing of equality with Protestant children admitted into a Government institution. He may quote para. 21 of the same resolution, which says that 'no distinction is in future to be made between Roman Catholic and Protestant Orphans.' He may return to para. 17, and argue from it that 'in future the Roman Catholics will of course share in common with all other classes in the advantages of the system of grants in aid of Schools for general education.' A very cheering picture if it were only true; but, unfortunately for the Catholics, these paragraphs are worth nothing. More than twelve months passed away since other clauses of the resolution have been acted upon, but to this hour nothing has been done by the very efficient and truly zealous Governor of Madras to improve the condition of Catholic Orphans: the increased allowance, sanctioned fourteen months ago by the Government of India, has not in any instance been disbursed, and, although certain paragraphs of the resolution, this one amongst them, were referred to the Director of Public Instruction, no single step has been taken either by that useless officer or by the Government for giving them practical effect."

Again:—"But why take the trouble of referring to old reports when we can see from every day occurrences the hostility of Government to Catholics and to Catholic schools? Why trouble ourselves with showing that Government will not give assistance to Catholic schools, when we can point to the penalties enforced against parents who avail themselves of those schools for the education of their children?—When persecution stalks abroad to compel Catholic children to frequent schools conducted on Church of England principles, presided over by zealous Protestant teachers, who use books containing matter highly offensive to Catholics; and when this persecution is carried on under sanction of an order of Government, why should we be surprised to see the liberal provisions of the Dalhousie resolution treated with the most contemptuous indifference? It is for others to say what has been done in other Presidencies, but we can assure the Liberal members of Parliament that in this Presidency, owing to the apathy or the bigotry of the head of the Government, so far as Catholic orphans and other Catholic children are concerned, the Dalhousie resolution is 'a delusion, a mockery, and a snare.' On the other hand, the army school regulations are a scourge in the hands of every worthless commanding officer who endeavors in his old age, to atone for the sins of his youth, by encouraging proselytism."

Again:—"The readers of the *Examiner* are aware of the sacrifice made by the poor Catholics of Vizagapatam, when the choice was forced upon them by Major West; they almost, without exception, paid the forfeit of two and a half rupees a month for each child, rather than remove their children from the Catholic schools, and this, amounting as it did to £1 a month for those who had four children, was no slight proof of their fidelity to their religion. At the time that Major West issued his order, some six months ago, another appeal was sent in to Government, and referred by the chained Governor to Calcutta, but no relief has yet been obtained! The next case in which an attempt was made to oppress poor Catholic soldiers by depriving their families of their allowance, was in the 1st Madras Fusiliers. Colonel Stevenson, influenced thereto by Captain Raikes, issued his order; a most unnecessary one it was in his case, for, owing to certain liberal arrangements made by the colonel, the children were allowed to avail themselves of, and were actually attending the regimental school; but with the publication of the army school regulations, the securities vanished, and the consequence was that upwards of ninety children's pay was forfeited by the parents rather than allow the faith of the little ones to be tampered with. In this case, the attention of the right honorable instrument of the Bengal Government was called to the great hardship of depriving poor families, for conscience sake, of the means of support, and the right honorable promised to give the matter his serious attention. We have now to record another case in which the persecuting spirit of some of our Madras officers shows itself. In Bangalore, as at Madras and Vizagapatam, the Catholics have excellent schools: there, too, thus brought out from Europe to watch over the education of young Catholic families, but there the canting hypocrite who commands the artillery has thought proper to issue the following division order:—

"A. D. O., 9th March, 1857.  
"The following paragraph of G. O. G., 23rd March, 1853, No. 89, is published for general information, and with reference thereto, the commanding officer desires that all concerned distinctly understand that the instructions therein conveyed will be strictly carried out."  
"Paragraph 61. All children above four years of age, for whom the Government subsistence allow-

ance is drawn, are required to attend the school regularly, unless prevented by sickness, failing which the allowance is forfeited."

"Need we say that the Catholic parents in the artillery stationed at Bangalore, have followed the noble example set them by the veterans at Vizagapatam and by the 1st Madras Fusiliers. The order has been enforced at Bangalore; the children of the artillery have lost the subsistence allowance, but the bigots have failed, for the Catholic schools have not been deserted."

The mere publication of these extracts will raise a cry of horror against the tyranny and the bigotry of England in every civilized country.—What language can describe the heartless treatment of the poor soldier: and where can we find words sufficiently strong to applaud the unflinching fidelity of these poor fellows to the Gospel they learned on the green hills of Ireland.—Let the French army read the English Souperism in India; and let Austria and Naples adopt additional rules to exclude from their shores those cruel wretches who have religion on their lips, but who, in the language of the Continental journals, are "the diseased scum of an atrocious impiety."

Let us now read some extracts from the letter of Dr. Fennelly, dated the 5th of last Feb:—

"TO THE REV. P. DOYLE, BELLARY.  
"My Dear Mr. Doyle—I have found it necessary to make a very painful announcement last Sunday morning to the congregation from the altar. The calamity, with which we were threatened nearly two years ago in the compulsory attendance clauses of the army school regulations, has now burst upon us. On the 7th inst., at Vizagapatam, the poor Catholics of the European Infantry Veteran Company, who have preferred a Catholic education for their children in the excellent Catholic schools upheld (not without considerable expense) at that station for nearly fourteen years, and have refused in obedience to their conscientious convictions to hand over their children wholesale to the irresponsible tuition of trained Church of England masters in the Government Regimental Schools, have been all punished with the forfeiture of the Government subsistence allowance of their children.  
"This unholty aggression upon freedom of conscience has not been opened simultaneously upon all quarters of the Indian army, but (like the conquest of India in a series of successive wars against petty princes) the weakest are made the object of the first attack. Eternal praise and thanks be to our Great and Good God, who is able to sustain the weak against the strong, the poor Veterans of Vizagapatam have been faithful to their God and the traditional belief of their fathers. One of them on hearing of the penalty to be paid for his fidelity has said—'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul? And another—'Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

Again:—"Neither the Governor General, nor the Government of India, nor Her Majesty's Government, has any right except *vis fortoris* (the right of the stronger) to set aside the natural authority of parents over their children, and in the summary usurpation of parental authority insultingly to address the injured and afflicted parents, as the army school regulations address them in effect—'Stand you aside, we shall educate your children for you after a fashion of our own under trained Church of England masters, without any control or interference on your part.' The pretended right is nothing better than the pride of might. I protest against such right. I denounce the usurpation.

"In a conflict like this with an unscrupulous Government, so much intoxicated with the pride of power, and imagining in its overweening vanity that it can control the waves of the ocean and the winds of heaven it was necessary to evoke the strongest power of the Church. I have therefore declared, and I now again declare, for the information of all, in virtue of the authority confided to me by God and the Holy See, that whoever shall (after the knowledge of this my declaration shall have reached him through any authentic channel whatsoever) send his children, or any of them, to any regimental school in this vicariate he shall in that instant sever the last link that binds him to the Catholic Church, and shall be delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh as effectually as was the incestuous man at Corinth by the Apostle St. Paul. He shall thenceforward be reputed by the faithful as the Heathen and the Pagan. No priest nor bishop of the Catholic Church shall have power to absolve him without authority specially obtained for that purpose from the Holy See, save and except in the article of death, when neither God nor the Church refuses mercy to any repenting sinner, who demands it in humility and sincerity. I further declare that if any clergyman shall (which God forbid) presume to absolve such a person except under the circumstances already stated, the absolution shall be null and void to all intents and purposes, as if it were pronounced in mockery by a Hindoo or a Mahometan. If children be sent to a regimental school against the consent of their mother, it shall be the duty of the priest to ascertain the facts of the case, and not involve her in the inquiry of her husband; but if she be found on inquiry to have at any time given countenance or approbation to the unfaithful conduct of her husband, she shall be involved in the same guilt, and remain (like him) deprived of sacraments to the hour of death."

Again:—"While we thus have recourse in our tribulation to God Almighty in the first place, there is no reason why we should neglect any other legitimate and constitutional means in our power to defeat this iniquitous measure, which is nothing less than a non-day robbery committed on the poor Catholic soldier under the name and sanction of school regulations, as unjust as they are oppressive. The widest publicity must be given to the misdeeds of the Indian Government. The Bishops and clergy of Ireland will doubtless feel it to be incumbent upon them to warn their flocks against the pitfalls dug for them in the

army school regulations of India, where a monthly tax of five shillings is imposed upon the Catholic soldier for every child God has blessed them with between four and sixteen years of age. Surely the East India Company cannot get recruits in Ireland as heretofore if this tax be once made known there, in connection with the system of unjust promotion of Catholics, so fully exposed in my letter to Government, on the 7th of August last, to which Government is unable to reply to this day. I reckoned up for Government 627 appointments, the best to which a soldier from the ranks of the Honorable Company's army can aspire, with the names of the present incumbents, to within a few days of the date of my letter! and I then showed Government, as I have since shown all India by the publication of my letter, that of so large a number of staff appointments, not more than 130 were bestowed upon Catholics, though Catholics constitute fully two-fifths, if not one half, of the Indian Army."

Again:—"Great evils are unavoidable despite of all our endeavors. Universal ill-feeling and discontent will prevail throughout the Indian Army. Some Protestants will rejoice at our misfortune, whilst others will sympathize with us. Major West acknowledged last year (and half the truth remains yet to be told) that in the course of three and a half years, ninety-nine men left H. M.'s 84th Regiment by free discharge foregoing the benefits of twelve and thirteen years' service, whilst forty-two young soldiers, not entitled to free discharge, actually purchased their redemption from the thraldom of the Regiment out of personal dislike to a Commanding Officer who was a truculent fanatic. The case of the Company's Army will be now far worse than any state of things we ever witnessed before. Men of seventeen and eighteen years' service will be seen demanding their discharge from the Indian Army with no better prospect before them than to end their days in a poorhouse. Votes of censure will be passed upon the India House by various Boards of Poor Law Guardians, and yet Lord Dalhousie, the main cause (it would appear) of all this complication of troubles, draws a pension of five thousand pounds a year from the East India Company. How far the Madras Government may be involved, we cannot say, as it is yet unknown whether or not Major Brett, who commands Vizagapatam, has enforced the obnoxious rules without special orders."

The history of Catholic Education in India is an accurate commentary of what the conduct of the underlings of the Government would do in Ireland if they dared; and the cruelty and injustice practised upon the poor Catholics in Asia should act as a warning to the Hierarchy and people of Ireland to watch with jealous care the workings of our system at home, and to meet in the first moment the smallest deviation from the principles which secure our ancient faith, and protect the souls of the present and future generations of Ireland.

D. W. C.  
May 28, 1857.

## MODERN NECROMANCY.

(Translated from the *Civiltà Cattolica*.)  
(CONTINUED.)

The mechanical explanation met with better fortune, and this came into the arena under the protection of some of the most celebrated men of science—such as Foucault, Babinet, Chevreul, Orioli, Faraday, and after them many others. According to Babinet, who has treated of the question of table turning in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* on more than one occasion, the motion is transmitted to the tables by the excessively slight and concordant influence of the hands which are placed upon them and lightly press them. In fact, the prolonged tension of the arm produces a nervous trembling and a series of insensible vibrations in the muscular system of each operator; these vibrations, by means of the contact of the hands, are communicated from one to the other and mutually reinforce one another; and when they arrive at a general agreement the impulses, although excessively slight, acquire, by all taking place at the same time and by the nascent state in which they are, a marvellous power, capable, says he, of producing "very energetic movements." To this reason, which is purely mechanical, add the physiological influence which the imagination, the will, or even the thought of motion only exert in producing motion by communicating to the organs a spontaneous, although an unobserved impulse, as we see in the experiments of the pendulum of Chevreul, and we shall have quite enough (according to those excellent authors) to give an account of the table-movements, even of those which are the most singular and powerful. This explanation might have seemed probable and sufficient at the beginning, when it was only a question of simple rotation of tables or of other light bodies, that is to say, bodies which did not offer any great resistance to motion, either on account of smallness of size or slowness of form and instability of equilibrium; and this motion once produced it was easy to preserve and increase and direct it, now in a right line, now in a circle or otherwise. This explanation might hold good within certain limits, that is, as long as there did not appear too great a disproportion between the nature or the intensity of the effects produced, and the power of the cause to which they were attributed; but it showed itself very insufficient in accounting for the phenomena as soon increased in number and multiplied themselves.

Who, in fact, could ever believe that the aggregate of the very slight nervous tremblings, or gentle purpose exerted by several hands (or even of as many as you will), would be sufficient to produce those very rapid rotations, those runnings, those dartings, those fearful throwing themselves about, that raising themselves up, that resisting and forcible upsetting of great heavy tables, naturally inert, as well on account of the great mass of their substance as of the steadiness of their equilibrium, with all those other marvellous gymnastic forces, of which the tables have so often given a spectacle? Who will be disposed to believe that a man, by merely pressing his fingers upon a body, can infuse into it such a power of motion as he would hardly be able to do if he were to push it with all the strength of his arms? But, even if all this should be believed, the problem would still be far enough from being solved; for the tables not only turn and move themselves like living bodies, but speak, and answer, and divine, by striking with the feet strokes by design and according to measure, or by signing among the numbers and alphabetical characters which are presented to them those which are suitable to form the answer, or by moving the pencils fixed to their foot, or by making other gestures and actions proper to animated and intelligent beings. Now, how are all these facts explained by any mechanical or mechanico-physiological explanation? M. Babinet, who does not choose to admit any other cause besides that of muscular impulses, gets out of the difficulty in two words, and with marvellous ease. To the question, "Are the indications of the table intelligent?" he does not for a moment hesitate to answer "Yes;" and for this reason, says he, "Because it answers under the intelligent influence of the imposed fingers;" as if he were talking of nothing else than sweeping the finger over the keyboard of a pianoforte. More facetious still is Chevreul, who in his book *De la Bagnette Divinatoire, du Pendule Explorateur et des Tables Tournantes* (Paris, 1854,) endeavouring to apply to table-turning the mechanico-physiological theory by which he explains the phenomena of the diving rod and of the seeking pendulum, does not hesitate at all to extend the same theory to the speaking and knocking of tables; and this is his mode of argument: "The faculty says he," at p. 224 of "making a table knock with one or other of its feet when once acquired, as also the faith in the intelligence of that table, I conceive how a question addressed to that table, awakens in the person who is acting upon it without his being conscious of it, a thought the consequence of which is the muscular movement capable of making one of the feet of the table strike in conformity with the sense of the answer which appears the most probable to that person." Do you wish, then, to know to set about it in order to make the tables talk and speak? Acquire for yourself, first of all, the faculty of making the table knock with a foot; then have lively faith in the intelligence of the table, and the table under your fingers will be ready to answer every question; because, then, as soon as ever you have put the question, your thought will form an answer of its own accord. To this thought, then, will naturally follow a muscular movement which will be sufficient to raise the tables and make it strike with its foot, and the strokes of the foot will be just enough to express the answer of the thought and to satisfy the demand. You will, perhaps, still ask: "But how and whence is this faculty of making the table strike acquired?" for here is the very knot of the problem. Besides, "How can I have a firm faith in so monstrous an absurdity as the intelligence of a table; and especially when you tell me that this intelligence has nothing to do at all with the phenomena, but that it is altogether the play of my thought and my muscles? And these muscles of my fingers placed gently upon the table, how can they possibly impress upon it so strong and singular a motion as is that of its raising itself and striking with its foot; and especially so when the impulse which these muscles receive from the presence of the thought must be so gentle and insensible as to escape the conscience entirely, not to say every command of the will?" But you will in vain expect that M. Chevreul will answer these and not a few other very difficult questions which you might put to him; nor, indeed, can he do it. And, if he were to give you an answer, it would still be found to be very far from an adequate solution of the phenomena of the tables. In fact, that theory of his as well as that of M. Babinet and of others, always supposes that there is contact, nay pressure, however slight it be, of the hands upon the table which turns or speaks. Now it is perfectly well known that the tables sometimes are moved, rise and dance, and speak without their being touched at all, either with the hand or with any instrument, but in obedience to a simple signal of the hand made at a distance, or even to the voice alone, or the will of the medium. In such a case as this, then, what explanation can the mechanico-theory give? and what answer can it make about