

LETTERS FROM BERMUDA.

LETTER XXIV.

HAMILTON, March, 18—

DEAR FRIEND—I have tried to give you an idea of the Penal laws so cruelly enforced in the 16th century, though that infamous code almost surpassed the eloquence of Burke to describe it. "It had," Burke says, "a vicious perfection. It was a complete system, full of coherence and consistency, well digested and well disposed in all its parts. It was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and the debasement of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man."

This code prevented the accumulation of property and punished industry as a crime. This code enforced ignorance by statute law and punished as a felony any effort to acquire knowledge, and yet the descendants of the parties who inflicted this "code" are actually in the habit of reproaching the Irish with wilful ignorance and wilful squalid poverty.

"During the reign of Elizabeth, Grey (the Deputy) used such inhuman, unrelenting brutality, whereupon the Queen was assured that soon there would be but little left for Her Majesty to reign over but ashes and carcasses!" So says Rev. Dr. Leland, Protestant historian, Book IV., Chap. II. This was the consummation of the subjugation of the Irish after 100 years of war, famine &c.

"Cities he sacked, and realms (that whilom flowered)
In honor, glory and rule above the rest)
He overwhelmed and all their fame devoured,
Consumed, destroyed, wasted and never ceased
Till he their wealth, their name and all oppressed.
Famine and fire he held, and there withal
He razed towns and threw down towers and all."

It seems strange that the poet Spenser should have suggested this cruel plan for the subjugation of Ireland. He recommended that 20 days be given the Irish to submit; after which time the army marched on Ireland destroying and burning all before them, creating a famine and ensuring pestilence. But let me give the words of the gentle Edmund, the writer of "The Faerie Queene." "The end will (I assure mee) bee very short, for, altho' they should not all be slaine by the soldiers yet thus being kept from manurance, and their cattle from running abroad to feed, by this hard restraint they would soon consume themselves and devour one another!" (Spenser's Ireland, page 165.) Hollinshed states, VI., 427: "As they (the army) went, they drove the whole country before them into the Ventrée. They took all the cattle in the country, 8,000 kine besides horses, garrons, sheep and goats, and all such people as they met were put to the sword and the rest were left to die of famine—for want of victuals." They wasted and foraged the whole country, so that the poor people were driven to devour dogs, horses, carrion, &c. But I will quote Spenser again: "Notwithstanding that the same was a most rich and plentiful country, full of corne and cattel, yet ere one year and a half they were brought to such wretchedness as that any stony heart would rue the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glynns they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs would not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death. They spake like ghosts crying out of their graves." A most populous and plentiful country suddenly left voyde of man or beast or corne. (Spenser's State of Ireland, p. 165.) Sir John Davies said: "The people were brayed as in a mortar with famine, pestilence, pillage and the sword,

and submitted themselves at last to the English government."

In 1612 the Statute II., James I., Chap. V., was enacted. The Irish being now subjugated this Statute "abolished all distinctions of race between English and Irish," with the intent, as the statute expressed it, "That there might be an utter oblivion of all differences and discords betwixt them."

When the Penal laws against Catholics were enforced, the Statute was ignored. The distinction of race was lost, Irish and English who were Catholics were obliged thenceforth to endure oppression and spoliation under the name of rebels and malcontents because they would not "deny Christ before men" and abandon the faith of their forefathers, the faith of St. Patrick.

Thou fair Religion wast designed
Dutious daughter of the skies,
To warm and cheer the human mind
And make men happy, good and wise.
To point where sits in Love arrayed
Attendant to each suppliant call
The God of Universal aid—
The God, the Father of us all."

From 1688 the great principles of Parliamentary power is dated. Public liberty was protected from any possible abuse of the royal prerogative especially with regard to pecuniary matters. William III. complained that he was king of Holland but only Stadtholder of England.

Ireland, however, did not share in the so-called "Bill of rights," a misnomer in one point, as religious intolerance was established by Law and the Sovereign was obliged to swear to maintain the Protestant religion. Religious dissensions were fostered by English rulers for the benefit of English rule. Ireland had no bill of rights; none of those statutes which were considered bulwarks of public liberty were copied into Irish statute books. But the great principles of civil and religious liberty, immortalized in the eloquence of Grattan, were written in latter days in characters of fire on the Irish heart by the burning words of the great O'Connell.

The following are a small part of Catholic grievances of that period: "All Catholics disqualified from voting. Catholic peers could not sit in the House of Lords. A Catholic could not hold office. Catholic priests or Bishops were considered as traitors and banished or hanged, drawn and quartered. Any one harbouring a priest or assisting at Catholic worship were treated in a similar manner or crushed under weights to death, as in the case of Mrs. Chitheroe."

Shortly after the treaty of Limerick, 1695, this law was again enacted that Catholic peers and gentlemen could not sit in Parliament. To their credit be it said that seven Anglican Bishops and six peers entered a strong protest against this unjust statute. The law was dead against Catholics obtaining land in any way. If a Catholic bought land, or was left it by will, or given it at all, any Protestant could take it from him and enjoy it himself. A Catholic might lease a farm for 81 years and if by labour and industry he improved it so as to yield a profit equal to one-third of the rent, any Protestant might by law evict him and take the land away and use it for the residue of the lease. If a Catholic had a horse worth even £100 (\$500) or more, any Protestant tendering him £5 could take the horse and keep it. If a Catholic, having a valuable horse, concealed it to keep it, he was liable to be imprisoned for three months and to pay a fine three times the value of the horse. If a Catholic taught school he could be banished or hanged as a felon.

It was a crime for a Catholic to have his children taught to read in Ireland, and it was also made penal to seek education abroad. To the parent the penalty was \$100 fine, and to the child loss of inheritance, &c. Any reproach on Irish ignorance comes

with an ill grace from those whose ancestors did their best to render the Irish people a nation of ignorant slaves.

In 1708 it was enacted that no Catholic could be guardian to, or have the custody or tuition of any orphan or child under the age of 21 years, and that the guardianship, when a Catholic was entitled to it, should be disposed of by the Chancellor to the nearest Protestant relation of the child, or some other Protestant, who was required to bring up the child in the Protestant religion. An offence against this law was punished by a fine of £500. Catholics were not permitted to be guardians to their own children until the Act was passed in 1782 which permitted that.

The wise Sully, regarding the ceaseless fermentations of the French, is said to have given this *mot* to posterity: "People do not revolt from fickleness or the mere desire of change; revolts are produced by the impatience of intolerable suffering." The iron hand of despotism, which presumed to point out the way to Heaven and crushed all who did not follow that law-appointed road, weighed heavily upon Ireland for several centuries. Looking back at the establishment of the Anglican Church, which gave the death blow to liberty of conscience, at the penal laws, which inflicted such suffering on a helpless people; at the violation of the articles of Melifont in the reign of James I.; at the cold-blooded atrocities of Cromwell and his puritans, by whom, according to Sir William Petty, over 80,000 Irish men, women and children were shipped to Virginia and the West Indies and sold as slaves to the planters.

I will mention incidentally that those of the poor peasantry who survived the "process of collecting" (tearing them from their families, separating husbands from wives, children from parents and plighted lovers parted forever) were embarked in transports to these islands, and in six years out of eighty thousand only twenty individuals were living! "Murder most foul as in the best it is."

"If crimes like these hereafter are forgiven, Judas and Cromwell both may go to Heaven. The latter laid schemes for death, to slaughter turned his heart, And fitted murder to the rules of Art."

Over three hundred priests with their Bishops were executed for exercising their ecclesiastical functions during the five years of the protectorate; and at the robbery and spoliation of the Irish nobility and landed proprietors by "Praise-God-bare-bones," and his Parliament, we turn with abhorrence from this gloomy record of terrors and fanaticism, bespattered with the blood and tears of the Irish, to behold the annihilation of their transient hopes by the violation of the treaty of Limerick in the reign of William III. The blind and furious bigotry which prevailed at this period may be exemplified by the following circumstance:—A few days following the treaty of Limerick—which was signed on Oct. 3rd, 1695—Dopping, Protestant Bishop of Meath, preached before the Lords Justices on the *crime of keeping faith with Papists*:

"What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text."

All Protestant ministers however, were not so devoid of honour and sense as this Dopping. One conscientious minister had the courage to preach a sermon in contradiction to Bishop Dopping; others also pleaded, but in vain.

"Thy with our judgments, as our watch is:
none
Are just alike, yet each believes his own."
Yours, PLACIDIA.

If the Baby is Cutting Teeth

Be sure and use that old, well-tried remedy, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children teething. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Twenty-five cents a bottle. It is the best of all.

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ADMINISTRATORS' NOTICE

To Creditors of John Noonan, late of the
City of Toronto, laborer, deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to R. S. O. cap. 110 that creditors and others having claims against the estate of the above named John Noonan who died on or about the 7th day of November 1894 are required to deliver or send by post prepaid to the undersigned administrators or their solicitors a statement in writing containing their names, addresses, and full particulars of their claims with vouchers if any, duly verified by statutory declaration on or before the 1st day of February 1895, after which date the said administrators will proceed to distribute the assets of the said estate amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims of which they shall then have notice and they will not be liable for any claim of which they shall not have had notice at the time of such distribution.

Dated at Toronto this 20th day of December, A.D., 1894.

The Trusts Corporation of Ontario, Administrators, of the Estate of John Noonan, deceased. By

ANGLIN & MALLON,

South-West corner of Adelaide and Victoria Streets, Toronto, their solicitors herein.

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