

so often loosed from the ordinary restraints of duty, that it is unfortunately looked upon as a time when bribery, perjury, drunkenness and every species of corruption are permitted to supplant the ordinary virtues of the people. It is our duty to endeavour to check those mighty evils, filled with a just apprehension of the threat of the prophet, that if the faithful should sin for want of seasonable warning, the Judge of the living and the dead 'shall demand their blood at our hands.'

"I am well aware that an apology is sought for those transgressions in the strong temptations held out by men who, as they affect a zeal for the morality of the people, should never hold out any inducements to sin. The dread of those who might persecute the freeholders for a faithful discharge of their duty ought to be subdued by the words of the Redeemer, telling us not to fear those who can kill the body, but rather to fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

"After filling their souls with this salutary fear which the Gospel inspires, you will not fail to impress upon the people that they risk the loss of their immortal souls by the crimes of perjury and bribery to which I have alluded. Remind them of the inspired admonition, 'Speak the truth every one to his neighbour: judge truth and judgment, love not false oaths, for these are the things I hate, saith the Lord.' Nay assure them in the words of the same prophet, that 'The curse of the Lord shall come to the house of the thief, and to the house of him who sweareth falsely His name.' Let them not, therefore, give a vote, unless their conscience assures them that they have a real freehold to the enjoyment of which they have already sworn.

"As for bribery, that foul crime that has done so much to corrupt the purity of elections, by debauching the minds of the people, your denunciations of so enormous a sin must be cogent in proportion to its atrocity. *The freehold is not a property to be set up for sale. It is held in trust for the benefit of the people,* and no man can have a right to traffic upon that which is not solely his own, and by such a vile bargain to inflict injury upon the community. There can be no compromise of this truth; let, therefore, the people be persuaded that whoever receives a bribe directly or indirectly for his vote is to be excluded from the benefits of the sacraments until he makes restitution of the money, which might be called the price of happiness of the poor, the widow and orphan. No matter through what medium the bribe may be received, no matter under what specious contracts the traffic may be disguised, the Catholic Church detests all such prevarications and evasions; and therefore the saying of St. Augustine is applicable to all such cases; 'Until restitution is made, the sin is not forgiven.' Let those who receive a bribe as the price of their country's happiness, entertain no hope of absolution until