THE PROTECTOR
AND CHRISTIAN WITNESS.

"RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION: BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE."—Prov. xiv 34.

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THE MEETING PLACE.

BY DR. H. BONAR, OF KEISAR.

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads."—Isaiah xxx., 10.

Where the faded flower shall freshen—
Freshen never more to fade;
Where the faded sky shall brighten—
Brighten never more to shade;
Where the sun-blaze never scorches,
Where the star-beams cease to chill;
Where no tempest stirs the echoes
Of the wood, or wave, or hill;
Where the morn shall wake in gladness,
And the noon the joy prolong,
Where the daylight dies in fragrance,
'Mid the burst of holy song;
Brother, we shall meet and rest
'Mid the holy and the blest!

Where no shadow shall bewilder,
Where life's vain parade is o'er,
Where the sleep of sin is broken,
And the dreamer dreams no more;
Where the bond is never severed;
Partings, cleavings, sobs, and moans,
Midnight waking, twilight weeping,
Heavy noon-tide—all are done;
Where the child has found its mother,
Where the mother finds the child;
Where dear families are gathered,
That were scattered on the wild;
Brother, we shall meet and rest,
'Mid the holy and the blest!

Where the hidden wound is healed,
Where the blighted life reblooms,
Where the smitten heart the freshness
Of its buoyant youth resumes;
Where the love that here we lavish
On the withering leaves of time,
Shall have fadeless flowers to fix on,
In an ever spring-bright clime;
Where we find the joy of loving
As we never loved before—
Loving on, unchilled, unhindered,
Loving once and evermore;
Brother, we shall meet and rest,
'Mid the holy and the blest!

Where a blasted world shall brighten
Underneath a bluer sphere,
And a softer, gentler sunshine
Sheds its healing splendor there;
Where earth's barren vales shall blossom,
Putting on her robe of green;
And a purer, fairer Eden
Be where only wastes have been;
Where a king in kingly glory,
Such as earth has never known,
Shall assume the righteous sceptre,
Claim and wear the holy crown,
Brother, we shall meet and rest,
'Mid the holy and the blest!

CONFIDE IN GOD.

There once lived in an old brown cottage, so small that it looked like a chicken coop, a solitary woman. She was some thirty years of age, tended her little garden, knit and spun for a living. She was known every where, from village to village, by the cognomen of "Happy Nancy." She had no money, no family, no relatives; she was half blind, quite lame, and very crooked. There was no comeliness in her; and yet there, in that homely, deformed body, the great God, who loves to bring strength out of weakness, had set his royal seal.

"Well, Nancy, singing again," would the chance visitor say, as he lounged at her door.

"La! yes, I'm forever at it. I don't know what people will think;" she would say with her sunny smile.

"Why, they'll think as they always do, that you are very happy."

"La! well, that's a fact; I'm just as happy as the day is long."

"I wish you'd tell me your secret, Nancy; you are all alone, you work hard, you have nothing very pleasant surrounding you; what is the reason you're so happy?"

"Perhaps it's because I havn't got anything but God," replied the good creature, looking up. "You see, rich folks, like you, depend upon their families and their houses; they've got to keep thinking of their business, their wives and children, and then they're always mighty afraid of trouble ahead. I hain't got anything to trouble myself about, you see, 'cause I leave it all to the Lord. I think, well, if he can keep this great world in such good order, the sun rolling day after day, and the stars shining night after night, make my garden things come up just the same, season after season, he can sartinly take care of such a poor, simple thing as I am; and so, you see, I leave it all to the Lord; and the Lord takes care of me."

"Well, but, Nancy, suppose a frost *should* come after your fruit trees are all in blossom, and your little plants out, suppose—"

"But I don't suppose; I never can suppose; I don't want to suppose, except that the Lord will do every thing right. That's what makes you people unhappy; you're all the time supposing. Now, why can't you wait till the suppose comes, as I do, and then make the best of it."

"Ah! Nancy, it's pretty certain you'll get to heaven, while many of us, with all our worldly wisdom, will have to stay out."

LAYING UP FOR CHILDREN.

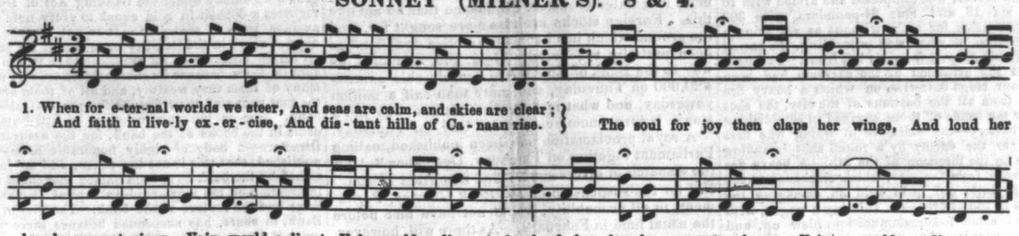
Parental affection naturally inquires, what it can best do for the welfare of its children in future years, and when the bosom which now throbs with love to its offspring shall be cold in death. Many plans are laid, and many days and hours of anxious solicitude are spent in contriving ways and means of rendering children prosperous and happy in future life. But parents are not always wise in the provisions which they seek to make for their children; nor do they always seek direction and counsel from God in this matter. The best inheritance for children, beyond all contradiction, is true piety towards God—the salutary truths and principles of religion, laid up in the hearts of children—a good education—good and virtuous habits—unbending principles of moral conduct—the fear of God, and the hope of heaven. This is the best inheritance for children, and which all parents should be most anxious to lay up for them.

Many an unwise parent works hard and lives sparingly all his life, for the purpose of leaving enough to give his children a start in the world, as it is called. Setting a young man afloat with money left him by his relatives is like tying bladders under the arms of one who cannot swim; ten chances to one he will lose his bladders, and go to the bottom. Teach him to swim, and he will not need the bladders.

Give your child a sound education. See to it that his morals are pure, his mind cultivated, and his whole nature made subservient to the laws which govern man, and you have given what will be of more value than the wealth of the Indies. You have given him a start which no misfortune can deprive him of. The earlier you teach him to depend upon his own resources, and the blessing of God, the better.

Penmanship Applied.—A schoolboy, whose teacher asked him how he should whip him, replied, "If you please, sir, I should like to have it on the Italian system: the heavy strokes upward, and the down ones light."

SONNET (MILNER'S). 8 & 4.



NOTES OF A SERMON,

PREACHED ON THE FAST DAY, NOVEMBER 15TH, 1857.

"Thy judgments are made manifest."—Rev. xv, 4.

The preacher began with observing that the judgments of God are the punishments which he inflicts upon nations or communities for their sins; and these judgments are made manifest when they are openly displayed before the eyes of the sons of men. These judgments of God are said to be written in his Word. Thus it is found written in the Word: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more; until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him."—Ezek. xxi, 26. Again, it is written in the Word of God: "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people."—Isaiah lvii, 14. In both these passages, as well as in many others of a similar import, there is an evident reference to the preparations, in the way of judgments, which shall precede the triumph of the gospel in the latter day, or the time of the Millenium. That glorious period, the Scriptures informs us, is to be introduced by sore judgments upon the Heathen, anti-Christian and Mahometan nations of the world. It is foretold that great convulsions in states and kingdoms, and the removal of those abuses which have long obstructed the promulgation of the gospel, shall take place, as making way for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth. And do we not see something going on in the present day very like the processes indicated by the remarkable texts which have now been quoted? Do we not, at the present time, see a striking fulfilment of that terrible discription given by our Lord, when he says: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring. Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."—Luke xxi, 25 and 26. Mountains are now being levelled, and valleys filled up, to prepare in the desert a highway for our God.

The truth of these remarks was then illustrated and enjoined by referring to some of the judgments which have been executed upon the nations in our own time, particularly to those inflicted upon the Russian, Ottoman and Chinese empires. In these empires, which have long been opposed to the gospel of Christ, the process of overturning has been going on with terrible energy, and the judgments of God have been and still are made manifest. But, passing from these, the attention of the audience was then turned to our own nation—the British empire by observing that we are not to suppose that, while the judgments of God are thus made manifest in the surrounding countries, Great Britain shall escape. On the contrary, we have reason to fear that she shall be more severely punished, because more highly favored, and more heavily laden with iniquity than others. Peculiar advantages, when neglected or abused, only serve to increase the guilt and punishment of their possessors. Being favored of God in such a manner as no other people have been, the British nation, instead of being, on that account, connived at in their wickedness, shall be punished with distinguished severity. It may be said of Britain, in some respects, as it was said of Israel of old: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii, 2.

The method adopted in the further prosecution of the subject, was to speak first of the national sins of Britain, and then, secondly, of the judgments inflicted upon her for these sins.

In speaking of national sins it was observed that nations or communities, as well as individuals, may have their characteristic or besetting sins. When nations are guilty of some peculiar species of iniquity, such may be called their national sins. A community, as such, may be so generally characterized by some ever-prevailing species of iniquity, that it may be truly said of it that it is the sin of that community.

In the first place, crime, of every kind—an epidemic of vice, of lawlessness, of outrage—is prevailing in our nation, and increasing with a rapidity altogether frightful, as is painfully evident from the discoveries of depravity every day made in the public prints, and with which we are shocked in reading those prints. "The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood."—Hosea iv, 1 and 2. Like the nation of Israel of old, the whole body politic has become corrupt—the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it. Bad wounds and bruises and putrifying sores; infidelity, and intemperance, and covetousness, and ungodliness, and other evils greatly disfigure our nation. In some instances infidelity is established by law, and in many cases there is a flagrant violation of common justice in acquitting the guilty and punishing the innocent. This fearful prevalence and increase of crime, it is true, is not peculiar to our nation, but is to be found equally, if not more extensively, in other communities; but it is an evidence that God is near to execute judgments in the midst of us. For when every species of crime prevails, and is daily on the increase, it is an evidence "that God is coming out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities."—Isaiah xxvi, 21.

In the second place, the many lives sacrificed in extending her colonial empire in the East is a national sin chargeable upon Britain, and which may be viewed as bringing the judgments of God upon her, as now manifested in India. It is not said that the English entered India at the first with a view to conquer and subdue it. It was with a view simply to commerce that they began to establish themselves in that extensive and rich country. But the current of events forced them, certainly against their intentions, and probably against their will, to assume the position of a conquering, dominating race; and the means employed by them to extend and establish their power were far from justifiable. The early history of British rule in India was stained with atrocities to extort revenue, and tortures were permitted, by the connivance of the governors, down even to the present time. In connection with this may be mentioned the accursed traffic in opium, for the purpose of profit and revenue. This traffic has spread degradation, misery and death among hundreds of thousands of the Chinese. That government should derive a large part of its revenue from this source is an iniquity—a national sin truly melancholy to contemplate, and brings down upon the nation the sore displeasure of Almighty God. Deriving revenue from this and from intoxicating drinks, as is so extensively done by the British government, is a crime of great magnitude—a national sin which, together with the sacrifice of life by wars and otherwise that has taken place in extending and maintaining the English power in India, are bringing down the judgments of God upon the land. God is now requiting Britain, as she has done, in the execution of his judgments.

In the third place, neglecting the opportunities which she has enjoyed for extending the Gospel, particularly in India, is a national sin of Britain, for which God's judgments are now made manifest on her. The government of India have been pandering to the vanities, and bigotry, and religious prejudices, and idolatry of the Hindoos. This is now clearly proved and established beyond all dispute by papers lately laid before Parliament. For a wise and grand design in Divine Providence, India has been given to Great Britain. One part of the territory after another has been thrust upon her in a most remarkable manner. But she has never sufficiently realized her obligations to the native population. She has ground, or allowed the lower classes of the people to be ground, by oppression. She has done little to ameliorate the condition of the many millions of India under her government. She has done nothing to evangelize India. Nay, she has rather prevented the evangelization of it, and maintained and supported idolatry. Missionaries were for a long time prohibited from preaching the Gospel in India. Even after they were, to some extent, permitted to preach, still there was a practical negation of Christianity. If a Sepoy was converted he was immediately dismissed from the army, lest his presence should infect and bring over others to embrace the Christian religion. Just as predicted in Scripture, the native idolatrous kingdoms of India have been overturned and overturned, but the last rulers — the English — although nominally Christians themselves, have opposed Missionary efforts, and allied themselves, in various ways, with the idolatrous systems of the natives. In every government place of education throughout India, a positive prohibition is put on reading of the Scriptures by Heathen and Mahometan boys; proclamation has been made that government would proscribe any one of its Christian servants who should afford pecuniary aid or countenance to missions, or to any such efforts for the enlightenment of the people; and legislative enactments have been made, and are still unrepealed, enjoining idolatrous worship, such as—presenting offerings, in the name of the government, to idols; firing salutes, even on the Lord's day, in honor of Heathen and Mahometan festivals; and giving grants from the public treasury in support of rites to propitiate the Hindu deities. In all this is there not a practical disapproval of Christianity? And is it to be wondered, therefore, that the English are now subjected to the overturning process in India, and brought under the awful judgments of God?

In the fourth place, giving countenance and support to Popery is a national sin, for which God's judgments are made manifest on Britain. Government, at home and in the colonies, is giving every encouragement to Popery. All sorts of grants are afforded to Romanists which they may require for the extension and support of their anti-Christian system. Their priests are paid in the army and in the jails. Their schools and seminaries, and so-called reformatories, are liberally supported out of the public purse. In any circumstances, or on any ground, to give the public revenue to aid in overturning the Reformation, and in propagating damnable error, is unlawful; and this is what government has been for some time past, and is now, doing, in the countenance and support it is giving to Popery. This is the great national sin of Great Britain in the present day, and it is the sin that is bringing down divine judgments upon the land. God's judgments are made manifest in a very striking manner on this account, as will appear more fully from considering the second part of the subject, namely, the judgments inflicted upon Britain for the national sins now mentioned. This, however, with the examination of the connection in which the text stands as a prediction, must be deferred until next week.

Concerning the Soul.—We find the following interesting illustration furnished in a late number of the *Young Christian*, by Rev. H. R. Nye:

A preacher once endeavored to teach some children that their souls would live after they were dead. They heard his words, but did not understand them. He was too abstract; he shot over their heads.

Snatching his watch from his pocket, he said, "James, what is this I hold in my hand?"

"A watch, sir."

"A little clock," said another.

"Do you see it?"

"Yes, sir."

"How do you know it is a watch?"

"It ticks, sir."

"Very well; can any of you hear it tick?" All listen. After a little pause:

"Yes, sir, we hear it."

Then he took off the case, and held that in one hand, and the watch in the other.

"Now, children, which is the watch?"

"The little one in your right hand, sir."

"Very well, again. Now I will put the case aside—put it away down there, in my hat. Now, let us see if you can hear the ticking."

"Yes, sir, we hear it," cried several voices.

"Well, the watch can tick, and go, and keep time, you see, when the case is off, and put in my hat.

So it is with you, children. Your *body* is nothing *but the case*. The soul is inside. The case may be taken off, and buried in the ground; may be cast into the fire, or thrown into the sea, but the soul will live on just as well without the body, as this watch will keep on ticking when the case is laid aside."

Now, that illustration, and that thought, will live in the minds of those children who heard it forever.

Pleasure or Reading.—Of all the amusements that can possibly be imagined for a working man, after daily toil, or in the intervals, there is nothing like reading a newspaper or a book. It calls for no bodily exertion, of which he has already had enough, perhaps too much. It relieves his home of dulness and sameness. Nay, it accompanies him to the next day's work, and gives him something to think of besides the mechanical drudgery of his every day occupations; something he can enjoy while absent, and look forward to with pleasure. If I were to pray for a taste which would stand by me under every variety of circumstances and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me through life and a shield against all its ills, however things might go amiss, and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading.—*Sir John Herschell.*

THE WEALTHY HINDOOS AND MAHOMEDANS TO BE REQUIRED TO PAY WAR EXPENSES.

The London Times of November 7th, has an article on the cost of the Indian war, from which we take the subjoined extracts:

"There is certainly no other country which could have transported 50,000 men so quickly from various parts of the world to the scene of disturbance. A large army from home, 5000 men diverted from the Chinese expedition, several regiments from the Cape and Mauritius, and several more from other dependencies of the Crown, will, before this, have landed on Indian soil. But the despatch of this vast force with such celerity and completeness has, of course, necessitated a large outlay, and even though the rebels be crushed as an army it will be necessary to maintain strong bodies of Europeans to punish the robberies, murders, and other outrages to which the country must be exposed from desperate bands of outlaws. The cost of transport will be very large. So it is not at all too early to speculate on the manner in which unforseen disbursement is to be met.

A few months since we were congratulating ourselves on the return of peace, reduced armaments, and economical habits. The removal of the income-tax, and of more than one obnoxious impost was almost within sight. A long series of years spent in producing and consuming earning and saving, seemed a certainty. But the millenium of Manchester was not to be yet. The Persian war was scarcely over when the Canton troubles began, and these were soon to be forgotten amid the tempest which is still raging.—However, we must, in justice to our patient and hard-working people, continue to keep in prospect a remission of taxation and a reduction of expenditure. Where the national honour is concerned, they have never declined either to fight or to pay. Where the safety of a colony has been threatened by a foreign enemy, or the maraudings of any savage race, they have readily sent regiments to protect the settlers, and afterwards taken the whole expense on themselves. But this kind of self-sacrifice may be carried too far. If the inhabitants of these two islands are to bear every charge which is incurred by the treachery or turbulence of any race throughout the empire, a time must come when people will begin to listen to those who declare that a country has no business with dependencies, that we should cut our colonies adrift, and have no other than commercial relations with any spot beyond the four seas. We cannot conceive anything more malignant and unprovoked than this Bengal mutiny. The people were prosperous beyond any precedent within the range of history, the soldiery were well treated and well cared for in old age, their religion was not only respected but even honored as a kind of dominant church, their prejudices of caste were inviolate; their caprices too much humored by the negligence or good nature of the authorities; yet, without a cause or even a pretext, they burst into insurrection over an extent of 1500 miles, slaughter their officers, violate women, and cut children into pieces. The peasantry have not indeed joined them, but it is more than probable that a rich and influential class has not been unwilling to profit by the misdeeds of the soldiery. These considerations lead but to one conclusion. India should be made to pay entirely, or in great part, the cost of the struggle. A war contribution might be fairly levied on the provinces which have been the scene of such attrocities—Actively or passively they have been guilty, and should bear the punishment. Every class and creed in India should be made to feel that the race which rules them cannot be defied and injured with impunity. While we punish the mutineers with death or banishment, we should give the country in general a lesson which will discourage it from any repetition of its late enormities.

India is rich in hoarded wealth. For years that country has been drawing in and absorbing silver at the rate, it is said, of six millions sterling annually. Within no very long period forty millions are calculated to have passed from European circulation into the coffers or hidingplaces of these Asiatics. There are in India fortunes which would be considered immense even in the city of London. The Baboo bargains and speculates, and scrapes and saves, until he has amassed millions of rupees, while his taxes are next to nothing. The taxes of the country are, indeed, heavy, but they all fall on the unfortunate ryot. The tax on salt, like any which affects an article of universal consumption, is a poll tax. The peasant uses as much as the rich man who is covered with shawls and studded with diamonds. The peasant pays a rent, and a high rent, for his land; the wealthy trader escapes. In fact, as in most Eastern countries, taxation is irregular, unsystematic, and falls with greatest weight on those who ought to be spared. It must be remembered, also, that the wealthy Hindoos owe to us the security which allows them to heap together their wealth.—There is no prince or visitor or licentious palace guard to despoil them, to denounce them, to bring them to the dungeon, or to execution. In return for this safety and tranquility we have a right to demand that they shall add to the resources of the State. A contribution in some form or other to the present necessities of the empire should be exacted from those most able to bear it. Perhaps a property tax, extending the burden over a series of years, would be the simplest and most equitable device. It seems to us that the consideration of this question can be no longer delayed.

The people of England are not disposed to be taxed for Sepoy atrocities. The nation has learned enough of India to preclude the success of any humanitarian cry about exaction and extortion; it will, we are sure, grant any reasonable powers to a government which gives proof of capacity to act with courage, wisdom, and severity.

Catholicity versus Exclusiveness.—The Bishop of Norwich has just returned a reply to the address voted to him by the Norwich Town Council on his appointment to the see. The following is a passage: "Attached as I am to the Church of England, not only by the responsibilities of office, as minister and bishop, but by deepest conviction of her scriptural soundness, and affectionate preference for her Artitcles and Liturgy, I have nevertheless ever entertained in a more private sphere, and desire ever to manifest in my present higher office, a sincere respect and brotherl yaffection for the members of other Christian communities; and it is my anxious prayer that I may be enabled to prove in this city and diocese how possible it is, and how well it is, with an honest and open holding to our own convictions and an earnest faithful maintenance of the doctrine and discipline of our own communion, to have fellowship, by personal intercourse and common labors of love, with those who, though not of our communion, love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, hold fast his Word as their one rule of faith and practice, and seek his glory as the one Divine Head of the Catholic Church.

WAS SAINT PETER AGAINST BIBLE READING?

(*To the Editor of the Catholic Layman.*)

Mr Editor.—There is no use in talking, but the Bible is spreading in spite of the priests: and the queerest thing of all is, the more the boys are warned against them, the more eager they're for them. Myself often thinks they're like the pigs down in our parts; you must pull them east if you want them to go west. But, anyhow, we had a great sermon last Sunday from Father John on the head of it. 'Boys," says he, "I hear that some of ye are setting yourselves for reading the Bible, and that ye think yourselves able to understand it; but," says he, "I'll soon take the conceit out of ye, and I'll show ye that t'would take wiser men than ye to understand that book. I'll leave it to the book itself," says he: "and t'will tell you that the likes of you couldn't by any means comprehend it." So, with that he opened the Douay Bible, and says he, "St. Peter says that the Bible contains 'certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.' Now boys," says he, "I'll leave it to yourselves aren't most of you unlearned men, and isn't it clear from this that if you go reading the Bible you'll wrest it to your own destruction? St. Peter warns you against it, and the book itself warns you against it; and," says he, "take my advice, and leave it to your clergy, that's learned and knowledgeable about such matters, and don't destroy your soul by reading a book you can't understand." Well sir, this troubled me greatly; and when I went home after mass I looked in the Douay, and, sure enough, there were the words, and I couldn't tell what to make of them; but after a while some of the boys came in, and says Andy, "I hope you're satisfied now that the Bible is'nt fit for the likes of you. And," says he, "take care that you don't destroy your own soul with it; and," says he, "isn't it a mighty great notion you have of yourself to think you could understand it? And," says he, "you're very fond of raking up what St. Peter says against our Church; but I think St. Peter has done for you now—he has stopped your jaw for once." "Troth," says Mick, "that's true anyhow; and myself does'nt know what to make of St. Peter. When I heard of his being in favor of discussion, and ordering every man to give a reason for the hope that is in him, I put him down for a Protestant; but now it looks as if he was a true Roman; for he's as much against the Bible as Father John himself." Well, I was bothered, and had'nt a word in my mouth; but by great good luck the Reader came in and took up the argument; and says he, "it's no use arguing without referring to the book itself," and with that he pulled out a Douay Bible, and made any of the boys that had them do the same. And after he read out the verses, he showed us that St. Peter was speaking of St. Paul's epistles, and saying that St. Paul had spoken of the same things about which he had been speaking a little before—namely, the destruction of the world and the coming of Christ; and in these subjects there were some things hard to be understood, which unlearned people twisted and turned to their own destruction. "Them's the very words of Father John," says Andy; "and that's the reason he won't let the boys have Bibles." "Well," says the Reader, "whatever Father John may think, that's not what St. Peter thought; for he didn't tell the people not to read the Bible; he only told them to take warning by the example of those who made a bad use of the Scriptures." "But," said Jerry, "did'nt he order them to have no call at all to the Bible?" "No," says the Reader, "he did'nt do any such thing." "Well," says he, "Father John told us plainly that St. Peter ordered them to give up Bible reading altogether." "Well," says the Reader, "you can see for yourself that he did no such thing; but he told them to take heed to themselves not to fall into the error of those who wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction." "But," says Andy, "Isn't it all the same? Sure when he warned the people themselves by means of the Bible, 'twas all one as if he told them to have no call to it." "I don't think it's the same thing at all," says the Reader; "for," if I warned you not cut yourself with that knife, 'twould be a very different thing from telling you never to handle a knife again, and in like manner, if I warned you against making a bad use of a book, 'twould be very different from telling you to have nothing to say to the book at all; and," says he, "if St. Peter wished to keep the people from the Bible, he would have said so; but instead of that he only warns them against misusing it." "I suppose," says Mick, "he meant that we're to use the Bible but not abuse is, by twisting and turning its meaning." "Just so," says the Reader; "for if we use it properly it's a blessing, but if we twist it about to suit ourselves we're wresting it to our own destruction." "But, after all," says Andy, "isn't it easier to do as our priests do? to keep it from the people entirely, and then there's no fear of their twisting or turning it at all." "It's easier, no doubt," says the Reader; "but I'm thinking in that case the remedy would be worse than the disease." "How so?" says Andy. "Because," says he, "the soul would be starved entirely without the word of God. The Bible is meat and drink to it," says he; "and if you take it away, the soul will starve for want of it. "Troth," says Mick, "that reminds me of Con Kelly's horse." "How so," says the Reader, "Why," says Mick, "the horse got at the oat-bin one day, and eat until he got a surfeit; so Con asked his landlord (a fine English gentleman) what ought he to do; and says he, 'my man, my advice is, never give your horse another grain of oats, and then there will be no fear of a surfeit,' 'True for your honour,' says Con, 'there would be no fear of a surfeit, but there would be some fear of his dying altogether on me; and to tell your honour the truth, I think the remedy is worse than the disease;' and when the priests take away the Bible that God gave as food for our souls, like He gave oats as food for horses, I can't help thinking of Con Kelly and his landlord." "That's the very way, then," says the Reader; "and you all see how foolish 'twould be to keep oats from a horse for ever, because he had once eat too much; but wouldn't it be still more absurd to keep oats from every horse in the parish, because one or two horses had injured themselves with it?" "Faix," says Jerry, "that would be too foolish entirely. 'Twould be bad enough to keep it from the one that made a bad use of it, but 'twould be too bad to keep it from the others, that hadn't misused it at all." "Well," says the reader, "just see how the priests act. They arn't content with keeping the Bible from those who wrest it to their own destruction, but they do their best to keep it from every one." "Throth," says Mick, "I see now that we're sold entirely; for," says he, "if one man in the parish makes a bad use of his Bible, that's no reason why we should be hindred from reading it. And," says he, "Father John might just as well stop the oats from all the horses in the parish, on account of Con Kelly's horse eating too much." "And moreover," says the Reader, "who are the people that St. Peter says wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction?" "The unlearned and unstable," says Andy. "Well," says the Reader, "whose fault is it that you're unlearned in the Word of God? Isn't it the fault of your priests, who don't instruct you in it? And," says he, "the way to hinder you from being unlearned in the Scriptures would be to grind it into you ever and always; and," says he, "if the priests gave every man a Bible, and had it taught every day in their schools, and preached out of it constantly, and had Sunday schools for teaching it to their childer, then the people would'nt be unlearned, or wrest it to their own destruction; and," says he "instead of that verse teaching you to put away the word of God, it should teach you to be twice as diligent in reading it, and that you should study it night and day, and get all the instruction you could about it, and then there would be no fear of your wresting it to your own destruction." "Well," says Jerry, "it's a great ease to me to find that St. Peter isn't against the Bible, but only against people being ignorant and unlearned in it; and sure enough, the way to prevent us from being unlearned in the Scriptures, is to give it out to us and explain it to us; but I'm thinking that keeping the Bible from us isn't a good way to make us learned in it." "But," says Andy, "the word 'unlearned' in the text means them that are unlearned in the Latin and Greek, such as the likes of us that never went through college." "Well," says the Reader, "I don't think it could mean that; for if it did then the apostles themselves would have wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction; for we're told that some of them were 'illiterate and ignorant men, and we know that there were poor fishermen among them, that I'm thinking never went through college." "That sets my mind at rest,"