

[Master F. seizes his tongue in his fist and makes hideous grimaces, unobserved by his parents.]

Mr. F.—By the way, my dear, this is Friday you know, and Patrick don't eat meat.

Mrs. F.—Then let him go without? so much saved.

Mr. F.—He'll eat a whole raft of potatoes and butter.

Mrs. F.—No he won't though. (Hastily conceals the potatoes and butter in the closet, while Master F. laughs uproariously—meanwhile enter Patrick.)

Mr. F.—Come, Patrick, take a piece of this nice beefsteak. We've been at work hard this morning, and ought to have good appetites. Here is a first rate slice—just tender enough to make one's mouth water. Come let me help you to it.

Pat.—Thank ye, sir, this is Friday, and we Catholics never eat meat on Friday.—(Looking about the table.) I'll take some bread, if you please.

Mrs. F.—Now, Patrick, don't be a fool; what do you care if the priests do forbid eating meat on Friday? What business have they whether a man eat meat or fish or bread one day or another.

Pat.—It isn't the priests that forbid me, it's a power higher than the priests, for sure ain't they under the same law as the rest of us?

Mr. F.—Who is it then that forbids you to eat meat.

Pat.—Jesus Christ, who is above us all.

Mr. F.—Nonsense, Pat, there's no such thing in the Bible.

Pat.—Sure, it's Jesus Christ says, "hear the Church;" and it's the Church forbids eating meat on Friday.

Mr. F.—But what business of the Church's is it, if you choose to eat meat?

Pat.—And what business was it of the Almighty's, if Adam and Eve chose to eat apples?

Mr. F.—No, I don't say that, for that's another thing.

Pat.—Indeed it's the one thing for me, for I am a Catholic, and I believe what the Church commands, God commands. What's the use of a profession if you don't live up to it?

Mr. F.—The fact is, Patrick, you Catholics are deluded and priest-ridden.

Pat.—Any way, if the priests drive us, it's into Heaven, and that's more than you can say of your ministers.

Mrs. F.—What impudence.

Master F.—(Singing.) *Sæcula sæculorum, amen.* I'm going to have fun. (Exit, running.)

Pat.—It's strange, I'm thinking, that you want to have me eat meat. You say it's no business of the Church to which I belong; sure and what business is it of yours? I'm hired to work for you, and not to follow your religion.

Mr. F.—No, but I wish you to have a mind of your own.

Pat.—Thank God I have a mind of my own, and that is to live and die a Catholic, and by the help of God I'll stick to that.

Mr. F.—This is a free country and you can do as you like for all the popes and priests.

Pat.—O, I know that well enough, I can curse and blaspheme and have no religion at all, and go to hell if I please, and no body won't stop me.

Mr. F.—Now what do you suppose would happen if you should disobey and eat a piece of this excellent meat on Friday, what would it do to you?

Pat.—Do to me I sure it would be the death of me. Any way, I'll not try it.

Mr. F.—Pshaw, Patrick, you know better, you did eat meat one Friday, thinking it was Thursday, did you feel any worse for it?

Pat.—I did not, sir. It was not wilful, and so there was no harm in it.

Mr. F.—But suppose it had been wilful do you think it would have killed you?

Pat.—Not my body, that's true for you, that would have been a small matter. It would have killed my soul, though, because I would have committed the sin of disobedience which destroyed our first parents.

Mr. F.—But, Patrick, the soul's immortal; how can it be killed?

Pat.—If you knew your catechism you would know that the soul is killed by destroying its life which is the grace of God.

Mrs. F.—(Hastily rises and gathers together with noise, the cups, saucers, plates, &c.) There now, I'll have none of these doings here. You had better be to work. Pretty business to come here to talk Popery. Mr. F. I should think you ought to be ashamed to permit such impudence in my own house too, that's the thanks I get for slavin' all day—(weeps, exit.)

Mr. F.—(Following.) My dear! my dear! (Exit.)

Pat.—(Looking after them.) Músha, God pity them, the creatures, its not begrudging them their beefsteaks here we'd ought to be doing, its few dainties they'll get after they go to their long home.—(Exit.)—*Catholic Observer.*

## CATHOLIC LITERARY INSTITUTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TABLET.

Dear Sir—Allow me to express my gratitude for the gratification afforded by the perusal of your article on "Catholic Literary Institutions" in a late Tablet. Every Catholic who has had any experience of the ordinary literary societies or mechanics' institutions as they at present exist throughout the country, must readily agree with you "that among Catholics these institutions ought to prosper, and to be a very great advantage; for if there be a body of men in the United Kingdom who have a special interest in the diffusion of knowledge, more particularly of historical knowledge, it is the Catholic body." There are, doubtless, numbers circumstanced like myself who could bear testimony to the unfitness of most literary institutions as places of education for Catholics, particularly for those who chiefly have recourse to them—youths and young men. Suppose, as was my own case, a young man whose education in early life has been very deficient through a want of means on the part of parents, or from any other cause. On approaching manhood he finds himself wanting not only in learning in general, but also in some branch of knowledge or scientific acquirement which it is absolutely necessary that he should possess in order to obtain an ordinary position as a workman in the business to which he may be attached. Such a one, convinced that his defect in this respect will detract from his reputation as a skilled workman, and consequently be a source of pecuniary loss to