

### Puseyism and High Churchism at Cheltenham.

We have received a letter from Mr. Borington (containing some interesting particulars as to the spiritual condition of this town), from which we make the following extracts:—

"Of Mr. Close, in conjunction with M<sup>r</sup>. Neil, Stowell, and O'Boirno, you have doubtless heard much. For several years past he has lost no opportunity, either in the pulpit or on the platform, of misrepresenting and villifying our holy religion, and his constant endeavour has been to make his classes believe that Catholicism and infidelity are synonymous. Under his patronage M<sup>r</sup>. Neil thundered away at the Assembly Rooms, the apostate Crotty bullied at St. Mary's, and at his invitation O'Boirno delivered his stock of lies and indecencies (so indecent were the pretended disclosures he made, that none but married men were allowed by his patron to be present at the recital of them). At Bible and missionary meetings which here are neither few nor far between, he never fails to have a collection, to enable him, as he says, 'to make inroads on the stronghold of popery,' and not content with all this polemical warfare and religious contention, he has, for the last three years, fixed upon 'Cecil's Holiday' as the most fitting one for 'brawling and stirring up strife.' On the 5th of November, 1839, he held up the Catholics as murderers and idolaters, and concluded by calling on his hearers to support Tory candidates as the grand means by which Popery must be annihilated.

"In 1840, he lamented the increase of Catholicism, talked about 'pulling the ears of the Popish privy councillors,' and 'blowing up the Papists,' entreating his congregation 'to contribute largely, and outvie in zeal the deluded Papists, who he saw with sorrow, in every part of the kingdom, were raising stately edifices for the worship of Satan and error.' But the bubble has at last well nigh burst, and the 5th of November 1841, saw him mount the pulpit to deliver his 'gunpowder plot' discoursing to an auditory which had 'grown small by degrees, and beautifully less.' But on that occasion no denunciation of 'Popery' was heard from his *charitable lips*. No; he had been crying 'wolf' when there was no wolf; and now that the wolf had effected an entrance, there was none to heed him! Mr. Close declared 'that it could no longer be concealed, that there was an enemy much more formidable than Popery now to contend with, in her twin sister Tractarianism, which had already eaten into the very core of Protestantism!' After lamenting over 'the apostacy of the Rev. Mr. Sibthorp, whom he was once in treaty with to serve St. Paul's church in this town, but whom he would have soon turned out, for his chapel at Ryde had been for some time desecrated with Popish ornaments and *traditionary rubbish*,' he declaimed against Puseyism and its followers, and concluded by giving the Catholics the gratifying intelligence that 'the ministers of the Church of England in these days never met a clerical brother after a few weeks' separation, without express-

ing their mutual doubts and fears that some change, some new doctrine, or a wish to return to Rome, had not taken possession of their mind!' Here then, we have the admission of this determined opponent of Catholicity that the Law Church is really in danger; that 'the house is divided against itself;' that none of its guides know what to believe; and that the portion of them whom the 'reformation plunder' has enriched are fearful; that the majority of their brethren are about to return to the 'one Holy and Apostolic Church,' and deprive them of the spoil. So that in spite of all the rev. gentleman's assertions, and the labours of Stowell, M<sup>r</sup>. Neil, &c., Catholicism is likely to become again universal in this country, after two centuries of persecution, defamation, and calumny. 'The affairs of 'his household' now require attention, and the 5th of November will in future pass by unheeded and destitute of the eloquence of a Close!' Mr. Borington then introduces us to another kind of Clergyman, "the Rev. A. Watson, M. A., formerly of Leeds, and now minister of St. John's Cheltenham, a gentleman, to whom, in ecclesiastical knowledge, argumentative powers, and simple eloquence, Mr. Close must be content to give the palm, for, indeed, 'comparisons are odious.' Mr. Watson has for some time been set down as a Puseyite, and having announced that it was his intention to deliver 'a lecture on the errors of Romanism,' on the evening of the 5th inst., I felt great anxiety to hear him, and accordingly attended.

"The rev. gentleman commenced by condemning 'political parsons' and 'platform orators,' and those of his brethren who endeavor to make the transaction commemorated that day a pretext for denunciation and uncharitableness. He declaimed against those who thought themselves qualified to interpret Scripture and defend religion without being appointed to do so, contending that such a doctrine was erroneous, and that the pastors of the church alone had that authority, and were specially empowered to do so. He said, 'he had no sympathy with those of his clerical brethren who abused a portion of the clergy for going as far towards Rome as they themselves had towards Geneva.' (Mr. Close, in the morning, extolled the piety and learning of Calvin, whom he styled 'the great doctor of Geneva,' and in fact, he is little else than a Calvinist, completely denying the necessity or merit of good works.' Mr. Watson said, 'he agreed with Dean Field, who said the Church of Rome was 'very ecclesia, sed non vera ecclesia,' and Archbishop Laud who declared she was 'vera ecclesia, sed non recta ecclesia;' and he also believed 'she was a branch of the true church.' The rev. gentleman then went through the 39 articles; and though my limits will not allow me to follow him through his discourse, I conscientiously declare, in common with many others who heard him, that his sermon throughout was rather a vindication of the doctrines of the Catholic Church than a denunciation of them.

"On the following Sunday he delivered a discourse on 'Transubstantiation,' when he quoted the very words from the holy gospels which a Catholic would in defence

of that doctrine; and though he did not admit, neither did he deny, the real presence, but exhorted his hearers 'to believe with the eye of faith,' and not to question too far, lest they should approach the altar, 'not discerning the body of the Lord.' Both these discourses gave the greatest dissatisfaction and uneasiness to the Closeites, 'making them quake for fear.' Thus you see, sir, that the doctrines taught by the Rev. F. Close and A. Watson are widely different, which shows at least that the Church of England, having no real head, no unity, and being as Cobbett justly said, 'engendered in beastly lust, and brought forth in perfidy and plunder,' is now divided with contentions, and 'tossed about by every wind of doctrine,' so that in this very town five minutes' walk will enable you to attend two churches, having pastors ostensibly belonging to, and sworn to believe in the same creed, but yet teaching directly opposite doctrines."—*Tablet*.

### THE PUSEYITES.

The University of Oxford is quite in a ferment on the subject of the late conversions of clergymen of the Established church to the religion of Rome. Many of the students, it appears, are shortly expected to declare themselves Catholics;—while not a few of the professors are suspected of having recently reconciled themselves to the Papal See. To every well regulated mind nurtured in the principles of the Reformation, such a state of things in an English University must be a source of sincere sorrow. Pitying, as we do, these dupes of their own credulity, it is not our intention to join issue with our contemporaries in abusing them, or calling in question the purity of their motives. The agony of mind which the sincere convert to any creed, if he be a good man, must feel before he can bring himself to renounce the religion of his fathers, of his childhood, and of his country—before he can, by implication, denounce as unhalloved by true faith the temples in which he worshipped—before he can bring himself to gladden the hearts of his enemies, and fill with sorrow the breasts of his friends by renouncing his religious fellowship with them; is at least deserving of Christian forbearance, if not of pity. Nor is such a man likely to be moved by revilings for having taken such a step. The conflict through which he must have passed must have rendered him altogether indifferent to what the world thinks or says upon the subject. But while we are for avoiding everything like a persecution of the converts to Romanism, it becomes a serious question how we are to close the flood gates which admit the pestilent stream into our Universities. Unless proper means be taken to arrest in time the progress of the evil it actually threatens to overflow this country. Some of the divines at Oxford are assuming all the functions of Roman Catholic priests, without going through any form of conversion, so that there is a positive danger of the Established church being overthrown without the people knowing anything about the

matter. Thus for example, auricular confession has been introduced into the University, and there are many persons in Oxford who can testify to such confessions being made to, and absolutions for sins given by, clergymen of the church of England! This may sound monstrously improbable, but we have among others, the testimony of the Rev. Baden Powell, Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford, that it is quite true, nevertheless. This distinguished divine, in a sermon preached on Sunday, the 7th instant, before the mayor and corporation of Oxford, gives an account of the recent doings of the Professors of Puseyism.—*London Sun*.

### PUSEYISM IN ENGLAND.

An article, which appears in another column of the *Sun*, indicates the feeling with which the revolution silently but not the less progressively and triumphantly, working in England in favour of the ancient faith, is regarded by a portion of the English people. The conversion of the Rev. Mr. Sibthorp has been followed by many other ministers of the Establishment. The Catholic colleges in Lancashire, Cheshire and Staffordshire contain, at this moment, many postulants undergoing probation previous to their reception into the bosom of the Catholic church, and the greater number of those postulants are clergymen ordained according to the Protestant formula. Auricular confession, it appears, has been introduced into Oxford—and the distinctions that separate the communion of Anglicanism from Rome, are daily dwindling, to the amazement of some and the horror of others. But why this amazement and horror? How can this revolution, in this onward march, be stayed? Is it anything more than a return to the old and venerable ways, in which peace and charity, and the most exalted sentiment of pure philanthropy and unadulterated religion were found? The students at Oxford had every inducement to remind them of those days previous to the so called Reformation. They could not move without meeting some object calculated to conjure up the memory of the past. Their halls were built with Catholic hands; their endowments were the contributions of Catholic munificence; their very plate contained the names of Catholic donors, with those words engraved—those words which after all, tell so much of Catholicity—'Pray for the souls of the givers.' We are not surprised at the progress made in Oxford—nor should we be astonished if, in the course of a few years more, the doctrines of the reformation had given place to those which they supplanted by violence, confiscation, spoliation and blood.—*Limerick Reporter*.

MADRID, Nov. 11.—A systematic persecution of the clergy appears to be organized. Several priests of Doreca have been condemned to detention for various terms, without being able to find advocates to take charge of their defence. So great is the terror now substituted for justice.—*Correo Nacional*.