

the upholders of the right of self-government began to feel that though the dissolution of the union might be a great calamity...

An impression prevails in the minds of some of our deluded fellow countrymen to the effect, that General Meagher is exciting them with such earnestness to take part in the civil war...

General Meagher excuses us on the ground that we are ignorant respecting American affairs and abstains from imputing base motives to our desire that peace should be restored in the Western world.

After alluding to Mr. Meagher's stupid saucers against Southern aristocrats, saying Irishmen liked old families, &c., Mr. O'Brien continues:

Gen. Meagher is more sure of exciting among us prejudices against the Southerners when he calls them slave owners than when he designates them as aristocrats. The Irish people feel an invincible aversion to the institution of slavery...

No one knows better than General Meagher that the condition of the emancipated slaves in the North is more humiliating to a sensitive spirit than the enforced subjection which is maintained in the South.

God forbid that I should say a word in favor of Slavery. The one redeeming advantage which I have contemplated as a possible result of this conflict, is that it may induce the Southern States to emancipate their slaves...

Let us suppose that in 1782, the Irish patriots had learned that instead of the amicable adjustment which then took place by a concession to the demands of Ireland, the British Ministry had appointed a Lord Lieutenant in Ireland...

Toombs to be blamed for having taken into account this element in considering the relations between the Southern and Northern States of America.

Equally unreasonable are the reproaches with which the Southerners have been assailed, because at the time of secession they took possession of the forts and arsenals which were situated in the Southern territory.

Let it not be supposed, however, that I write these pages with a view to justify the secession. When I made a tour in the Southern States of North America, in 1859, I earnestly implored my Southern friends to renounce the idea of a separation which could not fail to be disastrous to them, as well as to the whole of the Republic.

But since after a succession of bloody engagements it has been seen that what appeared at first to be the whim of a single State, is the deliberate resolve of several millions of people—since it has been seen that though contending under many difficulties and disadvantages, the Southern leaders have displayed more able statesmanship and more skilful strategy than has been exhibited by their adversaries...

Having thus endeavored to disconnect from the main question at issue the various fallacies and prejudices by which it has been surrounded, I now address myself to the question whether Virginia, Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and the other seceding States, have or have not a natural and indefensible right to determine what form of government is most conducive to their interests and acceptable to their feelings.

There remains, therefore, no other policy by which these territories can be governed except that which was formerly adopted by England toward Ireland, and which is now practised in Poland by Mouravieff and Berg, under the sanction of the tyrant Alexander.

I have spent much time in analysing the letter of General Meagher, because, although it is addressed to a private friend, it was evidently written as an appeal to the public opinion of this country. Though it is overlaid with cumulative epithets of declamatory invective, it is a production which has evidently been prepared with care and deserves a deliberate response.

By suspending the writ of habeas corpus, and thereby subjecting the personal liberty of every citizen of the United States to the caprice of a single ruler or of his minions.

By coercing into the ranks of the Federal army, through the instrumentality of conscription, all who cannot afford to purchase their deliverance by an enormous ransom, and by driving under the terror of military execution, unwilling conscripts into fields of battle where they perish for a cause which is not sanctioned by the approval of their own consciences.

By superseding the rights which, under the Constitution of the United States, were guaranteed to each individual State.

Lastly, by fraternizing with the tyrant of Russia, who is at this moment engaged in carrying into effect such a system of measures against the noble Polish nation, as has won for him, and all who abet him, the execration of mankind.

Alas! that we should ever have witnessed such backsliding on the part of an Irish patriot! It is the results of Republican freedom (so called) in America, we shall soon learn to be reconciled to the worst forms of European despotism.

How different a career lay open to our friend, Possessing the love and confidence of several millions of Americans, natives as well as Irish born, he might have applied his persuasive diction to the restoration of Peace, instead of urging these millions to fling their sons into the fire which now burns before the altar of Moloch.

The enemies of Ireland will rejoice that he has made such a choice between these alternatives; but though he may find defenders and apologists among a few attached friends, our heads droop with shame when we find one of our chosen chiefs thus lending the support of his great abilities to the cause of the oppressor rather than to the protection of the oppressed.

Believe me, my dear friend, very sincerely yours, WILLIAM SMITH O'BRIEN.

P. J. Smith, Esq.

SUPPER BEGGING LETTERS.

Below will be found an admirable letter from the Rev. Dr. Maher, P.P., Carlow-Graigie, exposing the nefarious system of perversion, pursued by the proselytising associations, established in various parts of the country.

THE WORKING WITHIN OF THE PRIESTS' PROTECTION SOCIETY.

Six—Private circulars, and some among them of a peculiarly malignant character, seem to be the fashion of the day. The private circular of the Employment and Aid Society for Protestants, recommending, as it does, the wholesale extermination of all domestic and farm servants being Catholics, and of all small farmers and land stewards of the same creed, as the only means of saving the Protestant proprietors from assassination, has been already brought to light, and indignantly denounced, but I regret to say, by only a small section of the Press.

Other private circulars, issued from the Priests' Protection Society, which have hitherto escaped notice, now lie before me. Publicity through an honest and independent press is evidently the best means to counteract the evil of such societies. Now to the task.

One of those private circulars runs thus:—"CONVERTS' DESTINATION."

"DEAR MADAM—With the utmost reluctance I beg again to urge on your benevolent attention and Christian sympathy the absolute poverty and destitution of some of the converts under the care of the 'Priests' Protection Society.' At this moment the Society is unable to render pecuniary relief to them, and they are without a week's support: consequently, if not relieved at once, they must either die of starvation, go to the workhouse, or what would be built with joy by the Church of Rome, relapse outwardly to her profession."

This circular, which is lithographed and marked private and addressed to the ladies, is signed Thomas Scott, Clk. Hon. Sec.

The other document, under the heading 'Reformation amongst the Priests,' is an earnest appeal of the Directors of the Society to obtain that godly work. It is the circular states the only institution of the kind in these kingdoms: and the applicants from every part of Great Britain benefit by its protection, as well as those from our own country.

for it to him, but the low state of the Society's funds at present precludes them from the pleasure of doing that really good work.

Under these circumstances the Directors humbly, yet earnestly and hopefully, appeal to you for aid, and they trust they will be favoured with a portion of your Christian liberality.

In conclusion, they may add the stupendous fact, which is not generally known, that a few perverts to a false creed have founded within a short period forty-three Chapels and Missions in England and Scotland.

This Society and all its acts are eminently entitled to attention, being under the patronage and direction of the Earl of Roden, Earls of Mayo, Erns, Castlemaine, Lord Dansey, several members of Parliament and dignitaries of the Established Church—in all 33—with a Committee consisting of three clergymen and three captains. The honorary secretary being the Rev. Thomas Scott; Treasurer, the Bank of Ireland.

Now, Mr. Editor, you will at once observe how truly the character of the two classes of converts is drawn in these proselytizing circulars. Blessed be God, who, whilst he receives praise from the mouth of babes and sucklings—ex ore infantium et lactentium—extorts the truth from the lips of his bitterest opponents! Protestant converts are attracted by food for the body, and preserved from relapsing by pecuniary aid. So the Secretary states, who also asserts that converts come to the Catholic Church, offering gifts to God, erecting temples in his honour in thanksgiving for that faith which they have received, and that peace of mind which the world cannot give nor take away.

This state of things, the Directors of the Priests' Protection Society characterize as a stupendous fact. On the contrary, it is exactly what we should anticipate. These who have received favours who have been brought out of darkness into light who have been relieved from the pain and anxiety of doubt and uncertainty, who feel themselves at length, after much prayer and searching, in the possession of the truth, under the guidance of the venerable Mother of the Faithful, always tender, always the same, compassionating the prodigal on his return, and overlaying him with her spiritual gifts and graces.

This, Sir, is the ordinary, and not the stupendous result of a true and sincere conversion to the ancient Church. It need not be said by the Rev. Thomas Scott, or the directors and agents of the proselytising associations, that no such thing occurs, when men leave the homes in which their forefathers worshipped. The motives of such men are well understood. The enormous sums of money raised in England—some hundreds of thousands annually—to buy in, and feed the converts, and pay the proselytizers, make known to all, but wilfully blind, the character of the proselytizing movement in Ireland.

In this unhappy change there is no new light poured in on the mind, no unbending of the conscience, no elevation of the heart to God, calling for a testimony of gratitude. The only step a hungry Catholic has to make in becoming a Protestant, is simply to neglect the duties of his religion—to abandon the use of the Sacraments, never to confess his sins, to bring up his children with or without baptism, just as he pleases; the grace of regeneration in that Sacrament being now left an open question; to look upon the anointing of the sick, notwithstanding St. James's testimony, as useless; and in case of infectious diseases, as very dangerous; to consider Holy Orders and Matrimony no longer as Sacraments conferring grace. The former simply qualifies one for church preferments, the other is a civil contract before either the parson or parish register, contract which may be, any day, annulled by some layman in the modern Divorce Court, the convert, moreover, is in no wise restrained in his belief. He may believe just as much or as little as he pleases. He may reject the dogma of the Trinity with a distinguished Protestant dignitary lately deceased; or the truth of the Bible history with Bishop Colenso; or the other doctrines of religion with the reverend authors of the 'Reviews and Essays'; he may do all this and still remain a good substantial Protestant.

For this great liberty, however, he feels after all no gratitude—he sends no missionaries to propagate it. The more he examines and meditates upon it, the more he is convinced that it is simply an emancipation of the carnal man from the laws of God, a casting away of the sweet yoke of the Gospel, and rejecting the salutary guidance of that holy Church which God declares to be the pillar and ground of truth.

Under what a sad delusion must those honorary secretaries labor, who, with their groups of converts around them demanding bread, cannot draw the legitimate conclusion from the stupendous facts as they designate them, which they themselves have unwittingly collected. They bring together a lot of unfortunate persons, rendered miserable by poverty, ignorance and vice, without education or other means of improvement; they provide them with food and raiment, on condition of renouncing the religion of their parents, and immediately honour them with the title of converts, children of light and grace, the elect of God. The great work of conversion is noised abroad in reports of every kind. The blessed spread of the Word through all the ranks of Romanism is talked of in the pulpit or from the platform, as a miracle of grace, and forthwith the inexhaustible benevolence of England is earnestly appealed to for money to perfect the good work, and save the dear souls from relapsing into Popery. These are the Society's converts in Ireland; converts obtained by the same means out in India, were contemptuously designated even by the Pagans years ago, the 'Company's Christians.' We have now at home the 'Societies' Christians.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church, without noise or commotion, wins to her creed the first scholars in the empire, men distinguished in science and literature, and in every department of life, men who have sacrificed wealth, honor, and position, to become members of the true fold, and who continue therein, rejoicing that they have found the truth. These converts, amongst whom we reckon the Newman, the Manning, the Dodsworths, the Wards, the Wilberforces, the elite of the Protestant hierarchy; Lord Viscount Campden, Fielding, Talbot, Pakenham, Thynne, Jellicoe, Dudley, Bosquet, the flower of the nobility and the professions; and converts, distinguished by virtue, disinterestedness, and sacrifices, designated by the Priests' Protection Society, 'Perverts to a false creed.' What a stock of cool insolence and stolid bigotry must have been hid in by those gentlemen who hesitate not to adopt such language? It is evident that they have yet to learn, that there is something in honest and deep-felt conviction, whether it falls in with our views or not, which is sure to shelter it from the sneers of all but vulgar minds, cast in nature's coarsest mould.

The proselytizing system, as conducted by the Priests' Protection Society, 'The Irish Church Mission to Roman Catholics,' and other societies which infect this country and destroy its peace, is the most audacious and infamous imposture ever attempted to be played off on public credulity. With the enormous expenditure of hundreds of thousands yearly,

they have never made a sincere convert from the ranks of Catholics. The private circulars and public appeals, selling for money to save their ecclesies from relapsing, is evidence of the fact. They have taught men to scoff at all religion, to hate the religion of their fathers, they may have made infidels, hypocrites, Deists, Socinians, and incendiaries; but they have never brought a Catholic to believe in the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Protestant Liturgy, which are believed in so little, even by those who have been brought up in that creed.

No man of conscience, of sincerity, honour, can pass over to the Irish Established Church, which is everywhere admitted, as well by Protestants as Catholics, to be the greatest ecclesiastical injustice and enormity in existence. The difficulty is to find men of eminence and high character, who have not recorded their abhorrence of this invidious injustice. 'There is no abuse like it (says the Rev. G. Smith) in all Europe.' Mr. Goldwin, the present Professor of History in Oxford, is still more emphatic, denouncing it 'as unjust and unchristian.' The latest writer, the (Rev. C. Demerille) on the Established Church, is a Protestant clergyman. In a letter written from Nettleton Rectory, August 27, 1862, he says—

'As an Anglican clergyman I feel that an institution, so evilly established in the first instance, and so productive of scandal, crime, and suffering ever since, ought, for the sake of our common Christianity, with a due regard to the vessel interests, to be dis-established as soon as possible.'

Can men holding those opinions, and we all hold them, ever conscientiously join the Anglo-Irish Church? Impossible. The greatest philosopher of the last century, writing about Roman Catholics, observes, 'Depend upon it, as true as nature is true, that if you force them out of the religion of habit, of education, or opinion, it is not to yours they will ever go. Shaken in their minds they will go to that (Deism or infidelity) where the dogmas are fewest, where they are most uncertain, where they lead them least to a consideration of what they have abandoned.'—Edward Burke's Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe.

'Dr. Johnson one of the profoundest scholars of which Protestantism can boast, concurred in this opinion.

'A man,' he says, 'who is converted from Protestantism, may be sincere. He parts with nothing. He is only superadding to what he already had: but to convert from Popery to Protestantism, a man gives up so much of what he has held as sacred, as anything he retains—there is such a laceration of mind in such conversion that it can hardly be sincere or lasting.'

What folly! What an amount of falsehood and shameless fraud there is in all this boasting of converts from Romanism. 'Of honest, disinterested converts,' said the Rev. Mr. Biggs, a Protestant clergyman, in his lecture at the Rotunda, Dublin, June, 1861, 'they had absolutely none. Where were they if they had them? Could they be produced?—But they had a number of poor creatures who were aided in various ways, on condition of attending classes and meetings, and calling themselves converts. These people some time or other were sure to go back to the creed they ever believed as the hour of death if not sooner.'

No good can come from disguising these facts, and it is desirable on many accounts to look the matter steadily in the face, with a view to check by the stern expression of public opinion such an intolerable abuse.—I have the honor to be, &c., &c., JAMES MAHER, P.P.

Carlow, November 1, 1863

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

THE RIGHT REV. DR. DOBBIAN ON THE DOCTRINE OF OBEDIENCE.

'Dictation at elections, interference with parental authority over their children in education or other matters, and censorship over literature, do not, we presume, come under the category of faith or morals. On these matters, and others like them, Catholic laymen have, therefore (we may infer, Bishop Dobrian's sanction for disregarding the preceptory binding of the priest if it is indelicately intruded upon them.'—Northern Whig, Oct. 29.

(To the Editor of the Ulster Observer.)

Dear Sir,—To satisfy some of your Catholic readers, allow me a few remarks on the above quotation. It appears this subject involves principles too deep for the comprehension of your contemporary. 'Dictation at elections,' should be practised as little by the landlords, the parsons, 'the priests,' as by that other class of greedy expectants who look after their own personal profits, together with the whole posse of second hand water-carriers, lawyers and editors, who gather around to pick up whatever crumbs may fall. The public good is the main question to be considered, and on this everyone ought to be at liberty to form his own opinion, and to give it to others, never indecently, but politely and conscientiously, when required. Of this some French prelates gave an example recently, whose claims to such right even an imperial censure could not destroy. This is my idea of 'dictation at elections.'—I am only sorry that it has not more adherents.

The Whig seems not aware that, in matters of education, there is the most perfect harmony between the 'authority of the parent' and the office, perhaps I should call it 'bidding of the priest.'—The parent has a perfect right to select any branch of education or any profession for his child, but the Church has the right, from her very constitution, of declaring where it would be 'intrinsically dangerous to faith and morals' to acquire that education, of which she is the (by Catholics) acknowledged guardian. Then, having this right, it is her duty to point out that danger wherever it may exist, not 'indecently,' but in all charity and sweetness. But that being done, it will ever be audacious and schismatical in any Catholic, whether in the Press, in the Parliament house, or at the Commissioners' Board, to uphold the contrary. If this be hard to some, there is no help for it, as the Church can never consent in the education of her children, to let any one part of the triple man—physical, intellectual, or moral—be left out in what is necessary, according to her, to form a good citizen and a good Christian. No Catholic can oppose this.

The conclusion from all this is, that every man should be allowed the privilege of enjoying, not merely civil, but religious liberty—not that dithyrambic and laced-up kind of thing that some nickname liberty, foolishly imagining it to be 'independence'—but that bold, manly, and healthy privilege that comes to us clothed with the sanction of God, as unfolded in the principles of the natural and divine laws—the liberty of being truthful, honest, tolerant, and Christian. And this is the 'type' of men presented to us in the great Mountbembert, of whom the Whig says he can approve—an approval I willingly endorse—a man who has, in his address at Mullinee, put his finger on the sore of modern society, when he says—I must quote him as the Whig refers to politics—'This furious and universal rage of placating makes society a prey, on which subsist whole generations of parasites, until fresh generations of beggary applicants succeed in replacing them by miracles of servility, or by the rising tide of a revolution.' Here is the secret of the perverted idea men now a-days take of liberty. Its spring is self-interest, whilst public good is made the pretence. Ah! he ought to be a very pure-hearted man whose principles for their echo in that eminent publicist. I wish I dare quote more, but I am far enough for my purpose—Believe me to remain yours very truly,

† P. DOBBIAN, Confrator Bishop, 8, Howard street.