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ON THE BELFAST RIOTS.

(From the Dublin Catholic Telegraph.)

It may appear strange at first sight to hear the statement made, namely, that the Whig and the Tory Governments have contributed about an equal share in producing the late riots in Belfast: nevertheless the statement is critically true. And, moreover, if the guilty parties were brought to public justice, it would be discovered that St. Stephen's is much more culpable than Sandy-row; and that Prime Ministers and Lord Lieutenants have early sowed the seeds of the political and religious discord which, up to the present time, and in this present year, have brought forth an abundant crop of social rancour.

With this brand of (to say the least) misalliance fixed on this sworn confederacy, it has lived on since '32, sustained, patronized, and petted by those persons highest in power in Ireland and nearest the Throne in England. It commands in the Army and rules in the Navy. It is seen on the Bench, and it preaches from the Pulpit. It stands with a drawn sword at the several halls of the University. It would dare to teach and to guide all our schools of education. It steals the heart of the bad Landlord, and it exterminates the poor. It increases the horrors of the emaciating poorhouse, by throwing the gall of bigotry into the soup of the paupers.

Lord Carlisle has pointed out unmistakably its true character by expelling it from the Magisterial Bench; thereby expressing his official conviction that in the Grand Jury-room, at Petty Sessions, at Magistrates' Courts, at Elections, and in the Poorhouse, strict impartial decision is ordinarily unattainable; popular confidence in the administration of the laws is shaken and lost, as long as the Orange element is found mixed with the accredited office of public justice.

by overmatched or equal retaliation: and the Orange aggressive onslaught repelled and punished by their former passive victims, whom they once trampled in the mire, and whose houses they wrecked in unrestricted ferocity? It is a narrow view of this case of Belfast to ascribe the late disgraceful proceedings in that town to any sudden or new-born excitement of the dominant faction: it is the old hereditary feeling of their ancient corporate abuses, for which past Parliamentary injustice, and past Castle persecution, are much more to be blamed than Sandy-row or Dr. Drew's church. These periodical ebullitions are like the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius: recent effects, no doubt, but which have had their political causes long ago deeply fixed near the woolsack, amongst the most elevated and most eminent personages in the British Empire.

These Northern riots, as I have already stated, are the offspring of a Tory and a Whig influence: they can be traced to a twofold cause, namely—a political and a sectarian source.—The Tories principally founded the political part, while the Whigs established the sectarian development. The Tory element began with Lord Castlereagh in '95: the Whig ingredient rose into rancorous vigour when Lord John Russell wrote the Durham letter in '51. Castlereagh devised the political part when he decided on plundering Ireland of her National Parliament: Russell executed the second part when he had been advised in '51 to crush the Hierarchy, and to rob Ireland of her faith.

NEVER DESPAIR.—True hope is based on energy of character. A strong mind always hopes, and has always cause to hope, because it knows the mutability of human affairs, and how slight a circumstance may change the whole course of events. Such a spirit too, rests upon itself; it is not confined to partial views, or to one particular object. And if at last all should be lost, it has saved itself—its own integrity and worth. Hope awakens courage, while despondency is the last of all evils; it is the abandonment of good—the giving up of the battle of life with dead nothingness.

his wife lying in scarlet fever, himself hungry, and his children naked, he was accosted by a Souper offering him fire, food, clothes, money, and employment if he would become a pervert—"Begone," said this Irish Confessor, "begone, you vile spawn of the D—: my children shall never grow fat on the wages of apostacy, my wife shall never wear the livery of perjury: and I would rather perish and rot, and be the food of dogs than betray Christ and drink sacrilege and perdition, even out of a cup of gold." Stunning thoughts and language like the foregoing quotation were not uncommon during the late Souper crusade; and the tongue of Demosthenes, warmed by the fire of Grecian patriotism has not spoken nobler or more stirring sentiments, than the poor famine stricken Irish Catholic has many a time uttered, when the maddening insult of the degraded Souper roused the burning eloquence of his faith.

This Souperism—this result of the Russell letter spread over Ireland a disastrous bigotry like the fever fog of New Orleans, preceding the fatal black vomit. Who has not heard of this impious crusade in Connemara, Dingle, Cork, Kells, Kilkenny, and Dublin: and who has not been made acquainted with its fights, its cut heads, its summonses, its lawsuits, its perjuries, its contempt, and its total failure after a yearly expenditure for several years of upwards of £39,000. After all the scandals, the malice, the impieties, the perjuries published in Kilkenny during the last two years, and patronised by persons in the educated ranks of society, hear the Kilkenny Journal on this day announcing the failure of this wretched Infidelism in that city, thanks to Captain Helsham:—

We have much pleasure in announcing that the street-preachers have at length broken up their establishment and taken their departure from our city.

The Irish people are already aware that this street preaching has been introduced into Belfast, in its most insulting form: and that goading lies and galling blasphemy against our most cherished doctrines have been preached and published in wanton, rampant bigotry, in open-air defiance.—This is the Whig part of the Belfast disgrace; and thus the double cause of the Sandy-row achievement, their fame and their renown can with justice be equally divided between ancient Orangeism and modern Whig bigotry. The Soupers, however, have mistaken the year for their exploits. They might have succeeded in 1815; but beyond all dispute they must fail in '58. The Catholics of Belfast will no longer submit to be trampled on at noon-day by wanton and aggressive insult: and it behoves the Government authorities to interpose prudently and impartially between the offenders and the defenders, and to restore the peace which they have themselves broken a thousand times heretofore, by the formation and the encouragement of the very society, which, public reproach and public shame now force them to punish and to dissolve.

It is not in the spirit of triumph that I advert to the independence and the courage of the Catholics of Belfast, as evinced in their late defensive position against the Orange mob. I wish there was no cause for this evidence of their strength: I wish they lived in peace and charity with all their neighbors: and if any labor of mine could promote the peace of that town, with which I happen to be acquainted, and where I have received kindness from all classes of society, I would cheerfully devote my time and my influence to promote the union of the Catholic and the Orangeman, to make them forget the past, and to be bound in permanent friendship for all future time.

June 17th, 1858.

D. W. C.

BELGIUM AND FRANCE.

We have much pleasure in laying before our readers a series of very interesting letters, written by a friend of ours, who visited Belgium and France last winter. The first is from Brussels; and his graphic descriptions of the churches and other public buildings will, we have no doubt, be acceptable to our readers:—

Brussels, 5th Feb., 1858.

Last Friday we left London direct for Ostend, at which place we arrived at 1 P. M. next day. It is a clean, snug town, with nothing to interest the stranger, except the great ramparts and ditches by which it is surrounded. We expected much annoyance from the Custom-house officials, but were agreeably disappointed; when, after merely glancing at our luggage, the gens d'armes politely informed us that we might proceed to our hotel. The next train conveyed us to Leopold's capital, passing, en route, through Bruges and Ghent, where I wish I could have remained a couple of days.—This hotel (Hotel de la Regence) we find a very good one; everything is not only comfortable, but elegant. It is refreshing to find such politeness here on every side, from the lowest domestique up to Madame, after so long suffering, irritation and annoyance from those troublesome London waiters. On Sunday, we got out early, and spent two hours in the Palais des beaux Arts, which contains many paintings, by Rubens, Van Dyck, and others; some of them are wonderful, and you may be sure I enjoyed the treat. At 11 o'clock, we attended Mass at L'Eglise de Ste. Gudule, a noble old building of the XIII. century. The singing was excellent, with a strong instrumental accompaniment. The interior is large, containing many fine paintings, statues, &c. The pulpit—a masterpiece of wood carving by Verbruggen represents Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise; the preacher stands in a globe, which rests on the branches of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. But I must hurry. Having heard of the fame of Antwerp in churches and paintings, I determined to spend a few days there; so after Mass I partook of a lunch jumped on a train, and in three-quarters of an hour, arrived there (25 miles.) Ascertaining that Vespers commenced at four o'clock, I went at once to the Cathedral. Fancy that! Mass at Ste. Gudule a Bruxelles, and Vespers at L'Eglise de Notre Dame D'Auvers! It is very large, and, unlike most churches, has three aisles on each side of the nave; the sexton told me that there are 125 columns supporting 205 arches, and these, I assure you, present a strange and very beautiful coup-d'oeil from any point of view—a crossing and intertwining of these numerous Gothic vaults and pillars, which you cannot imagine. I paid it a second visit on Monday morning to examine it more thoroughly by day light. The Great Tower is a miracle in itself. Up, up, it shoots into the clear blue sky, over four hundred feet above the street, terminating in a point; you wonder it does not crumble into pieces, so flimsy and aerial does its minute and ornamental lace-like work appear to the observer in la Place Verte. There is a spiral stairs leading to a gallery, which encircles the pinnacle.—I made the ascent, I cannot venture to say how often I gyrrated; it was like creeping up an immense cork screw. It is a giddy height, but the view is magnificent—the course of the Schelde, the Citadel, dykes, ramparts, Boulevards, &c.—'There is in this tower a superb chime of bells (80 or 90, which ring a merry peal several times each day, enlivening the jolly old burglers of Antwerp. While I was at the summit, 200 feet above the beifry, I heard an air from "La Bourgeoise" played in a manner which reminded me of a chorus of flutes, more than a chime of bells, and unlike anything I ever heard before—a sweet, soft, glass-like tinkling. The execution was wonderfully rapid—even chromatic runs were dotted out clearly, as if on a Piano; it was harmony itself. Coming down, I examined the working of the machinery minutely; you should have seen me, all over dust, poking amid a host of bells, great and small, and a vast net work of wires. Each bell has four hammers placed over it, which are governed by the musician himself, by means of a wire attached to each: these are so nicely adjusted that the least pull raises the hammer.—By having four hammers to each, a note can be repeated with great rapidity—one would not work quickly enough. But let us descend into the body of the church, rich in vast columns, arches, corridors, aisles and altars. In the south transept hangs that masterpiece of Rubens—"The descent from the Cross." You must not expect me to describe it. I can only say that I was completely taken aback, awe-stricken, when I saw it. Christ looks so cold, so dead, and grief is so painfully depicted on the female faces that I could hardly believe but that I was gazing on some terrible reality, instead of a representation. In the opposite transept is his "Elevation of the Cross," another wonder, and over the high altar his "Assumption of the B. Virgin."

He is buried himself in St. Jacques church—a church even more magnificent than the Cathedral;—in it the noblesse of Antwerp are buried; it is filled with their tombs and private Chapels, on which the most splendid decorations of marble, stained glass, &c., are lavished. The Lady Chapel, immediately behind the High Altar, is devoted to the great painter; it is his family tomb; over its altar is a painting—"The Holy Family," in which he introduces the portraits of himself, his father, wife, child, &c. The old Koster of the church told me that there would be a grand ceremony there in the evening; it being the Fete of St. Roch; so I returned at six o'clock, and was repaid an hundred fold.—The music from the choir in the rear, and the organ which is placed on the screen in front, was most impressive and grand. The church was decorated with family banners, and brilliantly lighted with thousands of candles. After the Benediction, there was a grand procession, and as it emerged from the choir, and glided round through those venerable aisles, the scene was beautiful; then came the waves of melody from organ and choir at the same time filling the entire space above, and pressing down, as it were, on the crowds beneath; the excitement of the scene and music combined, whirled me into another age, and for some time I fancied myself back in the good old days of chivalry, when Knights in armor, and ladies fair, assisted at these festivals of the Church, amid all the grandeur and pomp of the time. On again. There are a great number of churches in Antwerp, but I cannot stop to speak of them. In the church of St. Andrews, I saw the "Crucifixion of St. Andrew," by Otto Vennius, the master of Rubens; and in the Academy of Painting, there is a splendid collection, much superior to that here in Brussels, by Rubens, Vandyck (his pupil), Quertin Matsys, (the blacksmith of Antwerp), Titian, Teniers, and others of the Flemish and German school. Rubens is adored in Antwerp; there are several statues of him, and his house is still reverently pointed out. There are many things to admire there: the docks and basins, the citadel, the fortifications, the dykes, which environ it; the Boulevards, in all directions, are very beautiful, and the Zoological gardens are in some species superior to the London collection. It has a quaint, quiet old air, with its high gabled Flemish houses and painted roofs. The people appear jolly, good-harted, and innocent, and, like our own in Canada, wear wooden shoes. I noticed too in running through the country, that the houses all looked white, clean, and snug; indeed the country altogether (not the cities) looks more like Lower Canada than any place I have seen—and that is paying it a great compliment I assure you. I returned to Brussels on Tuesday night, and have been working hard ever since, visiting public buildings, churches, &c; there are many of both well worthy of more notice than I can give them here. The old part of the city abounds in fine old feudal looking mansions—the residences of the Brabant noblesse in their day; La Grand Place is alone worth a trip to see.—On one side is the Hotel de Ville, one of those superb buildings, peculiar I believe to the Netherlands, (as is the wonderful wood carving in all their churches.) It has a high standing roof, studded with windows and a beautiful Gothic tower, 364 feet in height (15th century); opposite stands the old Maison du Roi; and on a third side, an ancient Ducal Palace still proudly sits firmly as ever. The abdication of Charles V. took place in it—1555. The Park (quite close to our hotel) is a lovely spot, with the King's Palace on one side, that of the Prince of Orange on another; the Chamber of Representatives opposite, and the remainder built up with residences of the gentry. The Duchess of Richmond's house is still shewn in La Rue Royale, wherein she gave the grand ball to the Duke and officers of the British army on the eve of Waterloo. I went to the Theatre Royal Wednesday evening, and heard the opera "Les Demons de la Couronne" admirably sung. This theatre is, without any exception, the most beautiful and elegant, in everything, of any that I have seen; there is nothing at all in London to come near it: it is a perfect gem—comfortable, commodious, and well ventilated; there were a great many military men there in uniform, which gave color and variety to the scene. It was particularly pleasing to me to see the order and decorum preserved throughout; no interruptions of the opera by shouting and clapping; everything passed off as quietly as we had been in a drawing-room. I wish I had space and time to give you some little description of this beautiful city; but I must conclude. The Boulevards are so numerous that you can fancy yourself continually in the country; then there is no smoke, no fog, as in England: streets, houses, people, everything wears a cheerful and sunny aspect. "Yesterday we devoted to Waterloo! We chartered "un voiture de remise," and started at nine A.M.; leaving the remise at Mont Ste. Jean, I walked three hours a pied, visiting everything—the church at Waterloo, wherein there