

We beg to direct the special attention of all Anti-Popery Tract Distributors, not forgetting our *Ow'n* anti-smuggling friend from Lunenburg to the following creditable letter which has been addressed by a Protestant clergyman

To the Editor of the Pictorial Times.

Jan. 19th, 1846.

Sir—Protracted illness has prevented me from addressing you before now, on the subject of an article published in your paper of the 10th of January, and headed, 'The proper Station of Women.' The perusal of that article gave me deep, heartfelt pain, for in it you make a most unjustifiable attack on an innocent, zealous, and charitable body of women. Sir, allow me, a Dissenter from their creed, and pastor of yours, to tell you, it is unchristianlike of you to denounce a number of your fellow-Christians as a degraded class, because they, remembering the words of the Lord, 'He who loveth the danger shall perish therein,' have fled from the allurements and temptations of a vain and deceitful world, seeking to work out their salvation amid that solitude and retirement which Christ has commended Mary for, saying, 'She hath chosen the better part,' also, that he whose life it is their aim to copy, spent most of his life in retirement, and has commanded us to 'leave father, mother, sister and brother, to cleave to the Lord.'

Now, having given you scriptural proof that there is nothing contrary to the law of God in leading a life of retirement, 'under a profession of devotedness to a religious life,' will you inform me what there is degrading or contrary to nature in a number of females, sensible of their individual weakness and inability to contend with the cares and troubles of this world singly? What reason is there against their seeking comfort and protection in the society of one another, and devoting themselves and the love, which others lavish on their fellow-mortals, 'to Him whose love endureth for ever,' who will heal and comfort the drooping soul, and has promised when two or three assemble in his name 'to be in the midst of them.'

There are severities and rigours practised in some convents, which all men of our creed consider harsh and unnecessary to salvation, and that many of the opinions and doctrines held by their inmates we consider erroneous. Still we must not condemn them, knowing that 'Judgment is mine saith the Lord,' and that God does not require all to serve him in the same capacity. How many are, from moral and physical causes, unfit for fulfilling the duties of the married state. Now, if all such Protestant females, following the bright example set them by some of their Catholic sisters, would devote their time, talents, and energies, to the education of youth of the higher and lower classes, to the comforting the afflicted, sick, and destitute, and give their superfluous incomes to the founding of hospitals,

and other charitable institutions, which should be supported and attended by them, there would no longer be a necessity for taxing the industrious labourer for the support of paupers, very little poorer than many of those taxed for their support. Neither would there be a necessity for immense sums being drawn from the public revenue for the maintenance of hospitals, &c., &c; all should be supported as in former ages, by voluntary contributions; for, it is a well-known historic fact, that prior to the abolition of monasteries and convents, at the time of the Reformation, none of the public revenue of England was devoted to their support, or considered necessary; and, at that period, several of the Protestant divines voted for the remodelling, instead of abolition, of convents and monasteries, saying Christ did not destroy the Temple of his Father, but cast out those who bought and sold therein, 'and made a den of thieves of the house of prayer.' If called upon, I am ready to prove this, and also that the primitive Christians, before corruption had stolen into the Church of Christ, recommends a life of retirement and chastity as that most pleasing to God, and that this opinion was held by several of the brightest luminaries of the Church of England.

Often have I regretted not finding Protestant women, as (in the fulfilment of my clerical duties) I have found Catholic Sisters of Mercy and Charity, braving the inclemency of all climates, fearless of the most contagious diseases, undaunted by ribaldry and jests, with which they are often met in the jails, entering the abode of sickness, poverty, and, often, of iniquity. They, the virtuous, mingling with the vicious, seeking to withdraw them from the path of vice, strengthening them in the hour of temptation, by precept and example, promising forgiveness for the past, and giving hope for the future;

"Shedding a tear o'er their erring sister's shame,"

comforting the wounded spirit, and cheering the desponding heart, suffering and sorrow.

Merciful God! are those the women you have dared to call a degraded class of beings! cut off from the land of the living, and not filling their proper station! Sir, they are nobly filling the highest station mortal can fill on earth, preaching peace and good will to all, even those who differ from them in creed, and forgiveness to those who revile them for the sake of Him who forgiveth much to them who love him. To that God I pray, that my flock may follow their example; and to my flock I say—

'Go thou and do likewise.'

I may be told by some, they dread taking such a solemn vow as that which consecrates a creature to his Creator—to that God whose 'yoke is sweet, and burthen light.' To such I answer, I am daily called on to administer far more solemn vows. Yes, often have I trembled, when hearing one sinner call Heaven to witness him swearing to respect and obey!—another, equally weak, who perhaps is the