



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1852.

NO. 6.

THE MONASTIC ORDERS AND THE MATERIALISTS.

From the Dublin Telegraph.

There was published in this paper, a short time since, an account of the proceedings of the holy, pious, and sanctified brotherhood of Mount Melleray, in the county of Waterford. The proceedings described by our excellent and truly Catholic correspondent, whose feelings fully sympathized with the scenes he portrayed, comprised, amongst other things, the annual public examination of the children, many of whom are gratuitously educated by the Monks of Mount Melleray. It was a development of Catholicity under the most adverse circumstances—it was a demonstration, by facts, that there is, in the Catholic religion, something, which to the Materialist, the Infidel, and the Sensualist, is as marvellous, as astounding, and as incredible as any miracle of our Lord or of His saints, which ancient Deism has ventured to deny, and modern metaphysicians have endeavored to explain or refute on "purely philosophical principles?"

At Mount Melleray there is the fact, patent and notorious to the world, that in the county of Waterford what was but a few years ago a bleak mountain and a barren heath is now cultivated and productive land—that upon that cultivated and productive land there have been erected a church, schools, and a hospitable mansion, where shelter and food are afforded to the wayfarer and the miserably—that this change has been effected by the minds and the hands of those who have devoted themselves absolutely and for ever to the service of God, to the edification of their fellow-men, to the instruction of the ignorant, to the nurture and care of the poor—and in so doing have bound themselves by a vow to pass their days in abstinence and their nights in prayer, and never to break the silence which they have imposed on themselves, but to sing the praises of their God, or for the purposes of charity towards their neighbor.

What motives can worldlings discover for such a course of conduct as this? Its blessed and beneficent results are before them. By such means and such men the sterile earth is made to produce food for the use of man, the houseless wanderer is supplied with a home, the ignorant child is educated, the humble are sustained with friends, the afflicted provided with comforters. What motive, we ask worldlings, can these men have for what they have done, and what they are doing? It is not to enrich themselves, for of what use are riches to those who will taste no animal food, who lie on hard beds, who wear coarse clothing, who pass their entire time in manual toil, in prayer, or in works of charity for the benefit of others. Although all the gold in California were poured into the monastery of Mount Melleray, neither Abbot nor Monk would be a farthing the richer, for each is bound by a vow of poverty—the individual can possess nothing of his own; and the richness of the community would be but the additional power conferred upon it, of providing for the sustentation, the comfort, and the happiness of the poor who are not of the community.

What motive, we again ask the worldlings, that you can comprehend or appreciate, can have induced these men thus to pass their lives in prayer, or in silence, in labor, in teaching the poor, in tending the destitute and the poor? The world knows not of them. They do not seek for its fame, and they so utterly despise its praises, that they have buried in religion the names by which the world could have known or individually recognised them.

Such were the men in whose hearing was read, as described by our correspondent, a letter from Lord Shrewsbury to the Very Rev. Dr. Fogarty, describing the happiness he experienced at living in Palermo, because within its walls were to be found several religious communities. Lord Shrewsbury was describing the same good deeds, as following from the establishment of many pious communities, that which Dr. Fogarty, living in the neighborhood of Mount Melleray, could witness, but as occurring from the establishment of a single community. In Waterford that was effected on a small scale, which in Palermo is effected on a great scale. In Waterford was to be seen only a community, discountenanced by those in power, liable at any moment to persecution, and even lately despoiled by law—the English law—of a portion of that property which piety had bequeathed to it, and that justly belonged to it. What wonder can it be that a Catholic nobleman should say that it was a happiness to live in a country governed by a truly Catholic Prince, who, so far from discountenancing or issuing a proclamation against communities which did the good accomplished by Mount Melleray, sanctioned them, sustained them, protected them by his power, and took care that efficient laws should secure to them the peaceful possession of that property which charity, a love of God and our neighbor, had assigned to them.

For a Catholic nobleman to speak in admiration of monastic institutions, provokes the contempt and excites the ridicule of the *Times* newspaper! Lord Shrewsbury refers to existing monastic institutions, from a personal and positive knowledge of the good effected by them. The *Times* denounces them, not because it knows them, but because it has heard and read a great deal about them; because, from the day that an English monarch robbed the monasteries and convents of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, of their lands, their plate, and their manuscripts, it is difficult to find a single book published in the English language, whether it be falsely called "a history," or justly designated "a romance," or untruly described as "a book for the instruction of youth," that is not filled with the most base, untrue, foul, and calumnious statements upon Monks and Nuns, upon convents and monasteries. The thieves, and the descendants and representatives of thieves, have sought to popularise their spoils, by the vituperation of the victims whom they have wronged. The writer in the *Times*, who attacks Lord Shrewsbury, as if his lordship had said something monstrous, because he praises monasteries and convents, is probably one whose mind has not been poisoned merely by the perusal of books in the English language—that he has not been content to take his notions of the pious inmates of convents from the manners, language, and conversation of those who have been expelled from them—that he has sense enough to perceive that a vagabond Monk or a renegade Friar does not truly personify an entire community, no more than a stray runaway traitor represents the loyalty of an entire nation. It is not improbable that the writer in the *Times* has studied deeply the pestilential publications of the Jansenists of the last century—that from them he has derived his notions of the Jesuits—and that he, therefore, decries the idea of entrusting youth to the members of that great and glorious society, whose martyrs in defence of Christianity are a multitude—whose piety has edified millions—whose example has led whole nations to salvation—and who, in addition to the other great services they have conferred upon Christendom, have won for themselves immortal honor, by their labors in facilitating the education of youth. It is by no means improbable that the writer in the *Times*, who now denounces the idea of the Jesuits in Palermo giving a gratuitous education to eight hundred poor students, is one who was aided in the acquirement of his knowledge of the classics by some Delphin edition, for which he is indebted to these very Jesuits.

The *Times* is impressed with the conviction that England would descend in the scale of nations if the Jesuits were the instructors of English youth.

"What a strange world it would be," exclaims the *Times*. "if men like Lord Shrewsbury were allowed much weight in its councils. Could he but fill our large towns with assemblages of idle men and women—could he hand over all children of English parents to Jesuit instructors," what, then, would be the consequence? It is thus expressed by the *Times*: "Lord Shrewsbury would, no doubt, reckon he had accomplished a heroic deed."

And so, we think, he would; for he would thereby save the English nation from ignorance, from crimes, and sins, and brutality such as are not to be found amongst any other people upon the face of the earth.

The teaching by Jesuits is not only discountenanced in England, but the perpetuation of their existence in common with all other religious orders, is prohibited by law. Is England the more moral?—are her people the better instructed, or better conducted, because of the prohibition? The answer to these questions shall be given on Protestant authorities.

"Millions of baptised Christians" (says the Rev. E. Munro, M.A., Incumbent of Harrow, Weald, Middlesex, in a pamphlet published by him in 1850) "are living in cities and villages around us, either in utter ignorance of the religion they profess, or the victims of a deep-rooted and withering infidelity."

There are no Jesuit teachers in Harrow School; and yet the Rev. E. Munro declares, that "in the metropolis and other large cities" there are "whole families" to be found "in a state of ignorance of their awful responsibilities and future destinies which would appeal a *Finis*!"

But why search for Protestant authority on this important point beyond the columns of the *Times* itself? Have we not found it complaining, time after time, of the thirst for blood, and recklessness of human life, among its rural population—of the prevalence of poisoning, as practised both by men and women, until at last a law had to be passed prohibiting the indiscriminate sale of arsenic, to prevent husbands from slaying their wives, wives their husbands, and mothers even their own children, in order that the price of the innocent blood shed by them might be paid by Burial Clubs? And then, as to the manners and conduct of the urban populations, let us see,

even on the testimony of the *Times*, if a Jesuit education would not be an improvement upon that state of things which he depicts in the publication of the 20th of August.

These are the very words of the *Times*. It is thus it tells the truth of a people that the Jesuits dare not instruct:—

"We fear it is impossible to deny that, whatever be the merits of the lower class of our countrymen, considerable abatement must be made in any estimate of the national character, in consideration of a very large quantity of brutality. While theologians are quarrelling about the particular creed which is to be entrusted with the monopoly of teaching, reading, writing, arithmetic, and other civilising lore, we appear to be training up, to the disgrace and the confusion of the litigant parties, a race of barbarians, ignorant alike of their duty to God and man, and stimulating the most ferocious passions by the most brutal excesses. The glimpses which we obtain from time to time of the life and manners of the lowest portion of the laboring classes in this city are deeply disgraceful to our civilisation and our laws. The difference between the spacious squares and handsome streets of Belgrave and Tyburnia and the close courts and pent-up alleys in which the poor are crowded together is as nothing when compared with the difference between the amount of personal security and impunity from insult enjoyed by the rich the hazard and danger of the daily existence of the poor. If a ruffian has drunk to excess and fails to pick a quarrel with any of his boon companions, his natural impulse on his return home is to beat, to cut, to stab, or to mutilate his wife. We are informed, on authority we cannot doubt, that the number of women who resort to our hospitals to recover from the ill effects of such systematic brutality is enormous, and that in very many cases the patient only returns to her home to suffer violence which renders any further application to these benevolent institutions unnecessary. Another case with which we are now unhappily familiar, is that of drunken or cruel mothers horribly ill-using their children, lashing them to torture, or even, as in a recent instance, burning them with red hot irons.—Age appears to be as little respected as sex. The young and vigorous fall with merciless ferocity upon the old and feeble, and every notion of fair play is utterly discarded. To kick a man when he is down is disgraceful; but the head and face of a woman are selected by preference as the mark of the heavy hob-nailed shoe of her husband or paramour, and the victim is fortunate if she is not jumped upon as well as kicked. The teeth are called into requisition as well as the hand, the foot, and the bludgeon. Noses and ears are bitten off and lips and cheeks frightfully lacerated. A dead set is made at the police, as if they were the natural enemies of the human race. Not a week passes without several of this exemplary and useful force receiving severe personal injury, not from criminals seeking to avoid the pursuit of justice, but from brutal and drunken misfits, with whose orgies it is their duty to come in contact."

There is here no Jesuit teaching, and, if it could be universally diffused amongst such a population, "Lord Shrewsbury would, no doubt, reckon that he had accomplished a heroic task."

And so, we repeat, we think he would accomplish an heroic, an ennobling, a humanising, a glorious, a Christian task.

The *Times*, despite of its own experience, and of its own knowledge, and even of its own testimony, cannot, will not, see this. The monasteries and convents of Palermo are, in its estimation, nothing more than "assemblages of idle men and women."

What is idleness in the estimation of the *Times*? Is it that which Johnson defines to be "laziness, sloth, sluggishness, aversion to labor?" Could any one, who visited the Monks of Mount Melleray in Waterford, or in Leicestershire, affirm that, in their lives, they manifested an "aversion to labor?"—and that same description of life, which every Irishman knows, and every Englishman can know, by visiting the monasteries of the Cistercian Monks, is not one of idleness, is similar to that which is led in Palermo by Monks and Nuns.

The manner of life led by Monks and Nuns in Palermo is described by Lord Shrewsbury, and is quoted from our columns into the *Times*, from which we again copy it.

"There are," writes Lord Shrewsbury, "sixty-four convents in Palermo, all in good order; twenty-three of women, and forty-one of men; performing extraordinary works of charity, humanity, and civilisation, among all classes by whom they are surrounded."

To perform "extraordinary works of charity, humanity, and civilisation," is, in the estimation of the *Times*, "idleness;" and to wish that "we had some of them in England," by whom such such acts are done, an offence against that state of morals, manners, and conduct which the *Times* itself describes!

Materialists are offended with the establishment of monasteries. Those who look with complacency upon the erection of a temple for the gratification of the senses, and who consider the construction of a magnificent theatre as a proof the civilisation of the people amongst whom it is established, are displeased

when they see a convent, and are annoyed when they hear the tinkling of the Angelus bell! Such institutions, such buildings, such sounds, remind them that there are on this earth beings who believe all that the Church teaches, and who prove the sincerity of their belief, by mortifying their senses, placing a control over their passions, and devoting themselves, body and soul, to the service of God and their neighbors. The Materialists cannot endure this—they will not tolerate it; and they are, therefore, prepared to put it down by slander, by libel, by calumny, and, if this fail, by brute force and barefaced persecution. The Materialist will not tolerate the Christian monastery, although he will allow full freedom to the Pagan Agapemone. Between the Materialists and the monastic orders there never can be peace. The command for strife has long since been uttered;—"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

THE STATE MACHINE.

(From the Catholic Standard.)

It is unnecessary to inform our readers that the Anglican sect are divided into two factions whose animosity against each other exceeds in intensity the dislike they have to those who do not recognise the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen. The reader is perhaps also aware that this sect keep up the mockery of electing representatives—called Proctors or Procurators—whose business it is to go through the form of meeting when the Legislature is assembled for the despatch of business. That sham Parliament of a pseudo-Church, is called Convocation. We are thus minute, because it is not improbable that people whose minds are intent on business—whether affecting the soul or the body—may have altogether overlooked or forgotten that so ridiculous an imposture had survived to our day. The fact is so however. The Anglicans have their Convocation—as the Methodists have their Annual Council in Centenary Hall, or the Quakers their May Meetings in St. Mary's Axe. With this difference though—that the Wesleyans do act—and that the "Friends" may speak if the Spirit move them so—while the unhappy representatives of the Royal establishment, called by the high sounding name of Convocation, however disposed to be loquacious must not dare for the lives of them to wag a tongue. They meet in their two Houses, bless the mark! like Peers and Commoners;—but they meet to go through a miserable farce—a farce without plot or incident, wit or dialogue. Anything so contemptible, so ridiculous, is not presented in any other civilised nation on earth as this Anglican Convocation. They meet in solemn mockery, to go gravely through a stupid pantomime. We can imagine nothing on earth to resemble it but a conclave of owls moping in an ivy-mantled tower at noonday.

Now, with these facts in his head, can the reader believe that during the last few months there has been almost as much fuss as much canvassing, as much agitation, and as much heat among the Anglicans with reference to the constitution of this precious "Convocation" as there has been throughout the empire about the general election for the new parliament? High Church and Low Church have waged as furious a war as Monopoly and Free Trade; and Russell, Graham, and Cobden have not more earnestly opposed Derby, Disraeli, and Christopher, than Pusey, Keble, and Denison have warred against Gorham, Croly, and McNeile. And curiously enough the polemical fight has terminated pretty much as did the political. The Tractarians have a small positive majority—but the Methodical faction have run down to the saddle skirts, and by throwing the casting votes into the lap of the moderate men—those who would act if they were not told by the minister to be still—the constituent body have wisely provided against the humiliation that awaits "Convocation" whenever its members shall presume to be in earnest. As long as they quietly eat their pudding and hold their tongues, the Minister of the day will graciously permit them to masquerade as representatives of the church by law created—no matter how conceived—but the instant they show earnestness of purpose, the moment they evince a disposition to act or even to speak, the riot act will be read, and should they refuse to disperse, a platoon of the Guards will speedily put them to flight amid the jeers of their own congregations. The truth is they are tolerated by their masters as a harmless sham, like the Kings at Arns and the Champion, and Rouge Croix and other innocent mockeries of the stern realities of olden time, when a sword was a sword, and meant a sword and not an elongated tooth-pick for Magog on Lord Mayor's day. But let them dare to divest their character of the mock-heroic—let them presume to exhibit even the grotesque vitality of the Marionette Theatre—let them but venture on the dangerous experiment of voting even a resolution of confidence in the spiritual decisions of the Judicial Committee of