

as by the destruction of their property, and that public policy demands that so numerous and powerful a body of the people of the State, should not be forced into a position where their feelings must be hostile to the government, and their confidence and trust in its justice uprooted and destroyed.

Resolved, That recent investigation has brought to light the fact that sectarian Ministers of the Gospel, publicly in their Pulpits, advocated the destruction of the Convent, and by the influence which their high calling gave them, contributed in an eminent degree to that appalling outrage, and that this fact sufficiently establishes the truth, that the walls of that institution were buried in ruins by Protestant intolerance and hate.

Resolved, That the hour has come when the Friends of just and impartial Legislation should fall back upon the common privilege of every citizen, and at the BALLOT-BOX, in the attitude, and with the fearlessness of INDEPENDENT VOTERS, bestow their suffrages upon those who are pledged to do them justice in this matter, and that no predilections or preferences for party, shall for a moment induce them to forget their wrongs or forbear the remedy.

Resolved, That we are pledged to vote for such men only, in whatever party we find them, who are the known friends of Religious toleration and indemnification, and that we will use every possible diligence and exertion to ascertain who are the opponents of this measure, and that we pledge ourselves to the use of all honorable means to prevent their election to any office in this Commonwealth.

Resolved, That the past Chief Magistrates of this State, since the destruction of the Convent, and the present occupant of the Executive Chair, have forfeited all confidence among the friends of this question, by neglecting to recommend it in their Annual messages to the action of the Legislature, and that we look forward to the time when a candidate shall be in the field, whose regard for the religious rights of his fellow citizens shall command and receive our suffrages.

Resolved, That a powerful means of securing the triumph of justice in this State, will be that all of our friends who are eligible to admission into the privileges of citizenship, should forthwith qualify themselves for their exercises, and at the BALLOT-BOX, co-operate with us in securing to all without distinction of creed or country, the protection of government in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty.

Resolved, That the magnanimous thousand Petitioners whose prayer to the Legislature was so shamefully and insultingly spurned from the House, have purchased for themselves the admiration and gratitude of every friend of order and justice in this country, and that public opinion will at no remote time bestow upon them the applause which such distinguished and honorable conduct deserves, and that in all future efforts to redeem the honor of the State, they shall receive our cordial co-operation.

Resolved, That as citizens of Massachusetts, we appeal to all to investigate the facts and principles involved in this claim, and that if any member of the past Legislature was opposed to it from honest ignorance, that in justice to his constituents and to his Catholic fellow citizens, he will prove the nature and the consequences of the wrong and act as his conscience and judgment shall approve.

Resolved, That we appeal to our friends and fellow-citizens to rally around us in the consummation of this high and important work, and that in spirit and in letter, the sentiments and propositions of the foregoing Resolutions be firmly adhered to and fearlessly carried out on the common platform of American Rights—the BALLOT BOX.

DANIEL MCILROY, W. J. WALSH,
PATRICK DENVER, JOHN C. TUCKER,
D. W. O'BRIEN, PATRICK LOANE,
J. B. CLINTON, PATRIOT SHARKEY
LAWRENCE NICHOLAS.

BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

Towards the close of an energetic article on the British Constitution, the Editor of the *Tablet* observes :

We do not know that we shall find very much favor with many of our fervent politicians, even among our Catholic readers. A strange impression seems to have taken hold of the Catholic mind in this country. Because the Reformation has left us without a check upon arbitrary power, besides the few public institutions which it has suffered to exist, and has all the while perverted, it is supposed that this was always so,—and that the ancient liberties of Catholic England were always contingent upon the constitutional monarchy, with its neat balance of monarch, peers, and commons, and its supposed happy and discerning appropriation of all the excellences to be found, under absolute, feudal, and popular Governments. When one of us sits down to vindicate the aspersed political honor of the Ages of Faith, he seems to lay aside the Beatitudes altogether; and to aim rather at illustrating modern theories about Rights of Man and Social Compact, out of old Chroniclers, whom a Digby would have read in quite another fashion, and cited for other purposes. We invent the history of our Commonwealth. We treat our own thoughts on jurisprudence, as having comparative perfection. We endeavor to ordain their praises, out of the mouth of Norman jurists, and Anglo-Saxon law-givers. We accept the Bill of Rights, as it is called, and we show that Magna Cartha was scarcely inferior to it, if at all. We harken to a voice, proclaiming the sanctity of our actual parliamentary usages, and we endeavor to show, that our forefathers too had their Speaker, and Serjeant-at-Arms, and two door-keepers, to defend the entrance to the Lower House from the Lobby. * * *

"The sea, which appears on the point of overflowing the land, is arrested by the herbage and the smallest sands that are found upon its shores. And monarchs, whose power seems unbounded, are arrested by the smallest obstacles, and they humble their native pride before complaint

and prayer. The English, in favor of freedom, have rid themselves of all those mesne jurisdictions, which had formed their monarchy. Much reason have they to maintain that Freedom;—if they were to lose it, they would become one of the most enslaved among the people of the Earth.

There are those, who have imagined the abolition, in certain States of Europe of all Seigniorial jurisdictions. They saw not, that they were wishing to do that which the English Parliament has done. Abolish in a Monarchy, the Prerogatives of the Lords, of the Clergy, of the Gentry, and of the boroughs, and you will very soon have a popular government, or else a despotism.

And we say, abolish the Prerogatives of the Crown, and, sooner or later, the Prerogatives of the Lords, of the Clergy, of the Gentry, and of the Boroughs, will vanish. Abolish the Prerogatives of the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar of the King of Kings, and some or all of those inferior Prerogatives will begin to disappear. The secession of corrupt Catholics from the Temporal Supremacy of Rome, was but the harbinger of the schism and heresy which other Catholics, still more corrupt, brought in upon every land, under the guise of Reformation. In Britain, the Prerogatives of the Crown have, in all but name, shared the fate of the Holy See.—and, as we have seen, the Great Unrepresented and by no means the gainers. The melo-drama of Statecraft reached its second Act, in 1688;—we are looking most forebodingly for the third Act, which seems almost ready to commence. Let us at least hope, that neither the Author, nor his Company, will have any reason to cry *plaudite*, at the conclusion of their performance, were the horrible and the ludicrous so painfully alternate.

In the meantime, let us again advert to the erroneous view, which so many Catholics have taken of these matters, imploring them, to be more just to the Middle Age, than to suppose it, in any way, a partaker in these modern fallacies. Parliaments had their rise then, because Freedom already was. That Freedom would speedily perish in modern Britain, were Parliaments to cease to be, is highly probable, in the terrific state to which Centralization has reduced her. But in the Middle Age, when the laws were but occasional manifestations, representing outwardly, or illustrating some doctrines of the Public and Private Morality of the day, hallowed and fortified by pure Religion,—the destruction, or non-existence of a thousand such Parliaments could not have been of that consequence. In spite of such a phenomenon the rights and franchises of the community, and those of individuals, would have continued to flourish and wax strong, so long as those traditions were preserved, under the avenging care of Rome, their foster mother. But, now, the Laws have supplanted the Morals of the State.

Statutes and Parliaments have succeeded to the ancient franchises of England in the estimation of Englishmen. "Much reason have they to maintain that Freedom!" said Montesquieu.—"Should they chance to lose it,"—of what avail will it be to them, that Lord Burleigh's apothegm, so bepraised by the parliamentary Blackstone, will have come true? "England can never be ruined, except by a Parliament!" Alas! her Parliaments have taken care that, if none besides them have the power to ruin her, none shall have the power to save her from their hands!

THE PROTESTANT, OR NEGATIVE FAITH REFUTED; AND THE CATHOLIC, OR AFFIRMATIVE FAITH, DEMONSTRATED, FROM SCRIPTURE.

(Continued.)

XXV.—OF INDULGENCES.

Protestants deny the Catholic doctrine of Indulgence, without knowing, or choosing to know, what that doctrine really is; but, as usual, taking for granted the studied misrepresentations made of it by their crafty reformers, who found it their temporal interest to mislead the public; they have been even brought to believe the wicked absurdity that the Catholic indulgences are but so many licences granted to commit sin. It is truly wonderful that they, who believe nothing on so great an authority as the unanimous and never varying testimony of the whole Catholic Church; so readily believe everything against her, even the most obvious and palpable falsehoods, on the bare word of any one known to be her adversary. Their credulity on the side of error is as unaccountably great, as their incredulity and aversion to know the truth. Under the blinding influence of the spirit of error, they exhibit to the eye of the unprejudiced observer, an awful spiritual phenomenon; their dread of being made acquainted with the real doctrines of the Catholic Church; and their bold and unblushing misrepresentation of them; blaspheming, as St. Peter says, the things which they know not,—2 Peter ii. 12,—and of which they are wilfully ignorant.—Ibid. ch. iii. 5.

An indulgence then, in the Catholic sense, is only the commutation of a greater, more difficult, or longer lasting penance, enjoined for past transgressions, into a less, more practicable or shorter one; as the spiritual director, from his knowledge of the disposition, situation and circumstances of the penitent, sees fittest to prescribe.

In the rigid discipline of the primitive Church, long lasting, severe humiliating penances were prescribed; public always for public and scandalous offences; private for private ones. These penances, public or private, were often prudently shortened or changed into easier performances; sometimes wholly remitted, as in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, on account of his extreme sorrow and edifying repentance.—1 Cor. v.—2 Cor. ii. 5. Now every such diminution, commutation, or remission of the temporal punishment for past sin, is an indulgence: a total remission, is what is called a plenary indulgence.

But all such penances, enjoined by the proper authority, are binding and obligatory; otherwise the Saviour's declaration to his pastors, "whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."—John xx. 23,—was vain: and that in particular made to his chief pastor: "to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound also in Heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. If then what is thus bound is not loosed in this life, either by the exact fulfilment of the penance enjoined, or by the indulgence granted by the binding authority; a punishment proportioned to the penance enjoined here, remains to be endured hereafter. But, with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, is granted to the chief pastor the power to open as well as to shut, to loose as well as to bind; to forgive as well as to retain sin. It is then of this discretionary power, granted by Jesus Christ to his pastors, that the Church avails herself, under the constant guidance promised her of the Holy Ghost, for the spiritual advantage and final safety of her children. She relaxes, therefore, though reluctantly, the primitive holy rigour of her penances; which, in the present lukewarm state of the world, would frighten from her communion too large a portion of mankind; who, to avoid the temporal punishment here, would thus incur the eternal hereafter. She thus uses, like a tender mother, the saving power granted her by her divine spouse, of screening her dear children at any rate from the wrath to come.—Thess. i. 10. "Pulling them, as it were, out of the fire, having mercy on others in fear, hating also the spotted garment which is carnal."—Jude v. 53,—and substituting, instead of her former rigorous penances, which lasted often for years and corresponded with the immense fervour and zeal of her earliest offspring; more lenient and practicable duties of obedience: for as it was by disobedience and sinful self-indulgence that we fell from God; so it is by obedience and self denial that we can ever hope to rise to him again; and hence we are assured in scripture that "obedience is better than sacrifice."—1 Kings, xv. 22.

Relying, therefore, on the saving virtue of obedience, she spares the weakness of the weak, and inflicts her wholesome severities only on the strong; whom she thereby transmits into eternity, and delivers up to divine justice, with less to endure and a shorter account to render, than those who shrink here, from her mild correcting rod. Such she is forced to leave exposed to the full measure of their punishment hereafter; a punishment far exceeding all that we can imagine endurable in this present life. For "it is a dreadful thing," says St. Paul "to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 31. Whereas, as the same holy Apostle tells us, "if we judge and condemn ourselves now, we shall not be judged and condemned hereafter."—1 Cor. x. 31.—Such is the Catholic doc-