

Scotland will both give from their own collections, and take every opportunity of pressing so momentous a subject on the attention of their people. Apart from erroneous doctrine in religion, or exploded tenets in philosophy, scarcely anything can come wrong. We sincerely rejoice to see that a committee, composed of such men as are mentioned in the circular letter of the secretary, have the subject under consideration.

☞ We will rejoice in every effort that is made to provide Libraries for India; but we must not forget to urge the claims of our proposed Theological Institution in Canada.

THE POPISH CONFSSIONAL.

From Third Pamphlet of the Rev. L. J. Nolan, lately a Romish Clergyman, but now a Curate of the Irish Church at Athboy.

During the last three years I discharged the duty of a Romish clergyman, my heart often shuddered at the idea of entering the confessional. The thoughts of the many crimes I had to hear—the growing doubt upon my mind, that confession was an erroneous doctrine—that it tended more to harden than reclaim the heart, and that through it I should be rendered instrumental in ministering destruction to your souls, were awful considerations to me in the hours of my reflection. The recitals of the murderous acts I had often heard through this iniquitous tribunal, had cost me many a restless night, and are still fixed with horror upon my memory. But, my friends, the most awful of all considerations is this, that through the confessional I had been frequently apprised of intended assassinations and most diabolical conspiracies, and still from the ungodly injunctions of secrecy in the Romish creed, lest, as Peter Dens says, the confessional should become odious, I dared not give the slightest information to the marked out victims of the slaughter. But though my heart now trembles at my recollection of the murderous acts, still duty obliges me to proceed, and enumerate one or two instances of the cases alluded to.

The first is the case of a person who was barbarously murdered, and with whose intended assassination I became acquainted at confession. One of the five conspirators (all of whom were sworn to commit the horrid deed) broached to me the bloody conspiracy in the confessional. I implored him to desist from his intention of becoming an accomplice in so diabolical a design. But, alas, all advice was useless—no persuasion could prevail, his determination was so fixed; and his only reasons for having disclosed the awful machination to his confessor, seemed to have originated from a hope that his wicked design would be hallowed by a previous acknowledgment of it to his priest. Finding all my remonstrances unavailing, I then recurred to stratagem. I earnestly besought of him to mention the circumstance to me out of the confessional, in order that I might apprise the intended victim of his danger, or caution the conspirators against the committal of so inhuman a deed. But here ingenuity itself failed in arresting the career of his satanic obstinacy. The conspirator's illegal oath, and his apprehension of himself becoming the victim of brutal assassination should he be known as the revealer of the conspiracy, rendered him inflexible to my entreaties; and, awful to relate—yes, awful—and the hand that now pens it shudders at the record it makes—a poor inoffensive man, the victim of slaughter, died a most cruel death by the hand of ruthless assassins. Oh, my dear Protestant countrymen, you will now naturally ask, whether am I or the perpetrators of the

bloody deed, most to be censured? I who knew the murderers and the murdered previous to the act—I who had met the intended victim of slaughter in the public streets but a short time antecedent to his death? But, my friends, the prejudices of my early life in favor of the doctrine of auricular confession, and the influence of subsequent education, instilling into my mind the inviolability of that iniquitous tribunal, must plead before my God and the public, as my only apologies for the concealment of the diabolical conspiracy. And now, you, Romish priests, I ask you, could the Lord Jesus institute a doctrine so monstrous in its practice, and so subversive of the principles of humanity—a doctrine that beholds the dagger pointed at the human heart, but hushes the warning voice that would apprise the devoted victim of his danger? I must now proceed with the recital of another case more revolting to humanity than even the former one. It is that of a female administering poison to her parent. Her first attempt at parricide proved ineffectual, owing to an immediate retching that seized the parent after taking the draught. The perpetrator of this foul deed afterwards came to confession, and acknowledged her guilt, but circumstances proved that she only sought for priestly absolution, to ease her mind and prepare her for a speedy repetition of her heinous crime. Again she attempted the act, and it proved successful. I was called on to attend the dying parent. The unnatural throes and convulsive agonies of the unfortunate man convinced me that the disease was of no ordinary nature. The previous confession of his daughter, who at this time made her appearance, rushed upon my mind, and suggested that the parent was a second time poisoned. From what I had known through the confessional, I could not even hint at the propriety of sending for medical attendance, for the Romish doctrine impressed an inviolable secrecy upon my lips, and prevented me giving the slightest intimation of the malady; whilst the poor patient, unconscious of the cause of his death, died in the most excruciating agonies of which humanity can form a conception. Oh! monstrous system of confession! Will you dare any longer to ascribe your origin to the Great Eternal, and thus affix to nature's God the blasphemy of your tenets? Oh, thou iniquitous tribunal! thou cloaker of crimes—thou abettor of wickedness, thou brutal murderer! A child attempts the most diabolical act against a parent, but thou, by presuming to erase the past transgression, only encouragest to a repetition of the crime. A parent suffers the most agonising tortures, and dies in the most excruciating pains from poison, administered by an unnatural daughter, but thou, polluted tribunal, wilt not allow the priest acquainted with the circumstances to disclose the cause of this heart-rending death. Oh, my Roman Catholic countrymen, why not awaken from your lethargic slumbers!—why not arise from the mystic spells that bind you, and cast off that unnatural yoke which would dare to unite your God in an unholy alliance with such monkish blasphemy! Should any unacquainted with Romanism question the veracity of these statements, let him consult history, and he will find many similar facts. Did not the Romish priest, the Rev. Mr. Garnet, the provincial of the Jesuits, justify his concealment of the gunpowder plot, on the pretext of its being revealed to him at confession? Did not Father D'Aubigny, the French Jesuit, put forward a similar plea of justification for concealment, when the assassin, Ravallac (that stabled Henry IV.) in 1610, acknowledged to him in the confessional his plan of regicidal murder? But why need I refer to such circumstances, as every priest who has acted in the capacity of a confessor, must admit the fact of similar cases frequently coming before him at the confessional?