



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 1853.

NO. 33.

DR. CAHILL'S LETTER

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD VISCOUNT PALMERSTON.

Cambridge, February 23, 1853.

My Lord Viscount—I feel much difficulty either in renewing my correspondence with you, or reviving the controversy in the case of the Madiai—that controversy is now at rest. Proofs incontrovertible have been brought before the public notice to show that palpable mis-statements have been made by English correspondents, and by the universal English press; and an additional case has been thus placed on the records of English bigotry, to confirm the public impression that the British Government will grasp at any vague stories, and pervert every dubious occurrence, in order to malign Catholic political legislation, and to belie the Catholic Church. But, my lord, I have, in the present instance a graver charge than all this to settle with your lordship, in the case before us. I am come to accuse you and Lord John Russell with a guilty suppression of the truth, on the point at issue, in your ministerial capacities; and consequently arraign you both, before this nation and the Catholic world, of having encouraged, during the last eight months, in this country, public vituperation of the Catholic Church, and the Catholic community; while at the same time you both held in your hands the *despatches from your own Ambassadors*, which contradicted *in toto* this unceasing and groundless insult to two thirds of the citizens of this country, and the millions of the population of those kingdoms, with which you state you hold international and friendly relations. I owe it to the Catholics of this country to expose your unpardonable conduct in this case, and I owe it to myself as a public writer to prove the accuracy of my statements, and to demonstrate the indubitable sources from which I have, in my letters to the Earl of Carlisle, derived political information. I shall divide this letter into eight heads, and I beg to assure you that in the treatment of the subject I mean no personal offence either to your lordship or to Lord John Russell. I am solely actuated by the desire of doing public justice to injured truth, placing the subject before the impartial judgment of an honest British public, and warning them in future (an advice scarcely necessary) against giving implicit credence to any assertion of yours involving any statement where the Catholic Church, the Catholic faith, Catholic practices, or the political laws of Catholic states are the subjects under your official examination.

Firstly, then, every one who has read the furious articles of the daily London press, must have been struck, this some time past, with the painful description given of "the appalling prison in which the Madiai were confined, the damp floors on which they lived, the unendurable penal dress in which they were clothed, the cruel treatment they received, the barbarous tyranny of excluding all intercourse with their friends, and the murderous results of this *Papal* persecution which must very soon end, in the death of these most unoffending, most resigned victims of *Papal* intolerance." Even Lord John Russell, writing on the subject to Sir Henry Bulwer, the pink of toleration and truth, has said, "It is the same thing in effect," said his lordship, "to condemn a man to die by fire like Saronarola, or to put him to death by the slow torture of an unhealthy prison."

Here is the Foreign Secretary himself, joining in the cry of the furious bigots, charging the Duke of Tuscany with the indirect murder of the Madiai, and, as will presently appear, clearly *pre-judging* the case. This point will, I fancy, be sufficiently proved by the following letter of Mr. Erskine in reply to Lord John Russell, and received by him on the 4th of the present month:—

"I am informed by Mr. Chapman," writes Mr. Erskine, "an English gentleman, who has interested himself most warmly in favor of the Madiais, and who is permitted to visit them occasionally in prison, that he has no fault to find with their treatment. The prison is in a healthy situation at the top of a hill; and the Infirmary in which the husband is lodged is in every respect as comfortable as any well-regulated hospital for persons at large. Mr. Chapman is equally satisfied with the attention bestowed on the physical wants of Rosa Madiai at Lunca."

Again, we have an additional testimony in the letter of the Hon. Mr. Scarlett, directed to your lordship, Dec. 19, 1851, as follows:—

"In consequence of the great interest felt in the state of the Madiai, I conversed with Rosa Madiai for some time in prison, and I am happy to inform your lordship, that the place of her confinement, though small, is exceeding clean, well ventilated, and warm. She possesses, by her own admission, all the accommodation she requires under the circumstances.—She makes no complaint of want of good food and clothing; she has books to read, and she speaks in high terms of the superintendant of prisons, Mr. Peri; and she has not suffered in health."

Upwards of a year has elapsed since your lordship has received the letter referred to, and nearly a month expired since Lord John Russell heard the facts at issue from Mr. Erskine, and hence the public will learn with surprise, that in place of the one retracting his misconceptions, or the other checking the mis-

representations of the press, you both, on the contrary, repeated, on last Thursday night in the House of Commons (as is reported) nearly the same words, in the face of the public cognizance of the facts, and in the teeth of the official letter of your public servants. These brief remarks of mine on this point, spoken in pity for you both, rather than in anger, will, I fancy, settle falsehood the first.

Secondly, the entire press, Exeter Hall, and the inoculated conversation of private society, have all promulgated during the past eight months, "that there was no liberty of conscience tolerated in Tuscany for any dissenting creed." This statement being perfectly understood, what must be the astonishment of the thinking portion of our community, when I inform them that in Leghorn there are, at the present moment, a Mahomedan Mosque, a Jewish Synagogue, and a Protestant Episcopal Church; that there are at least five thousand Jews residing there, and possessing (as I am instructed to say) about two-thirds of the landed property of that district; and that there is not even one instance on record where any Protestant, Methodist, Presbyterian, Jew, or any member of any religion whatever, has ever been prevented from worshipping God as they may think proper in their own houses of worship, and in their own families! But, my lord, I have the authority of the Hon. Mr. Scarlett, your official servant at Florence, in a letter written to yourself on the same subject nearly two years ago, viz., on the 22nd August, 1851, as follows:—

"I have been made aware by the Duke of Castiglione, that all foreigners, professing a different religion from that of the Roman Catholic, were always permitted in Tuscany as much freedom of conscience as they pleased in regard to themselves."

Here, my lord, we have a clear statement made to yourself nearly two years ago, giving an authentic account of the point at issue; and yet you have in the midst of the public misrepresentation of this country, kept the above correspondence from the public eye, suppressed the clear known truth at the very source of official information; and thus, Sir, I impeach you before the whole world of the greatest crime a public officer can commit, namely, cushioning a public document, and thereby encouraging and being a principal party to the slander, the censure, and the calumny which, during eight months of unprecedented bigotry in public meetings, and acrimonious Journalism, has been flung (through your culpable connivance) on the temporal laws of an unoffending State, and on the tenets of a Church which even your own official organ has been compelled to vindicate in the letter just quoted; and this statement will, I trust, fully prove my second point, or falsehood the second.

Thirdly, the public report has everywhere declared in this country that the Madiai have been condemned for "reading the Bible." To this statement is opposed the fact, that Rosa Madiai had been a Protestant since the year 1847; that she attended the worship of that Church, and had never been disturbed in reading the Bible, no more than all those others of every other religion, Jews, Mahomedans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and all other foreigners referred to in the foregoing letter of the hon. Mr. Scarlett; and this short statement, my lord, settles the proof of falsehood the third.

Fourthly, it has been industriously circulated that at least no Tuscan Catholic dare change his religion and become a Protestant, under the heaviest penalties of the *Papal* law. To this statement of the English press, and to this mistake of the universal English people, it will be sufficient to quote an extract of a letter from Mr. Erskine to Lord John Russell on this particular point:—"The Madiai," says he, "are not, as it is alleged, convicted of having apostatised from the Established (Catholic) religion, but of having sought to seduce others from that religion."

I shall not, my lord, add one word to this appropriate extract, which palpably demonstrates falsehood the fourth.

Fifthly, the statement which through your connivance produced the bitterest feeling in England, was that part of the impeachment which declared "that all this tyranny was to be ascribed to the authority of the Pope in Tuscany, and that all the hardships of this murderous case were to be traced to the doctrines of the Catholic Church."

To this part of the question, it will be sufficient to say, that the case at issue is entirely one of the civil authority of Tuscany, and has no more connexion with what is called *Papal* authority (as such) than the submarine telegraph between Dublin and Holyhead has to do with the oath of allegiance to the Queen of England. The Duke of Tuscany could relax these laws, change them, modify them, or abolish them altogether, without interfering in the slightest degree with the principles of the Christian economy, which belongs to the province of what is known and obeyed as the *Papal* authority; and these ob-

servations will make the public perfectly understand falsehood the fifth.

Sixthly, the most malignant part, perhaps, of the entire English mania, is that view of the question, where the Catholic clergy are represented as the sole instigators of these laws and these penal enactments. Your lordship has even given utterance to these sentiments in the reply which you thought proper to make to the deputation, which, having waited on you some few days previous, solicited your kind interference on behalf of the martyred Madiai. Your lordship is reported to have said, "An Italian, when he hears of the complaints made concerning the restrictions imposed on reading the Scriptures, maintains that such restrictions are necessary, because, if the people were allowed to read the Bible, they would become Protestants either from conviction, or to escape the tyranny of the Priests, and thus the priests would be deprived of power and support."—Without daring to contradict you, by saying that no Italian can be supposed to utter one word of what your lordship states, I am still very much puzzled, indeed, to comprehend the statement you make, as it is founded upon a notorious falsehood, namely, that the Italians are not allowed to read the Bible. There are, in the first place (as far as I have learned) upwards of forty editions of the Bible published in the last three hundred years on the Italian Peninsula; and how and why all this trouble, and care, and expense could be incurred by the crafty Italian booksellers; and why all these books, which "are to take all the power away from the priests," are tolerated by these all-powerful priests; or why they would print in such abundance books which no one is allowed to read, are really, my lord, such startling, historical difficulties bound up with your assertion, that I hope your lordship will excuse me if I shall take some considerable time before I believe what you say. But pray, my lord, in what part of Italy has your lordship heard this strange statement, or amongst what description of persons has it been uttered? As the fact to which you allude is at variance with the doctrine of the Catholic Church (which permits and encourages the reading of the Bible) it must, I am convinced, clearly turn out that this statement must have been made to you by the companions of Lord Minto, in Italy, viz., Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cicconacchio, &c.; his being your family correspondent there during the last five years of your administration, it is more than probable he is your authority on the Bible-reading question; and here, again, your lordship must excuse me if, for a moment, I pause before I receive his statements, even made through you, when placed in contradiction to my own positive knowledge of the subject, confirmed by the world-wide doctrine of the Catholic Church. Go on, my lord, and continue your correspondence, your statements, and your English bigotry; go on and have, and enjoy your momentary triumph; but it is more than probable you will yet adopt the language of the victorious Roman general—"Another such victory will ruin me."

But, my lord, there is a meaning rather significant in this late speech to the Madiai deputation. Perhaps you were speaking figuratively as you did when you wept over the destruction of the convents and of the colleges of Switzerland—as you did when you *interfered one week too late* in saving the lives of hundreds of persecuted Catholics from the murderous fire and the inhuman butchery of the free corps of the sanguinary Calvinists; or perhaps you intended to throw out some sage hint to your brother Whigs (previous to Mr. Spooner's motion) that the Irish Priests have too much power in Ireland, and consequently that the clear plan of depriving them of their power and their support would be still more to join the Protestant alliance, to turn all Ireland into a universal Clifton, or a Conemara, or a Kells; to expend as much money in repelling Catholicity as you are now squandering to guard against your maligned victims, the French. Perhaps, my lord, this was your intention (for what man living is able to fathom you, except Lord Clarendon!) and if so, the Catholics of Ireland have gained one advantage from this calumnious or figurative speech—namely, they must be more than ever on their guard against your machination; and these lengthened animadversions conclude all I have to say in reference to "lie the sixth."

Seventhly, the last most remarkable, and most embittering misstatement in this ministerial connivance is that part where the punishment of the Madiai "is represented purely a spiritual tyranny, solely directed against the Word of God, and intended by the Priests and the Tuscan laws to crush spiritual freedom of opinion, and the indefeasible rights of conscience."

These opinions have been circulated during the last twelve months in every English journal, and the whole mind of the British public has been thus madened by the baneful prejudices of religious frenzy,

arising from the continued unrefuted publication of this anti-Christian doctrine. And what will Englishmen say now when I shall lay before them a letter which you received nearly two years ago from the Hon. Mr. Scarlett, in which the very statement at issue is denied; and the language of the most emphatic denial communicated to you. Yet you have suppressed that document, and by that suppression you have bounded on the Protestants of this empire in a course of falsehood and furious insult against their Catholic countrymen; you have looked on quietly while you saw the Catholics urged into unjust provocation by an unusual outcry against us, while at the same time you retained for eighteen months the very document which would cure the public rancor and restore peace to your injured and insulted Catholic subjects. The document referred to is a letter you received August 29th, 1851, an extract of which is as follows:—

"The policy of the Tuscan government could not permit foreigners to tamper with the religion of the native subjects of Tuscany, more especially at this time, as it is notorious that the pretended conversions to Protestantism were a mask for carrying out political views, which were intended to sap the foundations of governments in Italy."

I shall not take away from the force of this extract by adding any remark of my own. This is my last point in this unpleasant subject, and I now fearlessly assert that in all your political career, during the last six years, there is no one phase in your official capacity which places you before your country in so discreditable a position as the clear proofs of your having witnessed the grossest lies published against Catholic states and people, while you held in your hands the very official documents, the bare inspection of which would in one day have spared this country such scenes of degrading bigotry as has no parallel in any country on the face of the civilised world; and these demonstrations leave no doubt what veritas "lie the seventh."

What a suitable time it was to open a mission of godliness, just when the Pope was driven from the Vatican! when Naples was enveloped in the flames of revolution! when your friend and your correspondent, Kossuth, had nigh overturned Austria! and when your victim Charles Albert was on his deathbed broken hearted! No language can sufficiently condemn the palpable scheme of revolution devised by a set of British officers under the appearance of prayer and the Word of God. What a godly, appropriate time to commence the work of the reformation of Tom Cromwell and Somerset! But above all, my lord, what an appropriate set of apostles began the work; namely, Captain Walker, Captain Wilson, and a full military staff of evangelisers! how like the work of God in such hands, and at such a time. I am surprised that the French never conceived such a holy design as this, during the rebellion of '98 in Ireland, and send a batch of French officers to Munster, like Ledru Rollin, General Cavaignac, and others, to evangelise the Irish, just at the moment when Hoche was approaching Bantry Bay, with ten thousand men. Why, my lord, the heart sickens at contemplating the palpable audacity of the English spies, in their attempt to persuade the world that they mean to preach the Gospel, while the swords and the muskets of their perjured apostles appear beneath their crimsoned surplices.

My lord, I am not influenced by any desire to give the smallest offence or discourtesy to any one of her Majesty's ministers; I am, in my inmost soul, solely governed by a conviction that you and your Whig associates have been running, during the last few years, a most disastrous course; that you have laid a fatal plan of overturning Catholicity by falsehood, by misrepresentation, and by stratagem; that you have, perhaps unconsciously, been the advocate of the most notorious revolutionists of Europe; that you have made fierce and lasting enemies of some of the most powerful kingdoms on the continent; that you have, beyond all doubt, been laying the foundation of the ruin of your own country; that you are at this moment squandering the public money in building harbors, equipping armaments, constructing fortifications, preparing fleets to resist an aggression, which your own palpable bigotry has excited against you; and that in the midst of all these warlike preparations you neglect the chief defence, the only defence—namely cultivating the universal love, the undoubted allegiance of the whole people to the throne, and giving vigor to the blood, and nerve to the arms which are to feed the cannon, and man the ships, and lead the assault on the enemy. Lord Palmerston do not reject an advice coming from the humble individual who has the honor of now addressing you; high as is your ministerial flight, higher points can be reached than you have yet attained, and you may fall from the perilous eminence when you least expect it: you are not beyond the reach of other men: the lowly twig on which the meteor eagle has just but a moment ago stood in pride, can be pointed with the barbed steel and propelled to reach the lordly bird in his highest