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THE REV. MR. MACLACHLAN'S LECTURES AT FALKIRK.

(From the Glasgow Free Press.)

"You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake."—Mat. x. 22.

Soon after the Ascension of our Lord, as his disciples began to multiply and to spread over the world, they found, by experience, how truly their divine Master had spoken when he promised them crosses, trials, and persecutions—when he forewarned them that they would be an everlasting object of hatred to the world: "You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake." The sanguinary war of this world against the Church began by the scourging of the apostles in Jerusalem, and continued, almost without interruption, for nearly three hundred years. Every weapon was used against the children of God—fire, the sword, the rack, and calumny. From this frightful trial the Church came out victorious; her enemies were weary of inflicting cruel torments ere she betrayed any sign of weakness or unwillingness to suffer; while her numerous apologists, some of the most learned and able writers of the day, triumphantly refuted the slanderous accusations with which she was assailed. Nor was the glorious privilege of suffering for the Saviour's name limited to the Christians of the early ages. It has been mercifully vouchsafed to those of every succeeding century, from the first down to the nineteenth. Yes, indeed, the words of the Son of God, promising sufferings to his followers, were addressed to us no less than to his more immediate disciples; and the words of St. Paul, which I quoted not long ago, are true in every age, "that all who seek to live piously in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Like the first Christians, therefore, we have much to endure; like them we have to defend our holy doctrines, and, as it were, to apologise to the world for holding them. Ever attacked, we must ever defend ourselves; and I am now doing, alas! but too feebly and too imperfectly, what the Justins, the Tertullians, the Origenes, did so effectually in the early ages—I am continuing their work, I am apologising for the persecuted truth.

We are not, however, without consolation in the midst of our sufferings; we feel that, like our brethren of old, we are persecuted for justice's sake. It is not the worldly-minded, it is not the children of this earth, but those who aspire to a place in the kingdom of God, that this world speaks ill of and persecutes. Such, I trust, we are; and that we really are so we have this remarkable and irrefragable proof, that our persecutors urge the same charges against us now as the ancient heathens preferred against the first Christians. The laws made by a hostile Government to coerce our Church, and to impede the progress of our religion, are based on the very same grounds on which were based, in days long gone by, those bloody edicts so often issued against the early Christians, from the time of Nero to that of Diocletian. Now, I say, that to us this is a source of infinite consolation, because it evidently proves that our faith is the same as that which enlightened the minds and supported the courage of those millions of martyrs who died every kind of death rather than betray their Lord—rather than renounce the name of Jesus Christ. If we differed in ought from them the world would treat us differently; but to the same true and unvarying faith of Jesus Christ are reserved at all times the same enmity on the part of the world, the same persecution on the part of the worldly men.

It was on this uniform similarity in the world's treatment of the servants of God that I promised to dilate this evening. I promised to show you that the outcry of the present day against modern Catholics is but the echo of that old heathen clamor against the Catholics of the olden times—I promised to demonstrate that the same charges are now urged against us as were so cruelly preferred against the followers of Jesus Christ in the times of heathen persecution. I now proceed to fulfil my promise.

"It would seem," says Dollinger, in his 'History of the Church,' translated by Dr. Cox, 'it would seem that Christianity was viewed by the heathens as no more than a compound of foolishness, absurdity, and wickedness, and that their judgment of the Christians was this: "A Christian is a man capable and guilty of every crime, an enemy to the gods, to the Emperor, to morality, and to all nature." The mere name of Christian was sufficient to draw hatred on him who bore it.' Nor were the Christians odious to one part of the community only; they were detested by all; for then, indeed, a spirit of hatred animated all classes of men, and how different soever might be the education, the rank, the employment, and the manner of life of the various subjects of the empire, in their detestation of the Gospel and in their animosity towards the followers of Jesus Christ, all were equal and alike.—(Vol. I, p. 63.)

Such were the feelings of the Roman world with regard to the religion of Jesus Christ, nearly three

centuries after the death of its divine author. It was hated and detested. All, save those who had already embraced it bore it a mortal grudge—spoke ill of it, slandered it, persecuted those who adhered to it. Now, let me ask, is not the Catholic religion in these countries placed in circumstances greatly resembling those in which Christianity found itself, both among Jews and Gentiles, from the days of our blessed Lord to those of the first Christian Emperor, Constantine? Do not the whole British people unite in the most cordial detestation of Catholicism, nicknamed by them 'Popery'? You know they do. You know what took place last year when the spiritual government of the Catholic body in England was altered and modified on the ancient Catholic type. You know how the whole nation arose like one man, to repel the alleged aggression by Cardinal Wiseman, and the new Bishops. Public meetings were called, furious speeches were delivered, fiery sermons were preached, long prayers were poured forth; indeed, every possible means were used by the pulpit and the press to stir up the people against the little band of ecclesiastics whose advent to our shores was considered as fraught with so much danger. To see what was then done, to hear what was then said, to read what was then written against the Pope, the Cardinal, the Bishops, and Maynooth, and the Propaganda, and, in short, the whole Catholic body, one would have thought that the British empire was in the most imminent danger. Some fifty years ago our fathers were less alarmed at the threatened invasion so long meditated by Bonaparte. And the Senate made law against this same aggression; and took as much pains to guard against Cardinal Wiseman's red stockings as they would against a fleet of French steamers, and a whole army of French soldiers, with the tri-colored flag; for these manifestations, these precautions, these penal laws, were the results of hatred more than of alarm. Lord John Russell, who first sounded the tocsin in the ears of the Bishop of Durham, told the world distinctly that he did not fear Rome, but that he had a most cordial hatred towards her. So it was with the nation at large. They knew they had nothing to be afraid of, save, perhaps, of seeing and hearing the truth; but at the approach of the Cardinal and a regular hierarchy their old enmity burst out anew; and this was the real cause of that frightful agitation—and, I must say, of that persecution—of last year, the fatal effects of which the unoffending Catholics of these kingdoms will continue to feel for years to come. This, then, is the first feature of our resemblance with the early Christians—we are hated as they were, by all classes of the community. To proceed with some order in our remarks on this subject, we may observe

1. That, like the early Christians, we are hated by the mass of the people. The great majority of the heathen population considered the Christians as a body of miserable beings, who not only were loaded with the indignation of the gods, whom they despised, but who were also the cause of the vengeance of the offended powers of heaven upon the lands where these impious men resided. To them, therefore, were attributed all the calamities with which the provinces of the empire were at that period so heavily afflicted. Was there an inundation or an earthquake—did famine or plague cause men to tremble—then burst forth the fury of the populace against the enemies of the gods, and many a Christian fell a victim to their rage. The crowded seats of the amphitheatre rung with a thousand-tongued voice, "To the lions! Away with them to the lions!" And often, without even the forms of justice, the Christians were delivered to immediate death to appease the blood-thirst of a populace.—(Ib., p. 67.)

Does not this recall to our recollection the anti-Catholic meetings so numerous and so frequent in all our large towns—meetings at which the most frightful denunciations are uttered against the Pope and Popery, and all connected with the ancient creed of Christendom? In these popular gatherings we are accused of every possible crime, folly, and extravagance; and all the ills that befall society are laid to our charge. Foreign wars and domestic strife; famine, fever and pestilence; the inclemency of the seasons, and fluctuations of trade and commerce, are accounted for, by saying that Popery is encouraged in England; that so to encourage it is a national sin; and that national iniquity is punished by these and similar scourges, indicative of divine wrath and vengeance. To give one instance of this, I may mention what almost every one here is aware of—a few years ago an enlarged grant was voted by parliament for the Catholic College at Maynooth. This was followed by the potato disease; and many a wise man, and many a revelation-reading woman, saw, in this destruction of our favorite esculent, the potato, a curse inflicted on the country in punishment for the Maynooth grant!

Is there not, in all this, something very like what

the heathens said of the early Christians? It is true, British Protestants do not shout, as the Roman Pagans did, 'To the lions with these men!' because now-a-days, it is not the custom to throw men to wild beasts; but they become furious as wild beasts themselves, and they cry out, 'Enact penal laws against these Papists; we dislike them; we distrust them; they are the enemies of our pure reformed creed, and to tolerate them is a national sin. Strip them, therefore, of every privilege; and as for their educational institutions, let them not receive one penny of the public money. To endow them is to endow ignorance, error, superstition and idolatry.'

2. Our rulers and chief magistrates, no less than the vulgar, hate us, and embrace every opportunity of displaying this hatred. In this they only copy from the Pagan model. The Pagan Emperors and magistrates were hostile to Christianity because it was opposed to the religion of the State. The State leaned for its chief support on religion; ruin it and the State would fall along with it. The historian tells us that 'the introduction and toleration of foreign religions had already been considered an evil by those statesmen who followed the strict notions of their Roman fathers; how much greater an evil would be the introduction of Christianity, which would not consent to stand at the side of other religions, but aimed to destroy them all, and to triumph in their destruction! It required only a slight knowledge of Christianity to perceive that, sooner or later, it would create an entire revolution in the moral relations of the nations, as well as of the individuals, who embraced it; and that, consequently, the institutions, the laws, the manners, which had hitherto given to society its character and form in the Roman empire, would fall beneath the victorious spirit of the Gospel.—(Ib., p. 68.)

On grounds similar to those on which the heathen statesmen of ancient Rome opposed and persecuted the Christians, the English statesmen of the present day take their stand against Catholicism. They tell us often that the progress of Popery is a real evil, because it argues no good to what they call our Protestant constitution. This, they allege, is a Protestant country; our Queen is Protestant, our parliament is Protestant, our constitution is Protestant, our laws are enacted and enforced in the spirit of Protestantism, our courts of justice, our colleges and universities, all our civil and municipal institutions, are Protestant; in short, the prosperity of this country, its supremacy in commerce, its social happiness, its progress in the arts and sciences, all is due to, connected with, dependent on, its Protestantism. If its Protestantism can be preserved, England will go on and prosper—if its Protestantism yields to Popery, England's prosperity is gone. To speak in the language of Gavazzi, England, with the fall of her Protestantism, will be precipitated from the 'top to the bottom of the wheel.' Now, they argue thus: 'Catholicism is hostile to Protestantism, they cannot live together, nor like two kindred families grow up and thrive together. It is in the very nature of Catholicism to encroach upon, to absorb, to engulf, utterly to destroy every rival creed. In self-defence, therefore, we must oppose it, keep it at a distance, disarm it, mutilate, and maim it, and, if need be, sweep it from off the face of the earth.' So reasoned the old heathen statesmen of Rome; they, too, enacted laws and published edicts against the new creed, which experience soon taught them 'would not consent to stand by the side of other religions;' or rather, to speak more accurately, other creeds had not strength enough to stand by the side of it. Paganism could not long survive the promulgation of the Gospel; darkness is dispelled at the rising of the sun, and to the gloom of night, succeeds the brilliancy of day. As worldly wise men, therefore, as good and sincere Pagans, the Roman magistrates acted wisely in seeking to oppose and repel the advances of Christianity. Their false religion was no match for the eternal truth and the religion of the Son of God; as the latter advances, the former must naturally and necessarily recede, give way, altogether disappear, in the course of time. Resistance against the new creed was, therefore, to be expected. And when we see Protestant statesmen draw up their forces, to oppose the progress of Catholicism, do they not admit, in the very words of the heathens, that their cherished system is in great danger for coming into contact with the rival creed? Why did Lord John Russell, and his government, and his parliament, raise the alarm as Cardinal Wiseman and the new hatch of Bishops approached our shores? Was it not that they trembled for the fate of the Established Church? And yet there was nothing, in a worldly point of view, so very formidable in the appearance of the persons of these Prelates. They did not seek to sit on the Protestant episcopal benches—they usurped no ancient or existing titles—they asked no grant of public money—they claimed none of those funds forcibly

taken from their ancestors—they did not come supported by foreign bayonets—nor were they even so much as suspected of having conspired against the State. They asked only leave to live in England, their native country—to move about and minister to the wants of their own people—to reside where they thought they might be most useful. But no; this was too much, it was too much for them to presume to show themselves as Catholic Bishops, in a country where there were Protestant Bishops; people might perhaps mistake the one for the other; or they might compare their respective mode of living or acting, and the result of the comparison might not be favorable to the Protestant prelates; then, again, the Catholic Bishops would, of course, preach the old Catholic doctrines, once so dear to Englishmen, and these doctrines might, as of old, attract attention, and gain power, and spread among the people, and ultimately prevail; and so Protestantism would decline as Catholicism would advance, until the one became extinct, and the other had obtained a complete triumph. This is what our Protestant rulers were afraid of; similar fears formerly disturbed, as we have seen, the bosoms of the heathen rulers in Imperial Rome; and they sought to quiet, to remove those fears, by indulging in cruel persecution; in this they have been faithfully imitated by our statesmen in England. They knew, these wily men, that Protestantism now, as Paganism of old, was in danger of being eclipsed, when placed side by side with Catholicism.

3. In ancient times, next to the magistrates and men in power, the Church might reckon among her persecutors the body of lawyers. 'The powerful body of the juriconsults also threw the weight of their influence into the scale against the Christians. They, to whom the guardianship and maintenance of the laws, and the care of the "divine and human things" were intrusted, saw in the old religion an element necessary to the integrity of the State, which was to be preserved at any cost, and if need should be, by the infliction of the severest punishments. To this infliction of punishment they often excited the emperors and their governors; and that every pro-consul and civil authority might know what chastisements were provided by the laws for those who despised the gods, a learned lawyer, Domitius Ulpianus, in the third century, collected all the decrees of the emperors on this subject.—(Ib., p. 60.)

The learning and ingenuity of the Roman lawyers were thus taxed, in order to seek out and drag into light old and forgotten edicts which might be enforced against the Christians; the lately enacted laws were not cruel enough for the punishment of such men, and, therefore, the enactments of more barbarous and less humane times were in great request. So, on the appearance of Cardinal Wiseman, on the nomination of the new bishops, Lord J. Russell ordered the Crown lawyers of England to examine the statute-book, and to see whether aught could be found there to chastise the alleged presumption of Rome. Meanwhile, pending these researches, the gentlemen of the English bar addressed the Crown; they protested against the insolence of the Pope, they vowed vengeance against the hierarchy, and expressed the most devoted attachment to the throne and religion of England. At the same time, one of the judges of the land, heated with wine and full of zeal, declared himself ready to trample on the red hat of the Cardinal; and another member of the bench, alluding to the alleged crimes of the Pope against England, assured his Holiness, tauntingly, that should he ever stand as a criminal at the English bar, ample justice would be meted out to him.—On examination, it was found that, in reality, no law of England had been violated; the conduct of Rome was beyond animadversion; but still the lawyers of England, like those of ancient Rome, seeing in the old religion an element necessary to the integrity of the State, which was to be preserved at any cost, devised new laws to meet the exigencies of the time. To this we owe the penal bill of last year, which, although it cannot be enforced, is but too well calculated to gall and mortify unoffending Catholics. In fact, it is no source of comfort to the established religion, save in as far as it is a slur on the rival creed. The edicts of the emperors, cruel as they were, and often excited to the letter, could not save Paganism; so this bill cannot ultimately save the Church of England. A remarkable fact common to both the old pagan and the modern English legislatures is, that they enact laws in support of their respective religions, not on the ground that these forms of worship are agreeable to God, but because they help to prop up the State. It is altogether a matter of human policy; and we, like our Christian ancestors, are persecuted, not precisely because we profess a false religion, or because we are guilty of any crime, but because our creed is deemed hostile to the State. It has more to recommend it to the attention and affection of the community than