

Catholic countries, with the laws of the state, where they are never to marry, nor return to the world. What are then the few English nuns now in England, or the few Irish nuns in Ireland, for no ladies of any other country devote themselves there to a religious life? What are they in the eyes of the law? What are they in the eyes of any man who pays the slightest attention to the subject. A few Catholic females, who, from devotion, form a resolution to die old maids.

"If these ladies were ladies of pleasure, seducing youth, the gentlemen of Winchester would not give themselves the slightest concern about them. They are of the greatest use to the Catholic nobility and gentry, who send their daughters to be educated by them, on account of the strictness of their morals, their seclusion from the dissipations of the world, which affords them the more time to superintend the instruction of their scholars, and the facility of observing the exercises peculiar to the Catholic religion, such as fasts, abstinence, confessions, communions, &c., which could not be observed at other boarding schools; and which, though they may appear ridiculous to others, are held sacred by us. In Galway, in Ireland, there are ladies of this description, since the conversion of the kingdom to Christianity in the fourth century. The parliament, however rigorous in angry times, never molested them, on account of their utility, by their instructions, besides the policy of spending their money in the country; for if there were not ladies of this description in the country, the Catholics would send their daughters to be educated abroad."

"In an age of profligacy, when so many wise and virtuous members of the Legislature intended to introduce a law for the security of the marriage bed; when divorces, instead of *constant affection*, are the frequent fruits of matrimony; amidst so many seminaries of lewdness, and cities become, on account of vice and corruption, so many criminal Ninivites, which would require a Jonas to induce them to repent in sackcloth and ashes; streets infested with lewd females, from the age of eleven to the period at which the effects of a crime that carries with it its own punishment, and the enormous number of which wretches, a magistrate, who has written a book on the police of London, computes at fifty thousand annually! Amidst such scenes of vice, is the chastity of a few Catholic women an object of so alarming a nature, as to deserve the attention of the first senate on earth, especially as it is in their power to renounce their state of celibacy when they choose? Perhaps not two hundred of them would bind themselves to a single life in the space of fifty years. If their number were multiplied to ten times, or to a thousand times more, what are they when compared to the great number of immoral and unchaste all over England? About twenty or thirty atoms floating on the surface of an immense ocean. *Rari nantes in gurgite vasto.*

"Were it the custom amongst Quakers, Anabaptists, Moravians, or any other sect or description of people, to have women of a solitary cast or disposition of mind amongst them, who from fanaticism or inclination, would choose to lead a retired life, and superintend the education of the females of their sects, Sir Henry Mildmay would rather admire than molest them. Why then harass, perplex, and expose to the insults of domiciliary visits, persons of the Catholic religion? Why,

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