

their Priests—and are therefore to be regarded as if excommunicated; and being thus branded, they are to a very considerable, and in some instances to a ruinous, extent, injured in their business;—are constantly exposed to much personal insult, and not unfrequently ill-treated in the open streets by the lower orders of their own creed, who deem it a meritorious service thus to carry into effect the denunciations of their Priests.

But besides these temporal annoyances, they are constantly subjected to every kind of neglect and contumely, their Clergy often contemptuously refusing to perform any clerical duty for them, their wives or families. Those offices of their Church which are regarded as most sacred, are refused often with insult and abusive language; and others are performed in such a manner as to render the very performance painful in the extreme to persons possessed of common feeling. Since the general election of last Autumn, their Clergy have refused to hear confessions—to grant absolution—to visit the sick—to administer extreme unction, or the eucharist—to perform the office of churching women—to attend funerals, and even to bury the dead, when the parties have been what they call “Mad Dogs,” or the wives, children, or parents of such persons. These punishments were threatened before the elections of last autumn; since which period, electors who had firmness enough to act with independence have been visited with their rigid infliction. Several have been interdicted from attending the Chapels, and when, notwithstanding such interdict, a sense of religious duty has led them there, the Mass has been suspended until they have gone out, or, declining to retire, have been forcibly turned out.