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ON THE UNIVERSAL PEACE OF EUROPE IN THE YEAR 1857—ENGLISH INTOLERANCE—ENGLISH INGRATITUDE.

Since the accession of George the Third to the throne of England, the peace of universal Europe has not rested on a more fixed basis than at the present moment. One might call it a permanent basis, if the reign of Louis Napoleon could be guaranteed during the natural time of human life. France, under his Government, and in the existing circumstances of European policy, is the very main-spring which gives political activity and equitable laws to the surrounding nations; and her Government is now regarded by monarchs and peoples as the mainstay of public liberty, and the security against revolution and irreligion. The French throne at this moment is the very centre of political gravitation in Europe, which maintains the stability and regulates the harmony of hitherto conflicting nations.—The great disturber of European equilibrium heretofore was the Revolutionary Propagandism of England; but the exposure and the failure of this gigantic scheme in Hungary, Lombardy, Rome, and Naples, together with her recent humiliation in the East, have compelled her to abandon her former arrogant pretensions; to lay aside her claims of a first-rate power, and to take second place beneath the acknowledged superior dominion of Imperial France.

About the year 1837 the Revolutionists of France conspired against the reign of monarchy in the person of Louis Philippe: and the history of the last century, taken in the aggregate of its malice, treachery, rebellion, and impiety, does not contain a tithe of the political phrenzy and religious crime which in the space of ten years planned and executed the revolution of 1847, lighting up a conflagration in several countries, and well-nigh involving order, morality, and the Gospel in one confused mass of universal desolation. It takes one thousand years to build up a nation in power, legislation, wealth, and security; but it can be brought to ruin in one lunar cycle by an opposite course of treachery, disorder, disunion, revolution and impiety. From 1847 to 1854 more events of national importance are crowded together in seven years than are spread over the history of centuries.—From '37 to '47 it was all secret societies, oaths, propagandism, plots; but from '47 to '54 it was all blood, in the furious combination of infidels against the altar and the throne. The power and the prudence, and indeed the religion of one man (Louis Napoleon), gave the first check to this disastrous confederacy; and afterwards, the combination of all the good and virtuous: the exposure of the wicked: the protection of a guiding Providence: and even unforeseen coming events, baffled, defeated, and entirely crushed, a catastrophe from which, only one year before, no human foresight or courage could discover the means, or even the hope of escape. This period of European terror should never be lost sight of by the chronicler of the passing events, in order to guard posterity against a recurrence of the dangers of the past: like a mariner placing a beacon on a discovered rock to guard future barks from shipwreck, the permanent, the unceasing exposure of political iniquity and past terrors, at once points out the danger and the means to escape it. England never again can play the game of the year 1847; and hence, Liberty and Religion are relieved from a shock which had in several Catholic kingdoms threatened the unfettered exercise of both.

In all these past sad events, kings blamed their ministers for their remissness or their inability in detecting or crushing these incipient Revolutions, while again ministers have accused kings of haughtiness or tyranny as the causes of internal discontent and revolution. Charles Dix upbraided Polignac as the cause of his overthrow: Louis Philippe by turns inveighed against Thiers and Guizot: and our own Queen was compelled to write a condemnatory memorandum against Lord Palmerston, for damaging the name of the Sovereign, and the character of England at the several courts of Catholic Europe. This idea has led within the last two years, to a personal diplomacy (if one can so speak) between the monarchs themselves, without the intervention of ministers or ambassadors, for the mutual settlement of national questions, and for the mutual security of their respective thrones. The present year may be called the year of royal diplomacy. The Tuileries is the great European hall, where all the European monarchs meet; and Louis Napoleon is the great Imperial chairman who hears and governs and regulates their royal deliberations. The Queen of England, the King of Sardinia, the King of Bavaria, have been already there in person: and the Emperors of Austria and Russia have sent their royal brothers there, to deliver secret messages to his Imperial Majesty. Louis Napoleon, on the other hand, has sent his kinsman through several of the courts of Europe, on a tour of inspection: and as soon as circumstances will permit, he intends personally

to meet the Emperors of Russia and Austria, in order to confer on the secret interests of their persons and their empires.

This is quite a new phase in European kingly history. It opens well for the public peace of the nations confided to their protection and their care. More strange still is it to see the generals of the two hostile armies meet together after the battle, shake hands, kiss, dine, and even dance in the same set, in the same quadrille. It is certainly a most wonderful fact, to see upwards of four hundred thousand men nearly on the same battle field, clad in hostile steel; to note the graves of forty thousand of the finest army ever England saw; to read of the death of two hundred and fifty thousand Russians from cold, sickness, and the sword: to gaze on the Alma, Balaclava, Inkermann, the Redan: to observe seventy thousand Frenchmen dead at the "white works," the bridge at the trenches, at the Malakoff: and then see the survivors after the fight, English, French, Russians, meeting, drinking, and dancing together, is decidedly a new idea of the present century. It is called the acme of civilization; but I do think that if the army, that is, the soldiers, the fighting men, could foresee the fun of their commanders over their mangled bodies when the battle is over, it is more than probable the poor fellows would not have the same nerve in the charge. As the result of the battle ends in the frolic of Kings, Queens, and Generals: as oceans of blood are changed for goblets of claret, it might have the effect of lessening the poor private's ardor for the war. Seeing that the hard labor of his military life, and the terrible scene of his military death, ends in the mutual jocularity of the contending leaders, it might soon produce the universal impression that modern warfare is the legalized murder of the soldiers, for the honor, the fame, and the advancement of a few of the leaders.

But there is still one fact of English policy far and away more remarkable than any yet noted in these new phases of modern civilization. The peace of Europe is for the present admitted to be fully and gravely established. Naples is relieved from the machinations of the infidel English, and is therefore secure; the throne of France is popular, beneficent, and powerful: Austria has cemented her disjointed sovereignty, is cheered by her rebel dependencies, and resumes her track of order and stability: Turkey is surrounded by four nations which like sentinels round her walls watch and defend her: and Russia has been taught a lesson, from the terrors of war, which makes her love the very sound of peace on her exhausted shores, her wasted population, and her drooping commerce. The Pope is feeble and helpless, but he is at peace from French honor, French courage, and is in security from French power. The strangest fact of all to which I allude is, that while England compliments, honors, fetes the Russian soldier, her fierce enemy, she insults, dishonors, degrades her Irish Catholic soldier, her faithful, invincible friend. She elevates the Jew in St. Stephen's, she respects the Pagan in Bombay, while she distrusts the Irish Catholic, who helped to win her laurels at the Alma; and she doubts the oath of the men, the race, whose blood has flowed in her defence on every field of English glory. On the gates of the British Constitution may now be well and appropriately written the well known couplet—

Pagan, Jew, Atheist,  
Enter here: but no Papist.

And to her universal disgrace, she still in her senate maintains an oath of distrust for the Irish: she still insults the Catholics with an odious distinction: she still places chains on her faithful Irish subjects as if in terror of the Pope, who, all the world knows, is supported on his own feeble temporal throne by a foreign power. In the face of the civilized world, in the presence of the universal peace of Europe, the past experience of Irish allegiance, the recent proof of devotion and courage, the perfidious conduct of Lord Palmerston, and the bigotry of the House of Commons, on the Oaths Bill, stand before mankind as an instance of intolerance unknown in the present age: and it is an additional demonstration of national ingratitude, which cannot fail to produce a permanent burning impression on the heart of the Irish people.

D. W. C.

July 18, 1857.

## MODERN NECROMANCY.

(Translated from the *Civiltà Cattolica*.)

(CONTINUED.)

As we have already shown that the spirits of the tables are wicked, we shall not extend our examination further into a hundred other questions, which might be raised concerning them: whether, for instance, these spirits are really (as they generally give themselves out to be) the souls of the dead, or whether they are demons, which according to their wonted deceitfulness conceal themselves under those names, the better to insinuate themselves and succeed in their

wicked intentions—whether, again, in order to produce their wonders in the tables and in the organs of writing and speaking mediums, they avail themselves (according to Mirville) of certain fluids, or whether they apply a motive power immediately to bodies, which power they possess as a natural faculty, and which is in them much more free, strong, and multiform than it is in man—whether, again, considering the historical connection of the phenomena and their uninterrupted development from the first experiments of table-turning up to the strange oracles and wonders of the speaking tables, they ought to be all in a lump, that is, no less the first than the last (supposing even that the first can be explained naturally), attributed to one and the same principle in common, that is, to the more or less manifest action of the spirits—whether, also, the will of the medium exerts an influence upon that of the spirits to move them to operate, and how great that may be, and why the spirits seem to subject themselves to the will of man, why they often require certain rites and practices seen *per se* unless as regards the end; and several other questions of a like nature, which, if we were to discuss them, would draw us much beyond the limits which we have proposed to ourselves. And we consider it to be better worth our while to answer, in the last place, some difficulties which have been made by some persons against the doctrine of the intervention of spirits in the phenomena of the speaking tables. And, first, let us hear M. Babinet, who gravely puts the following question: "Admitting that the mover of the table is a spirit, is one quite sure that a spirit (which is generally looked upon as something very light and very little compact) would have enough force, enough impulsion or shock, to move a heavy table?" (See *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May 1, 1854). "Risum teneatis, amici!" Who would ever have thought that so celebrated a *savant* could give utterance to so great a blunder? He who explains away the motions of a heavy table by certain imperceptible and nascent impulses of the muscles, fears that spirits have not got enough impulsive force in them to effect as much; and why?—because they are a something of the lightest and thinnest description—perhaps a gas, a vapour, a wind, a fluid, an ether, or something of that sort? But the able physicist ought not, at least, to have forgotten the very powerful impulses and motions which fluids, though they are of the most subtle nature, produce daily in the most solid matter. Who does not know the dynamic effects of the electric and magnetic fluids, of vapours, winds, gases, which are all of them "very light and slightly compact things?" The worst of it, however, is in his believing that spirits are matter, however fluid, thin, and light it may be, and in supposing that matter only can impress motion upon other matter. The first error is simple materialism; the second, which is very little short of it, would render motion in the universe inexplicable, unless we choose to swallow the absurdity of the eternity of matter and motion. The beginning of motion cannot be otherwise explained than by ascending to a merely spiritual cause; and though we are in ignorance as to the manner in which spirit moves matter, it is, nevertheless, indubitable that it does more it. And have we not, in fact, in ourselves the continual experience of it! Does not our soul, which is pure spirit, continually give movement and life to all our members! Less unreasonable is the difficulty which Littré and others make, not on the ground of the defective power of the spirits, as we have seen Babinet do, but instead of it on the ground of their superhuman power. "If they really are spirits or devils (say they), that is, beings immaterial and powerful, from whom nothing is concealed, and who can do everything, let them give some proof of their knowledge and power. All is confined to the poorest manifestations, and they can only move about articles of furniture, shake doors and windows, make sounds and lights, and hold conversations in which we never find anything more than mysterious repetitions of what has been already said hundreds of times and better by far." The answer is very simple: though it may unfortunately be rather an old and common one, which is enough to make it have the less credit with a member of the Institute. The infernal spirits have certainly a power and knowledge very far indeed greater than that of man, and such as is able to work, not indeed true miracles, but many portentous and wonderful effects. But they are chained and can only so far injure mankind as Almighty God gives them permission. Now God, on account of that supremely wise providence by which he governs the world and especially man, is not wont to permit either that they should reveal the great secrets of nature, nor make a great show of sublimity of knowledge, nor work remarkable prodigies, nor confer great advantages upon man were it only in the natural order; and this he does as well to humble their pride as to punish the foolish and wicked curiosity of all men, who might allow

themselves to be seduced by their arts, and also, at the same time, to leave to the good certain countersigns by which to mark the operation of the angels of darkness. And this conduct of Divine Providence is manifest in the Sacred Scriptures, and in the most authentic histories, wherever we meet with diabolical operations and prodigies. In fact, the devils of whom mention is made in the Gospels, did not give great signs of transcendent power or knowledge in tormenting those whom they possessed, rendering them dumb and deaf, making them fall into water and fire, and making them utter cries and horrid howlings; and that entire legions of devils, which possessed that miserable inhabitant of the country of the Gerassens (See St. Luke, viii. 26.), made no show of any marvellous power when compelled by Christ to abandon their victim they instantly rushed at His permission into a herd of 2,000 swine, who were quietly feeding on the neighbouring hill-side, and then all frenzied they made them run down into the bottom of the lake. And yet who can deny that these were real and true devils, unless he denies the Gospel? When there are therefore from other quarters certain marks of a preternatural agency, the extravagance of the wretched character of the effects proves nothing else than that the agent belongs to the wicked band of those "outcasts of Heaven, abject race and scorned." (Dante, *Inferno*. Cary's Trans.) Finally, there are some good Catholics, who in order to excuse their reluctance to believe in the spirits say that the admitting this theory of the invasion of devils in the world at the present day is an injury to Christ and to His redemption. If He "in hoc apparuit ut dissolvat opera diaboli," how is it to be believed that after His coming the Devil still exercises such a power of producing marvels for the deception of mankind. We answer, that this argument, taken in the sense of our adversaries and rigorously carried out, would prove too much. For it would prove that since the coming of Christ the Devil has lost all power and efficacy of seduction in the world. And no good Catholic can admit this, without at once condemning as useless and absurd the exorcisms of the Church, and the entire order of exorcists which form one of the minor degrees of her hierarchy, and without cancelling all those prophecies in the New Testament which attribute to the Princes of darkness so great and terrible a power of false wonders, especially in the last times, to which we are undoubtedly getting near. The text, then, of St. John, alluded to, and the power of the redemption of Christ against the diabolical influence must be taken, not in an absolute, but in a relative and limited sense; inasmuch as through the coming and grace of Christ, not only has the power which the Devil exercised before in the world as the strong man in peace, been very greatly lessened, but there has been given to every one of the Faithful the power of combatting and overcoming him; and there has been made a happy beginning to that which was continuing in the Church militant until the consummation of the age which will then only obtain a complete triumph when the Divine Father, filling up the last measure of the glory of the Son, "ponet omnes inimicos sub pedibus ejus."—And this does not imply that the Devil does not still exercise some empire among men at every time, especially among infidels and the heterodox, when the absence of the true faith, of the true Sacraments, and of the Adorable Sacrifice of the Altar renders the operation of grace and of the redemption less efficacious; nor that in our own days this empire may increase, and by degrees become more visible and powerful, until it arrive at that degree foretold in the Scriptures, when the Man of Sin shall be manifested—"secundum operationem Satanae, in omni virtute et signis et prodigiis mendacibus," and the seducing power of the infernal wonders shall be so great—"ut in errorem inducantur (si fieri potest) etiam electi." See Thessal. ii. 9; St. Matthew, xxiv. 24. And here we bring our treatise to an end. The courteous reader who has followed our reasoning will no doubt have already anticipated, in his own mind, the practical consequences which we wish to draw from all this, which are indeed so obvious and manifest that there is no need of a long discourse to set them forth; and every good Catholic will be very well able to deduce them of his own accord, if he will but recall to mind the teaching of the Catechism, which as a child he learned in the bosom of the Church, his mother. According to it, the evoking of the souls of the departed, or other spirits, in order to have answers from them, the consulting tables, tripods, or anything else for the divination of hidden and future things, the producing or the attempt to produce singular effects by entirely vain means, and such as are disproportionate to the necessity, and similar other practices, are all of them superstitions which tend to bind man by ties of communication and service expressly or tacitly understood to the Devil; they are opposed also to the order of provi-

dence which God has established in the universe, and to the supreme worship due to Him alone; and therefore they are of their own nature illicit, impious, abominable, most dreadful, and severely forbidden, no less by the natural law than by the law of God and the Church: whatever be the judgment which an age of levity and scepticism passes upon it, and by whatever name it chooses to call it. To practise them seriously, therefore, and deliberately, must be judged as a most grave crime; to experiment upon them only by way of play is rashness, to say the least, of a most dangerous kind, as it is never without great danger to trifle, though at a distance, with that Serpent, in whom the art of deceit is no less ancient and refined than his malice in doing man evil. And here observe, that to make such practices unlawful, it is not necessary that they be known as things certainly diabolical; but it is quite enough if they be only seriously suspected; and if this suspicion were sufficiently strong in the minds of those most zealous and learned Bishops of France and America, whom we have before mentioned, to cause them to prohibit the Faithful of their dioceses, in words of deepest feeling, from making experiments with table talking, even from the very first year when these practices became the fashion in those countries, how much more ought it to be sufficient at this day, now that the subsequent facts have changed that suspicion, at least in great part, into certainty? Lastly, sincere Catholics, who keep the Divine flame of the Faith ever burning in their breasts, and are conscious of the nobility of their Christian dignity, have no need of much argument to divert them from these follies and dark practices of the tables and spirits. That delicate instinct of virtue and superhuman wisdom, by means of which the most simple and uneducated of the Faithful are often superior to the wisest men of the world, when forming a judgment of the practical morality of actions, as in beginning it inspired them with a just distrust of the necromantic novelties which had sprung up in America, so it will at present teach them to regard them more than ever with distrust and horror. To conclude, in the words of an illustrious Bishop of France, "Let those follow such wonders as these, and blindly give themselves up to such practices who, deprived of the light of the True Faith, are groping about amid the darkness of error and infidelity." This ought the more to move us to pity them, than to marvel at the fact; as it is the property of those who move about in the dark to follow every *ignis fatuus*, every light, though it be deceitful, in order to find the lost way. But we who live in the midst of the splendors of the Catholic doctrine, what need have we to go and beg elsewhere a light for our intellect, or consolations for our heart, or a guide for our actions? And why should we give up ourselves foolishly to run through untroubled and dark paths in search after good things, which we already hold in our hands by Faith, and have a firm hope of possessing one day in all their fulness in the unveiled glories of Eternity?

## PERSECUTION IN THE INDIAN ARMY.

(From the *Weekly Register*.)

British India and all England itself is at this moment in excitement about an inconsiderate invasion of the religious superstitions of the Hindu soldiers. Cartridges have been served out to the native troops which ought to have been strictly confined to the European soldiers, because they were greased with the fat of an animal sacred by the Hindu superstition. What a noble specimen of religious toleration are we affording to all the nations of the world. How disgraceful to the Governments of Naples, of Austria, of Tuscany, to refuse as their model, and Mentor a nation which so nobly illustrates in its own practice the great principles of religious liberty. John Bull may well hold his head an inch higher than ever. Whether this tenderness towards idolatry is altogether disinterested, is a question into which we need not enter. That it exists there is no doubt and we lately called attention to a debate in which the House of Lords was frightened from its propriety, because the Governor General of India was reported to have subscribed to a Missionary Society. The imputation was repudiated as incredible by all parties in the House. Unfortunately, however, this same spirit of toleration is only partial. The exception to it, we need hardly say, is the Catholic Church. It happens that at this very moment the Madras newspapers bring us the record of ineffectual complaints repeated for years against a practical grievance to the Catholic soldiers in the Company's service. It is more serious that that of the greased cartridges. The facts, as stated by the *Madras Examiner*, are shortly these.—Some "Army School Regulations," issued in 1855, required all children of European soldiers to be educated in the regimental schools, on pain of the entire forfeiture of the allowance for their