

with secure retreats, in which they preserved the torch of faith. Hunted as was the missionary, still the glens and lonely valleys of Ireland resounded with the praises of the Most High; for the lips of the proscribed servant of the altar poured forth irresistible strains in the native tongue, animating the people to bear with fortitude the misfortunes of their country, and pointing out instead of transitory things, the infinitely preferable treasures of eternal life. In the mysterious language of Ireland was found a barrier, which English heretics could not surmount; unknown to the rich and to the Protestant, who preferred plunder, it was abandoned to the poor but faithful people by English reformers, as the only birthright of which they could not rob its ancient inheritors; in that mysterious language, which is so pure, expressive, and the only one of Europe, in which there are no unmeaning words; in that language, of whose original greatness English misrule has left us nothing but the wreck, the ancient faith found its safety and its stronghold.

While Protestantism is being consumed by its enormous wealth and with remorse, because it has revolted against a tender parent; without hold, because of its impure contact with mammon, on even the affections of its own votaries—their ministers, because the revilers of the country and the ancient faith, the scorn and contempt of the public—writhing in the agony of death and its agony, as if prolonged by the unwilling Minister of Great Britain, whose fiat must soon put upon the monster the seal of extinction, Catholicity sends forth new germs, aspires to new destinies—ancient, and still ever new and beautiful, looks fresh and blooming in all the vigor of youthful life. The pastor of the ancient faith, with a virginal purity beaming in his countenance, is revered and respected, because his breast dilates with tenderness and compassion, offering consolation to the afflicted; revered, because he devotes his days to the confessional, reconciling thoughtless man to the offended Deity; because he takes long and painful journeys, when the soul of the dear one is to be prepared for its passage to that abode in which sorrow does not dwell; because he overcomes the most serious obstacles, when the glory of God and the welfare of religion demand the exercise of energy and fortitude.

Though the virginal faith of Ireland has hitherto escaped contagion, the descendants of Irishmen should watch with the keen-eyedness of the American eagle the present struggle as well as the future, of Ireland, against the enemies of our faith; for the maddened bigotry of England may lead on her statesmen to acts of violence and persecution. "England dreads the dark cloud in the West." Who can be indifferent to the land of the beautiful and the brave? the land of the minstrel and the sage; the home of all that is lovely and endearing; the home of faith, virtue, hospitality. Our national Church is the bond of our national existence; though the political arrangements of Ireland with the sister country have almost annihilated the political interests of the former, still that system has given to the church of Ireland an imperial character: for she is the mistress of religion in the British Empire, gives her an imperial voice, by which the bigotry of England is branded with universal reprobation, and secures to Ireland an imperial importance, through which England, tired and disgusted