

LETTER OF THE REV. DR. CAHILL
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
Nov. 4th, 1851, Airdrie, Scotland.

My Lord—This day brings before the minds of the Catholics of the whole world the painful recollection of your letter to the Bishop of Durham. Twelve months have now elapsed since the publication of that inflammatory and persecuting document; and time and experience, which are the best tests of political wisdom, have proved that your views have been incorrect and your speeches exaggerated. The Bishops have assumed their titles, and they exercise their diocesan jurisdiction without infringing on the principles of the constitution, or trenching on the prerogatives of the crown. Your statesmanship, therefore, is a palpable failure—your penal law is a political lie, and Lord John Russell stands before the gaze of mankind a false leader and a naked bigot. As your lordship is about to enter on this day into the second year of your ministerial Hegira, it may not be amiss to present to your lordship a historical review of the conduct of your cabinet during the last few years; and to inform the people of Ireland and Great Britain of the disastrous position to which you have reduced the British empire, both as regards its internal interests and its external relations. I have already laid before my most persecuted fellow-countrymen the intrigues of Lord Palmerston and his *corps diplomatique* in aiding the revolutionists of five different countries in Europe; and I have proved that he attempted at the same time to overthrow the authority of the Pope and to uproot the discipline and the Faith of the Catholic Church. You were of course the abettor and the prime mover of these two-fold intrigues, and thus we clearly convict you of appearing during five years as the advocate of our national and religious liberties, while, in fact, you were secretly undermining our inherent rights, and treacherously sapping the foundations of our creed. Your letter of November, '50, disclosed your real character, developed your long concerted plans, and will be distinguished in our future history as the Russell conspiracy; and it will take its place in enormity next to the atrocious memory of the Gunpowder Plot. Guy Fawkes and Lord John Russell will, therefore, fill two correlative pages, alike in their aim, their treachery, and their failure. I informed my poor faithful countrymen in last March (that is such of them as you had not starved, and pitted at that time), that your intrigues were well known in every court in Europe; that you were digging a pit for England, which very soon would engulf the whole empire; and that a European combination against the machinations of the English cabinet would be the inevitable result of your unexampled political and religious deceit. And I exhorted my bleeding countrymen not to despair, that the sword of God's justice would be soon drawn against our oppressors—that the hour of their deliverance was nearer than they imagined, and to stand fearless and firm together in a national confederacy. I am now in a position to prove these points, and to lay before the Queen and the country the undisguised expression of universal hostility which your unprecedented cabinet schemes have lashed into fury in almost every court in Europe. May I, therefore, my lord, beg your calm perusal of the following extracts; they will point out the unmistakable combination of foreign courts, and the gulf which you are preparing for England:—

"A private letter from Frankfurt, dated the 6th, and received in Paris on Monday, states that Lord Palmerston has directed a note to be presented through Lord Cowley to the President of the Diet, Count Thun, in which he requests the Assembly to take steps with respect to the Neapolitan government, in order to induce it to abandon the political system it has hitherto followed. The note was accompanied by several copies of Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet. The affair was discussed in the sitting of the Diet, held on the 20th September. The President, in an address at once clear and precise, showed how unusual and unbecoming such a demand was. He dwelt particularly on the extraordinary proceeding of a government claiming the authority of any individual statement to interfere in matters purely domestic of another nation, and with the administration of justice of an independent government, and he concluded by calling on the Assembly to reject the demand made on it.—The minister of Prussia to the Diet declared it as his opinion that the demand of Lord Palmerston was neither more nor less than defiance to all continental policy, and should be met by a very decided answer. It was, therefore, resolved that the President of the Diet should be authorised to reply to Lord Palmerston, to the effect that the German Diet, having made itself acquainted with the note of the British government, and the contents of which appeared to it as unusual as they were little in harmony with the ordinary usages of international relations practised by all governments, felt all the less disposed to interfere with the domestic affairs of a foreign government as independent of itself, as it would not permit any one, whoever he may be, to meddle with those of the Confederation; and that it was for that reason it disapproved and rejected the line of conduct proposed by Lord Palmerston in the name of his cabinet. An answer to that effect has been made to Lord Cowley."

"The Frankfurt journals state that Russia has replied to Lord Palmerston's note, enclosing Mr. Gladstone's letter, in a strain exactly similar to that put forth by the Germanic Diet against interference with the concerns of foreign countries."

In the foregoing communication Lord Palmerston, with his usual duplicity, endeavors to concoct a conspiracy against Naples, and hence he sends one of his characteristic despatches to one of his characteristic companions (your nominees and servants) to intrigue with the German Diet, and through the Diet to intrigue with Prussia, and through Prussia to intrigue with Russia, and when this sneaking and most cowardly conspiracy should be finally formed, then to

menace Italy and Naples with a combined attack in order to redeem your pledge to the unfortunate dupes and victims, whom your diplomacy excited to revolution, and drove to exile and death. But Germany, and Prussia, and Russia, have clearly "snubbed" your colleague, and have read to you and to him a lesson of defiance which places your cabinet in the most humiliating posture. But the contempt offered to you does not end here; Lord Palmerston grounded this your conspiracy on the private communication of Mr. Gladstone, which has been disproved word for word by Mr. McFarlane, and Monsier Condon. And here I shall take leave to present to the Queen, "snub the second," which your honorable colleague has received from Prince Castelcicala, minister of the King of Naples; let England read this second contumely cast on this country.

[Here follows the note from Prince Castelcicala, to Viscount Palmerston, and the reply of the latter to the Prince's note.]

It is impossible not to see the sneer of contemptuous derision with which the foreign prince demands reparation for this national slander, backed as he is by all Europe, and the painful position of Lord Palmerston in his shifting reply excites pity for the man and shame for the minister. Your Minister of War stammered, hesitated, shuffled, before this honorable, firm, and decided request of Naples; and finally, with a doggedness so peculiarly his own, refused to make the reparation of a gentleman for the most palpable misstatement, and the most obvious perversion of facts.

My next extract shall be taken from one of the highest ministerial and commercial journals of Austria—an extract which places your cabinet in a position degrading to the whole empire, tending to tarnish the high reputation of British honor, and which ought to be a sufficient reason to remove you from a station which you fill with discredit to the state and with injury to the crown. No British subject can read the following extract without shame, and horror, and indignation:—

(From the Austrian Lloyd's.)

"The ovations which are now under preparation in England, in honor of an Austrian subject guilty of treason to his sovereign, and of having ignited the flame of revolution in his native country, do not arouse our indignation to any great extent. We feel a pity, mixed with uncommon contempt, for the stupid, well-fattened aldermen of Southampton and London. In 1848 the English Foreign Office gave itself every possible pains to dismember the Austrian empire.—The noble lord at the head of the government tried all that intrigue, duplicity, treachery, and deceit, could do to obtain his ignoble ends. Whilst a minister of the highest diplomatic rank represented his Queen at the Austrian court, and ostensibly in public spoke of the friendly relations existing between Great Britain and Austria, secret agents in the pay of the British cabinet, and its public servants—men like Lords Minto and Abercrombie—were laying intrigues which were soon to acquire an historical importance. The mines were dug, the powder laid, and on a signal transmitted from Downing-street, the explosion followed. A portion of South and Central Europe was in flames. Lord Ponsonby remained in Vienna, a guarantee of England's 'Punic' Faith to her old ally. Meanwhile that unhappy King, whose tragic fate shields him from too severe a judgment being passed upon him, was driven to distraction and to death by British intrigue; and as Kossuth can boast of Lord Palmerston's friendship, with equal right may it be claimed by all the rebel leaders in the different parts of Europe. That many of them were discarded by their *quondam* friend in their hour of distress is no refutation of the fact. Even English journals have declaimed against Lord Palmerston for having unmercifully abandoned the men he had misled as soon as their plans proved unsuccessful.

"Every victory of the Austrian arms in Italy and Hungary—the close alliance between Austria and Russia—the successful suppression of the revolution wherever it broke forth—the failure of the Prussian scheme to drive Austria out of Germany—finally, the consolidation of the power of the empire—were so many severe and keenly-felt blows to English policy. Never was a cabinet compelled to make so many miserable retractions, never did a cabinet suffer so many painful defeats, or lose so much influence, honor and respect as the English cabinet at this period.—Its influence in the Mediterranean, to which England attached so much importance, vanished. The cabinets of Madrid, Naples, Athens, justly regarded England as their enemy. The infamous proceedings against Greece aroused the slumbering sense of honor and justice even of the British parliament, and threatened the ministry with a disgraceful termination of office.

"Rage at foiled plans, vexation at the defeats sustained by Sardinia, shame at being convicted of dishonesty, had been gnawing for some time at the hearts of leading men in England. Their impotency to harm Austria makes them give vent to their feeling by making grimaces at it. A man convicted in Austria of high treason is therefore to be received as an honored guest. This is not done so much in his honor as to offend loyal Austrians. We scarcely think this demonstration will attain its object. The loyal Austrian has reason to rejoice that the mightiest and most hostile endeavors, that the most deeply laid and deceitful plans of one of the most powerful cabinets of Europe have not succeeded in preventing the regeneration of his country, and that England has no other means left to resort to, to express its rage at its failure, but to render honors to a man who has been banished from his country for political offences."

Verily, my lord, your diplomacy on the European continent is likely very soon to inflict a heavy blow on our common country. There can be no doubt that all Europe is beginning to combine, and, in fact,

to arm itself against England. You have roused (and the world will say justly) the anger of Switzerland, and Naples, Germany, Prussia, Russia, and Austria. Lord Palmerston is in fact the Captain Rock of Europe, and under the pretext of preserving European peace, you are fomenting a European war. Take care lest the mines you are digging under other nations may be imitated in return under England; and beware lest the explosion you have prepared for them may not involve your own country in irretrievable ruin. Verily, Lord John Russell is rather unfortunate in his foreign relations, and as Lord Stanley has already prophesied of your cabinet, "unless you are checked in this unrestrained career, you will inevitably bring on a European war." There can be no greater enemy to England than the man who endangers the supremacy of her commerce, and there is no question that you are laying the foundation of a combined resistance to England over the civilised world, which sooner or later will check her dominant power, lower her high national name, and vitally damage her commercial interests. The clear statements of all reform associations show that the taxes direct and indirect on every twenty shillings' worth of consumption and manufacture in England amount to thirteen shillings and two pence; that the people of England therefore can claim as their own (for their capital and skill) only six shillings and ten pence in every pound which they give the state. And hence, Sir, if through your unbridled ministerial dictation and domination through Europe, you compel foreign nations to quarrel with us, to dread our connection, to establish their own factories, and to annihilate or diminish our trade, you will cause a revolution in England such as history has never recorded, and your name will be transmitted to posterity as the greatest enemy that England ever saw. For the first time in English history we behold a decided and a universal attitude of defiance assumed by Europe against England; your ambassadors are insulted, your votes of diplomacy scoffed, and one loud voice of contempt and indignation is raised against your diplomatic conduct and your country from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. This is a fact beyond all dispute, and it establishes by a clear demonstration that England is regarded at this moment by universal Europe as the disturber of international peace, the fomentor of revolution, the secret enemy of foreign thrones, and the insidious persecutor of the Catholic Church. If I were actuated by the revenge to which your treatment of my country has forced the Irish heart, I should rejoice at the perilous position to which your unexampled perfidy has reduced your country; but I am neither a revolutionist or a rebel, but I am an Irish Priest. These two words contain the record of national honor and of national loyalty. And when you and your colleagues would behead the sovereign, as you did Charles, and join a plebeian usurper, as you did Cromwell, and expel your monarch, as you did James, and receive a foreigner out of a poorhouse, as you did William, I, and every one of the ancient order to which I belong, would bleed at the foot of the throne, as we have done through every age and country. And when you and the class to which you are associated would change your creed from Presbyterianism to Protestantism, and *vice versa*; and from somethingism to anythingism or nothingism; and while you prove before scornful men, weeping angels, and laughing devils, that your official lordship cares no more about faiths and creeds, and Priests and Bishops of any denomination than you care about the color of your official cravat, or the cut of your official coat, we, the glorious Catholic people, and we, the heroic Priests, stand through all time, and place, and circumstances, faithful to God and loyal to the throne; and we stand forth a contrast to your officiality like truth to falsehood, light to darkness, and national honor to national perfidy.

Such, my lord, being your official work on the European Continent, I shall proceed to inquire how matters stand at home in persecuted Ireland. But before I shall commence this melancholy view of your disastrous legislation, I must beg leave to tell you, that, although Ireland is bent to the earth by the heartlessness, the calumnies, and the cruel oppression of your rule, we are still firm and fearless, and we are undismayed either by the threats of unjust power, or the scandalous jibes of a lying and bribed press. You may cut down, but you cannot eradicate—you may strike us prostrate for a time of ferocious triumph, but we shall rise again—you may expel us from the soil of our fathers, but we shall appear again, renovated in number and power, on the glorious American Continent. You may make cruel laws for the year 1851, but take warning of the results of these laws before the year 1851. You cannot keep us always in slavery and degradation; the history of the world is against this position. Where you least expect a reaction, you may receive a fatal national blow; and your name as an English gentleman, and your character as a statesman, will live longer in the future applause of the historian for being the advocate of honor and justice, rather than the supporter of perfidy and persecution. Powerful as you are, we shall never learn a lesson different from the instructions which our fathers have taught us; we have never yet yielded to your injustice through three centuries of cruelty, and we shall not now begin to take you for our political and national masters. We believe, besides, that between the Kaffirs, and the Australians, and the Canadians, and the people of all Europe, you have rather too much on your hands just now to appear in the second act of the late dramatic trials, and we think (that is, as many of us as are alive) that in the present state of France (with which your Captain Rock appears on such good terms) you will rather defer for the present the ancient custom of erecting your gibbets and your old racks, on the red cross-roads, which bear your name. Indeed, I may as well tell you, my lord, that, without meaning the least disrespect (of course) to the Queen's minister, we fearlessly set you at defiance; and we are thoroughly convinced (a position which I could prove if I wished) that you have not the most remote notion of persecuting us at present; and we know that you are very near a crisis when you will be compelled to cultivate our friendship rather than provoke our further anger at your unprecedented conduct. Alas! alas!

where shall I begin to tell your political career, as regards poor trodden down, faithful, persecuted Ireland? Nor is it with ink and paper I would attempt the description of the woes of your rule. No, no, my lord; the deserted village—the waste land—the unfrequented chapel—the silent glen—the pale face, and the mournful national voice, stamp the history of Ireland with the deep, deep impression of your administration; while the ferocity of the unbridled landlord, and the terrors of the uprooted and smouldering cabins, and the cries of the houseless orphan, and the tears of the brokenhearted widow, and the emigrant ship, and the putrid workhouse, and the red oozing pit of the coffinless and shroudless dead—these, these, oh all these, are all the thrilling and the eloquent witnesses, to publish to coming generations, to unborn Irishmen, the character and the laws of the Russell-cabinet! Ah, Sir, when you had read the terrific facts of the mother living on the putrid remains of her own child; and when you saw the awful account of several cases of the dead bodies of the poor Irish being exposed for days in unburied putridity and devoured by dogs in this unheard-of state; and when you had heard the cries that were wafted across the Channel for help, and those that rose to Heaven for mercy from Skibbereen, from Ballinasloe, from Kilrush, and from Ballinrobe—has your heart, Sir, ever smote you with remorse that you heard these cries of Ireland with a pitiless composure, and sent to starving and dying millions a heartless pittance from your overflowing treasury? I distinguish your cabinet from the English people; they stretched forth their hands with the characteristic generosity of their nation; the Society of Friends well fulfilled, too, the expectations of their known philanthropy in our regard; but you, from an exchequer filled with eighteen millions of bullion—you doled out in withering insult (as to the beggars of a foreign country) a miserable and totally inadequate relief; and you called by the name of charity an act which should be designated the first demand on the realm, and the highest duty of the crown. Lord Stanley paid twenty millions sterling to give liberty to a few descendants of African slaves in your petty West Indian colonies; to men who never manned your fleets or swelled your armies, or fought for your name. But you, Sir, grudgingly lent in part, and bestowed in part, the paltry sum of eight millions to aid the last struggle for life of the faithful people whose misfortune in all our past history was imperishable loyalty to the throne, and undying devotion to our unfortunate kings—men who belong to an ancient unbroken race of forty generations; lion hearts which crimsoned with their blood every ocean where your navy fought and conquered; which stood before the bristled steel of England's foes in all your struggles; which shared the perils of a thousand fields of blood by the side of your countrymen, and won your victories—these are the men and this is the nation to whom you have given your paltry usurious charity to preserve their lives.—But the history of all nations will yet tell that you permitted five in ten to perish of hunger, while your exchequer was filled with gold. You, therefore, Sir, have made my country a desert—you have banished and starved the people—you have a grave for the Irish—and you have buried our race and name. May God forgive you this cruel treatment of our fine people—this ministerial atrocity. We charge you before avenging Heaven with the exile and the death of our people; both crimes lie at your door. And you have added ingratitude to cruelty. We honored you, we followed you. You did not so much surprise us by the introduction of your penal bill as by the historical falsehood and the insulting bigotry of your speeches; they were unworthy the historian, below the dignity of the statesman, dishonorable to the man. A third-rate orator amongst your own party, and a fifth-rate speaker in the whole house, you never could lay claim to distinction, except from the supposed honesty and liberality of your political opinions; but now your inconsistency and your bigotry, having torn from your face the mask which concealed your mediocrity, it is agreed that the foremost leader of the Whigs has now been befittingly transformed into the last lack of the Tories. Oh, for the ancient truth and honor of the old English statesman!—oh, for the sterling word, the generous foe, the brilliant genius of the days that are gone. Now, the origin of all these misfortunes at home and abroad arises from a twofold cause; firstly, to organise an English party in every country as you have done in Spain and Portugal; to keep a perfect internal system of disorder in every nation in order to keep the power of each country engaged in quelling this confederacy, and thus leaving England free to pursue her views of conquest and commerce without fear of resistance from the surrounding nations; and secondly, the object is to uproot Catholicity. This latter point is, in fact, your chief aim; and so wide-spread are your present stratagems to speech down, preach down, write down, drink down, eat down, dress down, sail down, and shoot down Catholicity, that all orders of the state are actually gone mad with what may be called a furious fanaticism to get rid of Catholicity. All the lawyers are infected, from the well-known Chancellor to the parish beadle; all the clergy are bitten from Canterbury (the cubical head of your present creed) down all along to the thin Curate; who, being the living definition of a mathematical straight line, may be considered as the Clerical element of the Archbishop. All your ambassadors are actually become swaddlers in every court in Europe, as I have already proved, so that yours should be called the swaddling cabinet; and the omnipresent navy and the invincible army of Great Britain have raised their swaddling colors nearly as high as the union-jack all over the earth—all your modern writers are inoculated with swaddledomania, down from the historical lies and rhetorical foppery of Macaulay to the half-penny sheet; there are even swaddling commercial travellers, swaddling hotels, and swaddling boarding-houses; and such is the vast ramification of this most absurd but terrific movement against Catholicity, that "Moore's Melodies" are banished from the society of all anti-Papal pianos, because they relate to Ireland, and were composed by the native fancy that drank its poetic inspiration at the fountain of Irish genius! But amongst the various incongruities of this mania which you have originated, there is not one which strikes the observer with such preposterous associations as to see an admiral of a fleet dressed in the garb of Johanna Southcote! or to see a general of an army converted into a Praise-God Barebones. Nothing can be so extremely ludicrous as to see Neptune kneeling and praying on a three legged stool, dressed in a white cravat and a coat of shabby black! or to behold Mars habited in lawn sleeves and a powdered wig, reading and singing Psalms on a tar-barrel! There is scarcely a paper which does not contain, with the cognisance of the Duke of Wellington, religious collisions in chapels,