

## THE CONDITION OF IRELAND.

LETTER ON THE IRISH DISTRESS AND THE ACTION OF THE CHURCH IN IRELAND.

Rev. dear Father and dear Children in Jesus Christ:

I appeal to you to-day, according to promise, in behalf of the distress from hunger which is being felt in the Western part of Ireland.

THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE.

I begin by quoting extracts from three letters which I have received within the last few days.

The Archbishop of Tuam writes:—

"I have made particular enquiries in Mayo. The clergy told me that, while there are particular cases of distress, still at the present moment there is no general distress there. But they anticipate very great general distress about the beginning of April, as then the people will neither have food, nor means nor credit. They will be badly off for seed too. Their efforts to scrape together whatever little means they had, or to borrow, to be in a position, by the payment of a year's rent, to avail themselves of the Arrears Act, have served to stamp them. In the neighborhood of Claremorris over fifty families evicted from a property. I am told, are in a very destitute state."

The Bishop of Elphin (Sligo) writes:

"The distress in my diocese is not, I am grateful to say, general: still it is sorely felt by thousands of families, and is sure to become more acute and extensive from week to week during the next four months, especially along the sea coast and on wasted patches of mountain and bog, where the crops of last year totally failed."

In the other dioceses of this province the destitution is far greater and more general, as it also is in Donegal and Kerry.

Two months ago the vicarates of this province presented to the Lord Lieutenant the present and approaching destitution of their flocks, and pressed strongly for a system of loans, which would supply the poor landholders with a means of subsistence, whilst enabling them to improve their holdings, and guard against future distress. The reply of the Government has not yet reached us. The late utterances of the Chief Secretary make us fear that it will not be favorable to our memorial. And, if so, the prospect before us will be simply appalling. The bulk of the people will not leave their homes for the workhouse, and only comparatively few can or will accept the proffered aid to emigration. The result, therefore, will be that destitution and death will overspread wide areas of our province, probably over one-fifth of its total population, unless public charity supplies us with the means of subsistence. . . . Under any circumstances, even the most favorable we can expect, private alms on the largest attainable scale will be required to supplement the action of the Government and Poor Law Board."

The Bishop of Raphoe writes, under date of March 12th:

"I could not better give your Lordship an idea of the condition of the people than by stating that in ten out of 36 parishes which compose this diocese, large numbers of people would be in absolute destitution were they not aided by charity. As it is they undergo great want and suffering. Several of the other parishes are holding out for the present, with the exception of isolated cases of distress, but, the seasons wears on, they too must likewise become victims to want."

The parish priest of one distressed parish maintains that he has 3,500 people dependent on charity. I checked his calculation by the aid of the census return and my knowledge of the parish, and I would be inclined to reduce the number by 500. In a neighboring parish there cannot be less than 2,000 in want, and so on for the others."

There are two large parishes including between them 2,602 families. These were among the very worst in 1880. I was surprised that there was yet very little out-ry from these places. On enquiring I found that the people of these parishes, seeing the potatoes were gone, converted whatever grain they had into meal. This store is just now on the point of being exhausted, and when this mass of people become destitute it will add very much to our difficulties."

There is one want, which is not confined to the very small farmers, nor to what are called congested districts—the want of seed. How this can be met God only knows."

These three letters may suffice for quotation; others write to say that thousands are living upon nothing but a small measure of Indian meal a day, and many upon seaweed, and that the need of alms is becoming more urgent each week."

It appears, therefore, certain that along the barren seaboard of the western counties, and in the wild mountain of Donegal, thousands of poor peasants are on the verge of actual starvation, hundreds of them living upon seaweed, or a single bowl of Indian meal a day, and that the destitution is rapidly and certainly increasing, both in severity and extent."

These poor people have no rich centres, like our great English towns, into which they can congregate—no warm and comfortable cottages, affording regular employment and good wages; no collieries, no potteries, no iron works, no glass foundries—no resources of labor by day or night, but patches of wet soil, with miserable huts and cabins to huddle into by night, too often exposed to wind and rain, and the violence of the Atlantic storm."

In referring to the hunger and the climate in the West of Ireland one cannot help regretting that the immense and limitless wealth of the ocean which washes that western coast is still practically closed to the people who live on its shores. At present there are, I understand, 70 Irish fishing harbours officially recommended to the Treasury, requiring an outlay of £250,000 to place them in a condition to enable the population to fish with safety; but that outlay has not yet been made."

A fishing trade is exceedingly profitable; it may find occupation for thousands and food for millions. During the century it appears that Scotland has received £1,000,000 more than Ireland in encouragement of fisheries, and that £160,000 a year are paid to the Scotch Fisheries Board, with immense benefit to the people, whereas a sum of between £6,000 and £7,000 only is contributed for fishing harbours in Ireland, and of this, I believe, nearly one-half is absorbed in salaries. One would imagine

that the abundant resources of the sea ought to be made to supply the deficiencies of food on the land. But this by the way. We are now concerned with the actual starvation of our brethren while we are in the enjoyment of plenty. We are asking ourselves whether charity is Catholic, and whether we are ready to offer another alternative to that of the workhouse and to that of emigration, which may justly carry thousands of the poor out of a Catholic country to perish body and soul in the purlieus and slums of great towns on the American sea-board.

At present, the only public alternative offered for the choice of those who are starving appears to be either the workhouse or emigration.

As to the workhouse, a tenant going into it for relief must take with him his entire family, leave his farm to waste, his cottage or cabin to destruction, and, if he seek his home again later in the year, it will be to find his land gone to the landlord for unpaid rent, which unfilled fields can never produce, and himself and family without a roof to call their own. The English poor have a horror of the "house," but their feeling is nothing compared with that which has been created in Ireland by memories that have survived "the great famine," and by the moral degradation and permanent pauperism always connected with the workhouse in Ireland.

As to emigration, no doubt emigration has been the law of nature from the beginning, the human race has always been travelling, like the sun, from the east to the west. But if people are unwilling to leave their own country, they cannot transplant them for the crime of being poor. The aged and infirm of both sexes, little children and the helpless—and those who are needed to take charge of them—cannot be counselled by any one to emigrate. To force them would be sheer cruelty, perhaps death.

To profit by emigration there must be youth, vigour and intelligence, with a capability of engaging in sustained physical labor, or else capital and the resources of friends to fall back upon. In any event we must dismiss the idea of emigration as a present equivalent food to the hungry.

In summing up the causes that have led to the present distress, account must also be taken of the increased number of evictions which occurred last year. From the Government Return, which is before me, it appears that, while in 1881 the number of persons evicted was 17,341, in 1882 they rose to the awful number of 26,386.

There are, therefore, abundant reasons why we should assist our suffering brethren in Ireland as far as we can.

I will add a final reason why this appeal should be responded to with special and exceptional generosity. A strong feeling has been naturally excited by the secret societies and the crimes committed in Ireland, which has tended to indispose people to subscribe again just now with their wonted generosity.

But, let me ask, is it just to let the guilt of crimes committed by a section—a violent and turbulent section of the population—no doubt, but still only a section—upon the whole nation? Before answering this question let me sketch out a picture that stands before the world. Ireland has been going through a frightful crisis during the last few years—a crisis such as we, with our various sources of industry and immense wealth, have had no experience of for centuries. I need examine neither into the remote causes and grievances nor into the guilt of some most deeply concerned in it.

ACTION OF THE HOLY FATHER.

But I behold in the midst of the tempest that has blown over Ireland, and the frantic conduct of a few, a calm and majestic scene which will be contemplated impartially when present events shall have become matters of history.

A vision arose before the Irish people in the midst of the storm, of the venerable figure of the Holy Father, clothed in white, the cross on his breast, calming the troubled sea, and saying, "Peace be to you. It is I." The successor of the Fisherman has stood before Catholic Ireland, and before the world—first of all, an example in his own august person of patience, justice, and charity. Look carefully into these latter years. You will see the Vicar of "the Man of Sorrows" outrageously stripped of all his possessions, degraded, and virtually confined to a prison. He has suffered the truculent robbery of province after province, solemn promises to respect his rights having been made again and again, and again to be broken. He has endured an armed invasion of the remnant of his States without even a declaration of war, the breach of Porta Pia, the mockery of the plebiscite, the deception of the guarantees, the assault on the corpse of his predecessor, the claim now put forward by the invader to a legal right over the Vatican and its furniture—to say nothing of constant insults and tyrannical interference. He has become a poor and a dependent on the alms of the Pope and the Catholic religion. The English people have heard of nothing but of the influence of evil and exaggerations of evil. Of the constant, quiet action exercised by over 20 Bishops and 4,000 priests in their dioceses, and by the bands of missionary fathers, continually travelling over the length and breadth of the island, giving missions, hearing confessions, and preaching penance and love to God and man in every group of the population—of all this no note has been taken by the Press. Now it is certain that the great majority of the people have been docile to the teaching of the Church and peaceable. Coercion laws and physical force cannot calm a whole nation without the influence of religion. That Englishman, more or less steeped in a bigotry unworthy of consideration, who does not recognize upon the faithful Irish people the powerful influences of the Catholic religion. Had these influences been withdrawn, Ireland by this time might have been floating in a sea of blood.

Had the historical circumstances of the two peoples, as exhibited in the cold and impartial pages of Mr. Lecky's *History of Ireland*, been reversed, I know not what power would have sufficed to restrain us.

PRESENT CONDITION OF IRELAND.

Meanwhile, as to the present condition of Ireland, let me end by quoting extracts from two letters I have received from Missionary Fathers in Ireland.

The first is from an English Redemptorist, of great experience in both countries, a man of high education, whose judgments I have always known to be singularly calm and unbiased. He says:

"After ten years' absence from Ireland, I have found the people morally much improved; less ignorant, more pious, more sober. Limerick, the city I know best, has a bad name in England. It certainly does not deserve it. Every paltry disturbance of rough hals is magnified by newspaper correspondents into riots and outrages. I think every group of streets in the suburbs of London would supply far more, if all eyes were turned thither and penny-alms were intent on supplying daily records of evil. Whatever may be the case as regards agrarian crimes, Ireland is singularly free from all others."

Another experienced Missionary Father, upon whose judgments I can thoroughly rely, writing from another part of Ireland, says:

"In all the parts of Ireland, in which we

have been giving missions the people are really very quiet, and anxious to attend peaceably to their farms and domestic duties. Here in Dublin, where we have given three Missions lately, we have been delighted to find among the working classes, even in what were supposed to be the worst parts of the city, a cordial and unanimous repudiation of the society, doctrine, and works of the so-called *Invisible Men*. Nationalists, old and young, equally and energetically abhor them. Being much less than at the corresponding period during the last three years. At Longford there was only one indictment. The Leitrim Assizes were finished in a few hours. At Clare the cases were neither numerous nor serious. Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, in his charge to the Grand Jury, commended with great satisfaction on the diminution of crime—and so on from all parts of Ireland."

I am, your faithful and devoted servant,

+ HERBERT, Bishop of Salford.

Bishop's House, Salford, March 14th, 1883.

THOMAS PAINE.

Last Hours of the Great Infidel.

SCENE AT HIS DEATH BED—AS RELATED BY BISHOP FEENECK OF DORSET.

Philadelphia Press.

A short time before Paine died I was sent for by him. He was prompted to this by a poor Roman Catholic woman, who went to see him in his sickness, and who told him, among other things, that in his wretched condition if anybody could do him good it would be a Roman Catholic priest. This woman was an American convert (formerly a Quakeress) whom I had received into the Church but a few weeks before. She was the bearer of this message to me from Paine. I stated the circumstances to F. Kohlman at breakfast, and requested him to accompany me. After some solicitation on my part he agreed to do so, and I was at the time young and inexperienced in the ministry and glad to have his assistance, as I knew from the great reputation of Paine that I should have to do with one of the most impious as well as famous of modern times. We shortly after set out for the house where Paine lodged, and on the way agreed on mode of proceeding with him. We arrived at the house. A decent looking elderly woman (probably his housekeeper) came to the door and asked whether we were the Roman Catholic priests. "For," said she, "Mr. Paine has been so much bothered of late by the other denominations calling upon him that he has left express orders with me to admit no one to-day except the clergy-men of the Roman Catholic Church." Upon assuring she opened the door and showed us into the parlor. She then left the room, and shortly after returned to inform us that Paine was asleep, and at the same time expressed a wish that we would not disturb him. "For," said she, "he is always in a bad humor when roused out of his sleep; 'tis better to wait a little till he be awake." We accordingly sat down and resolved to wait a more favorable moment. "Gentlemen," said the lady, after having taken her seat, also, "I really wish you may succeed with Mr. Paine, for he is laboring under great distress of mind ever since he was informed by his physicians that he cannot live and must die shortly. He sent for you to-day because he was told that if any one could do him good you might. Possibly he may think you know of some remedy which his physicians are ignorant of. He is truly to be pitied. His cries when he is left alone are heartrending. 'Oh, Lord, help me!' he will exclaim in his paroxysms of distress; 'God help me! Jesus Christ help me!' repeating the same expression without the least variation in a tone of voice that would alarm the house."

"Sometimes he cries, 'Oh, God! what have I done to suffer so much?' Then, shortly after, 'But there is no God! And again, a little after, 'Yet if there should be, who will become of me hereafter?' Thus he will come from me here terror and agony, and call out for me by name. On one of these occasions, which are very frequent, I went to him and inquired what he wanted. 'Stay with me,' he replied, 'for God's sake, for I cannot bear to be left alone.' I then observed that I could not stay, but with him, as I had much to attend to in the house. 'Then,' said he, 'send over a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone.' 'I never saw,' she concluded, 'a more unhappy, a more forsaken man; it seems he cannot reconcile himself to die.'"

Such was the conversation of the woman who had received us, and who probably had been employed as nurse and take care of him during his illness. She was a Protestant, yet seemed very desirous that we should afford him some relief in his state of abandonment, bordering on complete despair. Having remained thus some time in the parlor, we at length heard a noise in the adjoining room, which induced us to believe that Mr. Paine, who was sick in that room, had awoken. We accordingly proposed to proceed thither, which was assented to by the woman, and she opened the door for us. On entering we found him just getting out of his slumber. A man, watching being in appearance I never before beheld. He was lying in a bed sufficiently decent of itself, but at present beset with dirt; his look was that of a man greatly tortured in mind; his eyes haggard, his countenance that of one continual scene of debauch. His only near-

ishment at this time, we were informed, was nothing more than milk punch, in which he indulged to the full extent of his weak state. He had partaken, undoubtedly, but very recently of it, as the sides and corners of his mouth exhibited unequivocal signs of it, and as of blood which had also followed in the track and left its mark on the pillow. His face, to a certain extent, had also been besmeared with it. The head of his bed was against the side of the room through which the door entered. F. Kohlman, having entered first, took a seat on the side of the foot of the bed. I took my seat on the same side nearer the head. Thus in the posture of which Paine lay, his eyes could easily bear on F. Kohlman, but not on me, without turning his head.

As soon as we had seated ourselves, F. Kohlman, in a very mild tone of voice spoke concerning our invitation, to see him. Paine made no reply. After a short pause F. Kohlman proceeded, addressing himself to Paine in the French language, thinking that as Paine had been to France he was probably acquainted with the language (which was not the fact), and might better understand what he said, as he had at that time a great facility and could express himself better in it than in English.

Paine interrupted him abruptly, and in a sharp tone of voice, ordering him to speak English, thus: "Speak English, man; I speak English." F. Kohlman, without showing the least embarrassment, resumed his discourse and expressed himself heartily as follows, after his interruption, in English: "I have read your book entitled, *The Age of Reason*, as well as your other writings against the Christian religion, and am at a loss to imagine how a man of your good sense could have employed his good sense in attempting to undermine that, to say nothing of his divine establishment, the wisdom of ages has deemed most conducive to the happiness of man. The Christian religion, sir—" "That's enough, sir, that's enough," said Paine, again interrupting him. "I see what you would be about; I wish to hear no more from you, sir. My mind is made up on that subject. I look upon the whole of the Christian scheme to be a tissue of absurdities and lies, and Jesus Christ to be nothing more than a cunning knave and impostor."

I felt a degree of horror at thinking that in a very short time we should be cited to appear before the tribunal of his God, whom he so shockingly blasphemed, with all his sins upon him. Seeing that F. Kohlman had completely failed in making any impression upon him, and that Paine would listen to nothing that came from him, nor would even suffer him to speak, I finally concluded to try what effect I might have. I accordingly commenced with observing: "Mr. Paine, you will certainly allow there exists a God, and that this God cannot be indifferent to the conduct and action of His creatures." "I will allow nothing, sir," he hastily replied. "I shall make no concessions." "Well, sir, if you will listen only for one moment, I shall tell you that there is a God, and I will demonstrate from His very nature that He cannot be an idle spectator of our conduct."

"Sir, I wish to hear nothing you have to say. I wish you to leave the room." This he spoke in an exceedingly angry tone, so much that he foamed at the mouth. "Mr. Paine," I continued, "I assure you our object in coming hither was purely to do you good. We had no other motive. We have been given to understand that you wished to see us, and we come accordingly, because it is a principle with us never to refuse our services to a dying man asking for them. But for this we should not have come, for we never obtrude upon any individual."

Paine, on hearing this, seemed to relax a little. In a milder tone than he had hitherto used he replied: "You can do me no good now; it is too late. I have tried different physicians, and their remedies have all failed. I have nothing now to expect" (this he spoke with a sigh) "but a speedy dissolution. My physicians have, indeed, told me as much." "You have misunderstood me," said I immediately to him. "We are not come to prescribe any remedies for your bodily complaints; we only come to make you an offer of our ministry for the good of your soul, which is in great danger of being forever cast off by the Almighty on account of your sins, and especially for the crime of having vilified and rejected His word and uttered blasphemies against His Son."

Paine, on hearing this, was roused into a fury; he gritted his teeth, turned and twisted himself several times in his bed, uttering all the while the bitterest imprecations. I firmly believe such was the rage in which he was at the time that if he had a pistol he would have shot one of us; for he conducted himself more like a madman than a rational creature. "Be-gone!" said he, "and trouble me no more. I was in peace until you came." "We know better than that," replied F. Kohlman; "we know that you cannot be in peace—there can be no peace for the wicked." "God hath said it." "Away with you, and your God, too, all that you have uttered are lies, filthy lies, and if I had a little more time I would prove it, as I did about your impostor, Jesus Christ." "Monster!" exclaimed F. Kohlman, in a burst of zeal, "you will have no more time; your hour has arrived. Think rather of the awful account you have already to offer, and implore pardon of God. Provoke no longer his just indignation upon your head." Paine here again ordered us to retire, in the highest pitch of his voice, and seemed a very maniac with his rage and madness.

"Let us go," said I to F. Kohlman; "we have nothing more to do here. He seems to be entirely abandoned by God. Further words are lost upon him."

Upon this we both withdrew from the room and left the unfortunate man to his thoughts. I never before or since heard such a callous man. This, you may rely upon it, is a faithful and correct account of the transaction. I remain your affectionate brother.

BENEDICT, Bishop of Boston.

Don't Be Alarmed.

At Bright's Disease, or any disease of the kidneys, liver or urinary organs, as Hop Bitters will certainly and lastingly cure you, and it is the only thing that will.

FLIES, roaches, ants, bed-bugs, rats, mice, crows, chipmunks, cleared out by "Rough on Rats." 15c.

A Bonanza Mine.

of health is to be found in Dr. R. V. Pierce's "Favorite Prescription," to the merits of which as a remedy for female weakness and kindred affections thousands testify.

## Queen Mary and the "Reformation."

She had no doubt also seen that the most strenuous supporters of the new religion were guilty of sacrilege, blasphemy, lying, time-serving, treason, and immorality; she had witnessed the wholesale destruction of holy places and things, under the guise of religion. No wonder, then, that she clung closer and closer to her own faith, for she saw the evil, but none of the good which some folks say resulted from the Reformation. Listen to what Latimer says of the "reformed" faith: "In times past men were full of pity and compassion, but now there is no pity, for your brother dies in the street." As regards reverence, he adds, "Surely in Popery they had a reverence, but now we have none at all." Hooper says, "Another life is required than that which is led by the Gospelers nowadays." Ridley says that "Lechery and oppression, pride, covetousness, and a hatred and scorn of religion were generally spread among the people." These robbers of the church, under the cloak of religion, destroyed more than 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, 2,374 churches, and 110 hospitals and colleges; and as Belshazzar celebrated his drunken feast in the sanctified vessels of the Temple, so these reformers made carousing cups of the sacred chalice. Hallam speaks of the neglect of the poor, the corruption of the judges, the oppression of landlords, and the frequency of murder, adultery, and divorce, as some of the results of the Reformation. Can it be wondered at, therefore, that Mary held in abhorrence, a change of religion, which seemed to have prompted men not only to disregard the honest convictions and scruples of others, and desecrate the most holy things, but which had also been so disastrous to the well-being of her people? As to "Persecution," on account of the number of persons who were executed during the reign of Mary for differing from the law-established creed, she has been represented as the embodiment of every evil quality, and no amount of oil has been thought too great to keep on her memory. Persons whose minds are warped by religious fanaticism are apt, while reading the history of her reign, to regard the cruelties which took place then as the only case on record, and some historians have, for political or controversial purposes, been careful to conceal, or slur over all the harsh measures which took place under the rule of previous and subsequent monarchs.

## Public Confession and Repentance.

During the years 1872, 1873 and 1874 I labored in the Diocese of Cleveland in the capacity of a priest. In an evil hour, impelled by anger and yielding to pride, I abandoned my position, at the same time renouncing the Church. I confess my apostasy was a rash and unjustifiable act, and altogether my own fault. It happened at a time when I was neither devout nor charitable, and when for the moment I had lost sight of the spirit and aim of a true priest.

For all this in better moments I have tried to atone. Having gone astray, I had to thoroughly learn that I could not return of my own light or strength, but only by the grace of God. Entering into myself, I hereby inform the public, which I have scandalized, my brethren of the priesthood, whom I have disedified, and in particular the members of the congregations in which I have ministered, that I have returned to the faith of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and with my whole heart and mind, and of my own free will, and in humble penance, have placed myself under the merciful judgment of my former ordinary, the Right Rev. Bishop of Cleveland.

Pardon me, then, you whom I have scandalized, that a man has not done more than he did, has not lifted higher his head against the true mother of the faithful, than turning himself from her, is, in my own poor judgment, pardon him. Yet if you forgive me you can do more for me than I can do for myself."

As divine charity bids, pray for me to our gracious Lord, the Saviour, and His Blessed Mother, that I may yet have strength and time to render some satisfaction and to make some reparation to the Catholic Church, so that in the blessed end, at least, we can say together gladly we are one in faith and one in charity.

A. M. MELL, Formerly priest of the Diocese of Cleveland.

CLEVELAND, February 28.

"ROUGH ON RATS." Clears out rats, mice, flies, roaches, bed-bugs, ants, vermin, chipmunks. 15c.

Remarkable and True.

Alonso Howe, of Tweed, was cured of a fever sore of thirty-five years' duration, by six bottles of Burdock Blood Bitters. He had suffered terribly, and tried many remedies in vain. He considers Burdock Blood Bitters a marvellous medicine.

The experiment which Messrs. Tuckett &amp; Son entered upon when they commenced to make their "Myrtle Navy" tobacco was this: to give the public a tobacco of the very finest Virginia leaf at the smallest possible margin beyond its actual cost, in the hope that it would be so extensively bought as to remunerate them. By the end of three years they found that it had grown so much as to give evidence of the success of the experiment was within reach. The demand for it to-day is more than ten times greater than it was then and it is still increasing. Success has been reached.

A HINT WORTH HEEDING. Life loses half its zest when digestion is permanently impaired. Satisfy then a speedy means of restoring this essential of bodily comfort is worth trying. Every rank, every profession, bears its quota of evidence to the beneficial influence upon the stomach, and also upon the liver, bowels and kidneys, of Northrop &amp; Lyman's Vegetable Discovery and Dyspeptic Cure, or celebrated Blood Purifier. What is the wise course suggested to the sick by this testimony? We leave to decide—Harkness &amp; Co., Dundas St.

Daughters, Wives, Mothers, look to your health! The many painful and weakening diseases from which you suffer, dispiriting of a cure, can be remedied by that unfailing regulator and unfailing tonic—Burdock Blood Bitters. Ask your druggist for proof.