

# The Cross;

HALIFAX SATURDAY, NOV. 11.

## FINAL CONDEMNATION OF THE GODLESS COLLEGES.

Amid the gloom that broods over our unhappy Country at the present moment, it is cheering that Whiggery in the pride of its recent Irish triumphs has had in this instance the mortification of a sad discomfiture. With all their boasted influence at Rome, and with all the devices that diplomatic chicanery could have suggested this Whig onslaught upon the religious liberties of our people, has been, thank God, a signal failure. The genius of her political freedom may have disappeared for the moment, the voice of her Patriot may be hushed, the best and proudest of her children may be immured in the prison cell, they may be hanged, they may be quartered and gibbeted, or consigned to the tomb of the traitor, the convict ship and the halter, the bribe and the threat, the bayonet and the prison may be pointed to as the insignia of British rule and British Triumph in Ireland, but like that of Canute when seated upon the Sea shore amid the flattery of his Courtiers, here their empire stops. This is the boundary that God himself has set to their dominion.

They may fetter the limb, they may muzzle the press, they may succeed in smothering the groans of a downtrodden people, but after centuries spent in the lawless exercise of the most unrestricted power, every effort to manacle their religious spirit, has been hitherto unsuccessful, and never, never more so than at the present moment. As they dealt out what they considered to be a death blow to the Political liberties of the people, they made the insidious attempt to enslave their consciences too. But in this they have been foiled, and what is singular enough, by an influence which they swear, and profess to have no existence in the empire.

Within the last twelve months, as within the last four centuries, this influence has been over and over asserted, and denied, it has been cajoled and threatened in turn, it has been despised and held as a by-gone folly and again upheld as a stalking horse of terror to the initiated. But old Rome is still as she was and as she will be, the idol of the Irish heart, "the mother of the soul" and the star of our faith, and of our hope through every peril. Now, as in days of yore, the thunder voice of the Vatican has echoed through the land, bidding defiance to the open threat as well as the hidden machinations of the Pseudo Liberal Bigots of Downing Street.

"Roma lucenta caesa finita est."

The voice of Peter has already been received as a command from God—and as Heaven's bidding where British law will never be respected (*i. e.*) in the true hearts of Catholic Irishmen—After years of painful investigation the Whig Trumpery Scheme of Education, with all the influences of Downing street to back it, has vanished into thin air. The Godless Colleges with the mongrel system of half-Catholic, half-Protestant, and thorough infidel training, tinkered together after Whig fashion, have tottered to the ground. From the following account in the last Tablet our readers will be happy to learn that not a stone of them will be left on a stone. There is no further fear that this Whig Leviathan will uncatholically oppress our people, and make Ireland more British by despoiling her of this only remnant of her nationality.

The following letter, from our Roman Correspondent, is the best possible introduction to the document which records the final condemnation of this nefarious English conspiracy against the Faith and Morals of the Catholic population of Ireland:—

October 11, 1848.

"Dear Sir,—I feel the sincerest pleasure in being able to inform you that the 'Godless Colleges' have been once more reprobated by the glorious successor of Peter. On the 8th of this month, which was here the feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin; the Pope signed their unqualified condemnation with his own hand. Some days previous to this solemn act, the Cardinals had held a council on the matter, and after a most careful examination of arguments on both sides pronounced the Colleges to be fraught with the utmost danger to faith and morals. The written statement of their Eminences, the letter recently received on the subject from all the Bishops in Ireland, the documents drawn up by the Archbishop of Tuam and the Bishop of Ardagh,

as also those of Doctors Nicholson and Ennis, were all placed in the hands of the Holy-Father, and, notwithstanding the unanimity and earnestness of the Cardinals, he declined deciding until he should have read every line that had been written in favour of, or against the Government scheme. This task his Holiness performed with his usual zeal and impartiality, and having invoked the aid of the Holy Ghost to guide him to a just conclusion, he wrote in characters that will endure for ever, the emphatic condemnation of the Clarendon sinks of Indifferentism and Error. The decision has been hailed with rapturous applause by all the Catholics of Rome, and, in truth, its importance can be scarcely overrated. It will infuse fresh courage and vigour into the bosoms of the intrepid Bishops in Ireland, and all over Europe, who are nobly struggling for the sacred freedom of education, and fighting the battle of the Faith against the tyranny and corruption of Governments.

"The Rescript, which you will find in all respects complete will be immediately forwarded to the Irish Prelates, and I shall lose no time in supplying you with an authentic copy.

"Your late article on the 'Diplomatic Relations' with the Holy See, has been copied into the Roman papers, and its tone, its style, and its masterly *expose* of Parliamentary bad manners and bigotry, have been the theme of universal approbation. It has been read with delight by all the authorities, and the Tablet is now looked upon here as the only newspaper in Great Britain that is able or willing to explain or defend the sound Catholic feelings and Catholic interests of England.

"Some uneasiness seems to have been created in England and Ireland by the 'Diplomatic Relations,' but I can safely assure you there is no reason whatever for entertaining the remotest apprehension. The Holy Father will be found inflexible in asserting his rights both as Pope and Monarch, and whether the ambassador be a Shrewsbury, a Beaumont, or a Brougham, in case he be at all received, he will never be permitted to meddle in any way with the conduct or spiritual interests of the Catholic Clergy of Ireland or England. Depend upon it that the insulting law on this subject will prove the source of bitter disappointment to the spiteful and blind bigots who carried it through the immaculate Parliament of the English aristocracy. The two Irish Bishops are still here, and both being assistants at the Throne, they attend his Holiness at all the solemn functions. They appear in excellent health.

"P.S.—Doctors Nicholson and Ennis have left Rome—the former for Corfu, the latter for Dublin."

"Most Illustrious and Rev. Lord—Some extracts from the statutes which are compiled for the new Colleges in Ireland, as well as the suffrages given by the Bishops regarding them, have afforded the Sacred Congregation an occasion of again treating of the aforesaid Colleges chiefly under that respect, and of weighing diligently and maturely whatever it should deem its duty to answer regarding the spiritual interests of the Catholic people of Ireland. For though the aforesaid statutes are in such form that it is difficult to judge what may be their authority considering the constitution of the English realm, still, all things maturely weighed, the Sacred Congregation could not be induced, on account of the grievous and intrinsic dangers of the same Colleges, to mitigate the decision passed on them; and with the authority of our Most Holy Lord promulgated to the four Metropolitans in the month of October last year.

"But since it is manifest with what zeal the Clergy and the entire people labour for things which have for their object to promote the good of the Church, the most eminent Fathers judged not to be despaired of; nay they have again and again recommended a project of this sort, in order that all may lend their best endeavours towards its execution, and that thus sufficient provision be made for giving the Catholics more ample instruction without their religion suffering danger from that source.

"This decision of the Sacred Congregation our most Holy Lord having with all maturity and prudence strictly examined, he resolved to sanction and ratify it with all the weight of his authority, and signified his wish that it should be sent to the four Archbishops respectively, by them to be communicated to their Suffragans.

"But whilst I perform this duty I ought also

to signify that it is the peculiar desire of the Sacred Congregation, nay also of our Most Holy Lord, that sacerdotal concord be preserved, and that you have at heart to cultivate the unity of spirit which the Sacred Gospel attests to have been very much recommended by Christ our Lord to His Apostles. And since I am addressing Prelates who are well versed in the history of the Church, and the excellent admonitions of the Holy Fathers, I deem it superfluous to quote them, or to mention what benefits the union of Bishops conferred on the Church, and what evils, on the other hand, flowed from their dissensions. And whereas you are all unanimously wishing for this union, it will not be amiss to remind you to choose and cheerfully to apply the most reasonable means towards securing it. These are prominent in the Sacred Canons and in the other rules of Ecclesiastical discipline, which, if you will faithfully follow in your ministry, and if in your doubts you will apply to the Holy See, in order that through it you may know what is to be done, the aforesaid union will become more and more firm and lasting. Amongst other things, the Sacred Congregation deemed it right to remind you, with the sanction of our Most Holy Lord, that Sacerdotal meetings should henceforward be held in due order and according to the path chalked out by the Canons and liturgical books: otherwise, difference of opinions will daily increase, and from meetings of this kind, which may rather wear a secular than a religious appearance, no good will result towards regulating Ecclesiastical discipline, to which alone they should be subservient—and therefore it will be most useful to transmit the acts of the Synods to the Apostolic See, as also to write at certain times concerning the state of your churches, as has been ordained, in order that you may receive from hence reasonable answers.

"But those things are signified to you, not that any doubt arises regarding your submission to the Apostolic See, since it has been proved to the world how fervent and constant it is, and a fresh testimony has been borne to it by all your letters written on the aforesaid subject of the Colleges, but that by those manifestations it may again be actually proved. And when reference on the more weighty concerns is accurately made to that Church from whence Sacerdotal union is derived, the same unity will, by this means, more easily abide among yourselves.

"In the meantime, I pray God long to preserve your Grace in health. Your Grace's most obedient, &c.

"J. PH. FRANSONI, Prefect.

"ALEXANDER BARNABO, Secretary.

"Given at Propaganda Fide, Rome, 11th October, 1848."

In the few moments we have to spare before our First Edition goes to press, we can hardly trust ourselves even to attempt an expression of the feeling which this great act of our ever glorious Pontiff necessarily excites in us. Every word of this document deserves to be pondered and maturely reflected on. It is brief, weighty, full and decisive. It is the result of the amplest deliberation. It is the winding up of the most careful, repeated, anxious and conscientious inquiry. It is not, by any means, a hasty, or a rash, or an ill considered verdict. It is not a solitary decision, or a first opinion, or an *ex parte* judgment. It is not even the act of one man, though that one man be a Pope, and that Pope, Pius IX. If the fate of the world hung upon it, nothing is wanting to its completeness and maturity. Every person, every interest, every authority, every pretender to interest and authority have been heard and judged. Catholics and Protestants, Priests and Laymen, Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, Englishmen and Irishmen, private letters and public documents, oral and written testimony, fact and fiction, argument and remonstrance, guesses and opinions, solicitation and intrigue, humble prayers and presumptuous rebuke, temporal inducements and eternal duties, State influence and ambassadorial deceit—everything and everybody have been heard, read, weighed and judged, and while nothing has been left undone to procure the reversal of the former decree, behold it again promulgated more resolutely than ever and so as to conclude the question for all time to come.

The Godless Colleges are now finally condemned on account of the grievous and intrinsic dangers of "the same?" God and Our Blessed Lady be thanked for it. And while we express our gratitude for this wholesome result, we can not but express our satisfaction at the time and

manner of it also. Many of our readers, in their anxiety to have the question settled, may have been troubled at the delay which has taken place. At this very delay, seeing the happy conclusion to which the matter has been brought, those who were most impatient cannot now help rejoicing. Every one knows that it has not been an idle delay. Probably, every week or every month of it has added something of information, something to the grounds on which the decision now rests. And the time spent, considerable as it may seem has shown the implicit obedience paid by all Catholics interested in the matter—and what Catholic is not interested?—to the supreme authority of the Holy See, and has given to the decision an external decorum and consideration which internally it could never want.

During the first months, after this College conspiracy was first propounded, there was much agitation, vehement discussion, meetings, resolutions, speeches, and all the marks of popular effervescence. This was when the matter was under consideration here; when an English Parliament and English Ministers, the devout Sir James Graham foremost in the fray, were labouring to impose on Ireland a method of education suited to their own views of religion and their own hatred of secure Catholic Faith and morals on a sound sceptical basis. But since that time, and especially since the cause was referred to the Holy See, every symptom of agitation and effervescence has disappeared. All public discussion has been suspended. The affair has been wholly confided to the wisdom of the Supreme Pontiff and his illustrious advisers—and what we may call the most legitimate provocatives to discussion, have been allowed to pass by "unapproved." Even the "extracts from the Statutes," affording as they did fresh evidence of the official deceit with which in almost all departments of almost all Governments, public affairs—and Church affairs more especially—are for the most part managed, were allowed to speak for themselves. For our small part, it certainly was our original intention to expose what seemed to us the fraud and falsehood of that characteristic document—characteristic no less in what it suppressed than in what it put forward—and we were doubtful whether, the matter still being—though in a less obtrusive manner—under discussion here, it was not almost a breach of duty for a journalist, however significant, to keep silence on so important a matter. Happily for our own feelings now, we did so with a very trivial exception. The affair has been kept entirely out of the domain of newspaper discussion and popular debate: it has been transacted altogether and in appearance as much as in reality, between the Holy See, its official councillors, and such other personages as more privately either were summoned to advise the Supreme Pontiff, or thrust themselves unauthorised on his councils; and whatever undue influence may have been used on behalf of the Colleges, against them there has not been the shadow of the shade of an endeavor to force or bias the ultimate decree which now gladdens the hearts of millions.

The Holy See has now spoken. Its word has gone forth to the ends of the earth, and will never be recalled. All Catholics must bow to it and render it obedience. If any sons of the Church, nominal or real, wished to gainsay what has now been written, it would be impossible for them to do so; and we hope and are most anxious to be persuaded that few—none even—entertain a thought that would dishonour them for ever. No Cleric can henceforward take a part in these Colleges; so that there can be no Ecclesiastical President or Vice-President in Galway. No layman of high character can meddle with them—so that Cork is equally safe. Even the shadow of Catholic authority and protection therefore is wanting; and they must now stand on their true basis—un-Catholic or anti-Catholic establishments—"sinks of Indifference and Error," but man-traps or soul-traps no longer. If Catholic students attend their halls, supposing halls ever to have a bodily existence—they must attend avowedly because either their parents or themselves are careless of eternal ruin. Against such danger no Bishop and no Pope can effectually provide. But at all events a yellow flag has been hoisted over these receptacles and propagators of contagion. The mark of the Beast is upon them and the brand of infamy has burnt down to their very bones.

Nicholas V. Maher, Esq. M.P. has sent up an additional subscription of £510 to assist in liquidating the debt of Conciliation Hall.