

whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's." You see, my brethren, the character of St. Paul's love; it was a love fervent, eager, energetic, active, full of great works, "strong as death," as the Wise Man says, a flame which "many waters could not quench, nor the streams drown," which lasted to the end, when he could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up for me the crown of justice, which the Lord will give me in that day, the just Judge."

And there is a third, my brethren, there is an illustrious third in Scripture, whom we must associate with these two great Apostles, when we speak of the Saints of penance and love. Who is it but the loving Magdalen? Who is it so fully instances what I am showing, as "the woman who was a sinner," who watered the Lord's feet with her tears, and dried them with her hair, and anointed them with the precious ointment? What a time for such an act! She who had come into the room as if for a festive purpose, to go about an act of penance! It was a formal banquet, given by a rich Pharisee, to honor, yet to try, our Lord. Magdalen came, young and beautiful, and "rejoicing in her youth," "walking in the ways of her heart and the gaze of her eyes," she came as if to honor that feast, as women were wont to honor such, with her sweet odors and cool unguents for the forehead and hair of the guests. And he, the proud Pharisee, suffered her to come, so that she touched not him; let her come, as we might suffer inferior animals to enter our apartments, without caring for them; suffered her as a necessary embellishment of the entertainment, yet as having no soul, or as destined to perdition, but as nothing to him. He, proud being, and his brethren, might "compass sea and land to make one proselyte," but, as to looking into that proselyte's heart, pitying its sin, trying to heal it, this did not enter into the circuit of his thoughts. No, he thought only of the necessities of his banquet, and let her come, to do her part, careless what her life was, so that she did that part well, and confined herself to it. But, lo, a wondrous sight! was it a sudden inspiration, or a mature resolve?—but behold, that poor, many-colored, child of guilt approaches to crown with her sweet ointment the head of Him to whom the feast was given; and see, she has stayed her hand. She has looked, and she discerns the Immaculate, the Virgin's Son, "the brightness of the Eternal Light, and the spotless mirror of God's Majesty." She looks, and she recognizes the Ancient of Days, the Lord of life and death, her Judge; and again she looks, and she sees in His face and in His mien a beauty, and a sweetness, awful, serene, majestic, more than that of the sons of men, which paled all the splendor of that festive room. Again she looks, timidly yet eagerly, and she discerns in His eye and in His smile the loving kindness, the tenderness, the compassion, the mercy of the Saviour of man. She looks at herself, and oh! how vile, how hideous is she, who but now was so vain of her attractions!—how withered is that comeliness, of which the praises ran through the mouths of her admirers!—how loathsome has become the breath, which hitherto she thought so fragrant, savoring only of those seven bad spirits which dwell within her! And there she would have stayed, there she would have sunk on the earth, wrapped in her confusion and in her despair, had she not cast one glance again on that all-loving, all-forgiving countenance. He is looking at her: it is the Shepherd looking at the lost sheep, and the lost sheep surrenders herself to Him. He speaks not, but He eyes her; and she draws nearer to Him. Rejoice, ye Angels, she draws near, seeing nothing but Him, and caring neither for the scorn of the proud, nor the jests of the profligate. She draws near, not knowing whether she shall be saved or not, not knowing whether she shall be received, or what will become of her; this only knowing that He is the fount of good and of truth, as of mercy, and to whom should she go, but to Him who hath the words of eternal life? "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: but in Me is thy help. Return unto Me, and I will not turn away My face from thee: for I am holy, and will not be angry for ever." "Behold we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord our God." Truly the hills are false, and the multitude of the mountains: truly the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. Wonderful meeting between what was most base and what is most pure! Those wanton hands, those polluted lips, have touched; have kissed the feet of the Eternal, and He shrank not from the homage. And as she hung over them, and as she moistened them from her full eyes, how did her love for one so great, yet so gentle, wax vehement within her; lighting up a flame which never was to die from that moment even for ever! and what excess did it reach, when He recorded before all men her forgiveness, and the cause of it! "Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much; but to whom less is forgiven, the same loveth less. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath made thee safe, go in peace."

Henceforth, my brethren, love was to her, as to St. Augustine and to St. Ignatius afterwards, (great penitents in their own time,) as a wound in the soul, so full of desire as to be anguish. She could not live out of the presence of Him in whom her joy lay: her spirit languished after Him, when she saw Him not; and waited on Him silently, reverently, wistfully, when she was in His blissful Presence. We read of her, on one occasion, sitting behind His feet, and listening to His words; and He testified to her that she had chosen that best part which should not be taken away from her. And, after His resurrection, she, by her perseverance, merited to see Him even before the Apostles. She would not leave the sepulchre, when Peter and John retired but stood without weeping; and when the Lord appeared to her, and held her eyes that she should not know Him, she said piteously to the supposed keeper of the garden, "Tell me where

thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away." And when at length He made Himself known to her, she turned herself, and was rushing to embrace His feet, as at the beginning, when, as if to prove the dutifulness of her love, He forbade her: "Touch Me not," He said; "for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." And so she was left, to long for the time when she should see Him, and hear His voice, and enjoy His smile, and be allowed to minister to Him, for ever.

Such then is the second great class of Saints, as viewed in contrast with the first: Love is the life of both; but while the love of the innocent is calm and serene, the love of the penitent is ardent and impetuous, commonly engaged in contest with the world, and active in good works. And this is the love which you, my brethren, must have in your measure, if you would have a good hope of salvation. For you were once sinners; either by open and avowed contempt of religion, or by secret transgression, or by indifference, or by some indulged bad habit, or by setting your heart on some object of this world, and doing your own will instead of God's, I think I may say, you have needed, or now need, a reconciliation to Him. You have needed, or you need, to be brought near to Him, and to have your sins washed away in His blood, and your pardon recorded in Heaven. And what will do this for you, but contrition? and what is contrition without love? I do not say that you must have the love which Saints have, in order to your forgiveness, the love of St. Peter or of St. Mary Magdalen; but still without your portion of that same heavenly grace, you are in a very precarious, a very unsafe condition. If you would do works meet for penance, they must proceed from a living flame of charity. If you would secure perseverance to the end, you must gain it by continual loving prayer to the Author and Finisher of faith and obedience. If you would have a good prospect of His acceptance of you in your last moments, still it is love alone which blots out sin. My brethren, at that awful hour you may be unable to obtain the last Sacraments; death may come on you suddenly, or you may be at a distance from a Priest. You may be thrown on yourselves, simply on your own compunction, your own repentance, your own resolutions of amendment. You may have been weeks and weeks at a distance from spiritual aid; you may have to meet your God without the safeguard, the compensation, the meditation of any holy rite; and oh! what will save you then, but the presence of "divine charity poured over the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us?" At that hour nothing but a firm habit of charity, which has kept you from mortal sins, or a powerful act of charity, which blots them out, will aught avail you. Nothing but charity can enable you to live well or to die well. How can you bear to lie down at night, how can you bear to go a journey, how can you bear the presence of pestilence, or the attack of ever so slight an indisposition, if you are ill provided in yourselves with love against that awful change, which will come on you some day, yet when and how you know not? Alas! how will you present yourselves before the judgment-seat of Christ, with the imperfect mixed feelings which now satisfy you, with a certain amount of faith, and trust, and fear of God's judgment, but with nothing of that real delight in Him, in His attributes, in His will, in His commandments, in His service, which Saints possess in such fulness; and which alone can give the soul a comfortable title to the merits of His death and passion?

How different is the feeling with which the loving soul, on its separation from the body, approaches the presence of its Redeemer! It knows how great a debt of punishment remains upon it, though it has for many years been reconciled to Him; it knows that purgatory lies before it, and that the best it can reasonably hope for is to be sent there. But to see His face though for a moment! to hear His voice, to hear Him speak, though it be to punish! O Saviour of men, I come to Thee, though it be to be at once remanded from Thee; I come to Thee who art my Life and my All; I come to Thee on the thought of whom I have lived all my life long. To Thee I gave myself when first I had to take a part in the world; I sought Thee for my good early, for early didst Thou teach me that good elsewhere there was none. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? whom have I desired on earth, whom have I had on earth, but Thee? whom shall I have in the sharp flame but Thee? Yea, though I be now descending thither, into "a land desert, pathless, and without water," I will fear no ill, for Thou art with me. I have seen Thee this day face to face, and it sufficeth; I have seen Thee, and that glance of Thine is sufficient for a century of sorrow, in the nether world. I will live on that look of Thine, though I see thee again, never to part from Thee. That eye of Thine shall be sunshine and comfort to my weary, longing soul; that voice of Thine shall be everlasting music in my ears. Nothing can harm me, nothing shall discompose me; I will bear the appointed years, till my end come, bravely and sweetly. I will raise my voice and chant a perpetual *Confiteor* to Thee and to Thy Saints in that dreary valley; to God omnipotent, and to Blessed Mary Ever Virgin, Thy Mother, and mine, immaculate in her conception, and to Blessed Michael Archangel, created in his purity by the very Hand of God, and to Blessed John Baptist, sanctified even in his mother's womb; and after these three, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, penitents who compassionated the sinner from their experience of sin; to all Saints, whether they have lived in contemplation or in toil, during the days of their pilgrimage, I will address my supplication, begging them to remember me, since it is well with them, and to do mercy by me, so as to make mention of me unto the King, that He bring me out of that prison. Then at length "God

shall wipe away every tear from my eyes, and death shall be no longer, nor mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things are passed away."

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### IRELAND. THE OPENING OF THE SYNOD.

(From a Correspondent of the Tablet.)

Thurles, Aug. 22d, 1850.

Sir—In anticipation of those fuller details which I shall be able to give you this afternoon, regarding the great national event to take place to-day, I offer you a hasty outline of what has been done. Although the opening, properly so-called, commences this morning, yet, as may be supposed, a considerable amount of preliminary business has already been transacted. As early as Monday, Bishops, Theologians, Masters of Ceremonies, and other Ecclesiastics of importance began to arrive in great numbers, and on Tuesday, all who had a right to be of the Council, with the exception, I believe, of three Prelates, had already assembled; the Bishops in the palace of the Archbishop, and the Provincials of Orders and other Ecclesiastics in the College of St. Patrick's—a spacious and noble building, which I shall afterwards have occasion to describe.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, the first formal proceedings took place in the chapel of St. Patrick's College. Although the public were not admitted to these, yet I am informed that the ceremonies and general character of the day were scarcely of a less solemn and imposing description than those which are to attend the public opening. These proceedings alluded to, like those of the latter, consisted in holding, first, a private, and then a public congregation; at the former of which, it is understood, their Lordships the Bishops only are present, and at the latter the Council generally—viz., Bishops, officials of the Council, heads of Religious Orders, Procurators, Theologians, &c., &c. The private congregation was held about three o'clock in the chapel of St. Patrick's College, when the Prelates assembled, wearing mozzetta and rochet. The ceremonies commenced with the prayer *Adsumus Domine Sancte Spiritus*, &c., which being ended, the Prelates proceeded to name the officers of the Council.

The three Secretaries were appointed—viz., the Rev. Dr. Leahy, President of St. Patrick's College, Thurles; the Rev. Dr. O'Brien, of Carlow; and the Rev. P. Cooper, Prelate of the Metropolitan Church, Marlborough Street. The Promotor, an official of the highest importance, whose office it is to move the different decrees, is the Right Rev. Dr. Derry, Bishop of Clonfert. The Masters of the Ceremonies were also appointed, three in number—viz., the Rev. Dr. Forde, of Blackrock; the Rev. Mr. Keogh, of Dublin; and the Rev. Mr. McHale, of Tuam. Other business of an important nature was also transacted at the private congregation, but only the matters of form are as yet made public. Immediately after this was over, a public congregation, preliminary to the general opening, was held, and at this all the Fathers were present. The business consisted in the passing of certain decrees of form, always passed at the opening of a Council, and the heading of which, I believe, is as follows:—1. *De modo vivendi in Concilio*—the rule and manner of life to be pursued in the Council. 2. *De prajudiciis vitandis*—of avoiding the prejudging of questions. 3. *De non divulgandis decretis*—of not divulging the decrees. In the course of the proceedings, his Grace the Lord Primate delivered a very noble and holy exhortation to the assembled fathers; the purport of which, like much of the important business of the Council, is not made public, but which is stated to have made a deep impression on all who heard it. The congregation now closed with solemn prayers. This terminated the preliminary proceedings; and the public opening takes place at the Cathedral this morning. The excitement of so very great an event gives a most singular appearance to this quiet, sombre old town, as I saw it late last night—the single street with groups of people in all directions, watching the arrival of strangers, who are continually pouring in from all parts of the country—Ecclesiastics of the Council here and there in their black mantles—other Priests, of course, in great numbers; the laity of all classes; the shops all open, and in their best array; and the whole place, in short, as full as it can hold: so that it is considered not a little piece of luck to escape having to bivouac on the floor.

I may add one word on a subject of great importance. It is rumored that the Dean of Residence is withdrawn at Cork, either by the obedience of that gentleman to the judgment—which few now can doubt—of the National Council on the Colleges question, or in deference to the expressed wishes of his diocesan. I am obliged to state the matter thus vaguely, because I have heard this rumor in different shapes; but I believe it represents a fact. I shall resume my letter this evening, when I hope to communicate all the events of the day. The morning, which was at first overcast, cold and sleety, now (8 o'clock) promises tolerable weather.

### ENGLAND.

THE CATHOLICS IN CAMBRIDGE.—Sunday, Aug. 9th, and the Sunday before, were glorious days for Cambridge. On the Sunday before last, 14 converts publicly made their profession of the one Catholic Faith, and were admitted into the one Catholic fold; among the number was the lady of a distinguished French officer. The Rev. Michael Quinlan, a beggar from that land, where all are now beggars, and still all honorable men, preached on the occasion to a crowded church. His Lordship the Bishop of the district was also present. On last Sun-

day, over seventy, the majority of them converts, had the great happiness of receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Bishop delivered an admirable discourse, on the nature and effects of the Sacrament; and was listened to by numbers of respectable Protestants with the most respectful attention. The services of the day closed with Vespers, a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Quinlan, and Solemn Benediction by his Lordship. This for Cambridge is a right good thing, and a true illustration of the happy times we live in. N. B.—Our conventual schools are sadly too small; one of our good sisters has had to leave through ill-health; and the Bishop threatens to deprive us of the services of the Nuns altogether, unless we get them larger schools. Oh! Catholics of England, will you suffer this? Remember that golden maxim and precept, and fulfil it generously between this and the day of the raffle—"Bear ye one another's burthens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Only let every Priest in England, and three out of every congregation, take tickets, and Michaelmas shall be a glorious day for Cambridge.—*Correspondent of Tablet.*

### UNITED STATES.

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK.—We learn with great pleasure that a Parish school for boys is to be opened at St. Mary's church in this city, under the care of the Christian Brothers. The day for opening is not yet settled, but it will probably be in the course of week after next. Three of the Brothers will attend it from the first, and there will be accommodations for about 300 boys. The free school for girls of St. Mary's, opened as usual the first of the month, in charge of the Sisters of Charity. About 400 girls attend it. St. Mary's select school in Grand street is also opened for the winter session, as also the Sisters' schools at St. Peter's church, and their free school at St. Patrick's. The various academies for young ladies in the vicinity of the city have also commenced for the season. To the above schools we are happy to add the school for young ladies at St. Vincent's Church, which, as well as the Free-school for girls, is under the supervision of the Rev. Mr. Lafont, who has shown such zeal in the cause of Catholic education in this city.—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal.*

### MISCELLANEOUS.

#### THE AGRARIAN CONGRESS.

(BEING SOME NOTES AND SKETCHES OF THE CONFERENCE, BY A NORTHERN DELEGATE.)

(From the Nation.)

God forbid I should deny, it was with a feeling of heavy and sorrowful anxiety that I saw the old village church, with its ring of green umbrageous trees all around it; sink down behind the hill which shadows—to the south, as we drove off on Monday morning last to the Conference. I had long looked forward to this assembly with great hope—with such hope as I had never yet put in any previous political movement of the generation I belong to; though I attended various Monster Meetings in '43, and gave several months' diligent study to barricade dialectics in '48. But I had never known the people so earnestly and thoughtfully anxious in any cause as in this—life or death as it inevitably is to them; and the representative character in which I was leaving them was a trust awakening new and solemn considerations, and although undertaken some months since with a certain ambitious alacrity, it became a leaden load on my conscience as the time of its exercise approached. A serious and solemn trust, indeed, as ever steadied the stroke of an honest man's heart! As I looked down on the thin, bleak-looking chapel the Sunday before, and remembered, only four years ago, how it used to be packed—this aisle with comfortable freize-coated farmers and their sons, or laborers; and that with handsome, robust, happy-looking women, with their snow-white caps, and motley-colored kerchiefs, and long cloaks of blue or scarlet cloth; the rails of the sanctuary all round forcibly occupied by a band of rosy-cheeked *gossamers*, much inclined to occasional irreverence when the National Dominie on the altars' hard by is praying over-intently—and remembered how, Sunday after Sunday, ever since, the congregation had grown thinner and thinner; and worse and worse clad; and week after week with more of woe-ful entreaty and less of thanksgiving in their prayers—and how every spring bore off its segment of the parish to America, and how every Sunday deducted its unit from the decently-clad circle who still kneel within sight of the Priest, adding to those who slunk into the dark corners of the aisle, or hid behind the pillars, or hung round the doors, or stayed utterly away for decency's sake. As I looked at the thin wheat crop and the lodged oats, and the blighted potato-fields the evening before; and marked the roads so lonely-looking, that used to be thronged with the boys and girls of the country round—(many a crossed love-match since; many a pleasant face, and many a strong arm on the wharves of New York, or amid the ridges of Illinois!)—as I looked and saw it all, all the poverty and desolation, that had come like the decrepitude of old age on the country, I made sure that now and for ever the doom of the Irish race was definitely sealed unless God inspired the hearts of our Delegates with the spirit of courage, and wisdom, and unanimity.

Oh, surely to God, no man could be an hour in that Conference without feeling that it was so indeed! Never since the topmost oak of Ireland rose from the waters of the Deluge—never, since Partholon's greedy eyes first rested on the green forests of the lonely island—never, in all our history, did an assembly meet in so solemn a juncture, so manifestly charged with the fate of the nation, and so entirely representative of the Irish people. To an Irishman, knowing and feeling his country's state, and knowing the men