

ism was set up, and every man, woman, and child was commanded, on penalty of death, to bow down and worship it. Those who had the constancy and courage of a Daniel, such as More and Fisher, clung to the religion of their fathers, and were sent to the stake or the block. The weak, the timid, those who cared more for this life than for the next, submitted to the decree of the despot, and embraced the new religion. From that time forward every means was used not only to exterminate every lurking adherent of the old faith, but to prevent the return of the people to its embrace. Every conceivable plan was pursued to extirpate the Catholic faith, root and branch. Every thing was done that mortal man and the devil together could do, to erase from the public mind every line and trace, yea, the very remembrance of the Catholic Faith. The voice of its living teacher was silenced by exile or death. Its temples were made to resound with the discordant notes of a strange creed. Its altars and other sacred symbols and monuments were impiously overthrown and destroyed. Its books of instruction were consumed along with their martyred authors. And not only was every thing done to keep from the people all correct information concerning the former religion of the country, but the most unflinching efforts were made to imbue their minds with false and distorted views of its doctrines and precepts. Those pulpits in which it was wont to be set forth with so much clearness and unanimity, were made to exhibit it as a base and degrading superstition, as a lying imposture, as a system of gloomy fanaticism and bloody persecution. The press was made to re-echo the falsehoods and calumnies of the pulpit. Books, grossly misrepresenting the faith and morals of Catholics, and the history and institutions of their Church, were multiplied without number and scattered over the land, so that the very name of Popery, if remembered at all, should be remembered only as another name for cruelty and corruption. These abominable measures were for a long time successful. But we may now hope that their day, or rather night, has nearly ended. The decrees of tyrants have lost their terror; the bloody statues enacted by the minions of despots have been erased; and liberty of conscience proclaimed and established by an authority which even kings have at length been taught to respect and obey. And behold the happy result. The old faith has returned to the land from which it was so long exiled, and reasserted its claims to the homage and obedience of the people. These claims are heard; they are discussed; they are admitted and obeyed. Old Oxford, the chief seat of learning, has been the first, we may say, to listen to the voice of her ancient mother, by yielding up to her arms her most gifted and most honored sons. Her noble example is every where followed. This good work has been going on more particularly during the last fifteen years, but, above all, during the recent agitation on the "Papal Aggression." There are but two things necessary to the progress and complete triumph of Catholicity, and these are, liberty and inquiry. Where these are possessed and exercised by the people, nothing can arrest her onward march.

THE GREAT DEBATE ON THE LITTLE BILL.

(From the Weekly News.)

Five nights of debate have produced one or two good speeches, and one scene of Parliamentary uproar on the most approved "No-Popery" scale; apart from this, matters are much where they were. Many weeks ago we recorded our deliberate opinion that all legislative action on the subject of the Papal Hierarchy must be either impotent or mischievous. Nothing has since occurred to change that opinion. We further confessed our regret that when the Diplomatic Relations Bill was under consideration of the House, the opportunity had been lost, of entering into such a negotiation with the Court of Rome as would have rendered the appointment of Papal Hierarchs without communication with the English Government, a political impossibility. From the expression of that regret we have seen no reason to recede.

The best speech in defence of the Bill was Lord Palmerston's. He put the only points that can really be urged in favor of it; viz., that the House is pledged to do something; and that all they are asked to do by the Bill is confined to a simple repudiation of the Aggressive Act sought to be dealt with. You, the Pope, have given us Bishops with Territorial Titles; we, the people of England, will prohibit those titles from being assumed. That, according to Lord Palmerston, is the whole Bill, and notwithstanding the counter opinions of the lawyers, we think Lord Palmerston is right in his estimate. But if so, the question recurs, is it worth while for this to have convulsed England and alienated Ireland? The majority will be regarded as no answer to this question; it is merely the recorded opinion of the House that, as they must legislate in some way, they choose this mode of legislating as being, upon the whole, the only practicable course. It is, in fact, a compromise of extreme opinions resulting, as compromises generally do, in a tertium quid, which, while it offends many, satisfies none.

THE PROPOSED VISITATION BILL.

(From the Tablet.)

Our readers will find considerable matter for reflection, and we hope action, in the document given below, a proposed "Bill to prevent the forcible detention of Females in Religious Houses." Protestant England is being absolutely driven mad by the spirit of Catholicity with which it is now engaged in a hand-to-hand fight. The British people, by the voice of the Times, yell out a scream of agony at finding that a young lady, possessed of £80,000, is likely to take the veil. Eighty thousand pounds! Is the Catholic Church

really to get such a sum? A sum which, if that young lady married, instead of following the holy vocation to which Almighty God is, perhaps, calling her, might actually purchase seats in Parliament, shares in railways, pictures, statues, plate, and fine houses—might open long vistas of banquets and assemblies—might feast the god of this world for years with most acceptable sacrifices. Something clearly must be done. What presents itself is a bill to subject Nunneries to domiciliary visits made by six justices of the peace at least twice in the year, and as much oftener as they please. They are to visit at any hour between six in the morning and eight in the evening, or eight in the morning, and six in the evening, according to the time of the year; or any Nun separately, or all the Nuns collectively, to be brought before them as they shall see fit; and if it pleases them to think that any of them wishes to leave the Convent, they may make inquiry of the Superior about her if they please, or if they like better, they may make no inquiry, but remove her out of the house forthwith, and hand her over to be kept in the family of the matron of the parish workhouse (!) for the space of one month, with "a reasonable allowance" out of the parish fund for her care, maintenance, and clothing. Where she is to go after the month is out, the act does not say. There is to be a register kept of all the members of such religious houses, under penalty of a misdemeanor; and if those worshipful justices are impeded in their visitation, the person so impeding them shall be also liable to penalty for misdemeanor, or if he assaults them, to transportation for ten years. This is what the enemies of God are meditating against His Church. Picture to your minds, O Catholics of England and Ireland! six justices of the peace, impure and bad men for aught we know, having this power of vexing and harassing the holy virgins of the Lord in the hallowed cloister whither they have retreated from the world. Imagine to yourselves any meddlesome or profligate squire, who happens to have a seat on the Bench, endowed with the power, with two of his fellows, to knock at the door of a Convent, and demand to see any of the inmates he names, or all the inmates collectively, and, with or without the consent of the Superior, to remove them from the Convent, and place them with the matron of the workhouse. Are Catholics to submit to legislation like this? Will not the whole voice of Ireland make itself heard like thunder if there be any serious danger of Parliament's passing an enactment so Satanic? [And their arms felt also we hope.—Ed. T. W.]

Extracts from the Bill to Prevent Forcible Detention in Religious Houses.

"That the justices for every county in which any religious houses shall be registered under this act shall at the Michaelmas quarter sessions of the peace in every year appoint six or more justices of the peace to act as visitors of each house registered under this act, situate within such county, and such visitors so appointed shall be and are hereby authorized and empowered, not being less than three in number, together to visit every such house in manner directed by this act.

"That every registered religious house shall be visited and inspected by the visitors appointed for that purpose under this act at the least twice in every year, on such days and at such hours of the day, between the hours of eight in the morning and six in the evening, from the twenty-first of September to the twenty-first of March, and between the hours of six in the morning and eight in the evening, from the twenty-first of March to the twenty-first of September in each year, and without notice, and for such length of time, as they shall think fit, and they are hereby empowered to see all and every the inmates therein, either separately or collectively, as they shall see fit, and for that purpose there shall be kept at every such house for the use of the said visitors a book containing a list fully entered up of all the persons residing therein, setting forth the true Christian and surname, the age, the last place of abode, the names and residences of the parents, guardians, or next of kin, as the case may be, of every such person, together with the date of her entry into the house, the style or title by which she is called or known therein, the office, if any, held by her; and in case any such person shall die, or leave the said house, or be removed therefrom, an entry shall be made in the list in the said book of such death, departure, or removal, as the case may be, opposite to the name and description of such person, together with the date thereof.

"That if it shall appear to the said visitors, upon the occasion of any such visitation, that any female is desirous of leaving the religious house in which she shall for the time being be resident, then and in every such case it shall be lawful for such visitors, if they shall think fit, to make inquiry in relation thereto of such person or persons, including the superior, if any, of such house, as they may deem capable of giving information on the subject, and also with or without such inquiry to remove such female from the house in which she shall be so resident.

"That if it shall be determined by the said visitors to remove, under the provisions of this act, any female from the religious house in which she shall for the time being be resident, then and in every such case it shall be lawful for the said visitors to place such female, if she shall so request, under the care of the matron of the workhouse of the union or parish within which such house shall be situate, and such matron shall be and is hereby required to take charge of every female who shall be so placed under her care, as an inmate of her own family, and not as a pauper, for the space of one month; provided always, that nothing in this act contained shall be construed or taken to make it compulsory on any such female to remain as such inmate for any longer period than she shall think fit.

"That if at any time after the 15th day of September next ensuing the passing of this act any religious order, community, or establishment consisting of females bound by religious or monastic vows shall reside or associate in any house in England or Wales, and such house shall not have been previously registered pursuant to the provisions of this act, then, and in every such case, the superior of such house shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor.

"That if any person shall wilfully obstruct or impede any of the visitors in their way to, at, or in, or returning from any such religious house, such person

shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and if any person shall assault any visitor in any such house or the curtilage thereof, he shall be deemed guilty of a felony, and being convicted thereof shall be liable to be transported as such for ten years, or to be imprisoned, either with or without hard labor, and for any time the court may direct, not exceeding two years."

CATHOLIC INTELLIGENCE.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

St. Jarlath's, Tuam, March 9, 1851.

My Lord,—It would seem as if you imagined that the people of Ireland, exhausted by a long and terrible famine, would sit down the silent and apathetic spectators of your disregard of the Divine law in endeavoring to annihilate their Apostolic Hierarchy. The signal discomfiture which you experienced, coincident with this aggression, when, flushed with the hopes of success, you proposed your fatal measure, is a triumphant attestation of the vitality and vigor of Ireland. You may starve the bodies of the people, an experiment that has been submitted to in all the variety of patient suffering during the inauspicious years of the Whig ministry—you never can subdue the energy of their immortal souls. The survivors have not yet recovered from this emaciating infliction; coroners' inquests still attest the frequency of deaths from starvation. But, accustomed to neglect, the people have ceased to complain, deeming it a superfluous labor to convey their remonstrances to a ministry by whom they have been so cruelly unheeded. This neglect might admit of some excuse under financial embarrassment. The people are told, however, that the exchequer is filled to repletion. Yet, though the treasury is thus supplied with funds pressed down, and flowing over, and embarrassing ministers only with the difficulty of finding channels for its expenditure, the lands of Ireland, so long untenanted, are still left waste and unproductive, without any legislative attempt to apply to them the vast amount of unproductive labor that is going to waste in the workhouses, and to create by this united produce of the land and labor a wholesome and virtuous sustenance for the people, instead of the irksome and melancholy and vicious idleness to which thousands of them are now doomed.

To the astuteness of worldly wisdom no period could be deemed more propitious to assail the Faith of a people. But Providence, that confounds the wisdom of the cunning, has drawn moral vigor out of the material infirmity of the nation, and converted what was deemed its weakness into a tower of strength. Those who could see with the holy resignation of a Job their dearest friends snatched from them by famine, and who would rather die than lay hands on what they deemed in the last extremity was unlawful to touch, have become loud and courageous on finding that the Faith is menaced which alone sustained the nation throughout the agony of its unprecedented suffering. They lost their friends, they bore the tortures of famine, they endured a martyrdom more painful than that of the forty heroic martyrs we commemorate on to-morrow, and after such sacrifices, which have left but little for life to enjoy, it was not to be imagined, but by the Materialists who have no hope beyond the grave, that a nation of confessors would be indifferent to any attack on their religion by an attack upon the Hierarchy through whom it is derived. No sooner has the alarm been sounded than the hearts of the Catholic people gave back a significant response, and those who seemed dead to every impulse, as if they had no tie in this world, have been seen suddenly starting into their wonted animation, and pledging themselves that they will not endure this last and cruellest, because the most treacherous, persecution of their religion.

I state those things preparatory to Friday, in order that, admonished, your Lordship may learn justice, and that the faithful representatives of Ireland, who have already brought such persuasion to your councils, may be encouraged to persevere in their truly patriotic career. They have Ireland with them. Never, perhaps, in any former period of its eventful history, has there been such a strong union of all classes—a union, thanks to your lordship's policy, brought about by the conviction of the hostility with which they are threatened, and the necessity of the most strenuous exertions to avert it. You now, forsooth, condescend to bring in your penal bill in a more mitigated form. No mitigation, short of its utter rejection, will satisfy the Catholic people of Ireland. We are conscious of no crime; our allegiance to our beloved Sovereign is beyond reproach or impeachment. Why, then, threaten us with a bill of pains and penalties under any form? There are laws of higher and holier obligation than those which are enacted by men; and your lordship must be aware how powerless must be all enactments that may clash with the paramount obligations of the laws of God. The history of all the persecutions of the Church, from the days of Nero to that now meditated, is nought but the unallowed efforts of men to substitute arbitrary and unjust enactments for the inviolable obligation of the Divine laws. The boast of England in asserting her independence of all foreign dominion, is easily resolvable into an ambition of independence of the laws promulgated by our Redeemer Himself. How absorbing and unsated is this mistaken pride of national independence! We are as impatient of a foreign yoke as ever England was, but we are not free, in our impatience of a foreign yoke, to confound spiritual with temporal jurisdiction, or to conclude that we ought not to obey the Pope as the successor of St. Peter, because he is also the temporal Sovereign of Rome. Your lordship may fancy, and insist on this fancy, that England was peculiarly excepted in the commission given by our Redeemer to his apostles to preach and plant churches throughout all the nations of the earth, as well as to the commission given to St. Peter in particular, to govern the entire of that vast flock,

including people as well as all the gradations of their Pastors. And following up this fancy, you will, no doubt, pronounce the first establishment of the See of Canterbury, by the Missionary of Pope Gregory, an unhallowed Papal aggression. If so, as the rights of the heir cannot be more sacred than those of the first Episcopal occupant, you place in the same category the Archbishops of Westminster and Canterbury. But whatever your lordship may think to the contrary, we firmly believe that Ireland is included among the nations handed over to the spiritual dominion of the apostles, and St. Peter, their chief; nor have we the morbid ambition of nationality, which, by freeing us from the sweet yoke of Rome, would also deprive us of the graces that flow from a communion with that Apostolic See. The truly heathenish ignorance and brutal vices into which that portion of the English population is sunk who have no instructors but those who have broken off all communication with the Apostolic See, is a lamentable commentary on the folly as well as error of mere national or secular Churches. What wonder that they should become worse than heathens, when their High Priests tell them that the great Sacrament of Baptism, by which sinful man passes from the state of heathenism into God's Church, is not necessary for salvation!!

The eyes of all are turned now to parliament, watching to see whether their members are at their posts, though, like the Roman senator of old, they should be carried thither on their couches. No apology can henceforth plead with the people if those members do not exert themselves in stopping the present penal enactment. Opposition—stern, persevering opposition—to your hateful measure, in season or out of season, is the paramount duty of every Irish member of parliament, as well as opposition to every other measure you propose until you abandon the bill which you in an evil hour proposed, or until once more you abandon the helm.—I am your obedient servant,

† JOHN, Archbishop of Tuam.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY—MUNIFICENT CONTRIBUTIONS.

LETTER FROM THE PRIMATE TO DR. COOPER.

Drogheda, March 16, 1851.

My dear Dr. Cooper—Will you have the goodness to announce a munificent contribution of £500, which I have this morning received by the English post for our Catholic University. The humility of the generous donors will not suffer us to do honor to their names, or otherwise know them than as—

- A. M., Liverpool ... £300
- D. G., Manchester ... 100
- L. M. ... 100

and it is therefore that I am obliged to request this acknowledgment through the papers.

With such a proof of the generous feelings that animate our brethren in England, how can any one reasonably doubt of the possibility of the glorious undertaking in which Catholic Ireland is engaged? Should not such an example be sufficient to dissipate the misgivings of the wavering and of the men of weak faith, and make them have more confidence in the cause of Catholic truth? Were we all more under the influence of faith and charity, every symptom of hesitation and diffidence would soon vanish.

But, notwithstanding the obstacles that may be thrown in our way, I am confident, as soon as the good work which has been so warmly recommended by the Vicar of Jesus Christ becomes better known, other large contributions will flow in, and our resources will be most abundant. Every day will bring new arguments to corroborate the statement of the Synod of Thurles, "that we have within ourselves here at home, and in the persons of our brethren who are scattered not only through the sister kingdoms and the British colonies, but the continent of America, ample resources—zeal, learning, talent, and the pecuniary means—for the accomplishment of such an object, the foundation of a University."

As yet I am not able to give you an accurate account of the sums contributed to the fund in this diocese; but I think it may be safely stated that both Clergy and laity are acting with the greatest generosity, having all entered most warmly into the spirit of the undertaking. They all ask, why should Ireland be the only Catholic country in Europe without a Catholic University?—why should the ten millions of Catholics now in these kingdoms be left without such an institution?—why should they be compelled to send their children to schools where their faith and morals are exposed to grievous and intrinsic dangers? Why should they not have the same advantages that are enjoyed by their Protestant fellow-subjects? If Protestants insist upon having their children educated under Protestant control, though they have no fixed principles—and many change their belief every day without ceasing to be true and good Protestants—why should Catholics be indifferent or careless upon so important a matter, when their faith is so inflexible that they cannot sacrifice one iota of their creed without losing every claim to the name of Catholic? The eyes of all are now open to the great want of Catholic books for the education of youth, and to the necessity of endeavoring to form a Catholic literature. The people will not be satisfied with books, merely because they do not insult and impugn our doctrines; works must be furnished, written not on latitudinarian but on Catholic principles, and breathing a Catholic spirit. Our deficiencies in this respect, and our crying wants, should be continually before the public.

The more closely this matter is examined, the more support shall we receive for a Catholic University, the object of which is to create and cherish a Catholic feeling in society, and to establish a literature not infected with error and immorality. If a Catholic University were once in full operation, we would not have to weep over the many apostacies which, to our affliction and disgrace, have taken place in other es-