

government is actuated; the efficacious, though to the world, unobvious, measures which that government has taken, and from time to time continues to multiply, with a view to eradicate that religion from every district in which the slightest vestige of it still remains. There was no enactment in the British or Irish code of penal laws which is not imitated in the Russian anti-Catholic system of legislation, under forms indeed not quite so direct and tangible, but equally inimical, tormenting, and enslaving in every respect. The letter of the law is tyrannical enough; but Russian Catholics have stated to us, that it is impossible for foreigners to understand the personal mortifications which are superadded to the law, by the insolence of the officers, who are commissioned to see it carried into execution. Under an outward form of toleration, the most degrading and infamous system of persecution is put into action, from which there is no possibility of escape, except through the fatal portals of apostacy. M.

PROTESTANT PERSECUTION OF CATHOLICS:

THE ORIGIN OF ILLEGAL SOCIETIES IN IRELAND.

From Madden's "United Irishmen"

The Peep-of-day Boys sprung up in the year 1784, in the county of Armagh. The members of this secret association were also known by the name of "Protestant Boys," and "Wreckers," and, finally, by that of "Orangemen." The character of their proceedings must have been particularly atrocious, when Sir Richard Musgrave felt the impossibility of palliating the exuberancy of their zeal in the cause of ascendancy. He says "They visited the houses of their antagonists (victims, he ought to have said) at a very early hour in the morning, to search for arms; and it is most certain that, in doing so, they often committed the most wanton outrages—insulting their persons and breaking their furniture."

The ardor of the religious zeal of this privileged association, could be appeased by nothing short of the popish lands and tenements of the Roman Catholic peasantry, in all the neighbouring districts. In the fervor of their assumed enthusiasm for the diffusion of pure religion, they posted the following pithy controversial notice on the doors of the benighted Romanists—"To hell or Connaught;" now as they were held to be going to the former region their own way, in turning them out of their houses and homes, it would seem that it was their lands and tenements, and not the cause of true religion, about which these champions of the church were interested. Lord Chesterfield speaks of Lady Palmer, a young Irish lady of the old religion, who frequented the Castle in his time, as "a very dangerous Papist." The possession of beauty, like the occupation of land, on the part of the Romanists, was no doubt of a very dangerous tendency.

In the beginning of 1796, "it was generally believed (says Plowden) that 7,000 Catholics had been forced or burned out of the county of Armagh; and that the ferocious banditti who had expelled them, had been encouraged, connived at, and

protected by the government." In the analysis of the report of the committee on Orange Institutions, in the Edinburgh Review of January, 1837, the following account is given of the proceedings of the "Peep-of-day" Boys; and of their systematic atrocities in 1795, under the newly adopted name of Orangemen.

"The first Orange lodge was formed on the 21st September, 1795, at the house of a man named Sloan, in the obscure village of Loughall. The immediate cause of those disturbances in the north that gave birth to Orangism, was an attempt to plant colonies of Protestants on the farms or tenements of Catholics, who had been forcibly ejected. Numbers of them were seen wandering about the country, hungry, half-naked, and infuriated. Mr. Christie, a member of the Society of Friends, who appears to have passed sixty or seventy years on his property as quietly as a man may in the neighbourhood of such violent neighbors, gives a painful account of the outrages then committed. He says (5573)

"he heard sometimes of twelve or fourteen Catholic houses wrecked in a night, and some destroyed;" (5570) "That this commenced in the neighbourhood of Churchill, between Portadown and Dungannon, and then extended over nearly all the northern counties. In the course of time, after the Catholics were many of them driven from the county, and had taken refuge in different parts of Ireland, I understood they went to Connaught. Some years after, when peace and quietness was in a measure restored, some returned, probably five or six years afterward. The property which they left was transferred, in most instances to Protestants; where they had houses and gardens, and small farms of land, it was generally handed over by the landlords to Protestant tenants. That occurred within my knowledge." He farther says, "It continued for two or three years, but was not quite so bad in 1796 and 1797 as it was earlier. After this wrecking, and the Catholics were driven out, what was called 'The Break of Day' party merged into Orangism; they passed from one to the other, and the gentlemen in the county procured what they termed their Orange warrants, to enable them to assemble legally, as they termed it. The name dropped and Orangism succeeded to 'Break-of-Day Men.'" (5575.)

"At first, the association was entirely confined to the lower orders; but it soon worked its way upward, and, so early as November, 1796, there appears a corrected report of the rules and regulations officially drawn up, and submitted to the Grand Lodge of Ireland, under the presidency of Thomas Veiner, Esq., Grand Master; J. C. Beresford, Esq., Grand Secretary, and others. The state of the country, soon after the formation of these societies, is faithfully described in an address, which the late Lord Gosford, as governor of Armagh, submitted to all the leading magistrates of the county. His lordship stated, that he had called them together to submit a plan to their consideration, for checking the enormities which disgraced the county. He then proceeds: "It is no secret that a persecution, accom-

panied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty which have, in all ages, distinguished that dreadful calamity, is now raging in this country. Neither age, nor even acknowledged innocence, as to the late disturbances, is sufficient to excite mercy—much less afford protection. The only crime which the wretched objects of this merciless persecution are charged with, is a crime of easy proof—it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this species of delinquency, and the sentence they pronounce is equally concise and terrible; it is nothing less than a confiscation of all property, and immediate banishment. It would be extremely painful, and surely unnecessary, to detail the horrors that attend the execution of so wide and tremendous a proscription, which certainly exceeds, in the comparative number of those it consigns to ruin and misery, every example that ancient and modern history can afford; for where have we heard, or in what history of human cruelties have we read, of more than half the inhabitants of a populous country, deprived at one blow, of the means, as well as the fruits of their industry, and driven, in the midst of an inclement winter, to seek a shelter for themselves and their hapless families where chance may guide them? This is no exaggerated picture of the horrid scenes now acting in this county; yet surely it is sufficient to awaken sentiments of indignation and compassion in the coldest heart. Those horrors are now acting, and acting with impunity. The spirit of impartial justice (without which law is nothing better than tyranny) has for a time disappeared in this county, and the supineness of the magistracy is a topic of conversation in every corner of this kingdom." [Evidence, 3251.]

"The resolutions moved by his Lordship were adopted, and signed by all the leading magistrates, who thus bore undeniable testimony to the persecution the Catholics were then suffering in that county, which was the cradle, and has ever been the hot-bed of Orangism.

"We have carefully examined the documents submitted by the Orange society to the committee, respecting the objects of their institution, the motives of its members, and the qualifications necessary for candidates, and nothing apparently can be more humane, tolerant moral, and praiseworthy. Certain doubtful features occasionally, however, do peep through this coating of amiable professions. For instance, this society enforced on its members an oath of qualified allegiance. 'I, A. B., do solemnly swear,' &c., 'that I will, to the utmost of my power, support and defend the King and his heirs, so long as he or they support the Protestant Ascendancy.' Another suspicious article (No. 5), declares—'We are not to carry away money, goods, or any thing, from any person whatever, except arms and ammunition, and those only from an enemy—enemy no doubt meaning Catholic.'"

So much for the report, with regard to the objects of this society, and the obligations of its oaths, &c.

Now the oath above referred to is sufficiently objectionable, on the score of the

conditional allegiance it embodies; but the original oath or purple test of this society, was not produced by the officers of this society, on the inquiry entered into by the committee in 1835—but the existence of this diabolical test was given in evidence before the secret committee of 1798, by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and the knowledge of it admitted by the committee on that occasion, when O'Connor's statement was answered by one of the members belonging to the administration, in these words: "Government had nothing to do with the Orange society, nor with their oath of extermination."

In the memoir of the examination of Messrs. O'Connor, Emmett, and M'Nevin, drawn up by themselves, O'Connor's answer is given to this observation: "You, my Lord Castlereagh, from the station you fill, must be sensible that the executive of any country has it in its power to collect a vast mass of information, and you must know, from the secret nature of the Union, that the executive must have most minute information of every act of the Irish government. As one of the executives (of the United Irishmen,) it came to my knowledge that considerable sums of money were expended, throughout the country, in endeavouring to extend the Orange system, and that the Orange oath of extermination was administered; when these facts were coupled, not only with the general impunity which has been uniformly extended to all the acts of this diabolical association, but the marked encouragement its members have received from government, I find it impossible to exculpate the government from being the parent and protector of these societies."

The fact of the protection of "the Peep-of-Day Boys," or the Orangemen, on the part of the government, admits of no doubt. When the insurrection act and the convention bill were introduced, the excesses of the peasantry, whom they had goaded into resistance, were denounced by the viceroy of the legal officers of the government, but not the slightest allusion was made to the outrages of the exterminators of Armagh; nay, bills of indemnity were passed to protect their leaders and magisterial accomplices from all legal proceedings on the part of their victims. As to the effect of these societies in promoting the views of the United Irishmen, it is clearly admitted by the members of the executive of the society of the United Irishmen, that the prosecution of the people in Armagh, the protection of the exterminators, and the enactment of sanguinary laws, and especially of the insurrection and indemnity acts, had not only filled the ranks of their society, but led the executive to the conclusion, that the government had forfeited all claims to obedience, and was to be resisted. "No alliance whatever was previously formed," says O'Connor, "between the Union and France"—namely, before the middle of 1798. The same answer is given by Emmett. So much for the power given to the United Irishmen by the persecution of the people on the part of the Orangemen permitted by the government; and as for the immediate causes of the outbreak of the subsequent and consequent rebellion, we can