

high-born sisters, wives with their husbands, and daughters without number with their trusting parents. I have known, in Derbyshire, a young lady not eighteen years of age, the daughter of a widow mother, the mother also a Roman Catholic, seduced into a convent under false pretences, kept there in spite of every effort of her family, with the approbation of the papal authorities, and only delivered by my own public threat, as a priest, of application to the civil power, and consequent fear of scandal. I have seen clerical inviolability made to mean nothing less than license and impunity. I have read to the pure and simple minded Cardinal-Prefect of the Propaganda a narrative, written to a pious lay friend by a respected Roman Priest, of such enormities of lust in his fellow-priests around him, that the reading took away my breath,—to be answered, " *Cura mio*, I know it, I know it all, and more, and worse than all; but nothing can be done." I have known a priest (here in England) practise Liquori on his clientele simply as an amateur of wickedness, apparently without conscious malice, just as he would try poison upon dogs or cats; an Iago, without even an imaginary wrong from any body. I have known this creature get up, and very successfully, a miracle.—(I have proofs in his own hand-writing.)—at the very moment when as a brother priest satisfied me, he was experimenting in seduction. But nothing could be done! I have known a priest received and honoured at a prince-bishop's table, when the host knew him to have just seduced a member of his own family. But nothing could be done! I have been mocked with false promises by dean and bishop in denouncing a young priest in whose bed-room,—and before there had been time for him to dress himself,—in broad day, in England, under a convent roof, I had myself found a young nun, apparently as much at home as her confessor was himself. I have been forced to let pass, without even ecclesiastical rebuke, a priest's attempt upon the chastity of my own wife, the mother of my children, and to find instead, only sure means taken to prevent the communication to me of any similar attempt in future.

This is a part of what has come within my own experience. But it is not yet the worst of that sad experience.

I have seen priests of mean abilities, of coarse natures, and gross natures, practise upon pure and highly gifted woman of the higher ranks, married, and unmarried, the teachings of their treacherous and impure casuistry, with a success that seemed more than human. I have seen these priests impose their pretendedly divine authority, and sustain it by mock miracles, for ends that were simply devilish. I have had poured into my ears what can never be uttered, and what ought not to be believed, but was only too plainly true. And I have seen that all that is most deplorable is not an accident, but a result, and an inevitable result, and a confessedly inevitable result of the working of the practical system of the Church of Rome, with all its stupendous machinery of mischief.

And the system is irrevocable and irremediable.

When I compare the Church of Rome, as I now see it, with what I painted her to myself, with the imaginary realization of our blessed Saviour's scheme for fallen man's sanctification, no words can convey my horror at the contrast. I should often doubt the conclusions of my reason, mistrust my moral sense, and reject my certain knowledge as a dream, if God's written word and man's universal conscience, if the experience of both hemispheres and ten centuries did not confirm me.

And though I acknowledge, dear Lord Shrewsbury, you are the man of all others in the world, to whom I am most bounden by duty, as well as affection, to defend my renunciation of communion with Rome, I should not have had the heart to do so, if I doubted for a moment that the character of the system which I revealed, was as abhorrent to you as to myself. Nay, more I should belie my conscience, if I professed to think that the mass of Englishmen who think themselves Roman Catholics, really are so. I profoundly doubt it,—out of the ranks of the recent converts to Romanism,—there can be found thirty Englishmen of thirty years of age, who are really Roman Catholics, who are ready to act upon their principles, when they maintain the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, and his infallibility as the Mouthpiece of the Almighty, in faith and morals.

The ties which bind an individual to his hereditary religion partake of the mysterious character of religion itself. But religion has claims as a national as well as an individual affair. And the religion of the Bible protesting against that of Rome, is emphatically the national religion of Great Britain and America. And my soul I am persuaded it is their religion, that has

made these countries, and that keeps them what they are, just as I am persuaded it is its religion that has made France what it is just now. Those who think any religion contemptible because it mixes error with truth, or because they see its ecclesiastics individually contemptible, are hopeless. They are almost fit to be considered what Rome has always considered *mere* men and women, as creatures half-way between priests and monks, not to be reasoned with, but ruled absolutely.

In the first interview I ever had the honor to have with Prince Metternich, the subject of his most minute inquiries was the religious development of America; politically considered, the relative numbers of the different sects, and their distinctive doctrines and discipline. Upon my remarking one day in his private cabinet the admirable "American Almanac" for the current year, he playfully boasted that I could find few in Europe better acquainted with my native country than himself; but it was over, even in that now empire, its religion that was his chief interest, that which he considered the preponderant interest of the State. The experience of Europe during the last four years, it would seem, should be enough to make all men think it so in every commonwealth.

What thinking man, (thinking of other things than himself I mean,) what thinking man, that saw into whose hands France, placed anew the rudder of the State in 1818, but knew where these hands would guide it—whether Cavaignac or Bourbon, Louis Bonaparte or Orleans, held the bauble of authority.

When Machiavelli, whose infidelity was learned from Popes, whose depths of wisdom was all his own, when Machiavelli points to profligate and dismembered Italy, "This," he exclaims, "is what we owe to the Church of Rome." What kingdom on the Continent, but may now echo Machiavelli's gratitude for Italy!

In bringing this painful letter to a conclusion, perhaps it only remains for me to add, that, though I entered into the religious part, properly so called of the Papal System, it is not because I still cling to any single one of the distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome; but I have not forgotten the awful regard with which I ever approached them during my great delusion. Their mysterious fascination of soul and sense, must have been felt to be imagined. God only knows, how my whole being was bowed down before, what I believed, His real presence in the Mass, how I almost seemed to myself sensible of angels kneeling round me, when I lifted up the host to be adored. And I cannot but respect the deep sincerity of such faith in others, however, I cannot longer hold it, when all the visionary basis it was built on is gone altogether.

No one knows better than your Lordship what a wrench it was that broke me from the Church of Rome. But painful as it was, I should be the most ungrateful of men, if I did not ever bless God, publicly as well as in private, for the grace that delivered me, and if in doing so, I did not also give my humble thanks to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord, that the grounds on which I renounced the communion of that Church, left my faith unshaken; that, of his great mercy, I was saved from infidelity which is a too intelligible reaction with those who, because the faith which grasped at "the secret things of the Lord our God" has proved a great delusion, reject also "those revealed things which belong unto us and to our children for ever that we may do all the words of the law."

Believe me ever,

Dear Lord Shrewsbury,

With the sincerest affection and regard,

Your faithful servant,

PIERCE CONNELLY.

Albany Heath, Guildford, Dec. 27, 1852.

Diocesan Church Society.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

DIOCESAN CHURCH SOCIETY.

The Hubbard Cove Branch of the D. C. S., held its annual meeting on Monday, 21st February, when a respectable number of members, and others interested in the advancement of religion, assembled in the Church School House. Two verses of the Hundredth Psalm were sung, the Prayers appointed for the use of the Society offered up to Almighty God, through Jesus Christ.—When these acknowledgements of divine mercy had been concluded, the Rector opened the business of the meeting in an address of some length, in which he drew the attention of the meeting to the different objects of the Society—the numerous calls upon it for help, from every part of the Diocese,—and the insufficient means at the disposal of the Society to enable it to attend to all the calls—"come" or send "and help us." He then adverted to the imperative duty, which devolved upon the members of the Church, to give, even the smallest sum, freely, as God had prospered them, to the support of the Society, whose objects were

for the temporal and spiritual welfare of our fellow creatures, as they themselves had experienced from the labours and exertions among them, of the Assistant Missionary, the Rev. J. S. Smith, who received much of his support from the funds of that Society.

The first Resolution was then moved by Mr. Thomas Skinner, and expressed the grateful sense of Churchmen for the continued benevolence of the venerable Societies in the Parent Kingdom, towards these Colonies, and the gratitude of the people in this neighborhood particularly; to the one, for the allowance towards the Assistant Missionary in this Parish,—and to the other—the S. P. C. K.—for the liberal grant of £50 sterling, towards the completion of the new Church.—This was seconded by Mr. Frederick Dauphiney, and passed.

The second Resolution expressed the bounden duty of all to return thanks to Almighty God, for the measure of success thus far vouchsafed to the Society;—which was moved, with some appropriate remarks, by Mr. Robert Fox, and seconded by Mr. Neil McLean, and passed.

The next Resolution, acknowledged the duty of all to contribute cheerfully according to their ability;—and was moved by Mr. C. P. Wood, who has devoted much of his time as schoolmaster in this neighborhood.—It was seconded by Mr. William Darez, and passed.

The last Resolution,—which desired to express praise to God, for the generous support afforded by the D. C. Society towards Assistant and travelling Missionaries throughout the Diocese,—was moved by Mr. Alexander Kelly, and seconded by Mr. George Darez, and passed. The returns of the different collectors appointed some time previous, by the Rev. Mr. Smith, were then handed in.—Some, in consequence of the "badness of the times," had been unable to effect but little,—others nothing at all. To three of the collectors much praise is due for their active and efficient exertions, viz.—Mrs. C. P. Wood, Mrs. Langille, and Miss Sarah Darez. Several subscriptions were then paid in, and the Meeting was closed with the Apostolic Benediction.

Some necessary business was then transacted with the Building Committee of the New Church, and some Resolutions passed, with respect to the future contributions of the people in the neighborhood, towards the salary of the assistant Missionary.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

Weymouth, February 8th, 1845.

The Annual Meeting of the local branch of the Diocesan Church Society was held at Weymouth, on the evening of the 13th ult.

The proceedings commenced by singing the 100th Psalm. After which the Rev. P. J. Filleul invoked the blessing of God, in the form prescribed by the Society.

The various objects of this Institution were set forth. Interesting extracts from the last year's report were read, and likewise portions from the report of the S. P. G. Other information bearing on the cause of Missions was imparted. The meeting evidently felt much interest in the proceedings; and at the close but one feeling seemed to prevail—to support liberally the recognized Missionary Association of our Church.

Three Resolutions passed unanimously:—

The first—expressive of "gratitude to Almighty God for great religious privileges enjoyed, &c.," was moved by Colin Campbell, Esq., and seconded by Mr. P. Grant.

The second—testifying to "the great and lasting obligations due to the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, for a long continuance of fostering care," was moved by C. P. Jones, Esq., and seconded by Mr. Jas. Payson.

The third Resolution appointing the Board of Officers and the Committee for the ensuing year, was moved by Mr. Sorenson, and seconded by Mr. Mildon.

The soul stirring Hymn of Bishop Heber, was then sung, and the meeting dismissed with the Apostolic Benediction.

A meeting for a similar purpose, was also held a few evenings afterwards in another part of the Parish, where also a general determination was evinced of contributing to an Institution, which offered so many opportunities of doing good to the souls of men as did the D. C. S.

The best proof that can be offered that the Churchmen of Weymouth are anxious, according to their means, to advance this good cause, will appear in their sending this year an increased amount of £11 5s. to the general fund. When the remaining subscriptions are taken in (which will be during the next fortnight,) the offerings of this Parish will be at least £14.

It may not be out of place to state, that within the last few months £25 have been expended in repairs on the Church and Parsonage, and that the congregation contemplate during the next summer, if God permit, painting the Church internally, and as soon as possible, procuring a Bell for the Church.

It may serve to encourage others in good works to mention that the following ladies, Mrs. Alpheus Jones, Mrs. Sorenson, Mrs. Vail, and Mrs. Filleul, most kindly undertook the office of collecting the contributions. The zeal with which this labor of love was performed appears in the success they met with.

We pray that our efforts in this holy cause may increase more and more, and that we may ever feel it to be not only a duty, but the highest privilege, to impart to the poorer brethren of our household of faith, the knowledge of salvation through the crucified Saviour of sinners.