

FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The annual meeting was held on Tuesday, June 7th, in the great hall of the Freemason's Tavern, Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Innfields. The spacious hall was crowded to excess. The galleries, and a great number of reserved seats, were occupied by elegantly dressed ladies, amongst whom were the families of several of the principal Catholic nobility and gentry. The attendance of members of the Metropolitan Branch Institutes was very numerous, and afforded pleasing augury of the success of the Institute now that it is based upon the truly comprehensive and popular plan proposed by the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Dublin. Upon the platform, besides the Hon. Charles Langdale (the Chairman) we noticed the Right Rev. Dr. Mostyn, V. A.; Lord Camoys, Lord Lovatt, the Right Hon. D. O'Connell, Philip Howard, Esq., M. P., W. Witham, Esq., Captain Stapleton,——Huddleston, Esq., C. Addis, Esq., J. A. Cooke, Sergeant Shea, Charles Weld, Esq., F. McDonnell, Esq.,——Eyston, Very Rev. Dr. Kirwan, Dr. Magee, the Rev. Messrs. Wackerhata, Sisk, Robinson, Moore, Stanly, O'Neil (Cambridge) Cottar and a great number of other clergymen, whose names we cannot at present recall.

On the motion of Lord Camoys, the Hon. Charles Langdale was called to the chair amidst loud cheers.

After a few speeches and resolutions,—

The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Dublin then rose, and was received in a manner which baffles description. When the cheering had subsided, he said:—I believe you all know that I am a moderate man—(laughter)—that I am easily contented. All I want is to hear high mass in Westminster Abbey. (Laughter and loud cheers.) It was often said there before. The abbey was built for that purpose, and it would be a pity not to apply it to its old object. Yes! I do want to hear high mass in that venerable abbey; and looking at the progress of events around us, both at home and abroad, I do feel convinced that the period is fast approaching when I shall hear mass there. (Loud cheers.) That will be a glorious day for England. Oh, when shall we again see the priests of God arrayed in their sacred vestments at the altar tomb of Edward the Confessor, for it was there they vested themselves—at the altar-tomb of him who was not more remarkable for the practice of religion than he was for the free institutions which he established—when we shall see the priests descending the steps from that altar-tomb, with canons, and deacons, and acolyths, and thurifers spreading incense around, to offer the holiest of sacrifices at the altars which have so long been desecrated—who will not fervently, and in rapture return thanks for this mighty and glorious regeneration of our Catholic England? (Loud cheers.) The right hon. gentleman proceeded to say that God's hand was abroad; and the period was, he really believed, not distant, when triumphant England would again enter the fold of the one Shepherd.

If the change were to be purchased by one act of fraud—by denying any one point which Catholics believed—or by the compromise of any one tenet which she holds, he—humble as he was—would sooner perish on a scaffold than consent to the change so purchased. Nor would he consent to a change of one act of persecution—it any penal law, or one restrictive enactment of any kind, were to be the price. (Cheers.) No! the change must come from spontaneous conviction—spontaneous, he meant, in its proper sense, for there was no spontaneity but from God. He believed the time for this change was coming. Everywhere—in every land—he beheld cheering promise of its advent; and soon he trusted that Catholicity would spread and reign throughout the universe. (Cheers.) They had heard what the American (Mr. Tyng) said about it. He came to England to curse and deride Catholicity, and yet he was obliged to admit its hundred fold increase. (Hear, hear.) In stating this, he (Mr. Tyng) had not gone to the extent of the truth. He had stated that there are in America 15 bishops, whereas the real number is 22; and if the same arithmetical increase be applied to Mr. Tyng's estimate of the number of Catholics, as is applied to his statement of the number of bishops, it would appear that Catholicity and America would soon be identified. (Loud cheers.) Miss Martineau and captain Maryatt—Tory as he was—were obliged, with Mr. Tyng, to admit the rapid advancement of the Catholic religion in America. (Loud cheering.) Look next to Europe, and there again consolation and hope arise on every side. Portugal, abandoning its schism is re-entering into union. Even Spain—at the atrocities committed in which he shuddered—in spite of the power of the tyrant Espartero, gave grounds for hope. Espartero could not carry his measures; the going out of one minister after another—these and other events, were but the upheaving of the Catholic mind in Spain—the dawn of the coming day of peace and piety; and he (Mr. O'Connell) hurled defiance at Espartero. (Loud cheers.) Yes; all around was consolation. Even the *Times*—that *Times* which so recently had no other name for the venerated clergy of their church than "surpliced ruffians," and a "demon priesthood"—that *Times* itself is now a witness to the glorious revival and spreading of Catholicism. What did he read in that paper, only a few days ago? He read of 1800 persons going to communion, in one week, in one of the churches of Paris. (Loud cheers.)—He read of more than one thousand youths of the Polytechnic School—amongst whom, not long ago, religion was made a mockery, and the priests held in abomination—he now found a thousand of these youths forming themselves into a confraternity to observe the feasts, and not only to adhere to religious practices themselves, but to administer the consolations of piety to others, by instruction and exhortation. (Loud cheers.) This was the cheering scene exhibited in the very metropolis of immorality and infidelity—which, indeed,

could not be separated. He would next turn to Germany. Five years ago, and Catholicity was tyrannized over there; but it had now shaken its fetters off, and enjoyed equality; with less than which it would not ask.—(Loud cheers.) In Holland, a few years ago, the Catholics were not 5 per cent, of the population, and there was no Catholic bishop. At present, the Catholics are half the population, and there are seven bishops. (Loud cheers.) His authority for this was a document lately laid before the King. He had shown there was a hope from abroad; he would now advert to the sources of consolation at home. Many events were conspiring to afford it. Mr. Laing, a Presbyterian, and a man of talent, had raised the question of contrast between Catholicism and Protestantism. How often had boasting Protestantism associated the growth of crime with the Catholic religion, and how often did it claim for Protestantism the absence of both. But Mr. Laing had settled the matter. What did he say of Sweden,—of Sweden, where there are more Protestants, and where they are less disunited, than in any other country,—what did he say of them? Why, that Sweden was the most immoral nation in the world. (Hear, hear.) Then came the Rev. Mr. Gleig, a Peninsular hero, who fought at New Orleans, but who is now chaplain at Chelsea—what did he, high Tory as he was, say of Prussia? Reluctant as he must have been to tell it, he states that, next to Sweden, it was the most immoral country. (Hear, hear.) And did the Protestant clergy here, in England, do their duty in impressing religious knowledge on the minds of the young? He would give them a specimen of the state of the children in the mines. (Hear.) He had extracts there, into which that name at which every knee should bow was freely introduced. It was a strange mixture of what was awful with what might be regarded as ludicrous. In reading the extracts, he would not mention the sacred name, but only the office, viz., the REDEEMER. Mr. O'Connell then read extracts from the evidence given before the commission by children working in mines. It appeared that some of them had never heard of God or the Redeemer, and were totally ignorant of the existence of a future state.

[Similar extracts—from the reports of the children's employment commission—have been already published in this Journal, so that it is unnecessary to repeat them.—*F.'s Journal.*]

The right hon. gentleman here said he really could not bring himself to go on with these statements. They paid the clergy of the establishment six millions a year for instructing the people, and that is the value they got for it. [Hear, hear.] They saw how they instructed these poor creatures—Mr. Addis had referred to Dr. Bagot, the Bishop of Oxford. He [Mr. O'Connell] was not inclined to be angry with the bishop for abusing Popery. On the contrary, he was very willing to forgive him. The time had come when the Catholics should be most vigilant and circumspect, lest they did any thing to curtail or check the mighty movement now in

progress. [Hear, hear.] No harshness should be used to those who differ from them. Catholics should thank God that, by his favor, they are themselves so—and they should cherish the fulness of affection for those who are not. [Hear, hear.] For what they do for us, the Catholics should be thankful to them. [Hear, hear.] For what they do wrong, Catholics should pity them. [Hear, hear.] Catholics should pray that the work should not be half done. When a disposition to the truth is manifested, Catholics should pray that it may be fully recognised, and that the work of conversion may be made complete. [Hear, hear.] To show the necessity of this forbearance and charity, he would ask where was Mr. Sidthorp two years ago—and where is he now? [Loud cheers.] Then he was amongst the enemies of their faith; now he is one of its ministers. [Loud cheers.] Oh, there was many an incipient Sidthorp, many who were undergoing the labour of thought, who, if obstructed by harshness or reproach, would be turned from the path of inquiry—but who, if treated with charity and kindness, would yield to truth and grace, and enter the one fold. [Loud cheers.] Mr. O'Connell next referred to a recent charge delivered by the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Bagot.

There are passages in the Bishop of Oxford's charge which fill my mind with consolation; he acknowledges this great movement; indeed, man might as well deny the sun at noonday as deny the progress of the restoration of Catholicism, and the increasing desire to return to that church which existed a thousand years ago, but which is the same now as she then was; and it is one of the charges against popery that she is unchangeable, and always the same. Why so we are, ever the same—and is not truth always the same? [Cheers.] Dr. Bagot begins his address to the Clergy of Oxford by saying "Since I last addressed you collectively from this chair, four years have elapsed, and although it commonly happens that men are disposed to exaggerate the importance of events occurring in their own time, and in which they are themselves more or less actors, still I cannot but think that these four years will hereafter be looked upon as the commencement of one of the most eventful epochs in the history of the English Catholic Church." He should not forget that there were two great events before; there was that great epoch in which Pope Gregory sent St. Austin to convert England, and the other,

"When gospel light shone forth from Boleyn's tower.

And love taught Henry to be most unwise."

[Laughter.] The Bishop then goes on: "The last four years have witnessed the rapid development of those principles which the world, though untruly (for they are of no locality); oh! I thank him for the word, [Laughter and cheers,] "for they are of no locality, has identified with Oxford, and to which I felt it my duty to advert in my last visitation. Those principles have during this short interval spread and taken root, not merely in our own neighbourhood and in other parts of England, but have passed from shore to shore, east and west, and north and south,