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DR. CAHILL'S LETTER TO THE CATHOLICS OF LIVERPOOL.

Liverpool, March 11, 1853.

The Irish in England are, from the very nature of the case and the circumstances, liable to be judged from false premises, and the value of their character calculated from misconceived data. The very presence of the poor Irish in England is, in itself, a decided evidence of the grinding poverty that oppressed them at home, and of the imperative necessity of emigrating to England for a mouthful of bread. The very nature of their case sends them to this country naked, and hungry, and friendless, and exterminated, and broken-hearted. I shall not here allude to the causes of this melancholy state of things; I merely mention the undeniable and thrilling fact, that hundreds and thousands of our wretched countrymen come over to England in a state of physical destitution and of mental depression, which makes every generous heart weep, and which stands before the mind of every thinking foreigner as one of the most unsolvable problems in political science—namely, how the most powerful, and (as it is said) the most wealthy, and the most liberal, and the most free, and the most generous, and the most godly country in the world, can continue, by its laws, a state of things which makes Ireland the weakest, the poorest, the most persecuted, the most enslaved, the most discordant, and the most religiously rancorous territory that there is at present, or perhaps ever has been, or perhaps ever will be, on the face of the earth. I shall not attempt to solve, in this place, this Irish political problem: my object here is merely to state the fact, that, from such a kingdom of terror, desperation, and woe, the poor Irishman arrives in England, accompanied perhaps by his starving wife, and his naked six children. And now where is the poor forlorn stranger—the poor hungry family—to get a morsel of food, or a night's lodging? I answer this question with sincere gratitude, that English sympathy and English generosity have extended to those forsaken wanderers the protection which Orange- Irish bigotry and Irish cruel landlordism have refused to them at home. But how are they to continue to live in England? They are not trained to any one department of commerce; they do not understand the agricultural science of this country; their wretched position in Ireland prevented them ever obtaining a glimpse of the neatness, the cleanliness, the order—the harmonious, decorous silence of an English gentleman's house. Where can the poor exiles go, or what office can they discharge? This is the question. They are obliged (if not employed) to cram the desolate garret, to fill the putrid cellar, to crowd the filthy lanes, and to present an accumulation of misery and a concentrated aspect of despair, which it is difficult to say whether nakedness, and hunger, and filth, and depression, and despair, leave the deepest traces on the heart of the stranger who has the courage or the sympathy to visit these abodes of national calamity and Irish woe. And yet, beloved fellow-countrymen, this is the point from which our enemies would fain describe our national character; this is the original from which our eternal and deadly foes would have the malice to paint the Irish national habits, and natural heart, and natural mind. This is painting the eagle chained, the lion in a cage, the flower withered, daylight set. Ah no! this is not the Irish character, no more than the putrid ashes of a dead warrior represent the living, gleaming resistless hero of the clanging battle. No, this is the sick-bed of Ireland, the hospital of Ireland, the church-yard of Ireland.

Again, if these poor creatures procure work, their place must necessarily be in the lowest offices of the town and the country; and to the true Irish heart that has read, and knows, and understands the circumstances, it is painful to behold the lowliness of their position, the description of their labors, and the smallness of their remuneration. Untrained in any of the mechanical arts of commerce, unacquainted with the improvements of scientific husbandry, and not accustomed to the luxuries and happiness of the domestic circle, the wonder is how soon they acquire knowledge of higher offices, and are made fit to fill more advanced situations, and ultimately become competent to rival, and even surpass, the English servants in all the duties that belong to their place. The wonder is, comparing all the circumstances of our case, how the poor Irish have made such advances in England; and have, under the presence of such disastrous and calamitous antecedents, risen by industry, honesty, and fidelity, from heart-broken misery to comparative comfort and social independence. If any other people in the world had the same difficulties in every sense to contend with, in my inmost soul I believe they could never have had the enduring perseverance to attain the place which the Irish at this moment occupy in England; and a place, too, which they have gained without the loss of their national

feelings, their national honor, or their national faith. And it is but common justice here to state with gratitude, that the English merchants, and the English employer, and the English people have encouraged the faithful Irishman, advanced the steady servant, and repaid with abundant wages and sincere kindness the Irishman who won a place in their confidence and esteem by a conduct of fidelity, punctuality, and truth. No one is more happy than I am to publish this fact: and no bosom more ready to feel it than the fond, grateful, warm heart of a moral and untainted Irishman.

While speaking on the subject of servants, there is one class of Irish immigrants to England who claim an especial notice in this very public communication to you. The persons to whom I allude are the poor, forlorn, wandering Irish girls. Their parents dead, their brothers having gone to America, their friends in the poorhouses, and no one living to protect them; these poor children, these deserted Irish orphans, crawl to Dublin, beg their passage to Liverpool, wander through all the neighboring towns for a rag to cover them, a morsel of food to keep the spark of life in their skeleton frames, and are prepared to work in the lowest place, and to do the humblest work, to earn their hard bread in honesty. Every one knows how hard it is for a poor girl in a strange country, without money, without friends, without a home, to maintain her character in the midst of the difficulties of her sad fate, her broken-hearted condition, and the numerous trials that present themselves before her at every step. No one living can understand this case either from writing, or painting, or description—you must see the original—you must behold these poor children, and hear them tell their own story. You must look into their artless beautiful Irish faces, hear their piteous complaints, and see the tears of agony that roll in streams from their eyes, before you can at all comprehend the incredible terrors that beset the path of these destitute children of Ireland. And you can never value the perfection of their character, and learn the sacrifices they make for virtue, till you hear the English magistrates on the English bench, in many, in several appropriate instances, declare publicly and officially that the conduct of the Irish girls is without reproach, and that their love of country, and their courage in enduring incredible privation and poverty, can only be equalled by the constancy with which they protect the chastity of their sex, and maintain the spotless purity of their character. These astonishing poor children are to be met in every town in England; they interest one's feelings and afflict one's heart; and if there be any one duty of charity more than another which I would command you discharge in the name of God, and for the love of our country, it would be never to omit an opportunity of being a father to these fatherless children, consoling them by your care, protecting them by your sympathy, and rescuing them from the perils that beset their virtue, and from the infamy that threatens their poverty, not their will. The greatest blot on the name of some sections of Englishmen is the late crusade preached against those poor girls. It is decidedly not the character of the generous English people to deny sympathy to distress in whatever form it presents itself, and it is not in the nature of an Englishman to declare war against poor forlorn females; and hence every generous heart must long for the moment of blessed national, social union, when these discordant and inhuman feelings will be banished from every bosom, and when no inquiry will be made at the threshold of the employer, whether the servant be Catholic or Protestant, but whether they are fitted for their office, and whether they are entitled from their moral character to enter their doors, and mingle with their children within the sacred precincts of the sanctuary of their domestic bliss. And in all my experience (which is very great) I have never known a Catholic servant who, if possible, did not love their Protestant masters and mistresses more than their Catholic employers—who would not fight for the honor of their children, and, if necessary, die in their defence. I have never known them to interfere in their internal family concerns, never speak on the subject of religion to their children, or betray the secrets of their private intercourse on any pretext or occasion whatever. On the contrary I have heard Protestant gentlemen and ladies repeatedly declare that their Catholic servants were most remarkable for their humbleness, their hard work, their fidelity, and their lasting gratitude. The importance of this part of my letter has detained my heart longer in discussing it than I had intended, and I therefore recommend it to your practical consideration and beneficent sympathy.

Beloved fellow-countrymen, it is quite certain that happier days are in store for poor old Ireland. The poor whom you once knew there are all dead or emigrated, or living in the poor-houses; in fact, the poor are nearly extinct; their generation is almost passed

away; the houses they inhabited are all thrown down, and the entire face of the country is changed. The chapels are, in many instances, only half filled; miles may be travelled without meeting a human being, or seeing the house of a poor man. And the fox-hunting fellows, and the claret-drinking old cocks, and the rack-renting gentry, are all gone too; and the surface of Ireland is beginning to be covered with a wealthy, hardy class of farmers and agriculturists, who live economically, require much labor from the poor, can afford to give fair wages, and who will add to the capital of the country, in place of increasing its incumbrances. In a word, the condition of Ireland in future is like the condition of a beehive when the old stock is smothered, all the old people are dead and buried in a premature grave, and the young bees, therefore, will have an abundance of support for the future time. I point out this state of things in Ireland to prove to you that the immigration of the Irish to England must soon cease altogether, that therefore the labor in England must be executed by native hands, that higher wages must be necessarily given, *quoad*, the deficiency of labor from Ireland; and, consequently, that the condition of the Irish in England must very soon assume a position of a higher value than it has ever hitherto attained. I think this view of my case cannot be controverted; and hence I now become before you, armed with this good news, to call upon you to rise with our contemplated advancement, to put on a higher moral character, to assume a more orderly social attitude, to rival the good and the virtuous in the whole tenor of your lives, to double your efforts of industry, to be behind no other class of men in the community in everything that can elevate character, and give credit to the country of our birth and to the faith of our fathers—make the name of Irishman be identified with peace, with order, and religion; and I tell you that, on the day you make this honorable, legal, constitutional pledge, you lay the foundation of a society which no power on earth can subdue, and you enter into a combination of virtue which is able to win liberty and social happiness from the most grinding tyranny that ever existed. Who ever heard of a nation of Ribbonmen advancing in the arts of commerce, or in the perfection of the gospel? Who has ever known virtue to spring from perjury? Who has ever seen social peace be the result of civil revenge and sanguinary murder? Who has ever read of wise laws being enacted by a kingdom of drunkards? Depend upon it, your condition will soon be raised to a point beyond your expectations; and, therefore, the clear view of our advancing interests must induce a corresponding pre-eminence of our social, moral, and religious demeanor.

This point carries my mind to the most vital section of this communication—namely, your conduct on next St. Patrick's day; this is, in fact, the main question to which I shall devote the remainder of this letter.

I think it due to the occasion that you should meet in the Concert-hall, and there celebrate, with feelings that shall not belie the name of the hall, the joyous festival in commemoration of the conversion of Ireland to Christianity. I am also of opinion that you owe it to your own character to render the present occasion even more remarkable than your meeting in 1852. I am convinced that the public example set by you in this second instance will have the effect of striking at the very root of Irish disunion in England; and, as France takes its political and moral tone from Paris, all Irish England (if I may so speak) will adopt the feeling, the feeling of Liverpool; and the voice of public praise will be echoed throughout the length and breadth of this country, in eulogy of our name and in defence of our national character. I do positively believe that the *soirée* must be conducted even on a more respectable scale than on the last year, in order to give confidence to your friends, and to disappoint your enemies. If you failed to realise the public expectations in this year, all your former decisions and pledges to me would be considered as the unsteady, and changeable, and transient acts of Irish enthusiasm, but not the unvarying, permanent unshaken determination of cool reason and deliberate action. You must, therefore, carry out your *soirée* with increased splendor in 1853.—You see the tone of command with which I address you; if you have invested me with the general's sword and truncheon, surely you must have wished that I should appear in this character. I am no more nor less than what you yourselves have made me; I speak the dictation which you yourselves have conceded to me; I utter the words which you yourselves have put into my mouth; I address you in the voice of a man to whom you yourselves have given supreme authority to speak, to act, and to command in the case before us. I am no usurper. I am your own official servant; and, as you know my place, I think I also know yours. I therefore place you at

this moment and by these presents, under two mild but firm commands; firstly, to render the *soirée* in this year more than usually splendid; and secondly, to have no private dinners or public drinking parties out of your own houses. I call on you, in the name of God, and for the love of your religion and your country, to fulfil these my two commands; and while you will thus astonish all England, you will make me the greatest man in Ireland. You know I have already overcome Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, and Lord Derby; surely you will not allow me to be vanquished in a beer-house or a gin-shop, or have me spit upon by the reckless street drunkard.—Fulfil my commands, and follow my advice, and you will pay a respect to me which no language of my gratitude can express; you will do homage to the authority of your Church, which no calumny can contradict; you will gladden the hearts of your faithful wives and your spotless little daughters; you will bring peace and happiness on that blessed evening to your firesides; you will be, on that holy night, the true fathers of your dear little children, the loving guardians of your helpless families; and you will earn a blessing from God and a reward from heaven.—Enable me to praise you, to boast of you, as I have often done before. Give me the power to propose your example to others, and to check the Irishmen of Newcastle and Leeds by the Irishmen of Liverpool.

I need hardly say what pain I feel in being compelled to be absent from you on that glorious day.—It is not my fault; neither is it yours; it is a mistake on both sides. I waited foolishly for an invitation; I became engaged in the meantime in Glasgow, whither I proceed to-morrow; your invitation came too late; and thus I am deprived of the inexpressible joy of witnessing that conduct, which, however, I fondly and firmly hope I shall hear through the agreeable reports of the local press. Believe that I am your sincere, your firm, your attached friend; and the man who contradicts my advice and my power is your deadly, incarnate enemy; and, while my counsel will raise you to happiness and virtue, his advice will involve you in vice and beggary, and in crime. Beloved fellow-countrymen, I now bid you farewell, till the next happy occasion, when we shall meet again; and believe me to be your attached friend and faithful countryman.

Unalterably yours, &c.,
D. W. CAHILL, D.D.

EXAMINATION OF ONE'S RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

(From the Catholic Telegraph.)

The Council of Trent, in its 5th session, defined that children, once baptized, when they come to the use of reason, are not obliged to examine the tenets of their religion before professing their belief therein: whence it follows that Catholics are not obliged to find particular reasons for believing the articles of their creed—but are bound to believe those articles independent of any examination whatever. The reason of this is clear. The Catholic religion is a revealed religion. The foundation for faith in its articles is the authority of God revealing through His Church. I believe, not because after mature examination, I find reason to receive the propositions of Faith, but because God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, has revealed. This is my motive of belief. This is the motive of belief of every man, woman and child in the Catholic Church. Learning or acuteness must bow before authority, just as ignorance and dullness. The man who knows the Bible by heart—who has read all the Fathers—who has penetrated all the subtleties of the schools—who can answer every objection of Protestant, Schismatic, Jew, and Infidel—never finds a new motive for believing, or any reason not already known to the poor Catholic who, having learned his catechism, the creed, the doctrine of the Sacraments, and the Lord's prayer, has never heard of objections, and would not be able to solve the least of them. All stand on the same platform—all believe the same—and for the same reason.

Some people imagine that the belief of a learned man is more intelligent—less blind—than that of the ignorant. It is not so. The belief of the most ignorant convert among the savages of New Caledonia, is just as intelligent as that of the greatest theologian in the Church. The ignorant man believes, because God reveals. The learned man can never find a better reason.

Nor does learning enable man to be more certain that God has revealed such and such doctrines, than he is when ignorant. After all his learning, his motive for believing that God has revealed any article, must always be, because the Church says so—just what it was when in his childhood he learned from his mother to lisp the act of faith. Nor has the child of the Church any need to examine into the question.