

powers to human governments, in a supposed right of theirs to judge what is conscience and what is not. And in this he betrays again the faculty of conscience as understood by me. It is not, he says, "every vagary of the imagination, nor every ebullition of feeling, nor every impulse of the passions, however honest the motive may be, which can lay claim to the rights of conscience." Again, "the human legislator has the right to separate presumptions or unfounded pretensions, at war with the just constitution of society, from conscientious dictates properly regulated and operating within their just sphere." Here General Cass takes away from individual conscience the very rights which he had claimed for it elsewhere, and he refers to the legislator, because he is a legislator, to determine whether a doctrine held by the conscience of a man is to be regarded as a vagary of the imagination, or is consistent with the just constitution of society. In other parts, his position is, that there is no lord or judge of man's conscience but God and the man himself. However, I find such mutual contradiction in the phrases of General Cass as he touches now on one topic and now on another, that it may become necessary for me hereafter to examine his speech more in specific detail. As it is now spread out before me in thirteen or fourteen columns of the Washington Globe, its dimensions horizontally considered in the order of length and breadth, become absolutely appalling. Its depth is by no means frightful, a child could wade through it. Its other dimension would be its height, and in that sense it may be my duty to analyze this immense mountain of words, and if in doing so I shall discover the smallest mouse of sound logic, practical common sense, or philosophical statesmanship, General Cass shall have the benefit of the discovery. I cannot however close this communication, already too long, without referring as in proof of my position, to one of the historical illustrations adduced by General Cass in support of his. He refers to epochs in the civil wars that resulted from the reformation in Germany and in France. And because the word liberty of conscience is said to have been granted to the Protestants of both countries by their respective sovereigns, General Cass seems to think that my idea of liberty of conscience is refuted by its having been granted in treaties, according to General Cass' quotation from "Universal History, Vol. 26, p. 302." I am quite surprised that this very reference did not tend to clear up the confusion of ideas which prevails on the subject. The Protestants in Germany and the Huguenots in France had freedom of conscience from the very beginning of their history. It was in the exercise of that freedom that they left the Catholic Church and became Protestants. General Cass will not deny this,—that freedom of conscience they had preserved through all the civil wars which ended, for the time being, in the truce referred to by him. It was in the exercise of that freedom of conscience which was theirs, that they had taken up arms; and if it had been theirs during all this time, how can General Cass say that it was only given to them by the sovereign in 1532 and in 1561. He knows the profound, but apparently simple maxim in law, *Quod meum est, amplius meum esse, non potest*,—what is mine, cannot become more mine. For many years freedom of conscience was theirs already, and according to this maxim could not become more theirs. Now, if it was theirs already, I would ask, with great respect for General Cass and "Universal History," how could it become more theirs by the grant of others. Consequently, General Cass and "Universal History," must mean something else than freedom of conscience. It must mean that they should be allowed to retain whatever advantages, whether of property and power, civil and religious, which they had secured during the progress of the dispute. Between the outward exercise of their freedom of conscience, against the laws of the State, and the pretensions of the State sovereignty to preserve order, the freedom of conscience was the pretext on one side, the sovereignty of the State was the plea on the other. And this granting of liberty of conscience, referred to by General Cass, reminds me of the alms given by a traveller, as mentioned in *Gil Blas*, to a poor man who had asked him for charity in a very piteous tone, but who had his musket levelled at the same time. General Cass will no doubt criticise this comparison as he has done other figurative language in my poor letter. So experienced an orator must certainly know that the value of a comparison is its suggestive property, which always depends upon its substantial agreement, but circumstantial difference as regards the thing to be illustrated. *Omnis comparatio claudicat*. General Cass must surely be aware that the figure of an egg is not a comparison suited to the description of another egg, they are both so much alike; that to suggest the idea of a piece of a piece of chalk, by comparing it with another piece of chalk, would be entirely out of the rules of rhetoric. General Cass has taken advantage of this even for the purpose of argument, when he assumes that because I spoke of the destruction of property—whether in Boston or Philadelphia, as a violation of the rights of conscience in regard to those persons to whom such property belonged, I am to be understood literally, and therefore as recognising that conscience can be violated through the medium of outward violence. I did not mean any such thing. No outward violence can reach that fortress in the human soul, to which conscience can always retreat, and from which she can laugh to scorn the attempts of men to invade her stronghold. I do not admit that from the beginning of the world up to this day there ever has been a violation of the rights, freedom, liberty or divine sovereignty of the human conscience. That is the portion of his nature which God placed beyond the reach of human power. His civil rights might be taken away, his property confiscated, his reputation rendered infamous, the life of the body sacrificed at the stake, or given to wild beasts at the Coliseum, but the sovereignty of his conscience above all earthly powers, has never in a single instance been vanquished by the cruelty or injustice of his fellow-beings. When, therefore, General Cass takes advantage of my using language in reference to this subject, such as that the rights of conscience had been violated in Charlestown or in Philadelphia, he forgets that there is among men an order of language appropriate to the science of any subject, and another which accommodates itself to the confusion of ideas in the popular mind. Persons who perfectly understand our solar system do not hesitate to speak of the rising and the setting of the sun, at the same time that they, in a scientific point of view, would maintain that neither phenomenon ever occurs; that in reality the sun is the centre of our system, and that all the planets, the earth included, are rising and setting and revolving around the centre.

I stated at the commencement of this reply, that the necessity of finding myself in an apparent collision with so distinguished a man as General Cass, was less of a pride than of a humiliation. The circumstances under which my letter was written have been referred to in the foregoing part of this communication. I never dreamed that that letter would attract the special attention of any one. It has turned out otherwise however. If General Cass had intimated to me, in any private manner, that there was one word in it disrespectful to himself, I should have immediately, in the same manner, replied in vindication or in apology. If on the other hand, he had signified to me twelve or fourteen months ago, that he intended to make my letter the groundwork or occasion of his great speech, I should have been prepared with ample materials to reply to it far more effectively than it has been possible for me to do, amidst incessant interruptions, and within the limited period that has been allowed me since his oration in the Senate. As it is, however, I stand by my letter, and I shrink not from the explosion of the great mortar, which it has taken this experienced gunner so long a period to charge, as if he intended that it should not only kill my little sparrow of a letter, but also that it should frighten away all the birds of the neighborhood. I find my little *nycticorax in domicilio* not only chirping, but without a single feather of its wing ruffled.

This letter is already too long, and I hope I may be pardoned, if I make a few general remarks bearing more or less directly on the circumstances which directed it. The first remark is that in this country at least no man is oppressed, in consequence of his religious belief, so long as he submits legally to the constitution and laws by which it is governed. And yet I regret to say that many of our citizens are hardly satisfied with this equal and common privilege, unless there be furnished them from time to time, occasions on which they may give vent to that lamentable intolerance which lurks in human nature everywhere, no less than in human governments in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. How tame would be the proceedings of such meetings as that, for purposes of sympathy with the Madiai, or those of our anniversary week, were it not for the vent which they furnish for the denunciation of Pope and Popery. There is not, and there ought not to be, opposition to, or complaint of, these proceedings. The Catholics of the United States, are accustomed to such. Many respectable Protestants are rather offended by them. But on the whole, this is a country of free speech and free writing, and it is better to bear with the abuse of either than that any legislation be employed to prevent it.—In the meantime, we of the clergy are obliged occasionally to travel abroad—sometimes because we have not received a suitable call at home; and sometimes because feeble health, by bronchitis especially, compels us to seek the benefit of foreign climates. Still wherever we go, we must never forget the object of our vocation, which is to do good. And thus, forgetting the difference between restraints on the outward development of individual conscience in other countries, and the unbounded freedom in this respect which we enjoy at home, we are liable in a mistaken zeal, but always with the best intentions, to get into little difficulties with the Police of Foreign Cities or States. What will be the consequence, if according to General Cass's project we shall have a quasi right under the high sanction of the Congress of the United States, to hang on the buttons of our Foreign Ministers, and pull them right and left into the little dogmatical squabbles in which we may have contrived to get ourselves involved. Should I go to Stockholm, I might be disposed to rent a room, announce that I intended to celebrate mass therein, on such or such a day, inviting all, who thought proper to be present. The room should be honestly, loyally paid for, of course. But if the municipal authorities of Stockholm should interfere with me, or take me before the magistrates for this, I should proclaim myself an American citizen and look to our resident minister for protection.—Some clergymen of our many Protestant denominations might be just as imprudent in the capital of any Catholic country in Europe. General Cass thinks it would be all right provided the local laws were not violated, but there is the rub.

For my own part, I think that as we have no established religion at home, which in our circumstances I regard as a great benefit, so it might be as well with us to deal with other nations prudently and modestly, just as we find them, until little by little, influenced by our beautiful example, they shall be induced to imitate it. The Congress of the United States are too well qualified to discharge the duties for which they were elected, to require the slightest suggestion from any private citizen as to the course they should pursue in regard to the matter which General Cass has brought before them. He has suggested to his fellow Senators that I pronounced their course all wrong. This was a mistake. I spoke of him alone, and of no other members of Congress.

If I may be allowed to express an opinion as an humble citizen, conscious of loyalty to the constitution, obedience to the laws, respect for, and benevolence towards all my fellow-citizens, without distinction of creed, to give expression to my own sentiments, I should sum them up, not as regards this special topic, but as regards the general policy of the country in a very few words. I would say that whilst the power, almost pre-potency of the United States is admitted and acknowledged wherever I have travelled in Europe, there is still a prevalent idea abroad that this greatness is rather detracted from by a certain tone of self-complacency and of contemptuous reference towards other States. They say that we are too great to stand in need of boasting; that we are too powerful, and too rich to be under the necessity of acquiring a right to property by fraudulent means. I do not pretend to judge how far these imputations are correct, but for my own part I would say, that the honor and dignity of this great, free nation are likely to be best and most permanently sustained by adhering to a principle which is ascribed to as true an American as ever lived—namely—We ask for nothing that is not strictly right, and will submit to nothing that is wrong.

† JOHN HUGHES,
Archbishop of New York.

New York, June 5, 1854.

THE SYNOD OF ARMAGH.

The Synod of Armagh, having finished its Session, has issued its Pastoral, from which we make some extracts:—

There now devolves on us a still more pleasing duty—to announce to you the happy issue of our Synodical labors in the adoption of measures which, sanctioned or modified by the Holy See, as far as in its wisdom may seem fit, will become for you rules

of action in your respective spheres. Your fathers desired to see the day when their Prelates could assemble in peace for such important purposes. They knew that unity of action was one of the blessings which Christ most earnestly invoked upon the Pastors of His Church, and that the Apostles, though inspired and individually infallible, met in council to consult together on the best means of guarding or promoting the interests of the Faithful.

But, owing to various impediments, many generations of those who have gone before you could not enjoy a blessing which is at last granted to you. After a lapse of nearly 300 years we see the revival in the Irish Church of a means which authority and experience have recommended as most efficacious in correcting abuses, invigorating discipline, and drawing the Clergy to the Bishops, and the Bishops to the successor of St. Peter, in whom resides the full primacy of honor and jurisdiction. These, we confidently hope, will be the fruits of the Synod which has just terminated in this town. The unity and charity which marked all its proceedings—the anxiety manifested by all who shared in its deliberations to promote the interests of our holy religion—and the unanimity of sentiment which dictated all its decrees, afford us the consoling assurance that your prayers for its success have not been offered in vain.

For this signal mark of the Divine mercy our souls should bless the Lord, and all that is within us praise His holy name. Confiding not in our own wisdom, but in His goodness, we may expect that our labors will be crowned with the desired fruit. We may entertain, too, a lively hope that the Mother of God will invoke the blessings of her Son on the work we have undertaken in her own month, and under her own holy auspices.

Whilst, however, we congratulate you on the happy termination of our Synod, we cannot separate on this occasion without reminding you that the realization of the hopes we entertain depends also in a great measure on your faithful fulfilment of the obligations you contracted in your baptism; the first of which in order, and certainly not the least in importance, is to preserve your own faith, and the faith of those committed to your care, from all contamination. There never was a period in the history of this country when this fundamental principle of our religion was exposed to more insidious attacks than at the present time. The time chosen by the Devil to tempt Our Blessed Lord was after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, and was hungry. It would seem that this event has suggested the plan of operation which is now carried on to undermine the faith of the Irish people. After a famine of several years a host of tempters has appeared amongst them, "creeping into houses," as in the time of St. Paul, "and teaching things they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." We know that the efforts of these emissaries of evil have failed except in a few localities; we are aware that the reports they have sent to their employers have been recently denounced by respectable Protestant Clergymen as tissues of unblushing falsehoods; but it is, nevertheless, your duty to employ every legitimate means in your power to deliver our country from this pest. Wherever it has appeared, strife and contention have been engendered among persons who had previously lived in peace and harmony. We implore our Clergy and the Societies of St. Vincent of Paul, now happily established under their sanction in all the towns of this province, to lessen the force of the temptations to which our poor people are exposed, by diminishing, as far as possible, the great privations many of them have to endure.

It cannot be too often impressed on you that the providing of our people, and especially of the poorer classes, with a moral and religious education, is the best means that can be adopted to check the diffusion of the pernicious doctrines which are now attempted to be scattered among them. Of those who have been induced to sell their faith for a "mess of pottage," the greater part have already returned to the one fold of the true shepherd of their souls. The principles they imbibed in their youth preserved them from the taint of formal heresy, and rendered their conversion a matter of little difficulty when the temptations to which they had yielded were removed. By imparting to the rising generation the blessings of a moral and religious education, we give them a shield to repel the darts of the wicked one, and a principle of resurrection if they should happen to fall.

Hence the paramount duty of Pastors and parents is to see that the children placed under their care are provided with this inestimable blessing. "Even the sea monsters," says God, in the fourth chapter of the Lamentation of Jeremiah, "have drawn out the breast—they have given suck to their young—the daughter of My people is cruel, like the ostrich in the desert. The little ones have asked for bread, and there was no one to break it to them." How much a greater crime than this must it be for parents to neglect the wants of their children's souls? The parent who abandons his offspring to ignorance, and the fearful consequences of ignorance, is laying up for himself a dreadful account against the day of wrath and the revelation of the just judgment of God.

But it is on the zealous exertions of our Clergy that we chiefly rely in the war we have now to wage against the spirit of error in league with the mammon of iniquity. Our fellow-laborers in the vineyard are not ignorant of the obligations they have contracted to instruct the little ones, of whom is the kingdom of God, and we beseech them, through the bowels of Christ, not to neglect this, the most important of all their duties. At a time when there is such a desire for education among all classes, the greatest care should be taken to afford parents no excuse for sending their children to schools where they would receive education without the safeguard that should accompany it. To visit the schools established in their parishes—to train in the way they should go the children placed under their care—to impress on the young the dangers to which they are exposed, and the necessity of guarding against these dangers by frequently and devoutly approaching the Sacraments—are matters which now demand a redoubled zeal from the Pastors of the Church.

In order to arrest more effectually the progress of the evil to which we allude, we exhort the laity to co-operate with their Clergy. It is a matter of consoling experience that Confraternities of the Christian Doctrine, composed solely of laymen, are generally productive of the greatest benefits to religion. If pious sodalities were formed to watch the movements of those who are endeavoring to corrupt the faith of our people—to relieve the wants of such persons as may on this account be exposed to greater temptations—and to employ such other means of countering the evil as their own piety, united to the wisdom of their

Pastors, may suggest, the best results might be confidently expected.

There is another admonition suggested by this subject, and which we deem ourselves bound to address to you on the present occasion. We know, and it is to us a matter of inexpressible delight, that your faith is sound; but it must be always our duty to remind you that faith without works is dead—that without the grace of God we can do nothing—and that prayer and the Sacraments are the channels through which this Divine principle is imparted to our souls. When recourse is not had to the Sacraments, or when they are received without due preparation, the enemies of our faith must find a state of things most favorable to their pernicious designs.

Among the causes which prevent some of our people from approaching the Sacraments, the one we deplore most is the existence of illegal societies in certain districts of this province. We have again and again repeatedly implored, and we now again, with united voices, implore such of our people as belong to these accursed societies to disconnect themselves from them at once and for ever. Sacrilege at the altar—drunkenness—premature and ignominious deaths on the scaffold—the shedding of innocent blood by night and by day—the separation of husbands from their wives, and of children from their parents—are the effects, and the only effects, these societies have hitherto produced. We denounce the members of them as the greatest enemies of their religion and country, disgracing the former as far as man can do so, and retarding the progress of the latter in all useful improvements.

With respect to the Sacraments which are received without due preparation, we wish to direct your attention particularly to the Sacrament of Marriage; established by God, and raised by Christ to the dignity of a Sacrament. Marriage is in itself a holy and honorable state; but it is not always a happy one to many of those who embrace it. It too often happens that the sacred relation of husband and wife is felt as a heavy and galling chain by many who have contracted that relation, because they did so without the due preparation which would have made their yoke sweet and their burden light.

We most earnestly implore all who intend to enter into this holy state to consider seriously the end for which it was established—the responsibility which attaches to it—and the state of grace which its sacramental character requires in those who embrace it.—It must never be forgotten that this Divine institution was not ordained for the gratification of passion or the promotion of worldly interest. One of its most essential obligations consists in giving a Christian education to the children who are born of it; and it requires unity of feeling and faith in the parents of such children. It is the duty of those who propose to embrace the marriage state, to procure the sanction of religion and the blessing of the Church for their marriage, and therefore avoid uniting themselves with persons of a different religion. We trust that none of our people will, either through the hope of some worldly advantage, or under the influence of insane passion, contract such marriages as the Church has never ceased to reprobate. We trust, moreover, that none, without grave cause, will ask the authorities in the Church to dispense in any degree of kindred or relationship which the Church, influenced, by most weighty reasons, has made an impediment to a valid marriage.—

You are already aware that the Synod of Thurles ordained that this Sacrament, and the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance, should be administered in the Church. You are also aware that this is the practice of all Catholic countries. There have been grave causes to justify, in Ireland, a deviation from this practice; but now that these causes have ceased to exist, the departure from universal Catholic custom which they introduced should cease to exist. We therefore expect that Clergy and laity will unite in giving effect to the decree of our National Synod on this subject.

Given at Drogheda, 17th May, 1854.

- † JOSEPH, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland.
- † PATRICK, Bishop of Raphoe.
- † JAMES, Bishop of Kilmore.
- † JOHN, Bishop of Meath.
- † MICHAEL, Bishop of Dromore.
- † CORNELIUS, Bishop of Down and Connor.
- † CHARLES, Bishop of Clogher.
- † FRANCIS, Bishop of Titopolis Apos. Adm. of Derry.
- † JOHN, Bishop of Ardagh.

TERMINATION OF THE NATIONAL SYNOD.—The third session of the National Synod, which commenced at the Presbytery, Marlborough Street, Dublin, on Thursday the 18th ult., terminated at four o'clock on Saturday the 20th. The deliberations of this solemn convocation of the Irish Prelates were strictly private; but the public may rest assured that, independently of the immediate opening of the Catholic University, they were addressed to subjects not only gravely affecting the faith and morals of the Catholic population of this country, but also of the highest importance to their general, intellectual, and social improvement. The Catholics of Ireland will, in due time, be informed of whatever it may be necessary for them to know of the results. And they have the consoling assurance that in no period of their chequered and eventful history could their interests be entrusted to the guardianship of Divines more distinguished for piety, learning, and patriotism than were assembled within the shadow of their noble metropolitan Church on the occasion referred to.—*Tablet*.

DESTRUCTION OF LORETTO CONVENT.—We (Nation) have the extremely painful task of announcing that the Loretto Convent at Dollymount, near Dublin, has been totally destroyed by fire. On Ascension Thursday, while the inmates were preparing for the festival, the candles of the altar communicated with the draperies, and set fire to the apartment, from which the conflagration speedily extended to the entire building. The Convent was completely consumed.

A Protestant meeting has been held in Dublin to petition government for the suppression of Popery, and the re-establishment of Penal Laws.

In connection with their Limerick Flax Factory at the North Strand, Limerick, the Messrs. Russell are now erecting a "monster weaving establishment," for which 300 looms are being made.

DEATHS FROM JOY.—Upon the occasion of the recent announcement of a free discharge to the convicts in Newgate Prison, Dublin, under sentence of penal servitude, so overjoyed were four of them at the sudden intelligence, that they dropped dead.