

noxious to two perils: first, education would produce amongst you *doubt* and *infidelity*; secondly, controversy would scatter your ranks and thin your convenicles. Thus, your third excuse, though not a wise, is, in spite of yourselves, an honest one. Yes, in plain truth you are justified in shrinking from a controversy which would confound your foolish pretensions, expose your variegated errors, and necessarily tend to relax the iron grasp of pecuniary power and spiritual despotism with which you have abused and deluded so many of your countrymen.

There are amongst the deluded many persons of pure integrity, and strong devotional feeling, misled, even by the excess of good dispositions. For, alas! such is human nature, even in its kindest form! I at once acknowledge that I would especially desire to see such persons enclosed in "the one fold of the one shepherd." A converted Methodist makes an excellent Catholic. The late Catholic Bishop of this district, the Right Rev. Dr. Bramston, was a converted Methodist. The Rev. Mr. Mason had been a popular Methodist preacher; he became an eminently useful Catholic priest. How I wish Methodists would read his "Earnest Appeal to the People called Methodists." I wish it, because Catholic truth does rejoice in, and prosper by, calm, temperate, and deliberate controversy.

I now come to the fourth and last excuse for not answering me. It is quite characteristic, and perfectly worthy of you and your cause. Here it is in your own words;—

4. "Because Mr. O'Connell's character as a controversialist, and a public man generally, but viewed more especially in reference to the oath taken by Roman Catholic members of parliament, disqualifies him from the office of a public censor; and at once releases this committee from all obligation to meet his challenge, and compels it, for the sake of its own reputation, to refuse him even the usual courtesy of a reply."

Gentle Pharisees, I thank you! You have been well described in emphatic language by the most awful authority.—How I enjoy the sanctimonious hypocrisy of your malignant piety! It makes you adept in the worst of arts—vituperative calumny.—I doubt much whether the most skilful dame of the fish-market may not be edified as well as instructed by the rancor of your scolding. And yet, I think I see you turning up towards Heaven the well-practised whites of your eyes, and hear you exclaim against me, for being intemperate and abusive. It is truly quite consistent with your habits and manners; first, to use the most unmeasured calumny, and secondly, to accuse the victim of your abuse with the very crime you commit against him. I admit that in this you are the general followers of your prototype, John Wesley, who, as I have shown, first roused the Protestant mob to burn the houses of the Catholics, and then accused the Catholics of having themselves burned their own houses.

Let us, however, quietly examine what this piece of what in Ireland is called "swaddling Billingsgate" contains. It is as

full of matter as an egg is of meat. We will turn it up, if you please, and the last of it shall be first.

First, then, you determine to refuse me any manner of courtesy; and I admit that in this, as in any other vicious propensity, you are quite able to carry out your determination.

Second—You state that for the sake of your reputation, you must be uncivil; and I am sure I am quite ready to consent that your reputation for incivility should be as extensive as it is well founded.

Let us now, from the rear of your battery of filth, come to the front, and there we meet your third charge against me. It is this—that I have a *bad* character as a controversialist. Now, sweet Methodists, be it known to you, that I never wrote upon controversy before my letter to you, except, indeed, on one occasion more than twenty years ago, when, being challenged on the subject, I published a letter containing proofs of the real and adorable presence of the Divine Redeemer in the sacrament of the Eucharist—a letter which was certainly never answered; and you, who never before heard of that letter, are indeed an imaginative people to give me a *bad* character upon that account.

No men, however, can have a greater store of bad characters than you have amongst yourselves, and therefore it is no great generosity in you to bestow one of them gratuitously upon me.

The fourth charge you make against me is the being, in your words, a bad public man generally. I shall not condescend to defend my public character from the filthy slime of Wesleyan malignity. Being, beyond any comparison, the best-abused public man now living, I ought, indeed, to be very indifferent to becoming the object of your reprobate censure; and I can very easily console myself for the entire, by recollecting that I have deserved it all by my honest—aye, and my successful—efforts in the cause of my country and creed. Nor have my exertions been confined to these alone. Oppression has not visited any caste, creed or color, without my giving my humble, but zealous and active advocacy to the oppressed, and against the oppressors. It is this, my duty as a public man, that brings me in contact at the present moment with your mercenary and bigotted confraternity; and I do feel bound by that character—because unwearied perseverance is part of it—not to desist from my honest exertions to expose your political profligacy and religious intolerance, until I make them so familiar to the universal mind as to leave your conduct what it ought to be—the honest contempt and the sorrowful scorn of all sincere and charitable Christians.

Your fifth charge exceeds the rest in malignant atrocity, as well as in unqualified falsehood. You accuse me, and with me other Catholic, of *perjury*, in violating the oath taken by Catholic Members of Parliament.

Shameless calumniators! I defy you. You cannot specify in what such violation consists. But vindication from so foul a charge is superfluous. It is a charge which can only injure the Reverend Riggs, the

Woods, and the Chappells—an unlucky combination of names—who have the frontless audacity to make it.

There is, indeed, a historic proof, written in letters of blood, amidst the annals of crime, confiscation, and persecution; and annals such as you, Messrs. Rigg, Wood, and Chappell, naturally gloat over; there is, I say, the glorious and unfading proof of the reverence of Catholics for the sacred obligation of an oath. It is this; that so conscious were their malignant enemies of that sacred reverence, that the only process they used to deprive the Catholics of these countries of all civil rights, of all offices, rank, honors and emoluments, in the state, nay, and often of their lives on the scaffold, was the mere obtruding of an oath which the Catholics could not conscientiously take. The Catholics, victims for three centuries to their abhorrence of perjury, sacrificing their properties, their franchises, their liberties, their lives, rather than violate the sanctity of an oath—these Catholics are now—

But no! I turn with contemptuous disregard from your foul, as well as foolish, charge, and leave you to answer it to your consciences (if such things be,) and to the God who is to judge you as well as me for an eternity of well or of woe; and before whom hypocritical pretensions, imaginative self-justification, rancorous intolerance, will appear in their natural colors, and leave no room for paltry excuse, or wretched subterfuge.

Wesleyan Methodists!—You began this controversy: You shrank from maintaining the ground which you yourselves had chosen. You substituted personal calumny and personal abuse for the arguments which I had introduced; and now it only remains for you to crouch beneath the well-merited chastisement I have inflicted upon you; or to have (for once) the honesty and manliness to acknowledge yourselves in error, and to make the necessary retribution.

Wesleyans! I have done with the poor and paltry excuses, under cover of which you have shrank from the controversy; and I now come to bestow a passing thought upon the residue of your second manifesto.

Here I certainly render myself liable to be accused of misrepresentation, because I am by no means certain that I understand the meaning of your document. It appears sanctioned by, and signed with, the euphonic name of Rigg. And so it ought. For it really is,—

"A specimen rare, upon the whole,
Of the figure of speech called Rigg-marble."

It seems, in one instance, to adopt that which in a preceding phrase it has disclaimed. It smacks, occasionally, of blasphemy: suggesting the fear of God for the purpose of inventing foul calumnies against man; and, if I can collect the drift of the entire, it is the expression of a vicious opinion unfavorable to national education; or, at least, a deplorable readiness on the part of the Wesleyan Methodists to abandon all provision for such education for Methodists, rather than consent that the government should be just enough to extend a portion of it to persons of a different persua-

sion. You are content, it seems, to be deprived of the means of education for yourselves, provided you can have the Satanic pleasure of seeing others participate in that suffering. You have no parental yearnings for education. It is no fondling of yours. To you indeed may be exclaimed, "O, give not the child to men: she is not the mother thereof."

There is also some cant in your manifesto, about what you are pleased to call "the Christian truth which all orthodox Protestants unite to hold." Miserable men that you are, what is the meaning of this attempt at delusion? A union between you and all other Protestants! Yes! when the sands of the sea shall be twisted into ropes to bind you in that union!—Even among yourselves what grasp of union have you, save what results from the sordid and pecuniary oligarchy of your conference!

But your object is as obvious as I must say it is dishonest—You have chuckled with pleasure at perceiving that Lord Stanley, a zealous Church Establishment Protestant, has beslobbered you with praise, on account of your resistance to national education. He, indeed, has an Irish education conscience at the one side, and an English education conscience at the other.—But let him pass. Other lords, who belong to his English conscience only, have likewise praised you for that resistance.—I wish they would look into your "Centenary Book," in which, with impartial hostility, you assail two of the leading divisions of the Established Church. At page 312 you assail the poor Puseyites, as exerting most mischievous influence, and holding up to public confidence what you call corruption and idolatry, and as giving too much efficacy to the sacraments. And, at page 115, you actually treat apostolic succession as a vain delusion, and make ministration in the church, and pastoral authority, to depend altogether on the piety and the gifts of the individual. The doctrines of Wickliffe and Huss (condemned by the Protestant Episcopal church in these particulars) you in your book adopt and insist upon. And then, forsooth, you fawn upon those whose belief on these important points you repudiate, and declare that you all—all of you!—are Orthodox. I wish the established church Protestants joy of the unholy union!

I cannot conclude without challenging you to controvert one single proposition in my first letter, and rejoicing once again in your inability to do so.

I have one account more to settle with you, and shall then have done.

It relates to your John Wesley. I have sneered at your calling him "venerable." I justify my contemptuous rejection of that title on these grounds:

Firstly—He was an intolerant bigot, who blew the flame of religious animosity until it burst out into a conflagration in the capital of this great empire; but his partizans having failed to destroy the persons of the Catholics, Wesley attempted to assassinate their characters, by accusing them of committing that destruction on their property which his partizans perpetrated!—Had he lived in the days of