

and christian charity, in the sight of God and man, would be faithful Ireland prostrate in supplication to Heaven, for mercy and compassion on her ancient enemy. And within the last year, wherever he was seen amongst them on his errand of love, have not the persecuted Irish nobly responded to his call? Yes; they have proved that they can make sacrifices of feeling, as well as sacrifices of property and life, for the Glorious Faith which they loved more dearly than both. Having learned from Him who was judged unjustly how to die for Truth, they have also learned how to pray for their enemies.

It seems as if by some inscrutable dispensation of Divine Providence, that, Ireland, whose nationality is as distinct and peculiar now as it was in the days of Henry II, should be reserved as an instrument in the hands of God for the weal or woe, the 'ruin or resurrection' of her more powerful neighbour. More grateful to our heart is the conjecture of many wise and holy men, that England will recover her lost Faith through the agency of Ireland by that sweetly-disposing wisdom of Him who chooses the foolish things of this world to confound the strong, and the weak things of this world to confound the strong, and the things that are contemptible and that are not to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his sight. (46) Indeed for a long time past the Irish have been silently, and perhaps unconsciously engaged in the Conversion of England. A very large number of the English Missions are supported by Irish priests, Irish Congregations, Irish generosity and Irish zeal. Thus in 'the hands of God, through whom "all things cooperate unto good" (47) even the sins of men, (48) the indirect fruit of English oppression in Ireland, has been, to import back again to the shores of Albion, that Religion which she so much dreaded. Neither is it the first time that England has derived much spiritual benefit and intellectual improvement from the Island of Saints. Twelve centuries ago the valuable services of Ireland on this score were gratefully acknowledged by the Venerable Bede. Then, as well as now, the Irish Clergy penetrated to the remotest parts of Britain, to bear the tidings of salvation. Then likewise, as recorded by this holy English priest, came numbers both of the nobles and the middle classes of the English, into Ireland, to acquire sacred learning, and the discipline of a pure life; and they were received with hospitality and kindness, and were generously supplied with food, books, and Masters, by the warm-hearted people of the Green Isle (49). And although this noble hospitality has been sadly requited, the charity of the Irish heart is as inexhaustible as their fertile soil. The Irish are again assisting England in England, and the Irish in Ireland are praying for the English, and the Irish in all parts of the globe will, we trust, also discharge the same holy office of fraternal love. And may the Almighty God, in His infinite mercy, listen to their supplications!

For, after all, Dearly Beloved Brethren, the great bulk of the English population, have many, very many claims upon our charitable sympathy. They are themselves the victims of a long, artful, and unscrupulous system of deception and calumny. And, if it frequently happens that they blaspheme the things which they know not (50) it should

excite our pity, rather than our surprise. For, only conceive a member of any of the Protestant Communions in that country, trained up from his infancy in the belief that Catholics hate him; that they would think it no crime to injure him; that they have no respect for the sanctity of an oath; that they can obtain pardon of any transgression for money; that they can get leave to commit any sin they please, by paying a stipulated sum; that with them, the end justifies the means, no matter how wicked; that they make a Divinity of the the Blessed Mother of God, and worship her as such; that they adore Angels and Saints, or offer them the homage which belongs to the Deity alone; that they place their hopes of salvation in their priests, or in long prayers, fasting and superstitious practices, and not in the merits of Jesus Christ's Passion and Death; that they make idols and images, and set up relics, to adore and pray to them, as if they were God Himself; that they hate or fear the Bible, are not permitted to read it, and prefer human traditions before its heavenly-inspired words; that their priests preach to them in unknown tongues, and that they have blotted out, or concealed one of the commandments, lest the deluded people should see the danger of idol-worship; that the Pope can give them a dispensation to do any thing howsoever wicked, provided it be for the good of the Church; that there is a regular list, kept in a Book at Rome, of the prices of every sin, either for leave to commit it, or for its pardon after commission—in a word, that their whole Religion is nothing but conjuration and deceit, outward pomp and unmeaning ceremony, without any adoration in spirit and in truth; conceive a Protestant imbued with these false notions from his very infancy, imbibing them with his mother's milk; hearing them from his parents, family and teachers; reading them in his school-books, listening to them assiduously from his Minister in the pulpit; conceive, if you can, all this terrible action and reaction, of interested calumny; for several successive generations; and though you may be shocked and grieved, you can hardly be surprised at the anti-Catholic fury which has lately raged through the length and breadth, of the once-blessed land of an Alfred, and an Edward the Confessor.

We, therefore, call upon you, Dearly Beloved Brethren, through the bowels of the mercy of our God, (51) to offer up your fervent supplications for the spiritual welfare of the English people, and for their speedy return to the faith of their forefathers. Lift up your hearts to Him who sendeth knowledge as the light and beseech Him that He would gather together the tribes of Jacob, that they may know there is no God beside Him; that he would hasten the time, and remember the end, that we may declare His wonderful works! (52)

It is our desire, that on every day during the Lent your petitions should ascend in Heaven for our dear brethren in England, and that on every Wednesday throughout the year, you should continue to pray for the same pious purpose, as for some years past both in England and Ireland, as well as on the Continent of Europe, a day in the week has been selected for the discharge of this merciful office. We wish however that one day should be specially set apart, and we consider none more suitable than the approaching festival of Pope St. Gregory the Great, so justly styled the Apostle of the English Nation, who "converted them from the power of Satan unto the faith of Christ." (53) and whose sacrifice for their salvation is so well known throughout the universal Church.

We will, therefore, on WEDNESDAY THE TWELFTH DAY OF MARCH next ensuing, by our united prayers offer a holy violence

(46) Wisd. viii. 1.—1 Cor. i. 25. 26. (47) Rom. viii. 28.
 (48) St. Aug. Lib. de corrupt. et grat. c. 1. (49) Erant ibidem (in Hibernia) eo tempore multi Nobilium simul et medicorum de gente Anglorum, qui tempore Pirani et Coluani episcoporum relieta insula patria, vel divina lectionis, vel continentioris vite gratia illo secesserant. . . . Quos omnes Scoti libentissimo suscipientes, victuque quotidiano sine pretio, libros quoque ad legendum, et magistrum gratitum præbere curabant Ven. Bedæ. Eccl. Hist. Gent. Anglorum lib. iii. c. 27. (50) Jude i. 10.

(51) Luke i. 78. (52) Eccles. xxiv. 35. xxxv. 10. 11.
 (53) De quo (Beato Papæ Gregorio) nos convenit (quis nostram, id est, Anglorum gentem, de potestate Satanae ad fidem Christi sua industria convertit) licet in nostra historia Ecclesiastica sacre sermonem, quem recte nostrorum appellare possumus et debemus. ACOSTORUM. Ven. Bedæ. Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 1.