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TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

"Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these things unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways."—BOM.

Drummin House, Co. Kildare, Nov. 3, '55.

Fellow-Countrymen—The madness of religious hate had nearly disappeared from amongst us, and Protestant and Catholic were accustoming themselves to regard each other with mutual forbearance and respect, when Lord John Russell, availing himself of the bigotry of the English flung into the midst of us the nearly expiring torch of Protestant Ascendancy. He breathed on it with pestilential breath, fetid and noisome, and as destructive of health as the offensive exhalation that rises from the putrid waters of the Thames. He fanned it into a flame, and supplied it with fit materials by denouncing Popery as a superstition and a mummery, and by calling on every Protestant to resist the "Papal aggression." Then England—cowardly England—instead of sending a fleet to blockade the Tiber, and make reprisals on the Pope himself; England—cowardly England—afraid of France, and of Napoleon, the "Protector of the Catholic Church," declares war against the defenceless and unoffending Catholic bishops of Ireland. The Times lashes the besotted English into a fury approaching to insanity. A corrupt majority joined a corrupt Minister. The English Parliament passes the "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill," a bill that, by declaring the existence of a Catholic bishop in Ireland to be a violation of the law, denies the validity of the ordination of the Catholic priest, and consequently infers the invalidity of the marriages solemnised by any person styling himself a priest of the Church of Rome; thus by implication bastardising the children of all such marriages!

The English Minister, it is true, does not, at this moment, find it convenient to act on this bill, having enough to occupy him in revolutionising Italy, and in preparing to seize on Sicily, as a counterpoise to the French power in the Bosphorus. But should the likelihood of a war with France be averted for a time, by creating another revolution in that country also, then assuredly the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill that now lies, like the coiled up snake, slumbering and torpid, will suddenly, when least expected by Irish Catholic or Protestant, start into activity, and sounding its rattle of "Papal aggression," spring at the throats of the Catholics. How can we expect it to be otherwise? When did England ever neglect her opportunity to divide us, and then oppress and plunder us?

To me it seems extraordinary that Catholics can bring themselves to submit to this; and most unaccountable that a single Session of Parliament should be allowed to pass without their moving for the repeal of this most atrocious bill—atrocious, because of the meanness and the baseness of the motives that originated it;—atrocious because of its destructive effects on Irish society; and most atrocious of all, because altogether unnecessary, and uncalled for by the Irish Protestants, it was enacted to gratify the worst passions of a cowardly despotism.

It is manifest that the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill is of no value as a safeguard of Protestantism, because, in the first place, it is deliberately and notoriously violated, with the privity and connivance of the English Minister; and next, because, if the Pope were to make a separate bishopric of every county in Ireland, as he might do, and will, should it so please him, this proceeding which has reference to the discipline of the Catholic Church alone can in no way directly or indirectly affect Protestants. Every Catholic well knows that this is the case, and every Protestant must be convinced of it. And yet, England, to carry into effect her policy of weakening Ireland, embroils the entire country in religious hostility, seriously injuring the Protestant as well as the Catholic. The Protestant acquiesces in this, because he is not individually aggrieved, or insulted. But the Catholic, who endures both injury and insult—what effort does he make to obtain redress, and what chance has he of succeeding? In my opinion, no matter what effort he may make, he has no chance of succeeding, so long as he shall fail to obtain the co-operation of Protestants. On this subject it is of great importance, and most essential to the accomplishment of my plan, that I should clearly explain myself, and that you should be convinced of the correctness of the system of political agitation which I intend to propose for your adoption.

Sectional opposition to English legislation, no matter how unjust and oppressive such legislation may be, never will succeed. I lay this down as a first principle. I defy any man to disprove it. Catholic emancipation was carried, and the anti-tithe movement succeeded because both were supported by Pro-

testants and Catholics. The united efforts of all the Bishops and Catholic clergy and laity in Ireland, never could have accomplished either had it not been for Protestant co-operation. The Repeal agitation, at one time so formidable, failed, because it was exclusively Catholic, the Protestants, with a few exceptions, refusing to recognise O'Connell as their leader. Nor would any Protestant have been more successful, because, however influential with the Protestant, he could not reckon on the support of the Catholic party. So it has been, and always will be, with every partial agitation. A portion of the Irish people agitating, even for a national benefit, will not succeed, and if so, what chance of success can any minor portion have, when they shall endeavor to obtain the removal of merely an individual or partial grievance?

To prove that such partial efforts are altogether unavailing, I need only refer to the "Solicitors" and to the "General Medical Practitioners" of Ireland. The solicitors as a body, are degraded from their natural position, though they constitute a most important branch of the legal profession. The apothecaries, or "general medical practitioners" are compelled, by law, to occupy an inferior place to the physician or surgeon, although their professional acquirements embrace, in addition to their own, a competent knowledge of medicine and surgery also.—Now both these bodies have so repeatedly endeavored to obtain from the English legislature just and satisfactory enactments, and have so often failed, that they have given up as hopeless any future appeal to Parliament. And wherefore have they been reduced thus to bear with passive submission those wrongs of which they complain, and against which they have recorded their protest? Because they are only fractional parts of the entire people—because they petitioned for the advancement of their own interests exclusively, and not for general measures, calculated to improve the condition of the people at large. Hence the other sections gave them no assistance, and indeed regarded their movements rather with suspicion and disfavor, believing their object to be selfish, and intended to aggrandise themselves at the expense of the community.

So it is with all other classes. Separately they are powerless. It is essential to the success of any political movement, intended to benefit our country, that Irishmen of every class shall be thoroughly persuaded of this truth. Catholics and Protestants, Repealers and anti-Repealers, Conservatives and Radicals, Old and Young Irishmen, Moral Force and Physical Force agitators, Tenant Righters, the Fools who drink the "glorious, pious, and immortal memory" of William—and those who, equally foolish, drink the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the grey horse that killed him!—all these should understand that, though separately they can do much mischief, yet separately they are all alike powerless for good. The experience of the past proves this—the miserable condition of our oppressed and degraded country confirms it.

I protest it appears to me that though, as men advanced in years, we pride ourselves on our intelligence, we are nevertheless inferior to children in knowledge, and require to be again taught like children. Every child is familiar with the fable of the "Bundle of Sticks," and finds no difficulty in understanding how, though each stick by itself is weak and flexible, yet when several are tied together they resist any attempt to bend or break them. This is precisely the case with regard to Ireland. He who would render good service to our country must labor to obtain the co-operation of the several sections into which Irish society is divided, and binding them all together by the powerful influence of self interest, convince every man, that while he assists in the regeneration of Ireland, he, at the same time, materially promotes his own individual advancement. The state of society is so artificial, and competition is so excessive that no man can work for nothing. He must look to his own interests, and adopt every legitimate means to secure them, or he will be shoved aside and be distanced by his more energetic competitors. So long as such efforts are not opposed to the general interests of the community they should be respected and encouraged. It is therefore on this basis, the basis of self interest, that I intend to recommend the formation of a new movement for the redress of all the grievances that affect Ireland—involving the members of every aggrieved class to put forward its individual grievance, in order that by co-operating with others equally aggrieved they may in return co-operate with them. My object will be to elevate and not depress the different classes, and to advise nothing that every impartial man will not at once say, "This measure, if adopted, would be most useful to the country."

The Irish people, if it be their pleasure to accept of my teaching, will have much to learn, and what

is more difficult, not a little to unlearn—for hitherto they have been badly taught, they have run wild after idle delusions, believing themselves to be sufficiently powerful to dictate to others, when in point of fact their strength consisted only of bluster, long winded speeches, mere empty sound and fury signifying nothing. There must be an end to this, or Ireland will never cease to be trampled on by her enemies, and despised even by her friends. The country wants deeds, not words. It wants plain, substantial, practical dealing, the value of which every man can understand and estimate for himself. It is instruction of this kind that the country requires, and this instruction can neither be imparted nor permanently acquired by a few irregular efforts. I want to teach the people by teaching them to think, and by furnishing them with materials for thought. But this I shall do after my own fashion, sometimes referring to and sometimes repeating what I may have already said.

I have spoken of the more prominent of the grievances connected with the English Church. I shall now explain in what way they ought, in my opinion, to be removed, so as to relieve the country from the perpetual disquiet of religious animosity. The English Church, originating from accidental circumstances and the brutal passions of a tyrant king, is altogether a creation of the legislature. It exists by the mere will of the people. It was established ostensibly for their benefit, and therefore can by them be at any time either altered or abrogated.—This is sufficiently proved by the many acts that have been passed to regulate its discipline and secure to it its privileges. As a Protestant I have a right to inquire into its discipline, to call in question its privileges, and to discuss, if it shall so please me, the orthodoxy of its theological doctrines. Its doctrines I pass over as matters in which the public have no immediate concern, requesting the public, however, to keep in mind the important distinction between "Religion" and "Money." Religion is not Money—Money is not Religion. Indeed the phrases, "God's money," "God's property," rightly interpreted, mean nothing more than property or money possessed by churchmen, and employed by them in providing, not for God's wants, but for their own. As applied to God, such expressions seem to be rather profane, while in their worldly sense they are too often used to turn to a profitable account the credulity of the uneducated multitude.

The State, therefore, has a right in the exercise of its collective wisdom to interfere with and appropriate Church property in whatever manner its application shall seem most beneficial—not to a particular sect—but to the entire community. Now, it is manifest, that the property enjoyed by the English Church in Ireland exceeds beyond all reasonable proportion the wants of the English Church, while the Catholic Church, the Church of the vast majority of the people, and to which all this property originally belonged, is left totally unprovided for. This is a flagrant injustice, and one that acts injuriously on Protestants as well as Catholics, by fostering a spirit of jealousy between the two Churches—the one, of recent origin, proud of its wealth, and of its dominant position as the "State Church;" the other, though poor, proud of its antiquity, its apostolic succession, its discipline, its compactness and solidity, its universality, its claim to infallibility—all affirmed and recognised by at least one-half of the Christian world. With such claims the Catholic Church cannot possibly acquiesce, patiently and contentedly, in the legalised domination of the Church of the few; while in the struggle between the rival Churches the followers of each, Protestants and Catholics, plunge into the contest to their own injury, and to the ruin of their country.

Is this to continue? Is Ireland never to have peace? I put the question to every intelligent and right-minded Irishman. I ask every Catholic and Protestant layman, of common intellect and common honesty, is it not his interest and his duty to exert himself to put an end to this most destructive state of things? If there be no Irishman so shameless and so unprincipled as openly to avow his wish that such dissensions should continue, and of a certainty no one wishes them to continue except the "English enemy" why is it that some measure has not been devised to put an end to them? The time, perhaps, had not arrived for making any attempt of this kind with a prospect of success. It may have been so; but the time, I think, now has arrived, when, looking to our self-preservation, we must meet this difficulty, and grapple with it, and surmount it, or, failing in this, fall in all our other efforts to save our country.

I am aware that it is impossible to cause the two Churches to approximate in matters of doctrine—but to render them less antagonistic and more disposed to co-operate in matters useful to the public, I am persuaded, is by no means impracticable. It

is easy to see that it may be accomplished by placing both Churches on a footing of perfect equality.—The Catholics have a right to demand this equality, and Protestants should, in justice, agree to it.

But, certain Protestants fear that the Catholics might thus possess themselves of political ascendancy, and then turn round and persecute them, as they formerly persecuted the Catholics. Never was there a more groundless apprehension. The whole world is in arms against any attempt, on the part of the Catholic Church, to exercise political power; and in every country, without any exception, in which the Catholic Church possessed property, this property has been appropriated, from time to time, to public uses. In every country, in times of general commotion, and in every revolution, the Church, as the weaker body, is the first to fall—its own laity, as well as other classes, in their efforts to save or exalt themselves, directing the fury of the public against the Church and against Churchmen. The Church well knows this, and, therefore, both from a sense of duty and from a regard to its own interests, it upholds authority, and opposes itself to revolution and to every form of social disorder. I affirm it as my conscientious belief, that, to the tolerant and liberal spirit of the Catholic Church in Ireland we, Protestants, are indebted for the peace of the country, and are enabled to live, surrounded by Catholics, as securely as if the entire population were Protestant. The folly of Irish Protestants in fearing persecution or extermination at the hands of their countrymen, the Irish Catholics, is, indeed, so manifest, as to lead to the opinion, that we are "but children of a larger growth," easily terrified by nursery tales, and, like children, afraid to walk alone in the dark.

Protestants have much to unlearn. The statements of some of their pulpit-orators, who most violently abuse Popery and Jesuitism, are not always true. Popery they intentionally misrepresent, and of the Jesuits they know nothing. Instead of meriting vituperation, the Jesuits deserve much praise. They are decidedly the most learned and best educated men to be found in any Church. In all the departments of abstract science, and of polite literature, the members of the Society of Jesus hold the first rank. Society owes much to the Jesuits. Their system of teaching is unequalled by any thing that Protestantism has ever invented. They have contributed more to the conversion of the heathen, than any other men in existence. Had they not been interfered with, and themselves persecuted and expelled from South America, the natives of that country would, most probably, be at this moment, more highly civilized, more pious, more moral, more happy, more Christian, than one-half of the working population of rich, proud, imperious, Popery-bating England.

However, be this as it may—and on these subjects there will always be much diversity of opinion—one thing is certain, that Ireland can never prosper, or hope to enjoy even a transient gleam of tranquillity, so long as the rival churches shall be at war with each other, the one pampered and protected, and the other insulted, reviled, and denounced. Both churches should be treated alike, by applying the public property of the Church to pay both, but in such manner, and with such safeguards as shall secure to each Church its perfect freedom of action, untrammelled by the influence of the English Minister. Petty jealousies must cease, sacrifices must be made; the public weal demands this, and the people of Ireland will, I hope, insist on it. There need be no "ifs" in this matter, except this one "if" of mine.—If the Irish people are resolved to settle this question finally, I will by and by explain to them in what way they are to proceed, and how, should they follow my recommendation, they must, to a certainty, succeed.

I propose, then, that all Church property in Ireland, of every description, both tithe rent charge, and church lands, be declared public property; the tithe rent charge in every parish in Ireland to be paid to the collector of the county cess, and by him lodged in the bank to the credit of the county treasurer, so as to relieve the clergy altogether from the trouble, and sometimes the litigation consequent on the collection of the rent charge by themselves. To this I think no Protestant clergyman can object; but if any shall object, his objection is of no value, and should not be listened to. No Protestant clergyman now in the actual possession of any Church benefice should have cause to complain of injustice. Every one of these persons I would secure in the enjoyment of a life interest, making provision during such time for the Catholic clergyman, by a rate made for that purpose, and collected with the poor rate, so that, as in the case of the salary of the Dispensary medical attendant, one half of the expense shall fall on the landlord. This tax would not be permanent. In some parishes it would not last for more than a year;