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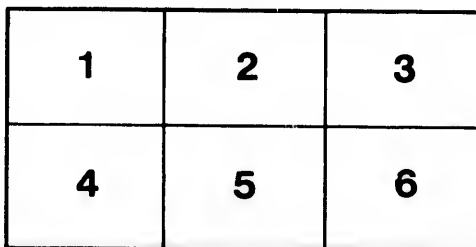
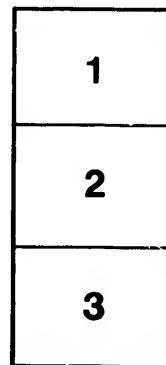
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LETTERS

OF

JOHN O'CONNOR, Esq., M.P.,

ON

FENIANISM.

ADDRESSED TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JOHN YOUNG,
BART., P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA,
ETC., ETC., ETC.



Toronto:
PRINTED BY HUNTER, ROSE & CO., 86 & 88 KING STREET WEST.
1870.

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1870.

LIBRAIRIE
G. DUCHARME
245, rue Fullum
Montréal

INTRODUCTION.

President Grant having, in the wise exercise of his executive clemency, pardoned the leaders of the Fenian outlaws who caused us so much annoyance on our South-eastern frontier during the past summer, those gentry are now again at large, and are concocting fresh schemes for the invasion of our country, and another attempt is to be made to bring about the liberation of Ireland by the robbery of a few Canadian hen-roosts. The O'Neill and Savage sections of the sacred Brotherhood have reconciled their differences, and a vigorous raid upon the pockets of the Irish servant girls throughout the States is being prosecuted, with a view to procuring the necessary funds for the next campaign. But while Canadians can afford to treat these efforts with the contempt they deserve, we must not forget that they touch us in our most sensitive part—our pockets. It has been stated that the Fenian attempt of last summer cost the Canadian people upwards of two millions of dollars, and we are not disposed to submit to the repetition of such an expenditure, when the Mother Country has it in her power to compel the United States Government to cease to tolerate the Fenian nuisance in its midst. Some other way of conciliating the low Irish element in the States must be discovered, or the Home Government will be compelled to take a more decided stand, and teach our neighbours what is required of them by the law of nations. The loyal Irish Catholics of the Dominion (and thank God, Irishmen of all creeds and parties in Canada are now a unit in respect of their loyalty and devotion to British connection) are indignant at the insinuations and ill-concealed distrust to which they have been subjected in certain quar-

ters, in consequence of the wicked attempts of these Fenian marauders. They therefore think that this is a fitting time (in view of the new life which is being attempted to be infused into the Fenian circles in the United States,) for the reproduction in pamphlet form of the following letters. These letters, which created such a profound sensation upon their appearance some months ago in the columns of the daily press, are from the pen of John O'Connor, Esquire, M.P., who is recognized as one of the leaders, if not *the* leader, of the Irish Catholics of Ontario. They contain the most scathing exposure of the Fenian swindle which has ever appeared, and are besides a noble vindication of the honour and loyalty of our Irish Catholic fellow-countrymen. Written in a calm, judicial spirit, which is more eloquent and effective than any flights of rhetoric, they tear aside the veil, exhibit Fenianism in its true colours, expose the underhand encouragement which parties in the United States have given to it for political purposes of their own, and teach us what we have a right to expect and to demand of Mother England in the premises.

In these letters, Mr. O'Connor has done good service to his fellow-countrymen, both here and in the States, by tracing the history of the Fenian imposture, by exposing the villainy of the scoundrels who have played upon that most sacred feeling of the human heart—love of country—in order to rob the innocent and the confiding, and by showing that it is after all only a political organization, which, as such, has been by turns coquetted with and encouraged (though to the very serious injury and damage of the Canadian people,) by both the great political parties in the United States.

Mr. John O'Connor, the author of these letters, is still in the prime of life, and we believe that, should he be spared, he may look forward to a long career of public usefulness. In early life he was a member of the press, editing newspapers both at Windsor and Sandwich, and displaying a vigour and ability in the editorial chair which caused many to regret his retirement there-

from. He was called to the bar in 1854, and has for years been one of the leading barristers in the western peninsula. He was for many years a member of the County Council of Essex, and was three times elected Warden of his county—twice by acclamation. He first became a candidate for parliamentary honours upon the retirement of Col. Prince from the representation of the Western Division in the old Legislative Council of Canada, in 1860. On that occasion, Mr. O'Connor, much against the wishes of his friends, retired in favour of the late Sir Allan McNab. Since then he has been twice elected to Parliament for Essex, the county he now represents. At the last general election he defeated the regular government candidate, but in the House he has hitherto given the present ministry an independent support, voting with them in support of all useful measures, but not hesitating to oppose them upon any questions which he deems calculated to affect the interests of his Province, or the Dominion at large, prejudicially.

Mr. O'Connor is not one of those with whom it is easy to establish terms of intimacy. Quiet and unobtrusive, he requires to be known long and well in order to be appreciated. Gradually he has won the respect and confidence of his fellow-members at Ottawa, and though seldom heard in the House, his opinion is sought and valued in those little private caucuses of members, which have more effect upon the votes than any set orations on the floor of the House of Commons. He has, however, the ear of the House, and when he rises to speak is listened to with marked attention. His speech last session, in reply to Mr. Blake, on the occasion of that gentleman's moving his resolutions upon the Nova Scotian subsidy, was one of the happiest efforts of the session. Cool, logical and incisive, it was a complete floorer for his learned friend, and a thorough exposure of the absurdity of his buncombe resolutions.

Mr. O'Connor's name has on more than one occasion been mentioned in connection with a seat in the Cabinet. When recent events at Ottawa seemed likely to render a reconstruction of the

Ministry inevitable, it was rumored at the capital that he had been sounded as to his willingness to accept a seat in the cabinet, the portfolio being even mentioned which was about to be assigned to him. Sooner or later, we believe that he is destined to become a member of the Government, and we trust that it will be in such a sphere as will afford his comprehensive and well-trained mind and his administrative capacity full scope for extended usefulness. In conclusion, we would express the hope that he may always devote his talents as efficiently to the service of his country as he did when he penned the following letters.

TORONTO, November, 1870.

LETTERS

OF

JOHN O'CONNOR, ESQ., M.P.,
ON FENIANISM.

ENGLAND'S DUTY.

LETTER FROM JOHN O'CONNOR, ESQ., M. P. FOR THE COUNTY OF ESSEX.

To His Excellency, the Right Honourable Sir John Young, Bart., P. C., G. C. B., G. C. M. G., Governor General of Canada, &c., &c., &c.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I take the liberty of addressing you through the public press, because although the subject which I desire to bring under your immediate notice is one of vital importance to the public and the Government of this country, and although I am a member of Parliament, yet I have no constitutional right to tender to Your Excellency privately any advice or suggestion relative to the affairs of this country.

Another attempt, as senseless and futile as it was wicked, has been made to disturb the peace of the country, for the avowed purpose of subverting its Government and establishing in lieu thereof something called an "Irish Republic." This last attempt was again weak as usual, so weak, so evanescent, as to have the appearance of a feat rather than of an intended invasion. But the consequences to this country are, nevertheless, serious. The extreme difficulty, or rather the impossibility of ascertaining in advance the precise magnitude of the threatened invasion, coupled with the rumours invariably set afloat, produces a vague apprehension that the preparations and means of the invaders are commensurate with the end proposed to be effected and the dread of being over-run by marauding bands, who, being subject to no law, no recognized authority, are free from the restraints of all civilized codes, produces panic. I mean not a panic of cowardice, but that which magnifies

the danger and causes greater and more costly preparations than turn out to have been really necessary.

The choicest of the male population are withdrawn from their ordinary avocations ; business is neglected, disjointed, and partially paralyzed ; and capital which would otherwise naturally flow into, is averted from the country. Great expense is also necessarily incurred ; and worse than all else, unjust suspicion and consequent distrust of a large and important class of the people of Canada—the Irish Catholics—are entertained, and ill-will towards them is engendered.

Yet I verily believe, indeed I am certain that, taken as a body, no class in this country is more industrious and contented. nor is any more loyally attached to the Constitution, the Government and the Institutions of Canada, than are the Irish Catholics.

For the present, however, I pass this over, and proceed to the object which I have mainly in view. The results to which I have referred have recurred frequently during the six years past. In fact we have been at no time during that period altogether free of the apprehension of danger from the same source.

When is it to end ? Shall we continue to be vexed in the same way during an unlimited period ? Surely it is not to be tolerated, if a practical remedy may be evoked. I think there must be a remedy for the evil. I am convinced there is.

What strikes one as the most extraordinary feature of Fenianism in the United States is that the Fenians are recognized citizens of that country, with which our relations, both national and social, are friendly. They make no secret of their hostile designs on Canada. They hold public meetings, great and small, and use the public press of that country to advocate their designs and propagate their doctrines in the presence and hearing and within the knowledge of the Government of the United States. They openly avow and boastingly proclaim their purpose to levy unprovoked war against the people of Canada, under colour of the sham pretence of giving liberty to Ireland—a pretence so intensely absurd as to excite no other feeling than one of absolute contempt.

Alas, poor Ireland ! Knaves, speculating knaves, are but desecrating thy name to enable them to prey upon the feelings of thy warm-hearted, patriotic and generous sons and daughters, and to filch from them the proceeds of their hard labour, their honest earnings. But the real purpose, the secret purpose underlying the pretences of the Fenian ring-leaders is not what I purpose to consider.

Be their real design what it may, they are permitted in their course, without any attempt at secrecy, to organize bands of men, to perform military evolutions, to acquire arms, equipments, military stores, and to use the public means of conveyance for transporting them from place to place in the United States.

They adopt and use military titles corresponding with those of the army of the United States, perform all the functions, and assume the attributes of a regularly constituted military power. In fact, they have

been, and they are an "imperium in imperio," constituted and organized ostensibly for the invasion of Canada.

If all this were permitted in relation to Great Britain, and with a view to the overthrow of British power in Ireland, it could be understood, even though it could not be justified by the law of nations. But in relation to Canada the case is wholly different. It is simply a crime which nothing can excuse or extenuate. History presents no case of like political turpitude. It stands alone—is in the strictest sense "sui generis"—and for obvious reasons.

Canada, or the people of Canada, are in no way responsible for misgovernment, past or present, or for oppression, real or imaginary, in Ireland. On the contrary, Canada is the home—the free and happy home—of many, aye, of thousands who found it necessary to leave Ireland under circumstances tryingly adverse. Furthermore, the people of Canada, of every national origin, class, creed and colour, are content with their lot, satisfied with and attached to the constitution, which secures to them the largest measure of rational liberty. They boast with reasonable pride of being blessed with a system of government more truly free than any other under the sun. They desire no change but such as may be effected from time to time, as circumstances require, by constitutional means. They neither desire nor will accept any impertinent interference of people who are not of them, and who are not subjected to the same allegiance as they themselves are.

American Fenianism, therefore, in its designs or pretended designs on Canada, stands without that colour of justification which is claimed for, and may in some instances be accorded to, those who aid or attempt to aid a people, or a large portion thereof, who complain of being oppressed and are struggling or desirous of struggling for liberty. It lacks immeasurably that justification which is claimed by the savage Indians of the Western prairies when they attack, murder and rob the white settlers, whom they, not unnaturally, regard as intruders, and even invaders.

The savages can and do urge that they are fighting for their primeval rights. In short, Fenianism in the United States presents an anomaly which is simply hideous.

Attila, self styled "the scourge of God," with his barbaric hordes devastated Lombardy. But he did it without false pretences, without pretending to advance the cause of political liberty. Barbarous he was, but not a sham. Not so is it with American Fenianism, and yet that is the system which has been nurtured and cherished until it has grown and become a recognized institution in the United States—recognized apparently by the people as a power in the State, and, if not formally recognized, at least connived at and tolerated by the government.

If France, great as her empire is, permitted such an abuse towards Great Britain, would the latter brook it? No, not even for an hour. Were Great Britain guilty of such a crime towards France instant war would be the result. When Napoleon the Third found that a few trait-

ors, who had found refuge in England, were secretly plotting there against his life and empire, did he remain passive as if they were beyond his reach? Quite the reverse. He informed the British Government of the conspiracy, and demanded, as he had a right to demand, that immediate and effective preventive action should be taken; and it was done. Thus it should be. So too would it be as between any of the powers of Europe, for such is the requirement of international law. The breach of that law would produce war between any of the States of Europe, and in such a war the injured party would have the active sympathy of the other powers of the civilized world. But immeasurably more aggravated has been the illicit conduct of the United States with respect to us in the Fenian matter.

I therefore fully concur in the position assumed in recent leading articles of Toronto papers. I think the time has come when the British Government, in justice to Canada and in vindication of its own honour, should interfere diplomatically, determinedly and unconditionally.

Canada, the largest, the most loyal, and the most important of Britain's dependencies, has a right to expect such action by the Government of the empire; and should the worst come of that action Canada will not be backward, nor will the Irish Catholics of the Dominion be the least forward in maintaining the national honour.

I am, however, strongly impressed with the belief that no evil will follow from a stand so taken by the British Government. I have had and still have favourable opportunities of obtaining information on the subject, and I am convinced that the better, the more enlightened, the wealthy and most influential of the American people have no sympathy with Fenianism, particularly in its designs on Canada; on the contrary, they disapprove of and dislike it. I am convinced that to a large majority of the better class of Americans, and even to a large proportion of the inferior classes, Fenianism and Fenians are objects of derision and contempt, mingled, nevertheless, with apprehensions for the results of the system as a political institution in the United States. I have besides an irresistible conviction that if called on in the name of the law of nations, which they themselves invoked not long ago under circumstances infinitely less aggravated, the Government of the United States will enforce the observance of their neutrality laws, and so apply their police regulations as to either extinguish Fenianism, or prevent its being openly offensive and threatening towards Canada. By such a course, and by it only, can the United States evince magnanimity becoming so great a power. By it alone can they maintain an honorable position amongst nations as a respecter of the laws of nations.

In the United States, as well as in Canada, Vattel is regarded as authority on the laws of nations; and he states the law on this subject as follows:—

“The nation or the Sovereign ought not to suffer the citizens to do an injury to the subjects of another State, much less to offend that State itself. * * * * *

If a Sovereign who might keep his subjects within the rules of justice, suffers them to injure a foreign nation, either in its body or in its members, he does no less injury to that nation than if he did it himself."

And he further says:—"Since the Sovereign ought not to suffer his subjects to molest the subjects of other States, or to do them an injury, much less to give open and audacious offence to foreign powers, he ought to compel the transgressor to make reparation for the damage or injury, if possible, or to inflict on him an exemplary punishment; or finally, according to the nature and circumstances of the case, to deliver him up to the offended State, to be there brought to justice.

"This is pretty generally observed with respect to great crimes, which are equally contrary to the laws and safety of each and every nation. Assassins, incendiaries and robbers are seized everywhere at the desire of the Sovereign in whose territories the crime was committed, and are delivered up to justice. The matter is carried still further in States that are more closely connected by friendship and good neighborhood.

* * * The Sovereign who refuses to cause reparation to be made for the damage done by his subject, or to punish the offender, or finally to deliver him up, renders himself in some measure an accomplice in the injury, and becomes responsible for it." So much for Vattel.

The principles, as enunciated by him, are, I doubt not, a portion of the laws of nations; and founded on the law of nature; and are in accord with the principles of universal justice.

They are necessary to the existence of Sovereignties, of nations, of society, to the maintenance and advancement of civilization; of liberty, and to the peace and happiness of mankind.

Great Britain and the United States are friendly; and reasons the most weighty exist for their remaining so. But there are reasons paramount why friendship and friendly relations, not inconsistent with imperial right, should exist between Canada and the United States.—Because, though they are governed by systems different in name, and in some degree in essence, they have nevertheless more in common to be cherished than in Christendom.

To maintain such relations is eminently the interest, and should be the aim of both. I am therefore unable to think so meanly of the greatness and civilization of the people of the United States, and the magnanimity of their Government, as to suppose that when properly and formally called upon, the American Government will not act according to the well understood principles by which the conduct of enlightened nations towards each other is regulated. By prohibiting their own citizens and others domiciled in their country, and claiming the protection of their laws, from openly conspiring, plotting and devising against, and invading the people of Canada, the American Government will do but what is just, and add lustre to their own position among the nations.

I think, therefore, it is the duty of Your Excellency's Government to urge upon the Imperial Government the propriety, the necessity of pre-

senting our case in proper terms to the American Government, and of demanding that they do justice in the premises.

I had intended to offer some remarks on Fenianism and its character, its relation to and effects upon the Irish people in Ireland, in the United States and in Canada, but I find that this letter is already too long. I will, however, probably take the liberty of addressing to Your Excellency another letter or two on this subject.

I remain,
Your Excellency's humble serv't,
JOHN O'CONNOR.

Windsor, Ont., May 31, 1870.

LETTER FROM MR. JOHN O'CONNOR, M.P., ON FENIANISM.

*To His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Young, Bart., P.C., G.C.B.
G.C.M.G., &c., &c., &c.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—In my letter of the 31st ult., I intimated that I would probably take the liberty of addressing to your Excellency a letter or two more on the subject of Fenianism.

I am impelled to do so by the belief that it may be of service, not only to the particular class to which I belong, but to the Dominion.

Since Fenianism in the United States assumed its position of hostility towards Canada, the Irish Catholics in every locality have been subjected, more or less, to the suspicion, vituperation and contumely of their neighbors. Of this I have had personal knowledge in many localities, and reliable information respecting the country generally. Nor have I myself been permitted wholly to escape the noxious atmosphere of general suspicion.

Hitherto, I have treated such suspicions, and the taunts arising from them, with silent, but indignant contempt; because, in the first place, I knew them to be unfounded, and secondly, I considered that a little enquiry and consideration, guided by a sense of justice, would shew that those suspicions were groundless and ungenerous. Latterly, however, I have arrived at the conclusion that a short review of Fenianism, in the relations mentioned in my letter already published, may be not only not out of place, but of some service to the country at the present juncture of affairs; for I conceive that everything which tends to dispel unjust suspicion, and to unite all classes in patriotic sentiment, will add to our country's strength, and enable her to grapple more vigorously with adversity.

The existence of the suspicion to which I allude is, I apprehend, attributable, mainly, if not wholly, to Orangeism. This I say, not in a

spirit of vituperation, but simply as a matter of observation and of political philosophy. My object is, not to rake up the embers of old strifes, but to trace the wrong of which I complain to its source, and elucidate my view of it. I will try to explain my meaning.

Orangeism, in Canada, is a plant from Ireland; and it possesses and exhibits on the new soil much of, if not all, the qualities, good and bad, which distinguished it in the old. Orangemen in Canada, being mostly from Ireland, possess probably not all, but most of the prejudices which they had in the old country, relative to Catholicity and Catholics. As they thought and reasoned there, with respect to Catholics and Catholicism, so they are prone to think and reason here. This is quite natural; for a change from one place to another does not, even though mighty waters roll between, change a man's nature, nor does it usually change his principles. And though his opinions and prejudices may be modified by the circumstances of his changed position, yet in the main they continue, at least for a long time, unchanged.

The misgovernment in Ireland which oppressed the Catholics, and caused them to be discontented and frequently rebellious, made the Orangemen prosperous, contented and loyal; because the misgovernment consisted of discrimination in their favor. They were, in short, the favored and dominant class. The government and acts of government which were most favorable to the Orangemen, were the most oppressive to the Catholics. Opposition of interest created opposition of feeling, from which arose strife and enmity. The Orangemen being in possession of, and enjoying the favors of government, supported it, and being warmly attached to that which gave them ascendancy, they attributed the opposition and discontent of the Catholics to a perverse and rebellious spirit, engendered in them by their religious principles. Hence the Orangemen acquired the mental habit of attributing disloyalty to the Catholics, as a normal condition of the Catholic mind. So, by force of that habit of mind, the Orangemen of Canada, and others in social communion with them, have suspected the Irish Catholics of Canada, and attributed to them sympathy with Fenianism, by reason of its professed object being the liberation of Ireland from British rule. But this attribute is an *a priori* deduction from false premises. The fallacy consists of applying a conclusion deduced from premises of a certain character to premises of an entirely different character. This can, I think, be made clear and satisfactory.

There are two reasons, of omnipotent force, why the Irish Catholics of Canada do not sympathise with Fenianism, and especially with that phase of it in the United States, which consists of threatening the peace of Canada, and marring its prosperity—two plain reasons why such a feeling should not be attributed to them.

The first is, that Fenianism is not a Catholic institution; nor has it the sanction or approval of Catholic authority. On the contrary, it is, in its essential characteristics, simply atheistic; and more inimical to the Catholic Church than it is to the British Government. As such, it has

been condemned by the Catholic Church, both generally and specifically. This fact is unquestionable, that it is a branch of, and founded on the same principles as those revolutionary organizations known as Illuminati, Carbonari, &c., which have been so long corrupting the manners and disturbing the peace of nations on the continent of Europe; and that it draws its inspirations from the same source. It is part and parcel of a general organization formed for the purpose of producing universal revolution, of destroying all legitimate authority, and of establishing socialism, with its brutal licentiousness, which is held up as the grand ideal of pure liberty.

Therefore, the special organization called Fenianism, as soon as its existence became known and its character understood, was, as its continental parent and prototype had been, condemned by the Catholic Church. It was condemned by the Pope at Rome; denounced by Cardinal Cullen, the head of the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland; execrated and consigned to perdition by Doctor Moriarty, the learned, eloquent and energetic Bishop of Kerry; and discountenanced by other Catholic Bishops and the clergy of Ireland. It received like treatment at the hands of that distinguished Englishman, Doctor Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, who is the head and ornament of the Catholic Church in England. The Catholic Bishops and clergy in England and Scotland generally, and without exception, that I know of, condemned it. In the United States it has been discountenanced by the Catholic Bishops and clergy, and denounced in strong terms by many of them. In Canada it has been universally discountenanced by the Catholic hierarchy and clergy, and denounced in language clear and strong by that eminent Irishman and Catholic prelate, the learned, amiable and venerable Archbishop of Halifax, distinguished not only by his zeal for the interests of religion, but also for his disinterested and powerful advocacy of Confederation. Nor could anything surpass the uncompromising determination, and the energy of language and action with which the esteemed Bishop Farrel, of Hamilton, sought out and uprooted and crushed every germ of Fenianism in his diocese from the outset. The venerable Bishop of Toronto, too, as soon as he became aware of the real character and designs of the infamous brotherhood, placed his foot on the serpent's head. Neither has the learned and pious Bishop Walsh, of London, been backward in exhibiting towards it decided disapproval, disfavor and dislike; while his senior Vicar General, the venerable and plucky Father Bruyere, has never flagged in the zeal, vigilance and determination with which he has labored to expose its character, and prevent its obtaining a foothold in the diocese; and in this his example has been followed successfully by all the clergy.

Strictly in accord with all this has been the practice of the Church; so much so, that no person avowing himself, or known to be a Fenian, has been permitted to partake of her sacraments, or other consolations usually administered to the faithful.

In Buffalo, one of the hot-beds of Fenianism in the United States, the

rite of Christian burial has been denied to Fenians after death ; and the same has been done elsewhere ; and it would be done everywhere if the friends of deceased Fenians presumed to require the rite. Such being the state of the case, it is, I apprehend, too clear to admit of doubt that no Catholic, be he Irish or not, who is attached to his church, and guided by her teaching, can be a Fenian, or harbor sympathy for Fenianism, after he learns and understands its character. By the mere fact of joining that society, the Catholic incurs the censure of the Church, and ceases to be of her, until he recants.

I desire not, however, to be understood as denying that Catholics have become Fenians. Undoubtedly many Irish Catholics in Ireland and the United States joined the organization, allured thereto by artful appeals to those feelings of dislike for and hatred of British rule in Ireland, which centuries of misrule and oppression had engendered in the minds of most Irish Catholics. But those who were so allured were the unreflecting, many of them generous and patriotic people, who became an easy prey to the wiles of initiated knaves and demagogues, most of whom made the whole affair a matter of speculation for profit's sake. Yet these poor dupes, without knowing it, in most instances without even thinking of it, in the excitement and tumult of their roused feelings, forfeited that which, under other circumstances, would be to them of the highest moment, the sanction and favor of their Church—of that church for adhering to which their forefathers, if not themselves, had endured all the wrongs and sufferings, the memory of which was so adroitly urged to them as an incentive for joining an organization whose principles involve the destruction of that Church as its ultimate and chief object. The Catholics of Ireland, in days gone by, and not long gone, endured the proscriptions of the penal code because they would be Catholics ; because they valued the church and their faith above all earthly treasures ; and they adhered to and cherished both when to do so was to incur privation and death. Are they likely now to exchange that church and its faith for Fenianism—a living branch of the most subtle and deadly enemy with which Christianity has to cope ? I think not, except by the ignorant, the unwary, or the malevolent. Thus it has been in Canada. At the outset, when little or nothing was known of the real value of the thing, emissaries from the United States, by representing that the sole end and aim of the order was the liberation of Ireland from British misrule, by reviving the memory of the past wrongs, and by seductive appeals to the feelings thus excited, did succeed, but to a very limited extent, with some of the poorer, but industrious and simple-minded class of Irishmen in Toronto, Montreal and Quebec city, and duped them for a while. But even this partial success of those imps of Satan was of short duration. The alarm was sounded by poor McGee, who ultimately fell a sacrifice to his zeal. He had had peculiar means of learning the real character of the organization ; and his eloquent tongue and powerful pen put the clergy instantly on the alert. The truth became known, and was proclaimed by the sentinels from the watch towers of the

Church, and the Irish Catholics who had been allured to partake of the forbidden fruit spewed it out, and cast it from them. A few calling themselves Catholics did otherwise, but they were strayed sheep, foolish ones, who preferred to stray in the wolf's domain.

The second reason, or that, why the Irish Catholics in Canada do not sympathize with Fenianism, in its designs on Canada, is as obvious as the first.

Canada is a free country; there is none more so. Her freedom is real, it is rational, sound and stable; liberty without licentiousness; restraint without abuse; protection without discriminative favor, are its attributes. The constitution is one of wisdom, not empirical, but the product of experience and of practical statesmanship. Its provisions, which secure to us the glorious privilege of self-government, are equable and just. Equal rights are secured to all men and classes of men indiscriminately. There is no distinction, no preference. The institutions of the country are in accord with the spirit and character of the constitution, liberal, sound and healthy. Life, personal liberty, and the rights of property are secured by wholesome laws, impartially administered. Industry and good citizenship are fostered. The country's natural resources are various and immense; fields for the exercise of profitable industry are illimitable. The climate is salubrious, and the soil productive. Particularly, in no other country is the Irish Catholic so free, prosperous and happy, greatly more so than he is in the United States, notwithstanding the boasted liberty and equality of that country. Why then should it be presumed that Irish Catholics in Canada, merely because they are Irish Catholics, sympathize with American Fenianism in its mad and diabolical design on Canada? The assumption is absurd and unjust. It is unreasonable to presume that the Irish Catholic is less attached and devoted than any other to that which secures to him and his family the enjoyment of life and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty. Is it reasonable to assume that they would encourage the invasion of their own country, the desecration of their own hearths, the destruction of their own property, by lawless, irresponsible hordes—mere marauders, who are accountable to no nation or recognized authority? Surely it is not reasonable. The Irish Catholics, like all others who have settled in Canada, have made it their home, their country. In it they and their descendants are to blend with the people and descendants of people of the divers other national origins therein, and to form in time, and ere long, a homogeneous, hardy, liberty-loving, law-abiding and happy people, delighting in, and proud of the title, Canadians.

One more letter, and I shall have done for the present. Meantime,

I remain,

Your Excellency's humble servant,

JOHN O'CONNOR.

Windsor, Ont., June 6th, 1870.

LETTER FROM MR. JOHN O'CONNOR, M.P., ON FENIANISM.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir John Young, Bart., P.C., G.C.B. G.C.M.G. &c., &c., &c.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—In the letter which I had last the honor of addressing to you, I endeavored to show somewhat of the nature of Fenianism ; the position of the Irish Catholics of Canada in relation to it ; and the fundamental and principal reasons why they could have no sympathy with or affection for it. And I flatter myself with the hope that I succeeded in doing so to the satisfaction of candid minds.

I now propose to offer for consideration some remarks on the primary end, the main object at which, as it is professed, Fenianism aims ; the absence of reasonable ground for expecting that it can attain that end ; how and why, as I can conceive, the organization has been so long sustained ; what its general conduct has been ; and the general results of that conduct in respect to the Irish people, but particularly the Catholic people in Ireland, in Great Britain and Canada.

The professed primary end and object of Fenianism is to ameliorate the condition of the Irish people, by wresting Ireland from the grasp of British power, and establishing there an independent government, republican in form.

How probable the attainment of this proposed end is, can be judged of, only by looking at facts as they exist, and paying due regard to "the logic of events," rather should I say to the logic of known circumstances.

Ireland is unquestionably, I think, a necessary part of the British empire. What I mean is, that without it, the British empire as such, cannot exist. Wrest Ireland from, and make it permanently independent of, Great Britain, and you virtually terminate the British empire. Furthermore, I say, establish a permanent republic in Ireland, acknowledged amongst the nations as a free, an independent sovereignty, and the subjugation of Great Britain by it must speedily follow. Because, in the circumstances and civilization of modern times, they must be politically connected, else neither can be an independent sovereignty. This is, I believe, an inevitable condition of their situation, relative position and proximity—coupled with the character and tendency of governmental ideas in our day. Such, I apprehend, was the opinion of Pitt, when, at the beginning of this century, he, by the use of means anything but scrupulous, bound Ireland to Great Britain more closely than she had been, by the extinction of her legislature.

Such, I doubt not, is the belief of the British people and government. Therefore, when Great Britain is compelled to fight for the maintenance of her dominion in Ireland, she will fight for her own political existence. Consequently, when Fenianism undertakes to wrest Ireland from the grasp of British power, it undertakes the more than Herculean task of overcoming all the resistance which can be made by the great military and naval power of Britain, sustained by her vast resources, her immense wealth, her powerful alliances, and above all, by her millions of loyal

people, impressed with the belief and animated by the consciousness that the struggle is not merely for the maintenance of supremacy in Ireland, but for the preservation of her own distinctive nationality—for the existence of British sovereignty. The accomplishment of this by any means within the power of an organization like Fenianism is, I venture to say, not within the range of what the human mind can regard as probable, I may even say possible.

Empires as great, in their day, as that of Britain—some probably greater, more powerful and more magnificent—have existed before, and passed away. The Babylonian, the Assyrian, the Macedonian and the Roman empires existed in turn, and in turn vanished. The Turkish empire, once so powerful as to menace and jeopardise the liberties of all Europe, has dwindled into insignificance. But those mighty charges from magnificent existence and potency to nonentity or insignificance, were produced not by the direct agency of human power—not by means devised by human ingenuity for such results, but by a combination or succession of causes—human or providential, or partly both—the effect whereof the human mind could not foresee,—by means, therefore, which the human mind could not devise. The British empire may in like manner decay, and disappear from the list of nations, leaving only her history behind; and then Ireland may become free, may be a republic or a kingdom, and may even obtain supremacy over England and Scotland.

But that such an event may be looked for as a result of the direct agency of Fenianism, or of anything devised or that may be devised by it, is, I take the liberty of saying, hardly within the province of possibility, considering the matter as within the cycle of natural causes.

Behold Ireland as she is, every harbor fortified, every city and important town garrisoned; the navy of Britain, still the most powerful on the ocean, surrounding her, or ready to surround her when required; all being equipped in the highest style, furnished with the latest improvements of steam, of guns, of gunnery, and of all the appliances of war in abundance. Last, yet not least, add to all this, that the people of Ireland are by no means united on the question of independence; perhaps not even a majority of them consider it desirable, even were it attainable.

Is it then probable, nay, is it possible, that the notion of wresting Ireland from British power by such means as Fenianism can possibly bring to bear, should have entered into any mind possessed of ordinary intelligence? I doubt that it ever has; the very supposition is preposterous. Grant that all the men in Ireland who pant for independence are ready to fight for it at all hazards, what could they do, without discipline, without arms, without munitions of war, as against trained hosts, supplied with all things needed, seconded by a powerful navy, and sheltered by the garrisons of the land. To suppose that arms and munitions of war could be supplied in adequate quantities from America, is frivolous. The mere mention of such a scheme is too wild to be entertained

by any mind not controlled by an imagination the most extravagant. That such a scheme was ever seriously entertained by men so shrewd as the Fenian leaders in the United States, is too much to be believed ; too much for ordinary credulity. I feel constrained, therefore, to attribute the phenomena exhibited by Fenianism in the United States, in Ireland, in England—everywhere—during the past six years, to a cause other than that which appears on the surface, and to the attainment of an end other than Ireland's independence.

At the close of the late civil war in the United States, there existed in the Northern States a class of politicians who had, during the war, amassed wealth by ways and practices ill-suited to stand the test of investigation in time of peace. Investigation was, therefore, to be, if possible, averted. The wealth accumulated by those men by their speculations and peculations gave them power and influence, particularly as they had the government almost wholly in their hands. They adopted a scheme, profoundly laid, of diverting public attention from the consideration of the question of burdensome taxation, from inquiry into the causes thereof, and into abuses generally. Hence was raised the cry for the oppression, for the absolute extirpation of the people of the subdued States, which produced the desired excitement, and the inevitable party warfare in consequence thereof.

But this measure alone was not sufficient. The Democratic party, though not in the ascendant, was still powerful, and with the ample materials furnished it, by the past misdeeds of its opponents, it might prevail in the struggle. Safety to the delinquents could be secured only by dividing the democrats. For that purpose other objects of diversion were required. The times furnished those objects, and they were eagerly seized on and used.

The people of the Northern States had become somewhat exasperated during the war, against England, and partially so against Canada. Hence the mischief-makers resorted to the Alabama claims. So far so good. But the best stroke of all is yet to be told. The Irish of the Northern States were then, and perhaps they are yet, an important constituent element of the Democratic party. They had to be attracted from that party, or, failing that, so agitated within the party as to make the pursuit of a domestic party policy weak and uncertain and harmless. For effecting this, a fitting instrument ready made to hand was found in Fenianism.

It was then an insignificant institution, of which Mr. John O'Mahony was the head ; and from which he derived an income greater, no doubt, than he could have obtained from any honest pursuit, which he was capable of following. But although insignificant then, it contained two elements which, worked and directed by skilful operators, would render it most formidable as an engine of agitation. It had that mysteriousness which always attaches to secrecy, which produces marvelousness, and excites and feeds the imagination ; and it had been constituted professedly to procure or effect the independence of Ireland and the humiliation of

Great Britain. Than this, no instrument could better suit the purpose of the knaves who had enriched themselves by despoiling their own country, while she was drenched and reeking with the blood of her own people shed in fratricidal strife. It was adapted to answer a two-fold purpose ; each useful to the other, and both answering the primary object of the secret operation. Agitation for the payment of the Alabama claims served to embarrass Great Britain, and it stimulated agitation for Ireland's independence, and *vice versa*. Each so materially aided and supported the other that they formed a common cause, having unity of purpose and consistency of end. The proverbial temperament of the Irish race, their keen sense of the wrongs which their country had suffered, and their excitability when the memory of those wrongs is revived, were known to and understood by the shrewd operators ; the game was therefore plain and certain.

The wrongs of Ireland were glibly recited, exaggerated and denounced on the rostrum, on the stump, in saloons, in the Senate, by demagogues who cared as little for Ireland and the Irish, and for their wrongs, past and present, as they did for Arabia and the Arabs. The internal enactments of the penal code were inveighed against, as if they were all still in full force. The atrocities of former days were spoken of, as if they had just happened, and as if they were daily recurring with increased violence. The Irish heart was assailed and agitated, and the imagination tortured by every art and wile which the acuteness of cunning men could devise. Irishmen, many of them being themselves dupes, and others doubtless initiated to some extent, if not altogether, were employed as secret emissaries. Some of these worked in the United States, others in Ireland, and more in England and Scotland, wherever bodies of the Irish people had aggregated. The irreligious character of the institution was so veiled by hypocrisy as to preserve it for a time from detection, and secure those who were allured to it from the salutary and counteracting influence of the Catholic clergy.

It is, therefore, not astonishing that many Irishmen, Catholic and Protestant, most of them good, kindhearted, patriotic, sympathetic and honest, joined the organization in the United States, and in Ireland and F. Rather is it wonderful that the number of the dupes has not

. American politicians—the wire-pullers in all this puppet-show, no desire for a settlement of the Alabama claims ; neither did desire Irish independence, or intend doing anything to effect it. As reasonably might a merchant be expected to desire the destruction of his stock in trade before he had effected an insurance. Therefore, when Reverdy Johnson, as United States Ambassador, agreed with the British Secretary of State upon a fair basis of settlement for the Alabama claims, the treaty was forthwith attacked and repudiated. Johnson, honest, guileless and conscientious man, was not of the initiated ; he belonged not to the party, and supposed it was his duty to act honestly for the settlement of a dispute which threatened to involve two great coun-

tries in war. The foolish old man ; his conscientiousness ruined him.

So in Ireland, the candidates at the late elections who were favorable to the Gladstone Government, which had been constructed on the basis of settling the Irish difficulties and removing Irish grievances, were opposed with the utmost violence by Fenianism.

Hence also came the ridiculous but painful farce of electing poor O'Donovan (Rossa) for Tipperary, while he was pining in a prison, undergoing punishment as a treason convict.

Fully in accordance with the purpose which I have intimated, have been the results of Fenianism, and the movements thereof. It has in no wise improved the condition of Ireland or of the Irish people ; quite the reverse. It increased discontent, interfered with industrial avocations, created heart-burnings and feuds amongst the people, eradicated from the minds of hundreds the principles of Christianity, and imbued them with infidelity instead.

In America, great things were to be done. From America great succor, overwhelming aid was to go ; so said the emissaries from America. But when the day of tribulation overtook those who had yielded too eagerly and unwisely to the charms of the serpent, America, alas, did nothing, great or small ; nor did succor go. The duped had to abide the consequences of their own indiscreetness, and of martial law brought upon them by the heralds of freedom from America. The public mind in England has been agitated, panic-stricken at times by the secret plottings and midnight workings of the brotherhood, exciting vague fears and terrible apprehensions ; but what benefit has come to the Irish people from all this turmoil and tumult there or elsewhere ? Some have been hanged, others imprisoned, and hundreds ruined in their circumstances.

In the United States, the Irish people have been tortured by agitation, the industrious have been fleeced, plundered, to fill the coffers of the institution, and set the principal knaves at fighting over the division of the spoils, resulting in scandalous crimination and recrimination amongst themselves.

In Canada, the Irish people have been injured, not only in common with the people generally, by the constant alarms of threatened raids, but in an especial manner, by the distrust of their fellow-subjects, from being suspected of having sympathy for Fenianism.

Such have been the fruits produced. By its fruits the huge swindle must now be judged. But the secret-wire-pullers—the politicians of shoddydom—have gained, or nearly gained their end. Time has dried the festering sores. Mammon may now sit majestically and reign securely in the model Republic ; for investigation, with a view to retributive justice, is no longer possible. Let us hope, therefore, that we shall hear no more of Fenian raids in Canada. Probably, too, after the next presidential election, the Alabama claims will be settled or dropped. Then Fenianism, having served the purpose of its Yankee keep-

ers, will be neglected, and numbered with the other ephemerals of the past.

One thing, however, it has effected, for which it will be remembered with shame on the one hand, and with jeers on the other. It has attached the stigma of cowardice to the Irish character. In this way Pigeon Hill and Hinchinbrook will long be remembered. Heretofore the Irish had credit, at least, for gallantry, undaunted valor—heroism in battle. Without recurring to a period too remote, mention may be made of Aughrim, where Irish valor, exhibited in fighting for the cause of a renegade king, extorted words of admiration from the foreign commander, St. Ruth. In the armies of France, Irishmen sustained their soldierly character; and on the field of Fontenoy, Dillon and his brigade won fame as imperishable as that of Leonidas and his three hundred deathless Spartans. In the armies of Spain and of Austria, Irishmen distinguished themselves. In the armies of England they sustained their warlike reputation on many a bloody field; and the "Connaught Rangers," dauntless and defiant of death, became proverbial for their deeds of daring. So in the armies of the United States, and particularly in the recent tremendous struggle between the North and South, Irish valor held its own, and added new military laurels to Irish fame.

But Pigeon Hill!! Hinchinbrook!! Alas! alas! shades of departed Irish heroes, in justice to your own memories, in mercy to the honest living, impart to us the secret of this inglorious decadence. I have it. Thanks, spirits of the brave dead, for the inspiration. I will write it. They were invading an innocent and peaceable people who had done no wrong to them or to Ireland, and incurred no penalty. They were acting without the sanction of authority. They were violating the laws of eternal justice; committing an outrage on society. The presence of the country's defenders, ready to do battle in the just cause, forced the truth into the invaders' minds, and vivified it. Conscience, aroused by the sense of immediate danger, smote them. The sense of injustice crying to Heaven for vengeance, depressed them. Death stared them in the face; every man shrunk within himself from the hazard of meeting an angry God, outraged by a flagrant breach of his laws. The sword of justice in the hands of the Canadian volunteers, inflamed with vengeance, rushed upon them, and, paralyzed with terror, they fled like cowards: like cowards fled men who, before then, had stood with dauntless courage, and acted with heroic bravery on many a gory field where Grant and Lee marshalled the opposing armies. Such, however, was the state of mind and the resulting cowardly conduct which gave opportunity to the plucky little soldier, Chamberlin, to proudly shout, "give the cowards a parting shot." Another effect has, indeed, resulted from Fenianism and its threats towards Canada—an effect more agreeable than any other for Canadians to contemplate—an effect of priceless value. It shews that though sunbeams cannot be extracted from cucumbers, good may ensue to the innocent from the evil machinations and doings of the wicked.

Although Canada has been compelled to incur great expense, and her progress has been seriously interrupted and retarded, yet all is, perhaps, more than compensated by the spirit of patriotism which has been aroused, and of self-reliance which has been implanted, resulting in an army of volunteers, not large, indeed, but well disciplined, and as brave, intelligent and patriotic, as any age or country has yet been able to boast of. In them Canada has the nucleus of a large and fine army, should her circumstances ever require it, which event, however, may God in His goodness long forefend.

I remain,

Your Excellency's humble servant,

JOHN O'CONNOR.

WINDSOR, Ontario, 10th June, 1870.

