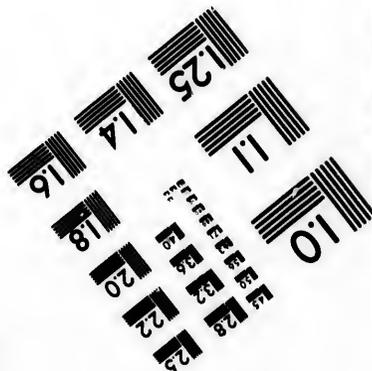
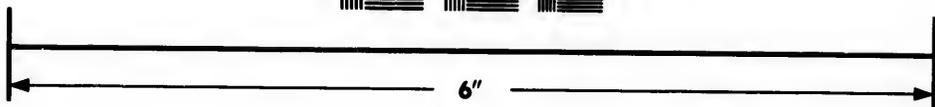
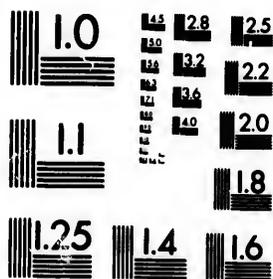


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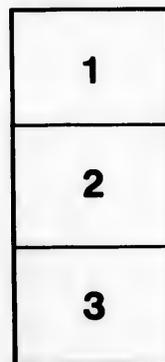
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LETTERS
OF
DANIEL O'CONNELL, ESQUIRE,
TO THE
MINISTERS
AND
OFFICE-BEARERS
OF THE
WESLEYAN METHODIST SOCIETIES
IN
MANCHESTER.

WILKINGSTON, CANADA:

PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY M. J. MACDONELL, BOOKSELLER.

1842.

PRINTED AT THE BRITISH WHIG OFFICE, KINGSTON.

TO THE
MINISTERS
AND
OFFICE-BEARERS
OF THE
WESLEYAN METHODIST SOCIETIES IN MANCHESTER.

LETTER I.

London, July 6, 1839.

“We hold the faith our fathers held to God.”

REV. SIRS AND GENTLEMEN:

There appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 2d of June an advertisement, headed “National Education,” containing a manifesto on that important subject, addressed by you to your representatives in Parliament.

I do not at all dispute your right to address your representatives on matter of such great interest; but whilst I admit that right, I feel bound to dispute the propriety of the manner in which you so remonstrated. It seems to me that the contents of your remonstrances do not exhibit any great stock of Christian knowledge, and that they are still more deficient in Christian charity.

To avoid all possibility of misstating your sentiments, I will give them in your very words. They are these:—

“We most decidedly object to the intended scheme on the strong grounds of conscience, and of *our right to full religious liberty.*”

“We protest against being taxed for the teaching and maintenance of *systems of religion which we, in common with the vast majority of our fellow-countrymen, believe to be false and injurious.*”

"We protest more especially against our being compelled to support schools in which it is proposed to use *versions of the Holy Scriptures notoriously corrupt and unfaithful*, and accompanied by *notes* which we consider contain the most absurd and pernicious doctrines.

"We think it would be an infringement on our rights, as a large and influential religious community, that after having paid a considerable portion of the money expended in national education, it would be impossible that the children of Wesleyan Methodists should avail themselves of its advantages without being subjected to the dangers arising from the exhibition of rival sects contending for rival versions of the Bible, and from the spirit of doubt, *if not of absolute infidelity*, in which that exhibition would be so likely to result."

I have several objections to this manifesto of yours. The first is, your claim to be considered friendly to the principle of full religious liberty.

It is an excellent principle: but, I repeat, you have no claim or right to be considered friendly to it. On the contrary, its assertion in your mouths sounds so exceedingly like hypocrisy, that I would respectfully caution you not to use it any more. And for this simple reason—that the Wesleyan Methodists, in the person of their founder, and from his days, have upon all occasions shown themselves the enemies of freedom of conscience.

I speak of the great body of the Wesleyan Methodists. There have, of course, been individual exceptions, and some highly honorable ones; but my accusation is directed against the great and overwhelming majority of the Wesleyan Methodists.

Look to the history of your sect, society, or persuasion, or whatever name you may choose to call it, and you will find that such history justifies and proves the truth of my accusation. In the first place, the Protestant dissenters of England, for nearly half a century after the organization of your society, were oppressed by penal and restrictive laws for conscience sake. And whilst *they* were seeking for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, *you*, the Wesleyan Methodists, never assisted them in that holy struggle. At least, if you did, the fact never reached me. On the contrary, you at least *appeared*,

if you were not *really*, amongst the ardent supporters of the enemies of the English Protestant dissenters.

I KNOW that in the year 1828, when the Catholics of Ireland unanimously and powerfully petitioned for perfect freedom of conscience for the English Protestant dissenters, *you* did not, as *we* did, mingle in the fight, or become entitled to share in the glory of the victory.

Secondly, in the long struggle the Catholics of Ireland made for the abolition of the laws that infringed freedom of conscience, *you* never gave us any assistance. On the contrary, you were found in the adverse ranks, active, persevering, virulent!

How can you, then, think of claiming to yourselves the Christian epithet "Friends of freedom of conscience!"

In the third place, you would have departed widely, indeed, from the principles of the remarkable man who formed your society, if you were not active enemies of freedom of conscience, as your founder, the Rev. John Wesley, exhibited the most ardent, but melancholy zeal in the cause of intolerance. He was, in 1779, one of the principal founders or managers of that "Protestant Association," which in June, 1780, very nearly achieved the destruction of London, by one of those insurrections which are in the present day called *emeutes*. The Protestant mob had, it is well known, possession of the city of London for nearly six days—destroyed not only the houses of the Catholics and their property, but the Catholic chapels, and also much Protestant property, as well as the prisons of the metropolis. The great instigator of that Protestant Association, both in the pulpit and through the press, was that Wesley whose name you bear; and the first page of your political history is stained with the blunderings, the burnings, the destruction of property, the bloodshed, and the fearful insurrection of June, 1780.

In the fourth place, you are unable (and perhaps you are unwilling) to shrink from the avowal of the guilt of John Wesley in these transactions. The insurrection commenced on the 2d June, 1780, the day that the Protestant Association presented their petition to Parliament. On the 17th of February in that year, that very Association presented their unanimous thanks

to John Wesley for his exertions in their cause. But what I think is the worst feature in the entire of his conduct is, his having afterwards, and after the insurrection was put down, the audacity (which, I hope, will never have a parallel) actually to publish and argue that this insurrection for destruction of Catholic property, Catholic places of worship, and Catholic lives, was nothing less than a **POPIŠU PLOT!!!**

Thus, Wesleyan Methodists, do I dispose of your claim to be deemed friends of freedom of conscience. My advice to you is, to abandon the wretched pretence in future. Avow yourselves friends of intolerance, and, if you dare, of persecution; but do not outrage common sense and Christian sentiment, by affecting to be favorable to religious liberty.

Such is my first objection to your manifesto; the suggestion of your being what you are not.

Yet I am quite ready to applaud the principle you put forward in that manifesto. Where it is applicable to *you*, I am quite content you should have the benefit of it. You protest against the tax for the teaching and maintenance of systems of religion which you believe to be false and injurious. Oh, how heartily do I thank you, good Wesleyan Methodists, for the principle. What a blow it gives to the payment of church-rates by Protestant dissenters, or Roman Catholics in England! What a heavy blow you gave to the Protestant establishment in Ireland! How heartily do I thank you for the excellent principle you thus put forward!

But come, be honest! Work out your own principle. No man should be taxed for the teaching and maintenance of a religion he deems false and injurious. Let the Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Independent, Baptist and Catholic, have the benefit of it. It applies to all. Will you work it out for all?

But no! you will claim it for yourselves—you will not grant it to others. "What you would that other men should do unto you, *that* you will not do unto them."

To justify your conduct in a moral point of view, all that is necessary is directly to contradict the plain precept of holy writ.

We will now proceed to your biblical knowledge. The words you use are these:—

"We protest most especially against our being compelled to support schools in which it is proposed to use versions of the Holy Scriptures notoriously corrupt and unfaithful, and accompanied by notes which, we consider, contain most absurd and pernicious doctrines."

I will begin with the notes. And my conviction is, that not one amongst you ever read the notes of the Catholic version of the Holy Scriptures in modern use. It is quite true that there was an edition of the Rhemish or Douay Bible, that contained notes in which the civil power was sought to be justified in inflicting persecution for religious dissent. But there are, indeed, very few copies in existence containing such notes; and all the copies in use by the clergy, or in use in Catholic schools, colleges or private houses, are quite free from any such notes. The multitudinous copies published in England and Ireland in recent times, are quite free from them. Indeed, even if they existed, the complaint against them would come with a very bad grace from the Wesleyan Methodists, who, as far as the more liberal spirit of the present period will allow, countenance the principle of religious persecution. But the Catholics, one and all, have repudiated these notes and the doctrines they contain. No man ever repudiated and condemned them more loudly than I did, and do. The complaint, therefore, that you make against notes that no longer, for any practical purpose, exist, appears to me to be idle and frivolous, and quite unworthy of being introduced into any discussion upon so important a subject as national education.

The next allegation of your's, to which I object, is, that the Catholic version of the Holy Scriptures is notoriously corrupt and unfaithful. In this you display nothing but a lamentable ignorance. You have made a charge which you can never prove, and which you would be ashamed to make if you had biblical learning adequate to the importance of the subject. You would then have known that such a charge applies, not to the Catholic, but to the Protestant version; and that whilst many Protestant divines have borne their testimony in favor of the Catholic version, many learned Protestant, as well as all Catholic divines, have demonstrated the errors in the Protestant authorized version; to this extent, that some of those errors, upon most important points of religious belief, are admitted by learned

Protestants to be manifest, and yet remain to this day uncorrected. Let me put you in possession of a few facts. It may be of use to you to know them.

First—That the first great use made of the press, after the invention of the art of printing, was the publication, by the celebrated Faust, of the Bible according to the Vulgate. The edition was very large. It was, however, in Latin; but you should know that at that period almost every person who could read understood Latin. This publication took place more than 70 years before the so-called “Reformation.”

Second—That about 800 editions of the Bible or New Testament were printed and circulated in Catholic Europe before the so-called Reformation, and before the name of Protestant was known in the world.

Third—A number, exceeding 200, of these editions, were in the vernacular tongues of the different countries in which they were published; and were thus accessible to every body who could read.

Fourth—These editions of the Bible in the vernacular tongues were almost exclusively published in the countries that afterwards continued faithful to Catholicity; whilst in England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, where Protestantism acquired an early, and has maintained a more lasting, ascendancy, no Bible existed, in the national tongue, until after they had embraced the new creed.

Fifth—That the only exception in favor of a country having adopted the new creed, or rather creeds, in Holland; in which there were two or three vernacular versions of scripture before the Reformation; but it must be admitted that the political position of Holland influenced, if it did not create, the adherence of the Dutch to Protestantism. And there is this compensation, that in no country in Europe are the inhabitants returning more quickly or more numerously to the Catholic faith than are the Dutch. But of the countries we have above mentioned as being peculiarly protestant, it is remarkable that Protestantism was introduced into England by Henry VIII., and into Denmark by Christiern II., two of the greatest monsters that ever disgraced, not only the throne, but human nature!

Sixth—That the first versions of the Bible in the English language published after the commencement of the Reformation

were—1stly, Tyndal's; 2dly, Coverdale's;—both in the reign of Henry VIII.;—3dly, that called "The Bishop's Bible," in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and these three possessed the exclusive circulation of England till the year 1611, when the present "authorized" version was published in the reign of James I. The three former versions having prevailed for a period of nearly sixty years as the authorized versions of the sacred Scriptures for the English Protestants.

Seventh.—That these versions were so full of gross errors that they were declared by more than one thousand ministers of the English Protestant church to be "in some places absurd; and in others, as taking from, perverting, obscuring, and falsifying the word of God;" and as being what James himself called "a most corrupt translation." Yet it was from such versions that the biblical christians of England had, for a period of nearly sixty years, to select their religion.

Eighth.—That the present authorized version, that of King James, had not escaped Protestant censure of the most emphatic nature. Protestant divines of the highest character; I name Louth, Newcome, Wakefield, Bellamy (and I could name others) admit that *the errors in the Protestant authorized version are frequent, and that a revision is desirable.* And a more recent and laborious Protestant writer, the Rev. Mr. Horne, in his "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures," vol. ii., fully concurs in the opinions of the more ancient Protestant divines.

Yet it is from this version, in which, in the mitigated language of Protestant divines, "*the errors are frequent,*" and of which a revision was declared to be very desirable, that you, Wesleyan Methodists, and the rest of the Protestants of England, collect your religion.

Ninth.—The persons who revised, and under whose sanction the present Protestant version was produced, were men whose character and strength of mind may be judged of by their having dedicated their new version of the Bible to James I., that slobbering and disgusting creature, who has been so justly described as the shame alike of royalty and of manhood!—and in their dedication having called him "the Sun in his strength;"—*"whom the heavenly hand of the Lord hath enriched with many*

* singular and extraordinary graces, that he may be the **WONDER OF THE WORLD**"!!!

Tenth—The Catholic authorized version was first published at Douay in the year 1609. It was the result of forty years toil and labor, and can fairly stand a comparison with any other version of the sacred Scriptures, published in any country, either Catholic or Protestant.

Eleventh—I close my statement of these interesting notices, with reminding you that the Catholic needs not, and does not rely upon any particular Catholic version of the sacred Scriptures. It has an ever-living and a speaking authority to resort to. It is the duty and it is the happiness of the Catholic that he should

*“ Her alone for his director take
Whom God has promised never to forsake.”*

Having thus thrown before you facts, the verification of which is familiar to any instructed biblical scholar, I proceed to consider as rapidly as so important a subject will permit, another topic of great importance in itself, but which, I think, you have been exceedingly incautious in bringing forward. It is a topic which, in my humble judgment, you should have cautiously abstained from. It can do you nothing but mischief. It appears to me to be a disavowal of the very first principle of Protestantism. It is that in which you complain of the dangers to which your children “would be exposed, by the exhibition of rival sects contending for rival versions of the Bible”—and by the spirit of doubt, if not of absolute infidelity, in which that exhibition would be so likely to result.

And is it so, Wesleyan Methodists? Is there, then, danger of doubt? is there, then, danger of absolute infidelity from the exhibition of rival versions of the Bible? And are you thus determined to rear up and educate your children in the ignorance of that most important fact? And will you conceal from those children, too, who *they* were from whom that spirit of doubt emanated, and with whom the danger of that absolute infidelity originated, and by whom it was continued? Meditate well upon your own words; and bethink you if they are not destined to rise in judgment against you, and to produce your condemnation out of your own mouths?

For, speaking of Protestantism as a fact, and, for the present, not condemning, and (of course) not approving of it—is it not this, the right of private judgment, and the right, as well as the duty of each individual to examine and decide for himself, by selecting from the written word of God, and from that alone, the tenets of his religion?

This is the principle of your religion, else you are not Protestant: "The *sole* sufficiency, and the *all*-sufficiency, of the written word of God, with the right of each individual to expound its meaning for himself."

Now, come with me, I pray you, for one moment, and tell me whether this principle does not necessarily and inevitably imply a perfect knowledge of what is and what is not "*the written word of God?*"

There is an accurate, though parliamentary language, a previous question, or rather questions, before you can use any book as containing the word of God.

First—Is it certain that the book *does* contain the word of God?

Secondly—Is it certain that it contains the entire word of God?

These two questions should be fully and satisfactorily answered before any Protestant can safely use his Bible. In fact, it is plainly the duty of every member of the Protestant churches to satisfy himself individually of the ground whereon he receives the Protestant Bible. This information is of the utmost and the most vital importance. The Protestant has thrown off the authority of the church to decide the canon of Scripture. It would be absurd to suppose that, disclaiming the authority of the church, he is to rely upon that of the King's printer!! To be consistent, therefore, with Protestantism, you should *instead of shrinking from the investigation*, consider it your first duty to teach your children to authenticate the genuine canon of Scripture, and, of course, to distinguish the false and erroneous versions from the true.

The fact is that your children, in order to be safe in reading the book you put into their hands as the Bible, should be taught, firstly, the authenticity of the several books composing that volume; secondly, the divine inspiration of the writers of those several books. They should be able to give a reason why the

books of St. Mark and St. Luke, who were not apostles, should be received as genuine, and, above all, as inspired; while they are called upon to reject that written by St. Barnabas as *not* inspired, although it is certainly authentic, and although he is certainly known to have worked miracles, and is described in your Bible to be *an apostle, and full of the Holy Ghost*.

These questions do not create doubt; they do not excite to infidelity in the mind of the Catholic, who relies on the authority of the church for the authenticity and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the sacred deposit in all times and in every age of the Catholic church.

But you, Wesleyan Methodists, what are *you* to do? Are you to control the reason and judgment of your children by an ephemeral claim to spiritual authority? And if you have not that authority (as you assuredly have not) it is vain for you to hope that you can stifle doubts by leaving your children in ignorance of the real nature of the controversy; or subdue the germs of infidelity by insisting upon a submission to what you have no species of rational claim.

In sober truth, the doctrine of church authority in these matters, is so plainly consistent with the dictates of common sense that you yourselves unconsciously resort to it and admit (without intending it, but in explicit terms) that the Anti-Catholic rule necessarily leads to *doubts*, and has a direct tendency to promote *infidelity*.

Wesleyan Methodists, I have done with you for the present. I shall not notice any *anonymous* publication that may appear in reply to this letter.

But I proceed to conclude my address to you with these observations:—

First—That you allege that it is not honest to apply the money of the Wesleyans to educate persons in the Roman Catholic religion. I admit it. But is it not equally dishonest to apply Roman Catholic money for the education of Wesleyans, or of any other sect, in doctrines which Catholics believe erroneous? As Cobbett coarsely said, “what is sauce for the goose, is sauce for the gander.”

Secondly—Your letter is full of the above dishonesty. You desire that the money of *all* persuasions should be applied to the education of only *some*.

Thirdly—The Catholics, on the other hand, desire to deal honestly by all. They insist upon the principle of common justice—that the money of all should be applied to the education of every one.

The Catholic church at every period and in every country, has been the promoter of education. Before the Reformation, every great church, and all the monasteries, friaries and convents, had schools attached to them for the poor, who were educated gratuitously. In Oxford alone, before the Reformation, there were 300 halls and private schools *besides* the colleges. Where are they now!

Wesleyan Methodists, I conclude for the present. You have provoked this contest by the bigotry and injustice of your narrow views on the subject of education. I rejoice in your affording to me the contrast between genuine Catholic liberality and the intolerance of Wesleyan Methodism. You have been driven actually to contradict Protestant principles in order to palliate that intolerance.

How true it is,

“*Et secum petulans cementia certat!*”

Your organization is extensive, and would be formidable, but for its inherent spirit of uncharitable antipathy to your fellow Christians. You desire to make converts of the Catholics. Can you hope to succeed by the exhibition of pecuniary injustice and spiritual virulence!

Your No-Popery cry is daily losing its force and its efficacy. At the present period you could no more get up an insurrectionary movement against the Catholics, as you did in 1780, than you could subvert the throne of the constitution. Instead of injuring, you serve the cause of Catholicity, because you place in the most powerful contrast with your labors the exertions of the Catholics to promote liberality, general education, and a perfect exemption for all Christians from any local or temporal fetters upon the freedom of conscience.

I am, Rev. Sirs and Gentlemen,

With all the usual compliments of ceremony,

Your humble servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

LETTER II.

London, August 15, 1839.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS:

Your reply to my first letter is a most exquisite piece of impertinence; an indescribable olio of anger, rancour, and absurdity.

Yet, take it for all in all, I heartily thank you for it. The vexation you exhibit at being defeated in argument proves how anxious you would be to controvert my facts and reasoning, if you could do so. It is, however, much more easy for you to scold and vilify me, than to answer those facts and that reasoning. Accordingly, you have in your own "meek and pious" manner, vituperated and calumniated me with an intensity of malignity which potently proclaims your sense of your own defeat. Such conduct is the usual resource of convicted and exposed bigotry and uncharitableness. You have a perfect right to do this. It is your only resource!

You have, indeed, given me a triumph in the confession of your weakness. Many of your friends, Protestant as well as Catholic, told me that my letter was unanswerable—that the facts alleged were so clearly proved, and the inferences I draw were so plainly just and natural, that there could be no rational answer. This opinion is perfectly borne out by the event. You, who began this controversy by your attack on the Catholic version of Scripture, would certainly have answered by letter but for one reason, namely, because it is unanswerable.

Am I not justified in this assertion, when you yourselves show how severely you feel the charges brought against you—and the force of the statements on biblical subjects which I put forward? You *must* be conscious that the weakness of the excuses which you make for not answering me, places in the clearest light your incapacity to do so.

My triumph is complete; and the joy which I experience at the impression which my letter has made, is, I trust, unmingled with a single particle of resentment for the incivility and uncharitableness which are the characteristic feature of your second manifesto.

Let me, in the same spirit in which I wrote my first letter, examine the excuse you make to cover your impotence to give a rational answer.

Your first excuse is this. With *you* it is necessary to be precise, and to use your own language. Here, then, in your own words, is your first excuse for not answering my letter:—

“1. Because that letter contains the most false and calumnious imputations as well upon the personal character and conduct of the late venerable John Wesley, as upon the general spirits and habits of that sect of Christians which now bears his name, and to which the members of this committee deem it an honor to belong.”

Here we join issue. I did make strong and severe charges—not mere imputations—upon the Wesleyan Methodists and their founder, whom you are pleased to designate as “venerable.” Venerable! Bah! But I utterly deny that these charges were false or calumnious, unless that can be calumny which is strictly true, as my charges certainly were.

Let me briefly reiterate these charges and show at once their undoubted truth. These charges were three.

Firstly—I charge the Wesleyan Methodists with being inveterate enemies of freedom of conscience. I demonstrated the truth of that charge by showing that the Wesleyan Methodists never assisted the Catholics of Ireland in their struggle for religious freedom; never assisted the Protestant Dissenters of England in their struggle for religious freedom; but, on the contrary, countenanced and supported, during these struggles, the opponents of the glorious cause of freedom of conscience.

And, at this present moment, are you not affording the clearest proofs that the spirit of bigotry is as vivacious amongst you as ever? Are you not supporting the dishonest practice of taking the money of all for the education of some? Is not even your present manifesto another proclamation of the same dishonest nature?—directly contradictory of the most glorious and useful

precept of Christianity, that of "doing unto others as you would be done by?"

My second charge was founded upon the hypocrisy of your insinuation that you are friends of religious liberty—you call it "*full religious liberty*." And, notwithstanding my caution to you in my first letter, you continue that hypocrisy by venturing to talk, in your present manifesto, of *liberty and truth*. Oh! shame on your unblushing hypocrisy!

Wesleyan Methodists!—I will put the entire controversy upon a brief issue.

Your history is a short one, scarcely exceeding some eighty years. Show me within that period that you have distinguished yourselves by any one act, or declaration, or movement, in favor of freedom of conscience, or full religious liberty—indeed I may say in favor of either civil or religious liberty—and I will blot out the word "hypocrisy," retract my charges, apologise most humbly, and write you down charitable Christians, and not intolerants and bigots.

It is also true that I made strong and severe charges against John Wesley, whom you denominated *venerable*. I have charged him that, in 1779, he was one of the principal founders or managers of that Protestant Association which in June, 1780, raised a rebellion in London; plundered, destroyed, and burnt private houses and chapels, the residences of judges, and public prisons; attacked the bank, and the palace, and left the streets of London crimsoned in human blood. I gave you dates and circumstances. I also charged him with the unparalleled audacity of having, after these crimes had been perpetrated by his pupils and associates, endeavored to shift the guilt from his beloved Protestant Association, and to place it upon the suffering and plundered Catholics. These were my charges. You have called them *false* and *calumnious*. I assert them to be perfectly *true*. I gave you the date of the unanimous vote of thanks of that plundering and rebellious Protestant Association to that very John Wesley. It was dated 17th February in that very year, 1780. Will you attempt to deny the existence of that resolution!—or the fact of his having merited it? You dare not do it! My proofs are ready. I challenge you to the controversy. But you will find it more prudent to shrink from

detail, and to confine yourselves to a general and sweeping assertion. Will you deny that Wesley had the indescribable falsehood to charge Catholic plunder and Catholic ruin, on the Catholics themselves? Will you deny that he called the insurrection a "Popish plot?" If you deny it, I am ready to give you chapter and verse out of his own writings for every one of these assertions.

Wesleyan Methodists!--Your history is one of the strangest exhibitions among the erratic movements of the human mind. It shows how easily strong and enthusiastic religious feelings may be mingled up with the worst passions of humanity, and how far mistaken religious zeal can make men hate, in the name of the God of charity, their unoffending fellow-Christians.

I now come to your second excuse for answering my letter. It is in these words:—

"2. Because the whole argument of the letter proceeds upon the most bold and palpable misrepresentations of the document to which it professes to apply."

Is it possible? What manner of men are you? But let me cease to exclaim, and just state the fact. The passage in my letter was this—these are my precise words:

"To avoid all possibility of mis-stating your sentiments, I will give them in your very words—they are these."

And then I transcribed from your document, word for word, without adding or altering an iota!—*ipsissimis verbis*. Yet you have the bad taste and brazen boldness to call this a misrepresentation.

There is no less than two hundred and one of you ministers and office-bearers, such as you are; and you have by your Education Committee—bless the mark!—the audacity to assert that the man who gives your sentiments in your own words, and no other, *misrepresents* them? I tell you at once what I call such an assertion—an emphatic but short word—a monosyllable! There are two hundred and one of you; you may share it among you, foolish * * * * as you are.

You never would have had the folly as well as the audacity to give such an excuse as that *identity* was *misrepresentation*, but that your excuses were not in truth addressed to me. They

were really addressed to the poor deluded hopes of your Society. You reckoned on their silly, but prompt submission; and that they would not read my letter, but take your account of it as true. You must have strong experience of their credulity to attempt so gross a delusion. You are, in sober sadness, a curious batch! How sincerely are the unhappy dupes of such men to be pitied.

Your third excuse for not answering my letter contains an assertion of quite a different nature, and such as you, I believe, are little in the habit of making; one in substance perfectly true. It does, indeed, contain a precious avowal! It is this:—

“3. Because the letter is an obvious, and, as this Committee considers, a dishonest attempt to propagate, by means of a controversy with the Wesleyans of Manchester, some of the most absurd, though dangerous doctrines of Popery.”

It is not worth while to remark how uncivil you are to charge me thus with dishonesty. The folly of your accusation much exceeds its rudeness. I believe with the certitude of faith that what you call the dogmas of Popery are perfectly true, and conducive to eternal salvation. How can it be dishonest in me to attempt to propagate these doctrines by open controversy, even though it were with the helpless Methodists of Manchester? You admit that my attempt is obvious. There is, therefore, no concealment, no fraud. There is on my part, entire candour; and, if your charge has any meaning; it means that candour is dishonest. It may indeed be so amongst *you*, who deal in all that is uncandid and shuffling; but it cannot be so with the Catholic Christian, who has nothing to conceal, and nothing that really belongs to him to disavow. I proceed with your assertion. You state your apprehension that controversy with you may propagate what you call the most absurd though dangerous doctrines of Catholicity. What an opinion you must have of the opinion of Methodism, when you admit that it is in jeopardy from “most absurd and dangerous doctrines.” What an admission this is!—that Methodism is in danger from even absurd doctrines. Truth, in open controversy, is in *no* danger from absurdity; but I admit to you that any open discussion places Methodism in peril. Those who entertain “most absurd

doctrines" shrink from controversy—just as you do. They carefully shrink from argument and reason; and take refuge, just as you do, in incivility and calumny.

You may, indeed, say that controversy conducted by verbal debate is liable to be distorted by eloquence on the one hand, and the want of oratorical powers on the other; and I may be prepared to admit that objection. But the controversy I attempted was one of quite a different nature; it was one to be conducted through the medium of printing and publication; one in which the reader could pause upon every phrase, examine every sentence, weigh every argument, and arrive at a cool and deliberate conclusion.

Such is the controversy which you shrink from; and I admit that you are right to shrink from it. I do believe that of all the errors that have deluded the human mind since Christianity commenced, there are none so totally defenceless in the field of argument as the ever-varying, contradictory, and fanatic doctrines of Wesleyanism. There is no sect, society, or persuasion, that has lent itself to worse politics than the Wesleys. Either as politicians, or as a religious sect, there is, indeed, little of any *definable* quality about you. You are quite right, therefore, when you, on the one hand, oppose the spread of a generous and general education; you are quite right when you, on the other hand, avow that to *you* controversy would be dangerous. Yours, indeed, are precious avowals; you avow yourselves obnoxious to two perils: first, education would produce amongst you *doubt* and *infidelity*; secondly, controversy would scatter your ranks and thin your conventicles. 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 forth 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 controvertialist. 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 Catholics, 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; 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 wo; 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 *Rigoc-marole*.”

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 persuasion. 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 fondliness of yours. To *you* indeed may be exclaimed, “O, give not the child to HER: 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 belabored 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 Titus Oates—those days of eternal infamy to the English people of that period—his sermons and exhortations would not have been wanting to stimulate the full flooding of that innocent Catholic blood which was shed, through the perjured forms of judicial solemnity.

Secondly—His religious opinions were as various as the patches on a harlequin's jacket. He began his career as a zealous priest of the Established Church, and actually passed over as such to America, to convert the Indians to Church-of-Englandism. But the only feat he achieved there—for he did not convert a single Indian—was to excommunicate a respectable young lady who thought fit to disappoint *him* by marrying another suitor. His first faith, therefore, was Church of Englandism.

Thirdly—After his return to England, he himself, in the year 1783, declared that for many years he had been tossed about by various winds of doctrine, and that he had been a Papist without knowing it. Thus, his second and third professions were—Uncertainty and some species of Popery.

Fourthly—One Peter Bohler converted him to Moravianism and he was then to be a Moravian for ever. His own words prophecied the perpetuity of the Moravian tenets. Speaking of Bohler, he writes,—“O, what a work hath God begun, since his,” (Bohler) “coming to England. Such a one *as shall never come to an end till heaven and earth shall pass away !!*” Thus was Moravianism, in fact, his *fourth* belief.

Fifthly—Having put on record an odious character of those in connexion with the Moravians, he adopted Antinomian Calvinism; and he continued in this, his *fifth* profession of faith, for a considerable time.

Sixthly—In his old days he invented a new species of Methodism; that which the Conference, the now ruling power of the Wesleyan Methodists, purport to follow, with its two-fold mode of justification. This was his sixth faith; convinced he was right in each, yet wrong in all.

Seventhly—Nor were these light and insignificant changes. He himself describes the Moravians, with whom he had been long in communion, as “swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness, opposing the ordinances, namely, prayer; the reading of

the Scriptures, the frequenting the sacraments and public worship." Also, as "selling their Bibles, &c., in order to rely more fully on the blood of the Lamb." This, indeed, is a frightful description of his colleagues and co-religionists of many years standing.

Eightly—But when he comes to describe his next set of co-religionists, the Antinomians, his description is still more frightful. He asks himself the question, "What is Antinomianism?" and he answers it thus: "Its main pillars are, that Christ abolished the moral law; that, therefore, Christians are not obliged to keep it—that Christian liberty is liberty from obeying the commands of God." I will not pollute my pen with dwelling upon any more of these doctrines, which Wesley entertained for years, and which he himself has described in the most fearful terms. Yet I may observe, that the person whom Wesley intended as his successor, Fletcher, if possible, exceeds his master in reprobation of the Antinomian Calvinism, using these remarkable words:—"There are few of our celebrated pulpits where more has not been said for sin than AGAINST it." But take the doctrine of that Antinomianism from one who did not desert it with Wesley, but was consistent in believing it to the last. I give it on the authority of that same Fletcher. The words (he quotes from high Antinomian authority, as their doctrine) are:—"My sins may displease God, my person is always acceptable to him. Though I should outsin Manasses himself, yet I should not be a less pleasant child, because God always views me in Christ. Hence in the midst of adulteries, murders and incests, he can address me with, '*Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.*' It is a most pernicious error of the schoolmen to distinguish sin according to the fact, not according to the person. Though I highly blame those who say, 'Let us sin that grace may abound,' yet adultery, incest and murder, shall, upon the whole, make me holier upon the earth, and merrier in heaven."

Ninthly—Such are the doctrines which belonged to Wesleyan Methodism until the old age of Wesley. He abandoned them in his last years, apparently with some difficulty, as his eulogist, Fletcher, makes his apology for him: "I admire the candor of an old man of God, who, instead of obstinately maintaining an old mistake, comes down like a little child, and acknowledges

it before his preachers, *whom it is his interest to secure*. This is, indeed, a characteristic apology.

Tenthly—The way in which Wesley, having secured his preachers, purified his religious system from the defilement of Antinomianism was this : he invented a two-fold mode of justification ; one without repentance, the love of God, or other works, the other, to which these works were essential. The former was for those who should die soon after their pretended experience of saving faith ; the latter for those who had time and opportunity for performing them. The observation of a celebrated Catholic divine on this system is no less astounding than it is just and accurate. It is in these words :—
“ Thus, to say no more of the system, a Nero and Robespierre might, according to it, have been established in the grace of God, and in a right to the realms of infinite purity, without one act of sorrow for their enormities, or so much as an act of their belief in God.”

Eleventhly—Thus, your *venerable* Wesley had no less than about half a dozen different sets of religious opinions, each of which, in its turn, he considered and proclaimed as the true faith. He found each of them—for the time—in the Sacred Scriptures ; and as he abandoned each, he found from the same Scriptures that his new opinion was true, and that the former belief was false. He was sincere in each belief. His avowal of his change was a proof of his sincerity, demonstrating these two things. Firstly, the facility with which any number of persuasions may be founded on individual interpretation of Scripture ; and, secondly, that mere sincerity can be no justification of any particular belief, nor any protection against error.

Twelfthly—With all this consciousness of the instability and insecurity of any one of the religious opinions that he from time to time entertained, he was exceedingly liberal in consigning those who differed from him in any point to eternal punishment. For example, he taught for many years that all persons under any of these three categories would certainly be damned :—

1st—All who were in heaviness through manifold temptations.

2d—All those from whom God, for wise ends, permits an abstraction of spiritual comfort.

3d—All who walk in darkness and have no light, and who, the prophet says, “shall trust in the Lord and stay himself upon his God.”

Upon this principle, he taught that if any of those persons died in that state, they must go to hell, however they might hate sin and cultivate holiness. But this monstrous and horrible doctrine he afterwards totally renounced; and he admitted it to be so unchristian that he himself said, “When I and my brother taught this doctrine, I wonder that the people did not stone us.” What would have become of your *venerable* John Wesley, had he been stoned for insisting upon false doctrine, as he himself says that he ought to have been? And yet he for years taught those errors, and was, upon his own confession, a deceiver in religion! “venerable,” forsooth!

Thirteenthly—One instance more. In the Conference of 1774, he himself says, “We have received it as a maxim that a man is to do nothing in order to justification.” He adds, “than this, nothing can be more false.” Mark! that here he admits that he and his preachers under him had received, and had been teaching a doctrine as the truth of God “than which, nothing could be more false.”

Fourteenthly—You, Wesleyan Methodists, who claim to be as orthodox as the church of England Protestants, can you deny this; that your John Wesley, being himself only in priest's orders, ordained several priests to be priests also? and went so far as to commit the “*facinus inauditum*”—that is, he a *priest*, consecrated Dr. Coke to be—a *bishop*!!! This, indeed, so horribly scandalizes his own brother Charles, that it created a lasting schism among the Methodists; and the son of that Charles afterwards became a Catholic!

I could extend this catalogue of Wesleyan enormities and contradictory wanderings in matters of religion, if a space permitted. I could also point out in detail the cruel tyranny exercised over the preachers by your self-appointed Conference. But my business with you must, for the present, for want of space, not for want of materials, be limited to some of its effects.

Wesley, by the manner in which he instituted the governing powers of the Conference, formed a despotic oligarchy of the closest nature. In the appointment of the men who composed that Conference, the body of Methodists have no choice or selection. Over their conduct they have no control. The property of their chapels, &c., is vested absolutely in this oligarchy, and freedom of opinion is no more to be found among them than in the divan of the Turkish sultan. What care I for this power, if it were not used for *political* purposes! The great body of Wesleyan Methodists have always been the worst politicians. John Wesley himself so hated popular liberty, that amongst his vagaries he actually offered the government of the day, to raise a regiment to enable George the Third to put down what he called the "American Rebellion." From that day to this, the Wesleyans have been found the ardent supporters of every bigotted and oppressive administration; in short, of every administration but one that happened to be tinged with liberality; and they have as uniformly opposed every measure calculated to increase the franchise, or diminish the burdens of the British people, or to lessen in any way the irresponsible authority of the wealthy and powerful classes. In religion, they have been bigots; in politics, slaves; tyrants, in their conference; servile sycophants in the exercise of religious privileges; a body formidable in the cohesion of this unholy alliance; despicable in their opposition to the tranquil spread of civil as well as religious liberty.

They hold out, however, a great example; an example of what ought to be avoided, not of that which we should imitate. They have in their history—in the dissensions that have risen amongst them—in the secession from brother to brother; in the great revolt of Whitefield from Wesley—Whitefield, who was as sincere as Wesley; and, above all, in the contradictions and contrarieties of the religious belief of that Wesley himself—demonstrated, that neither human talent, nor sincerity, nor zeal, nor erratic piety, however strongly disinterested and persevering; that none of these great qualities, taken separately, nor all of them taken together, can secure man from believing or teaching monstrous falsehood—from preaching "more in favor of sin than against it;" from instructing in

doctrines so very false and criminal as to deserve the punishment of stoning ; from fanatically disclaiming obedience to the commands of God—in short, from error, absurdity and impiety. No, Wesleyans. There is but one way of security. There is but one way to keep “the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” It is “clear as the sun.” It is to be found in the reasonable, and, therefore, entire submission to the authority of the everlasting *Church of God*, “the pillar and ground of truth.”

I am, with unfeigned pity,
Your servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

IN corroboration of Mr. O'Connell's Letters, we subjoin the following extract from the Toronto Church, of the 5th February :—

“The Methodists are a most exclusive body, and ought to be the last persons to talk about liberality. At page 73 of the ‘Doctrines and Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada,’ printed *by order of the Conference*, and sold at the office of the Christian Guardian, is the following rule, instructing Methodists how “they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation’ :—

“By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be—employing them preferably to others—buying one of another—helping each other in business—and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only.’

“This rule is anything, we are told, but a dead letter. In plain and fair English, it means buy your meat of a Methodist butcher, your bread of a Methodist baker, your clothes of a Methodist tailor, your shoes of a Methodist shoemaker, and

every thing that you want buy it of a Methodist, if you can.— What if Churchmen should imitate THIS EXCLUSIVE DEALING ; ‘buy of one another ;’ and employ Churchinen ‘preferably to others?’ What if they should ‘evidence their desire of salvation’ in such a manner? This rule, it must be borne in mind, is not the dictum of an individual, but an injunction of Conference. Were the sentiments of individual Methodists to be taken as the voice of the whole body, we might quote a startling declaration, from a correspondent of the Guardian of the 19th January, who, in denouncing the British Wesleyans, very modestly asserts, ‘*The Province is ours by right:—It is our native soil.*’ Without hazarding a conjecture as to whether this expression may be fairly taken as the opinion of the Methodists belonging to the Canadian Conference, we are quite content to let the liberality of Methodists be tested by their own Book of Discipline.”

