

4 TWO LETTERS

ON

THE SUBJECT

OF

THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY,

ADDRESSED TO

THE LORD LIEUTENANT,

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN,

AND

THE BISHOP OF CORK.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY R. COYNE, 154, CAPEL-STREET.

1809.

TWO LETTERS

THE SUBJECT

THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY,

THE LORD LIEUTENANT,

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN,

THE BISHOP OF CORK,

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY R. COOPER, 151, MARKET STREET.

TO
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF RICHMOND,
PRESIDENT,
AND
HIS GRACE,
CHARLES, EARL NORMANTON, &c.
VICE-PRESIDENT
OF
THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY.

MY LORDS,

WHEN the importance of the subject which impels me to address you is considered, I hope I shall be freed from the imputation of unnecessary obtrusiveness. I have long wondered that the Catholics should be so long silent on the grievance of which I am about to complain; and I regret it has not fallen into abler hands. Convinced that you cannot remain unstung by the bitterness of fair reproof, and that you are alive to that tenderness of public character, which high station requires,

quires, I have some hope that my letter may be useful. It can scarcely be believed by the people, that the representative of Majesty in Ireland should patronize open and wilful misrepresentation, and that the most dignified ecclesiastical character in the Irish Protestant Church should be joined with him in this shameful protection. Who could imagine that the dignity of rank and the purity of virtue can be so sullied or degraded? You well know, my Lords, the necessity, at this perilous juncture, of embodying all the force and feeling of the country in our common defence, and you cannot but be sensible of the mischief which the maintenance of distracting doctrines is calculated to produce. Has not the night of bigotry yet been dissipated?—Has not an enlightening mind yet walked forth into this unhappy land? Whilst a Buonaparte is abolishing the inquisition and the intolerant institutions of other countries, whilst he is arraying even the passions of mankind for our destruction, must we be tenacious of the institutions of our bigotted days? Must an Incorporated Society, the disgrace of the empire, be permitted
not

not only to exist, but to flourish, in a country of Catholics? Must you, my Lords, the heads of this Society, continue to set the example of intolerance to the vulgar, to patronize the most hellish prejudice, to foster the most poisonous and rankling passions of the human heart, and to set Irishman against Irishman in the furious spirit of religious hatred? But, my Lord Duke, you are the Lord Lieutenant of Mr. Perceval's administration; and such is the poor and interested policy of that poor and self-interested minister. Before I make any comment on the imputation of the doctrines contained in the Catechism of *your Society* to the Roman Catholics, permit me, for your Lordship's information, (for I acquit you of the guilt of having ever read this catechism,) to quote some of the passages. I cannot say so much for you, my Lord Archbishop, whose profession is theology, and who must have read what perhaps one of your predecessors composed. I will abstain from any, merely doctrinal, quotations—my purpose is not to argue points of controversy, though even in this respect there is much misrepresentation of

Catholic tenets, but to shew that the Protestant catechism, *so called*, published by your authority, inculcates into the tender mind the idea that Roman Catholics can be, by the principles of their religion, *rebellious and disloyal, and idolaters and perjurers.*

Let us hear the *Protestant catechism* :

Q. How do the Papists treat those whom they call heretics ?*

A. They hold that faith is not to be kept with heretics, and that the Pope can absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance.

Q. Hath the Pope any right to absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance ?†

A. No : for that would encourage subjects to rebel against their lawful sovereigns.

Q. Hath the Pope exerted such a power in these kingdoms ?‡

A. He hath frequently exerted it.

Q. Have Christians a right to destroy and persecute any person on account of religion ?||

A. No.

Q. How have the Papists been guilty in this respect ?§

A. It is well known that in too many instances they have endeavoured to root out those who differ from them by fire and sword.

Q. What

* Pag. 9.

|| Ibid.

† Ibid.

§ Ibid.

‡ Pag. 10.

Q. What instances can you give of this?*

A. The burning of many godly bishops and others in England, in the reign of Queen Mary, and the cruel massacre of many Protestants in Ireland in 1641; besides many severe persecutions in France and other countries, both before and since that time.

Q. In what does the sin of praying to any other beings besides God Almighty consist?†

A. In dishonouring Christ; and it is direct idolatry.

Q. Doth not the doctrine of transubstantiation betray men into idolatry?‡

A. Yes; into the grossest idolatry.

Q. What is the true end of penance?§

A. The correction of the sinner and the admonition of others.

Q. Is this end answered by the practice of the Church of Rome?§

A. No: the sinner is allowed to get another person to do the penance for him. And besides, the Pope grants indulgences, whereby he remits all penances not only of sins past, but sometimes such as shall be committed for a great number of years to come, or during a man's whole life. And those indulgences, which cannot but be considered as licenses for sin, are publicly sold for money!!!

Q. What do you think of those who separate themselves from the Church of Rome?***

A. They not only *may*, but are *indispensably* obliged to renounce all such idolatrous worship and sinful practises.

Well,

* Pag. 10.

† Pag. 18.

‡ Ibid.

§ Pag. 20—21.

‡ Pag. 11.

*** Pag. 23.

Well, my Lords, do you not blush, after reading these few specimens of the calumny, misrepresentation and falsehood, spread through every page of this infamous catechism? Why did Mr. Pitt consult the foreign universities, to know whether Catholics held such tenets, if, after all, we are still, by the authority of Parliament, by you, and by the Incorporated Society, to be held out as possessing them? Do you not know, my Lords, that we have long since publicly renounced such doctrines; and against this knowledge, will you order the publication of that book, which is so full of unblushing falsehood?—What must be the effect produced by the inculcation of such opinions, either in a religious or political light? In the first, my Lord Archbishop, it is weak and base, and betrays a bad cause, to have recourse to such weapons for the destruction of the Catholic religion.—In the second, my Lord Duke, the evils which it has entailed are tremendous. If, as your catechism avers, the Pope *can absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance*; if we hold a doctrine *that encourages rebellion*; what security, what confidence can the

English

English Government have in us? Are we not represented as *traitors in heart*, and watching the convenient moment to throw off our allegiance, to appear in arms against his *heretic Majesty*? If the Pope possesses this emancipating power—if he can forgive sins even *in futuro*—is the Government certain, that we are not at this instant under *papal* absolution, and are allowed by all the solemnity of our religion to rise up and butcher every Protestant in the land? And yet within this century past, the *Irish Papists* have displayed the steadiest loyalty to a *Protestant King*, whilst the *Scotch Presbyterians* fought in two rebellions for a *Popish pretender* to the throne.

I will not enlarge on the appearance which, according to *your* catechism, we must make in the eyes of the empire; as a besotted superstitious race, “*baptizing bells and other lifeless things*,”* as idolaters, perjurers, &c. The sin-sweeping *indulgence* of the Pope can legalize every outrage. It can make rapine lawful—make sacrilege holy—make murder meritorious. The seducer is immaculate—the robber

* One of the lies of the catechism, page 16.

robber is not unjust—and the assassin deserves praise. Does the English Government consider us this immoral, this depraved people? The Metropolitan and the Viceroy, the first officers of the Church and State, give their high authority to the publication of the catechism which so describes us, and the English Parliament grants £25,000 a year for the support of that institution to whom the catechism belongs. I regret, my Lords, that I am obliged to write on this disagreeable subject. It is a stain on the country that such a society should exist: it is a reproach to the liberality of the times, that such a catechism should bear the sanction of your names—a catechism which the very printer of it is ashamed to sell. Should not the Chief Governor, as the guardian of the public peace, endeavour to suppress such a cause of animosity? Should not the Archbishop, the preacher of the gospel, the preacher of *his* word, who spoke meekness and universal love to all mankind, strain every nerve to reconcile man to man in the true spirit of charity? If it be in your power, my Lords, will you not make this
sacrifice

sacrifice at the altar of Christianity? Will you not make this offering at the shrine of liberality? Will you continue to pour from the forty charter-schools of Ireland a host of furious ignorant bigots, that go out like a plague into society, to impart the contagious poison of their education? Will you not, with a great and generous magnanimity, recommend the abolition of this Society, supported by the sweat of the people, for their own depravation? Think, my Lords, like Christians and honest statesmen, on this momentous business, and if you are not totally callous to every fine feeling of patriotism and true religion, it cannot fail to make the deepest impression.

I have the honour to be,

Your Graces' obedient servant,

A CATHOLIC CITIZEN OF DUBLIN.

Jan. 29th, 1809.

P. S. For the information of my readers, and to shew what a high patronage the Incorporated Society boasts, I have set down the account given of it in the Almanack for the present year, 1809.

C

INCORPORATED

INCORPORATED SOCIETY IN DUBLIN,

FOR PROMOTING

ENGLISH PROTESTANT SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.

His Grace the DUKE of RICHMOND, LORD LIEUTENANT,
President.

His Grace, Charles, Earl Normanton, Archbishop of Dublin,
Vice-president.

The Committee of FIFTEEN, chosen February 3d, 1808.

Archbishop of Dublin, V. P.	Rev. Dr. Graves, S. F. T. C. D.
Archbishop of Cashel	Rev. Archdeacon Syngé
Bishop of Cloyne	Rev. Richard Bourne
Bishop of Down and Connor	Thomas Disney, Esq.
Rev. Sir Jas. Hutchinson, Bt.	Rev. Dr. Woodward
Hon. and Rev. John Pomeroy	Rev. James Whitelaw
William Maturin, Esq.	Rev. Dr. Smith.
William Disney, Esq.	

“ The children admitted into Charter-schools are orphans,
 “ or the children of Popish, or other poor natives of Ireland,
 “ who from their situation in life are not likely to educate
 “ them in the principles of TRUE RELIGION AND LOYALTY.—
 “ The children, after leaving the schools, are apprenticed
 “ into Protestant families; and the Society farther give a
 “ marriage portion to every person educated in those schools,
 “ upon his or her marrying a PROTESTANT!!!”

Watson's Almanack, pag. 186.

TO THE RIGHT REV. AND HON.

THE LORD BISHOP OF CORK.

MY LORD,

I am anxious that the motives, which lead me to address you in this public manner, may not be misunderstood. Feeling, in common with all the inhabitants of this city, a sincere respect for your private worth, I cannot help indulging an hope that you may acquire a further claim to their esteem of that public character, which your elevated station and the circumstances of the country require you to assume. To contribute to the common safety, by promoting a common affection among the people, is no longer a mere act of virtue—it has become a strict duty, and a matter of necessity. It is on this principle that I venture to call your Lordship's attention to a subject

which has already excited much of the public notice, and has been mentioned even within the walls of the Parliament House. I allude to that vehicle of animosity and slander, the *Protestant Catechism*, printed by order of the Incorporated Society for promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland. I have nothing to do with such parts of this book as are confined to real points of controversy between the respective Churches, but I aver that it contains imputations of doctrines and principles of the most seditious nature, and which have been a thousand times disclaimed by Catholics in the most solemn manner. They are, however, charged by this catechism, with rebellious and murderous principles—"that faith is not to be kept
 "with heretics—that the Pope can ab-
 "solve subjects from their oath of alle-
 "giance; and that the practice of Papists
 "is to endeavour to root out by fire and
 "sword those who differ from them in
 "belief." This catechism is taught not only in the Charter-school establishment in this city, but in almost every Protestant school, and in many private families

lies under your Lordship's jurisdiction. Thus, my Lord, is the rising generation taught to consider their Catholic brethren, not as mistaken religionists, but as traitors, assassins, and cheats, whom no oath can bind, and who are withheld only by their fears, or by some other cause, which accident may remove at any time, from exterminating their fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects.

Is it, my Lord, in the midst of a Catholic city, where not only the Protestant and Catholic laity, but even the most eminent and dignified ecclesiastics of both persuasions, are found mixed in social intercourse, united by mutual friendship and esteem, and promoting with common zeal and effort the cause of charity and benevolence, that such fatal prejudices shall be publicly taught; and an impudent and malignant bigotry, insensible alike to truth and to shame, be allowed to sow in the infant mind the seeds of future hatred and disunion?

The language of Sir Arthur Wellesley, when this subject was mentioned in the House of Commons during the last session,

sion, afforded us too much reason to believe, that the present administration would support its consistency with the most religious strictness, and that the infamy of its character should be able to defy the imputation of the least act of liberal or conciliating policy. The event has justified our conclusions on that point; and therefore it is, that it becomes necessary to call on you, my Lord, to do what I hope will appear to you a duty as a Christian bishop, and a friend to the happiness of your country; in discouraging, as much as lies in your power, the propagation of such fatal and unjustifiable prejudices.

Your Lordship must be acquainted with the real principles of Catholics on the points in question. You know well that the atrocious principles attributed to them in the *Protestant Catechism*, as it impudently stiles itself, have been disclaimed by them with the utmost abhorrence, and with all the solemnity of an oath, and that the sincerity of this declaration is proved by the evidence of their moral conduct in society—an evidence irresistible

sistible to any mind except that of a bigot.* It might be worth your Lordship's attention to consider, how far it reflects honour on the cause of Protestantism, that it should seem necessary, for its support, to employ the aid of misrepresentation in stating the doctrines of an adverse faith. It might be easy to prove that these caricatures of Catholicity, which are employed to terrify children, are, in fact, injurious to the cause which they are meant to serve. They succeed, no doubt, in making many incorrigible and furious bigots. But, my Lord, it is natural to think (and experience justifies such reasoning) that when a mind naturally strong, finds, in its intercourse with society, and in the progress of its maturity, the extravagant falsehood of those

* Extract from a speech of the Bishop of St. Asaph, in the House of Lords, in 1805 :—“ I do not hold that the Catholic religion is one which enjoins disloyalty ;—I do not hold the maxim, that, from their scruples about the oath of supremacy, they are a disloyal people ;—I do not hold that they maintain any such belief, as that the Pope may depose Protestant princes, or absolve Catholic subjects from allegiance to them ; or, that faith is not to be kept with heretics, or persons of a different religious persuasion from themselves.”

those caricatures which filled its infancy with terror, it may be apt to conceive some suspicion of the goodness of the cause which wanted the support of such means; and perhaps no inconsiderable bias in favour of a system of religion so unfairly attacked. But, as I disclaim all consideration of the subject, except merely as to its moral and political effects, I leave this reasoning to be pursued by others, while I solemnly declare, that it appears to me the bounden duty of every man, who is averse to the success of Bonaparte, in this country, to hunt out of society this libellous and uncharitable monster, which, under the mild and hypocritical face of a catechism, is injurious equally to Protestant and Catholic, and ought to be branded with the title of *The lying antichristian catechism of hatred, and disunion, and uncharitableness.*

I believe it is in your Lordship's power to suppress this catechism in the Charter-school of this city. I am anxious that you should have the honour of setting an example, which, I am persuaded, would produce the happiest consequences in
these

these times of peril, which demand the cordial union of all his Majesty's subjects. I am aware, my Lord, that you may have some obstacles to encounter in the progress of such a task. In the corporation of this ancient city, there are not a few, whose early partialities in favour of the catechism in question, as well as the establishment where it is so zealously taught, will excite an holy indignation against you. Notwithstanding your Lordship's exalted character and station, they will consider you as a sacrilegious man, when, for the purpose I have recommended, you shall have entered those *hallowed groves*, where their infant minds were first inspired with an holy hatred of their neighbours, and where they first chaunted the sacred songs of "*Thank God I'm no Papist*," "*The Battle of the Boyne*," and "*The Protestant Boys*." I fear it would be a vain expectation that even your Lordship should be able to reason those gentlemen into a compliance with any wise or liberal design, or to inspire them with any common feeling with such a mind as you possess:

and, considering that your Lordship, having been nobly born, and received the education of a scholar and a gentleman, would find it impossible to bring yourself to participate in their feelings and partialities; you must resolve to do, without waiting for their consent, this act of patriotism, of honourable and manly courage, dictated by a sense of Christian charity and justice, and of the duty you owe to the honour of the Protestant religion.

A CITIZEN OF CORK.

Cork, 18th January, 1809.

FINIS.