

# The Carleton Sentinel;

AND

## FAMILY JOURNAL.

Devoted to Agriculture, Literature, and General Intelligence.—Neutral in Politics.

"Truth, Justice, Freedom, here shall find a home."

NUMBER 37.

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 1849.

VOLUME I.

### BISHOP HUGHES CONFUTED.

REPLY  
TO THE  
RIGHT REV. JOHN HUGHES,  
ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NEW YORK.  
BY KIRWAN.

#### LETTER X.

##### AN APPEAL TO ALL ROMAN CATHOLICS.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—In closing these letters, as with the two series hitherto published, I turn from Bishop Hughes to you. Many of you have not been uninterested readers of my letters; nor of the controversy, so far as it has assumed that character, between Bishop Hughes and myself. And whilst the prejudices of education, and your respect for official station, would naturally lead you to take sides with him, I am thankful to know that the generous impulses of many of you, and your desire to know the truth, have led you to resolve that I should have fair play. I have appeared before you with no crosses before my name—with no ecclesiastical titles after it—making no flourish of trumpets from the places of brief authority, and with the one simple desire to unfold before your eyes the religious system which has oppressed your fathers, and which in its ceremonial exactions has become too heavy for the earth any longer to bear. And I am thankful that so many, educated as you and I were in our youth, have been led by these letters to seek the religion of Christ and of the Bible among Protestants. And whilst there are many of you whose minds, through priestly interferences, have been so imbued with prejudices as to repel all approach to you, however kind, with the lamp of life and light, yet this is by no means the case with you all. To this latter class, the intelligent and candid of your number, who, in this free land, are determined to think for yourselves, I now appeal.

The history of my "Letters to Bishop Hughes" is a very short one. Whilst yet in my minority, and nearly thirty years ago, I left the Roman Catholic Church. Motives that I now need not detail, led me to write those letters in which I have stated the reasons which induced me to give up the religion of the priest for that of the Bible. To these letters Bishop Hughes attempted an indirect reply in ten letters; and broke down in the midst of the discussion at the commencement of last Lent. As these had nothing in them to answer my objections, or to satisfy your inquiries, you asked for something else. Hence the six letters entitled "Kirwan Unmasked," in which, after abuse without stint or sense, and without answering one solitary objection, he again breaks down at the close of the sixth, and flees to Halifax. And this, my third series, which I now bring to a close, is designed as a reply to those addressed by him to "Dear Reader," and to me, Kirwan.

The history of the Bishop in the concern is about as short. When my letters first appeared, he could not condescend to answer them! He then commenced answering, without reading them! and without meeting an objection stated by me, he broke down with the tenth letter. When goaded by Catholics and Protestants, until he could stand it no longer, he resolved on a direct answer to my objections; and again he broke down at the close of the sixth letter, without answering one of them. Thinking that it would answer all his purposes with you to abuse me, he writes his six wonderful letters, which deserve a place in the museum as a specimen of the controversial taste and ability of popish priests, and again breaks down, and flees beyond seas to hide the shame of his wickedness! How high his calculations on the strength of your prejudices, and on the weakness of your common sense! Having usurped the power of thinking for you, he takes for granted that any kind of episcopal nonsense will satisfy you! But he is mistaken; as multitudes of you declare that his silence would be far better than what he has said and would have inflicted less injury on Popery in this country.

Such being the history of the letters, look for a moment at the state of the controversy. There, in my first and second series lie my objections to the Roman Catholic church, abused from Maine to Mexico, but unanswered. And I defy Bishop Hughes, and all his mitred brethren on this continent, to answer them on Scriptural and common sense principles, to the satisfaction of any reasonable man. The bishop has published ten letters giving his reasons for adherence to the Roman Catholic Church, out of whose pale there is no salvation. These reasons I have shown to be mere and miserable assumptions, and utterly insufficient to justify the faith or the practice of any living man. Bishop Hughes would not ask your note for a dollar, had he no stronger reasons for asking it than those which he has given to bind you to the Catholic Church; and if he should

so impose upon you as to secure your note for no stronger reasons, you might sue him for taking from you your money under false pretences, and send him, if not to purgatory, at least to state prison, to atone for his crime.

Such, then, is the state of this controversy. There lie my objections to popery unanswered. Let Bishop Hughes answer them, if he can. There are his reasons for adherence to the Catholic Church confuted. Let him reconstruct his argument if he can. And all that he has yet done is, to abuse me in a way unbecoming a bishop, for first riddling his building, and then taking away its foundations. And because the hopes of his gain are gone, he and his priests, were it in their power, would serve me as Paul and Silas were served in Philippi by the masters of the damsel out of whom they cast the spirit of divination. But we are in a free country.

Roman Catholics, from this man and his miserable system, I now turn to you. Read the ten letters which I have reviewed, and see how weak are the arguments for popery! Read the six letters addressed to me, and see how your bishop can descend! If John Hughes is the Achilles of popery in our country, what must the soldiers under him be! And will you longer sustain a religion the strong objections to which he cannot meet; and the reasons for adherence to which, as given by himself, are not strong enough to hold up the spider's most attenuated web? Behold him twice coming to the rescue of your church, and twice turning his back without even an effort to spike a single gun aimed at its vitals! Can the system which he cannot defend be worthy of your support? Can the captain who deserts his post in the heat of battle, be worthy of the commission he bears?

Read his ten letters, if their dullness will permit you, and examine their principle. What an argument for a religious despotism of the most grinding and enduring character! The pope is the successor of Peter, and you have no hope of heaven but in connection with the pope! Be as good, as pious, as charitable, as Godlike as you may, you are out of the way of life unless you submit to the pope, and then to all his subalterns! You have no right to form an opinion of your own; the pope, bishops, and priests are appointed to think for you! Without a license, such as they give in Ireland for selling whisky, you have no right to read the Bible; the priests will do that for you, and tell you what is in it that concerns you! To God your Father you have no right to go save through a priestly intercessor, who, for a fee to suit your circumstances, will transact all your business at the Court of Heaven! All you do you must tell the priest; and thus you give him a power over you by which he can whip you into the traces whenever you dare to think for yourselves! If the letters of Bishop Hughes are true, then the priests of the papal church are a close corporation with the pope at their head, with the keys of life and death in their hands, and through whom alone God exercises spiritual dominion in our world! What a fearful despotism is this, infinitely more oppressive than any civil despotism which has ever cursed the world! It meets you at your entrance into life—it dogs you through every step of your earthly pilgrimage—it stands by you at the bed of death, claiming the power of opening heaven to your soul when it escapes from its clay tabernacle, or of locking it up in hell! From the cradle to the grave you must only do as it ordains at the risk of all the joys of its wrath! And this is popery; yes, popery as advocated and practised in the city of New-York by Bishop Hughes! With what noble consistency can he raise his voice in Vauxhall against the oppression of Ireland by England, and subscribe his money to buy a shield for the back of the sham-patriot, who, by their shameful blustering and cowardly conduct, have made Irish patriotism a subject of merriment throughout the world;—and then vindicate a code of religious despotism in comparison with which that of Russia is freedom;—and then filch from the pockets of the poor, ignorant, credulous, but noble-hearted and generous Irish, the money they have earned with the sweat of their brow, to purchase for them chains, and to pay priests for riveting them on their limbs! Roman Catholics, will you submit to a despotism which thus degrades, dupes, and robs you? Irish Roman Catholics, so eager to burst the chains with which England has bound the land of our fathers, will you submit to wear a yoke like this? Sons of noble sires, whose blood and bones fatten and whiten every field in Ireland by struggles to break the British yoke, will you, in a land of light and freedom, like Russian serfs, wear a yoke like this? Will you permit a close priestly corporation, without any sufficient motive save to increase their corporate property, to assume over you the power of God—and to bind to their girdle the keys of heaven—to enter your family and to regulate your meat

and your drink—if a servant in a Protestant family, to place you there as a spy, and to forbid you enjoying its religious privileges—to think for you—on every hand to surround you with infinitely ramified and potent influences, which are sleepless in their efforts to keep around your neck the yoke of servitude, and to prevent your emancipation into that liberty with which Christ makes his people free? Thousands in this land, and tens of thousands through all the earth, are casting it aside as too heavy longer to be borne; will not all of you do the same? Will you be content to be slaves in a country of freedom,—slaves to papal priests, the most degrading of all slavery—when it is only for you firmly to resolve and your are as spiritually as you are civilly free? Fling the flag of your spiritual freedom to the free winds of heaven, and let your watchwords be God, the Bible, Liberty, and unborn generations will rise and call you blessed.

Irish Roman Catholics, I am not so destitute of all sympathies with you, and with our fatherland beyond the waves of the Atlantic, as Bishop Hughes would make you believe. I sympathize with you here in that degradation to which the religion of the priest has reduced you. I deeply sympathize with our lovely country at home and our noble countrymen, so deeply degraded, and mainly by the same cause. I renewedly charge upon popery the low social level to which Ireland has been reduced, and the social degradation of her children in all the lands of their dispersion. It is popery that has made her sons and daughters, in so many instances, hewers of wood and drawers of water. And my sympathies with you and for you, more than all other causes, have given existence to these letters. As I early predicted, the bishop rings changes on my apostacy—charges me with desertion—leaves the argument for the man—and in every way, save by reason and argument, seeks to vilify my name so as to diminish my influence with you. In this he is joined by his priests. But this is simply the conspiracy of the wolves, ravening the fold to induce the sheep to turn a deaf ear to the voice of the shepherd who sounds the alarm. Their craft is in danger, and hence their wrath. I here assert before heaven and earth, that you are grievously imposed upon by your priests—that for the sake of your money they daily practice upon you impositions such as should brand them as impostors—that they traffic in souls, and make a gain of godliness, and that instead of your veneration they are worthy only of your rejection. And for the evidence of all this I need only point you to the moneys which they draw from you by their senseless masses, by their extreme unctious, by their charms, and relics, and penances, and purgatorial deliverances, and by the thousand and one ways in which they show their sympathy for the sheep by fleecing them of their wool. And hence the hue and cry against me by your priests, because I plainly and fearlessly tell you these things.

Nor am I, Roman Catholics, the profane infidel which your bishop would make me out to be. If there were no alternative for me but to believe what he teaches, I would be again be compelled to shoot the gulf of infidelity, and to build my hopes for the future upon the dim twilight instructions of natural religion. What would I not believe sooner than that man can create God! But even were I an infidel, vulgar as Paine, bitter as Voltaire, plausible as Gibbon, would that be any reason why my objections to popery should not be answered? Did not Porteus answer Paine? Did not Campbell confute Hume? And even if an infidel, why should not Bishop Hughes answer my objections? The reason is not in my infidelity, but in his inability. He is unable to answer them. But I am not an infidel. I believe in the Bible. I believe in the religion of Jesus Christ. It is the source of my comforts here, and the foundation of all my hopes for the future. I believe in the divinity, the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ; and in the efficacy of that atonement to save all, without money, and without price, who rest solely upon it. "He that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ," if there was not a pope or priest upon earth, "shall be saved." This is my faith; and it is to this simple, efficacious faith—the faith of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, fathers, confessors of all ages and of all countries—of the true Catholic church in all its ministers and members, that, in my soul, I desire to win you.

Truth, and not mitres, crosses, unmeaning ceremonies, priestly vestments, solemn farces, is the only thing worthy of your love and reverence. Buy the truth and sell it not. Dig for it as for hid treasures. This is the pearl of great price; and if necessary, sell all that you possess to purchase it. Popery is the religion of children, of low civilization—Christianity is the religion of men, and of high civilization, where the virtues and grace most flourish. Dare to Chris-