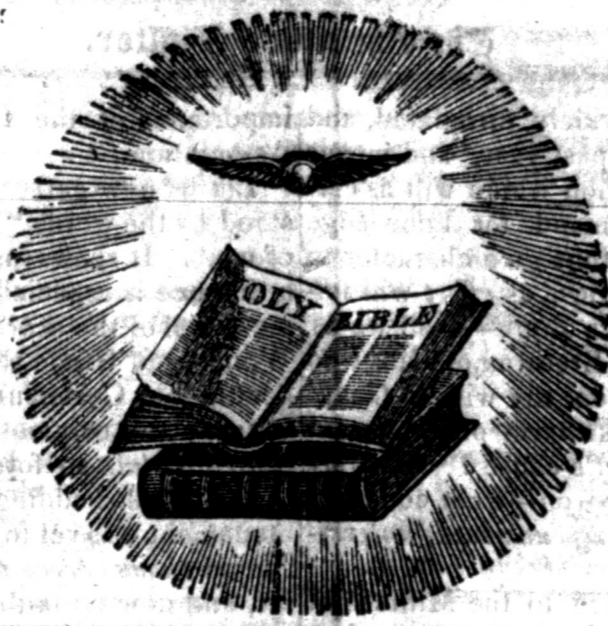


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REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNDEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

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THE PROTESTANT ALLIANCE.

At this deeply important and interesting meeting there were some most powerful Speeches delivered by Ministers of different denominations, but we shall confine ourselves to two, as they embody the substance of what was uttered, and which have already, we find, *told well*. The Chairman, the Earl of Shaftesbury, thus spoke:—

"We are met here to celebrate the first anniversary of the Protestant Alliance—(cheers) an association formed of persons of different classes and opinions, members of the Church of England and of the various Nonconformist bodies, who all unite together to assert that which they hold in common—the supremacy of the Word of God—the right of private judgment—the maintenance of civil and religious liberty—(cheers)—and I rejoice to say, that the records of the past year will show the entire harmony of our proceedings, our councils, and operations. They have been carried on without even the shadow of disunion—(hear, hear)—and I do rejoice that the experience of the past gives us great ground for hope in the future, that we shall be able to present a common front against the advance of our common and deadly enemy. Now, every day's experience confirms me more and more in the belief of such associations as these. I regret that they should be necessary; but, being necessary, I rejoice to see that they are formed. We might say, Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets; but when we see how, in the present stirring times, so many are led away by various occupations, by the calls of business, by the necessities of toil—when we see how little leisure there is for thought, reflection, or observation, for a moment they are startled by the present danger, but in an instant they forget it; and, because it is not seen, conclude that all is safe; but meanwhile our enemy, who never sleeps, is stealing onward, and will, unless the people are aroused, take us at an awful disadvantage;—I say that such associations as these become inevitably necessary to warn the unwary, to rouse the sleeping, to enlighten the public by writing, by meetings, by lectures, and by every legitimate means put before them their danger, and to call them to a sense of their duty—one common resistance. I say, these things show us the necessity of such associations as these; and it is for you to lend us all the support in your power, that we may, by your efforts, beget more common Protestant sympathy and common Protestant co-operation. (Loud cheers.) Now, I use the word Protestant emphatically and universally, because we do not confine ourselves to these kingdoms alone; we look to the other side of the Channel—we hold out the hand of fellowship to all Protestant brethren in foreign lands. (Applause.) We look even beyond the Atlantic; and we call upon our brethren of the United States to join us heart and hand, soul and body, in the great work we have undertaken."

The Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel in supporting the resolution put into his hands—viz:—

"That this meeting, being fully persuaded that Christians are becoming increasingly alive to the encroachments of the Church of Rome, and that the national repugnance to the endowment of Maynooth has been strengthened by the late discussions concerning it, desires to reiterate the firm and persevering demand of the Protestants, that the Maynooth Endowment Act be repealed, with a due regard to existing interests; that all national encouragement and support given to Popery be discontinued: that rank and precedence be not conceded to Romish ecclesiastics; and that all conventual establishments be subjected to inspection and controul by law."—Said:

"I have not many words to utter on the present occasion, but am very glad to have the opportunity of expressing my hearty concurrence in the object which this motion is intended to recommend to this meeting. We are here pledged to two things—to endeavour to promote the visitation of convents, and to endeavour to repeal the Maynooth Act. I am glad to have an opportunity of expressing very briefly why I think these things ought to be effected. I am not prepared, till I shall have obtained more information than I now possess, to say, with the gentleman who preceded me, that the students now in Maynooth are an inferior class of men to what they were in former times; nor am I prepared to say, that the very existence of convents is not in harmony with the British Constitution. I would wait till some private or public wrong had been committed, which interfered with the free action of individuals, before I interfered with them. I am disposed to give to my Catholic countrymen everything which I claim for myself. But when I learn from Mr. Connolly's pamphlet, that a young lady was detained in a Convent against her will, and that it was only by a threat to make the whole transaction public—which, as a priest of Rome, he was enabled to do—that she gained her liberty at all, I think, it is high time that conventual institutions should be visited by magistrates. When I was at Sens with a friend of mine, he told me that his introduction into that city had been greatly facilitated by a circumstance which had recently taken place in one of the Catholic convents. Groans had been heard in the street, proceeding from the walls of that convent. No person had access to it, but the groans continued; till, at length, the indignation of the people became so excited, that they broke into the building, and there they found a nun, for some alleged misconduct, chained down to the floor, emaciated in the highest degree, and seemingly approaching her end in this loathsome confinement.—Now, if this might take place in France, which was then perfectly free, why may it not take place in England too? (Hear, hear.) I say, then, that these convents ought to be open to inspection, that it may be ascertained with certainty that the young women are perfectly free agents. I ask no more. Then, with respect to the Maynooth endowment, some would rest their arguments for its withdrawal on the grounds that the books which are used in the college are of the most immoral character. (Hear.) And I will confess the deep disgust with which I looked upon those books by which young priests are taught their duties. They are of the most disgusting character—(hear, hear)—of a character which can hardly fail to pollute young men who are required to wade through them, and will certainly make these men the worst possible persons to be the guides of young women. But this is not the ground on which I would advocate the repeal of the Maynooth endowment. Nor will I venture to say, with my present deficient information, what, perhaps, other gentlemen better informed may be able to say, that Maynooth is a seminary of disloyalty. I do not now make any such charge; nor would I venture to say, with my present deficient information, that they either break the laws of the land themselves, or teach others to break them. This is not my charge against them, however well founded the charge itself may be. But I put my objection to the endowment on ground exceedingly simple and plain, which every man can understand, and which I think would be taken up very largely in this country, if there were not some other interests at work to hinder men coming to the conclusion, that Protestantism and Romanism are, as religious systems, diametrically opposed. Who questions it? Those best in-

structed in Protestantism do not, and certainly our Roman Catholic antagonists never questioned the contrariety between them.—Why is this country Protestant now? Why did the Church of England separate from Rome? Because it believed its doctrines to be false, and its systems unchristian; therefore our forefathers, right, or wrong, separated from that Church, and on that ground alone. (Hear, hear.) They have left us no room to doubt this. Now, is it not most inconsistent, that men in Parliament, who profess themselves to be Protestants, should, on the one hand, sustain a system which is thus diametrically opposed to the system of Rome, and at the same time support the contrary system with a view to pull down their own? (Cheers.) What is the object of Roman Catholic priests—their avowed object? It is, by their arguments, influence, assiduity, and zeal, to uproot Protestantism, and exterminate it if possible. (Hear, hear.) Is it consistent then, in us, as Protestants, on the one hand, to support an establishment which is intended to exterminate Romanism, and, on the other hand, to support a college the avowed object of which is to exterminate Protestantism? (Loud cheers.) These two things are contradictory. (Hear, hear.) If I look to the clergy of the Church of England, I see a body of men whom the State recognises as the authorised ministers of religion; but, if I go to the Church of Rome, I find it stated that not one of them has a lawful vocation—that they all ought to derive their authority from the Pope, and failing of that, are not ministers of Christ at all. Now, is it right for a company of gentlemen, who call themselves Protestants, to give support to a college which teaches these very doctrines, that their own ministers are false, and have no right to occupy the office which they hold? Whatever a man may think respecting one Church or the other, no man who knows the facts of the case, can deny that the doctrine which the Church of England teaches, is, that we are justified by faith in the Redeemer without the deeds of the law; but the Church of Rome accuses that doctrine, and declares that all who hold it are anathematised? The Church of England teaches, that if a man dies with faith in Christ, his soul at once goes into a happy eternity.—The Church of Rome teaches, that even Christians are to be broiled in the fires of purgatory. Now, if you are right in teaching the one, you must be wrong in teaching the other. (Great cheering.) I ask, again, is it consistent that the State should choose and appoint hundreds and thousands of instructors throughout this great country, to teach the people Protestant Christianity; and at the same time, in this half avowed manner, raise up a body of men to overturn, if possible, those very doctrines which they themselves have established? The Church of England says, that every man has a right to read the Scriptures, and would place the doctrines of the country upon an unrestricted examination of the Word of God. But the Church of Rome has decreed, that no man shall have a right to read the Scriptures except he has the concurrence of two persons, which he can seldom get—his confessor and his diocesan—and, even if this consent be secured, they must not read any but a Romish version; and if, in reading it, they should arrive at any conclusion at all different from the Church of Rome, that permission is to be withdrawn.—Now, is it right that this country should support an establishment which advocates the unrestricted right of every man to read the Word of God, and then support a college to train up a set of men to contradict that position?—Every man must see and come to the conclusion, that, without departing from the simplest and most unquestionable ground to fix a sin-

gle charge upon Roman Catholics, it is a palpable self-contradiction to support both of these institutions. You might just as well go to a large expense to drain off the filth of London, and to convey it to some distant place, and then employ a company of men to cast the filth back again. (Loud and reiterated cheering.) You might, with the same admirable consistency, when you were in fear of an invasion by a gallant and warlike nation, take care that your cannon should be in the very best condition, and ready for action, should France attempt to land upon your shores, and then pay a company of men to go from piece to piece, and spike every cannon you had got. You might just as well vote money from the Treasury to instruct our Indian fellow-subjects in all the useful sciences—as I am glad the Government of this country has in a measure done—and then provide a number of Hindoo teachers to instruct the same people in the false and superstitious science of the Shasters, and thus undo all that you had been previously doing. There is a palpable, undeniable self-contradiction in this policy. (Hear, hear.) Let those, then, who have the management of the public funds, say which is right, but let them not continue to act in a manner so evidently foolish and inconsistent. (Cheers.) I am not here to recommend the support of any Establishment whatever—but, if an Establishment is chosen by our Legislature—if Parliament comes to the conclusion that it is for the welfare of the nation that an Establishment should be maintained, it seems utterly incompatible with even an ordinary amount of knowledge or understanding, or the smallest regard for principle, to set up another and contrary establishment. But we are asked in a Catholic paper which I hold in my hand, and which is treating of this very question of Maynooth, whether we will not give a practical proof of our sincerity in advocating the right of private judgment, by allowing the Catholics those privileges which we claim for ourselves. It is said by the writer that we claim the right of reviling the Virgin Mary, and may they not, therefore, have full liberty for the exercise of their canon-law, and be permitted to hold in veneration the decrees of the Council of Trent? Now, we do not wish to interfere with their holding the decrees of the Council of Trent. They are most mischievous errors and palpable absurdities, but we will not interfere with them; but what we do demand is, that parliament shall not be required to pay public money for their support. And if it is alleged, my lord, that there is danger in undoing that which has already been done, I will admit that it is always difficult to repeal any act that Parliament has consented to; but the question is, are there such mischiefs in it as to render it imperative for us to meet these difficulties? (Hear.) But what are the dangers in the way of repealing the grant? I think the danger is all the other way. But I hope it will be apparent to any man who thinks on the subject, that it is our duty to endeavour to do what is right, regardless of the consequences. Some may say that there will be danger in repealing this act, because it is supposed that it would excite the enmity of a number of our fellow-subjects, and no one would more deeply deplore this than myself; but I believe that if we act consistently, legislate justly, and speak of Roman Catholics with respect, and feel towards them with respect, if we take care never willingly to give offence, and act in a way that is palpably right, and as we ought to act as Protestants, then we shall obtain the respect of all those among our opponents who are the most enlightened, because they will see that we are consistent. (Hear, hear.) If we were to ask them to establish a