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"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY THE NEW YEAR.

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages;
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth,
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Yet stars that measure life to man?
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid;
Why as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding?
When one by one our friends are gone,
And left our bosoms bleeding.

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness:
As those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion to their sweetness.

IRELAND'S MISSION FIELD.

By John Edgar, D.D.

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[Continued.]

IV.—IRISH POPERY'S INFLUENCE ABROAD.

Such, then, being Popish Ireland, the friends of truth and righteousness should look well to the position which she occupies on the map of the world, and the influences which she exercises on the destinies of our race. She lies near, very near, Scotland and England, and can neither be drowned nor pushed away; and modern improvements are bringing her every day nearer the great New World of the West. Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and other towns of Scotland, are oppressed and defiled by increasing swarms of illiterate, profligate, Irish Romanists, and are taking measures for mitigating the intolerable evil; crime in Liverpool has tremendously increased, on account of the huge proportion of its people who are now Irish Romanists; Manchester groans under a similar bane; and London feels it necessary to devote a special agency in her City Mission, to bring reforming influences to bear on the increasing masses of Roman heathenism, which are adding fearfully to the number and atrocity of her dangerous and perishing classes.

America, above all other countries, has an interest intense and alarming in Ireland, as a missionary sphere. The poor Irish Papist, with a desperate patriotism, long clung to the land of his father's grave, but the tie is broken. While the Irish priesthood are busy raising up a huge system of tyranny, and, by opposition to every reforming influence, are preparing for the people a heavier, deadlier bondage, the people, rising up in masses from the land which priests defile, are rushing away to the wilderness of the Far West, in hope of finding among the wild woods, and in the country of the stranger, the liberty, prosperity, and happiness, which were denied them at home. 279,000 persons emigrated in 1851; from 700 to 1000 daily land in New York alone; and of these by far the greater number are Irish Romanists.

Little did the great Dr. Beecher think what a tremendous verification of his own words he would live to see, when, twenty years ago, he wrote thus, in his "Plea for the West":—"Since the irruption of the northern barbarians, the world has never witnessed such a rush of dark-minded population, from one

country to another, as is now leaving Europe, and dashing upon our shores. It is not the northern hive, but the whole hive, which is swarming out upon our cities and unoccupied territory, as the effect of overstocked population, of civil oppression, of crime and poverty, and political and ecclesiastical design. Clouds, like the locusts of Egypt, are rising from the hills and plains of Europe, and, on the wings of every wind, are coming over to settle down upon our fair fields; while millions, moved by the noise of their rising, and cheered by the news of their safe arrival and green pastures, are preparing for flight in an endless succession. The rapid influx upon us of such masses of uneducated mind, of other tongues and habits, would itself alone demand an immediate and earnest national supervision, on the same principle of self-preservation that would dyke out the ocean, or turn the mountain torrent from carrying desolation over our fields. There is no despotism so terrible as a popular despotism, under the names and forms of liberty, where ignorance, and prejudice and passion, and irreligion and crime, are wielded by desperate political ambition, and a corrupting foreign influence; and if ever our liberties perish, it will be by the explosion of the volcanic power of the European and American populace; and foreign influence and American demagogues, in bad alliance, who will ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm."

Here, then, is a view of Ireland, as a missionary field, which attaches to it an overwhelming importance. We have no serpents in our land, but our Romish population, like fiery flying serpents, are spreading over the face of other lands. Here are the headquarters of infection, from which goes forth disease more fatal than cholera or plague. Here the reckless spirits are trained who destroy the peace of Scotland, England, and America; our Maynooth produces more priests than Ireland needs, and thus the public funds of Britain are employed in training agents for ill, ringleaders in rebellion and riot, in lands across the sea.

Every true Protestant, every friend of his race, is deeply interested in the prosperity of America. The destinies of Britain and America are so united that they cannot be severed. It is now, as it has long been—England and America against the world—the Popish and pagan world. No deadly wound can be given to Protestantism in America without our feeling it to our heart's core. But to whom is it a secret, that the Popish despots of Europe have been long gnashing their teeth with rage against the Protestant liberty of America?—who does not know, if the Pope had got hold of Penn or Washington, Witherpoon or Edwards, how graciously, by the help of his dear Inquisition, he would have handed him over to the civil power, beseeching tender-hearted Joab to deal gently with the young man, even with Absalom, for his loving father's sake? It has long been notorious that Rome looks with anxiety and hope to America, as yet to become a chief department of her empire. It is twenty-two years since the Romish bishop of Cincinnati wrote thus, in the *Quarterly Register*:—"The missions of America are of high importance to the church. The superabundant population of ancient Europe is flowing toward the United States. We must make haste; the moments are precious. America may one day become the centre of civilisation; and shall truth or error establish here its empire? If the Protestant sects are beforehand with us, it will be difficult to destroy their influence."

Bishop England, of America, in an address to his clergy, after his return from Rome, said of the Romish bishops of Ireland:—"They are ready, as far as our hierarchy shall require their co-operation, to give it their best exertions in selecting and forwarding, from among

the numerous aspirants to the sacred ministry that are found in the Island of Saints, a sufficient number of those properly qualified to supply our deficiencies. In Paris, and at Lyons (said he), I have conversed with those excellent men who manage the affairs of the Association for Propagating the Faith. This year, their grant to this diocese has been larger than usual. I have also had opportunities of communication with some of the Council, which administers the Austrian Association; they continue to feel an interest in our concerns. The Propaganda in Rome, though greatly embarrassed, owing to the former plunder of its funds by rapacious infidels, has this year contributed to our extraordinary expenditure, as has the Holy Father himself, in the kindest manner, from the scanty stock which constitutes his private allowance."

Let us now look at the bearing of all this on our present subject. In 1775, the United States had twenty-six Romish priests, and fifty-two congregations. About the year 1830, the Roman Catholics of the United States were estimated at 500,000; in 1832, 150,000 were added, and their numbers have continued steadily to increase, so that now the Roman Catholic church in the States has thirteen colleges, four archbishops, thirty bishops, 1073 churches, 1081 priests, and 1,199,700 members. Archbishop Hughes estimated the American Romanists at 3,000,000 in 1850, but the *Catholic Almanac* makes them 1,650,000.

To strengthen the hands of these, the three great Romish missionary societies of Paris, Vienna, and Rome, are lending effective aid; and the Irish church is sending to their help those hopeful students of Maynooth for whom she has no room at home.

For what purpose do this money and these men go forth? From all that the lessons of late years have taught us, we may be quite sure that Austrian money does not go for the diffusion of light and liberty, and the free Gospel of Christ; for, according to the report of an American traveller, "the Austrians are slaves, slaves in body and mind, whipped and disciplined by priests to have no opinion of their own, and taught to consider their emperor their God. They are the jest and byword of the northern Germans, who never speak of Austrians but with a sneer, and as slaves, unworthy of the name of Germans—mentally and physically slaves." France, too, needs no expositor of her intentions in helping American Popery. Rome's people unhappily know it too well. Rome's Pope, protected by French bayonets from the vengeance of his own subjects, no doubt knows well that France is prepared to do again what one of her "MOST CHRISTIAN" majesties did before—bind himself by *concordat* to the Pope "to employ, in concert with the Holy Father, all the means in his power to cause to cease, as soon as possible, all the disorders and obstacles which obstruct the welfare of religion and the execution of the laws of the church."

Were all the disorders and obstacles which disturb the welfare of the Romish religion to cease, woe to Protestant missions, and Protestant churches, and Protestant men! For what is the explanation which, from the lips of a pope, we have of the laws of the church? Pope Pius VII., in his instructions to his agents in Poland, in 1808, says, that the laws of the church do not recognise any privileges as belonging to persons not Catholic; that their marriages are not valid; that they can live only in concubinage; that their children, being illegitimate, are incapacitated to inherit. "From this polluted fountain of indifference," says a succeeding pontiff, "flows that absurd and erroneous doctrine, or rather raving, in favour and defence of liberty of conscience, from which most pestilential error the course is opened for that entire and wild liberty of opinion which is everywhere

attempting the overthrow of religious and civil institutions. Hence that pest, of all others most to be dreaded in a State—unbridled liberty of opinion, licentiousness of speech. Hither tends that worst, and never sufficiently to be execrated and detested liberty of the press." He then proceeds to quote, with approbation, the words of his predecessor, Clement XIII., respecting what he esteemed bad books. "No means must be here omitted, as the extremity of the case calls for all our exertions to exterminate the fatal pest, which spreads through so many works; nor can the materials of error be otherwise destroyed than by the flames, which consume the depraved elements of the evil."

There can be no mistake as to the motives and aims of France, Austria, and Rome, in contributing money to the Romish cause in America. They are of one mind in promoting the interests of a religion which never prospered, but in alliance with despotism; and which always has been, and which will ever be, the deadly enemy of liberty of conscience, free speech, and free inquiry. Are the Irish prelates influenced by different motives in sending their supply of men to the help of the same cause? Assuredly not. These young priests go forth to teach in America what their seniors teach at home, the avowed and sanctioned, and stereotyped and unrepealed principles of Romanism—that theirs is the only true church, out of which there is no salvation—that no man may read the Bible but by permission of the priesthood, nor understand it differently from what they prescribe—that heresy is a capital offence, to be punished by loss of property and death; that priests have at their command both heaven and hell; that popes may dethrone kings and release from oaths; and that a priest may grant pardon for any crime.

Since, then, Ireland exercises such a powerfully pernicious influence in spreading over Scotland, England, America, Australia, that fell religion which, despotic in its own constitution and doctrines, has ever been the friend of despots; which extinguished the last lingering remnant of liberty in old Rome; which waged a thirty years' war against the revival of civil and religious liberty in Europe; which for ten centuries has swayed an iron sceptre over one-third of the population of the globe—since Ireland is a chief support of that blood-stained system which has murdered about 68,000,000 of human beings, and holds in darkness and bondage one-half of the civilised world, what is to be done? what does duty to the church, and the world, and to God require? Whatever is to be done, one thing is clear—the Man of Sin is doomed. Babylon shall sink, like a millstone, in the great deep, to be seen no more. With impossibilities, therefore, we have nothing to do; God does not command impossibilities. There is nothing practicable which we ought not to do for our brother's good and our Redeemer's glory; if we fail, on our own negligence or cowardice be the blame, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Americans! it is wise and well that your great and all-important work should be the education of your own nation, the culture of its intellect, the formation of its conscience, the regulation of its affections, heart, and conduct; you must, as you would live and die in peace, and meet your God in peace, you must extend intellectual culture and evangelical light to your Roman Catholic population; but is that all? Did Hannibal wait to allow the Roman army to ravage the towns and desolate the homes of his native land, or did he mow down their armed thousands, in the field of Cannæ, at their own gates? Did William wait till the Popish bigot James had so broken the strength of Protestantism in England that weak nations like his own would fall an easy prey? The crocodile's egg is easily crushed; it is astonishing what a multitude of ugly grubs a swallow will carry to her young in a day.

[To be continued.]