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A

CIRCULAR LETTER

OF

ADVICE AND JUSTIFICATION

FROM THE

COMMITTEE FOR ENSURING THE ELECTION

OF

SIR ROBERT INGLIS.

ADDRESSED TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD WHO SIGNED
THE REQUISITION AGAINST MR. PEEL.

Irruimus ferro. Virgil.

OXFORD,

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GENTLEMEN,

IN this awful and dangerous crisis, when the King, the Ministry, the Commons, and the Lords, with all the acknowledged talent, and a vast majority of the property of this country, have wickedly and perversely agreed to destroy those institutions, in whose safety their own happiness, and freedom, and property, and religion, are obviously and necessarily involved; compassionating this miraculous blindness, which has thus seized upon all, whom we formerly held up to admiration as the luminaries and saviours of the nation: and convinced that we only are now capable of managing the State:—We the undersigned, in conjunction with the Duke of Cumberland, Sir Harcourt Lees, and Mr. Cobbett, have resolved to take upon ourselves the defence of our betrayed Constitution, and to exert our utmost efforts to perpetuate a policy, which those to whom the country and ourselves have confided the direction of the State, and all whose information and

wisdom should enable them to administer it rightly have unanimously pronounced to be impracticable.

Convinced from the mere perusal of your names that few, very few, of you are likely, from your habits of thinking, to discover any thing but wisdom in this line of conduct, and knowing that, like all honest Protestants, whatever opinion you once may have expressed, to this you will implicitly adhere, (since when a man has once erred, consistency requires him to err on, and when he has fallen into a bog, it is dishonest to endeavour to get out,) we place the most unlimited reliance on your vigorous and uncompromising support.

However discordant we may be in religion, in manners, and in affections, we are for once united together by one common feeling—a feeling which every lover of his country and every true Christian is bound to cherish—by a hatred and detestation of the Catholics.

Some of us, it is true, know little of that religion but its name; and some are now secretly engaged

in perverting the tenets of that Established Church which we openly affect to defend. Some also are perhaps unconsciously influenced by a jealousy of rival societies. These however are points which it will be expedient to keep in the back ground; while we all join unanimously, with one cheer more, in that noble and enlightened appeal to the passions of our ignorant countrymen, whitewashed on the hovels of London, and echoed by the rabble of Penenden, the cry, the British cry, of No Popery! No Popery!

That you should all be acquainted with the grounds and nature of the plan you are pursuing, we do not presume to expect. To speak confidentially, our strength does not lie in ratiocination. But happily for ourselves and the country, we can in some degree compensate for our ignorance of principles by our vigorous adherence to conclusions. We are therefore most anxious to inculcate on you the necessity of avoiding discussion, and of not rashly venturing to encounter our antagonists on a field, where we certainly are not in our element. Never was prudence in this respect so necessary, sur-

rounded as we now are by active and dangerous opponents, who so puzzle and perplex us with arguments, some of which we cannot understand, and others we are unable to answer, that we shall assuredly be finally defeated, if we venture to act on the offensive, and do not keep close within our trenches.

Since however it is possible, that either by temerity or stratagem, (for our enemies are as artful as they are wicked,) some of you at some time or another may be entrapped into assigning your reasons ; and as the faculty of extemporaneously discovering these is a gift among us of very rare occurrence ; we have thought it our duty, in behalf of SIR ROBERT INGLIS and the Church, to provide you with a tolerable store of well-selected arguments, carefully compiled and condensed from all the great authorities on our side, and suitable to your various capacities. And lest any from disuse or inexperience should find any awkwardness in managing them, as children when playing with edge tools will be likely to cut their own fingers, we have thought it advisable to prefix to them a few rules and regulations for their use.

And first it should be a general maxim, that those of you who know nothing of the subject, should carefully abstain from talking on it. Nothing has so injured our cause as the temerity of incompetent friends. And though our active forces will thus be considerably diminished, the great mass may still act with considerable effect as a corps de reserve in the rear. A significant shake of the head, an inversion of the eyes, a half suppressed groan, or even a melancholy silence, may be thrown in occasionally with success to reinforce the positions of the talkers. The only difficulty will lie in discovering the time for their employment, and whether the argument you support is favourable to yourself or the enemy. Great mistakes and much evil have arisen from some of our friends having ignorantly at times supported the wrong side. On this point you must therefore be cautious, and advise with your leader. But by all means do not trust yourself *vivâ voce* in the front of the battle. Nature never intended that cows should dance, and she never designed that you should argue.

For our lighter troops the following directions

may be useful. Remembering that our business is to be defensive rather than offensive, never provoke or permit a discussion, you can possibly avoid. Should you be unwittingly drawn in to one, commence with an appeal to your conscience. No one on the other side pretends to have one, and it is an advantage peculiar to LORD ELDON and yourselves. No man, we well know, whose conscience assured him he was right, has ever been led into wrong. And being a purely intellectual faculty, it is the most infallible criterion of remote and complicated contingencies. If a man with a conscience assures you that two and two make five, and three angles of a triangle are equal to four right angles, who is there, that shall dare to dispute it? We can only apologize for using such an abstruse illustration.

Should your conscience, however, make little or no impression, follow up the charge, by declaring your opinion to be founded on unaltered and unalterable conviction. That is to say, that you believe black to be white, and round to be square, because you believe it to be so. This is a position which no one can possibly dispute, and you may therefore

employ it with safety. No argument can prove more convincingly the conformity of a man's conduct to the rules of truth and justice, than that he always has acted so, and always will act so.

If after this you are pressed into more difficult and disputable ground, put on at once a bold aspect of defence, and assume without hesitation (remember we intreat you without the least hesitation) any matter of fact which may be useful for your purpose ; remembering always that it is one which cannot immediately be disproved by reference to documents and authorities. A reference you never should hazard. It is only a trick of the enemy's to get us into difficulties. Thus you may assume without danger that the majority of the people are with you ; that the Catholics are rapidly increasing ; that the Pope has at this moment three hundred emissaries in London, who are carrying on treasonable negotiations ; that the greater part of the House of Commons is unfavourable to the Established Church ; that the Catholic religion is unchanged, or is even more profligate than ever ; that Mr. Peel has received £500 from the Duke of Wellington to induce

him to change his opinion ; and others of the same description, which the exigencies of the moment will suggest and provide you with. And if you are called on for a proof, you may either assume the point in dispute as too notorious to be disputed ; or declare next that somebody told you ; or, which is the best method, assert your acquaintance with the fact from your own individual experience. The laws of society protect your own knowledge from doubt, and you may escape in safety, perhaps with triumph.

We have also found it extremely serviceable to take two or three distinct propositions, and fasten them together by connecting particles either as cause and effect, or as premiss and conclusion. And this may be managed in such a manner, that the connexion shall defy all discovery, while the result will astound your antagonist. This mode of argument is somewhat analogous to the operation, which fastened the head of a tattooed Otaheitan to the tail of a Dutch red herring, and denominated the union a mermaid. Thus if Emancipation be conceded, all the Members from Ireland will be Ca-

tholics. If you give them up seats in the House, you infallibly destroy the Church. If you concede to them what you think right, you must also concede to them what you know to be wrong. Mr. Peel has changed his opinion, he has therefore done so from dishonest motives, &c. &c. &c. A few instances suffice to shew the mode in which this is to be done, and a little practice will give you the necessary expertness. Remember only to take your points as widely remote as possible; for thus the surprise to your hearers will be the greater; and while they are puzzling their heads to discover a connexion which never existed, you may build on their silence as defeat.

Another argument extremely efficacious is prophecy. To be crazy and prophetic are in some countries synonymous terms. Happily from such a suspicion the majority of us are exempt, since no one ever discovered in our conduct any symptoms of that peculiar rapidity of thought, and unnatural vivacity of sentiment, which characterizes intellectual derangement. The best mode of employing this argument, viz. that such events will take place

because you are persuaded that they will, is to assume a solemn and religious tone of voice, pausing for a minute or two before you are delivered of your burden, and calling the earnest and conscientious attention of the hearer to the truth you are about to assert. Express the fact itself in solemn and metaphorical language, something perhaps about the sun, and the star of Brunswick; and leave the room immediately after, lest further conversation should discover that your prediction did not result from inspiration.

It may perhaps be advisable to deliver it standing on a chair, with a request to the servants that they would communicate it to the kitchen.

The faculty, however, most peculiarly desirable at this dangerous crisis is ambidexterity, or the art of fighting right and left at the same time. From the extreme danger with which it is attended, we must caution all our friends against its use, but those who have studied Mr. Hinds' Logic, and Jeremy Bentham's Fallacies. Before you employ it know your man. If he be of an obtuser intellectual

cast, you may perhaps hazard the leap. But avoid all cunning and dangerous opponents ; and in general divide the attack. If you would cut and thrust both, cut one man and thrust another : do not attempt such a mode with one and the same individual. Thus there never was a time, when, by the indiscriminate diffusion of knowledge, the alarming increase of Dissenters, and the false liberality of Mr. Brougham and his schoolmaster, the bulk of the people had become so sceptical as at present, so indifferent to religion, so impatient of subordination. Or, on the other side, there never was a time when the whole mass of the English nation was so likely to embrace without hesitation the grossest errors and absurdities of Popery, to become blindly and brutally superstitious, and submit their consciences, their lives, and their property to the control of a tyrannical priesthood.

Again, disfranchise the freeholders of Ireland ; for who can be so unfit to pronounce on political affairs as an ignorant and violent peasantry ? Or dissolve Parliament, and appeal to the numerous majority of the country : for in a question which de-

mands for its consideration a perfectly dispassionate mind, an acute discernment of proportions, and a clear and quick-sighted perception of remote consequences, who are so likely to pronounce correctly as the peasantry, the farmers, the operatives, and the rabble of England? Two instances will be sufficient to illustrate our rule.

In the use of all these weapons you enjoy a peculiar advantage over your opponents, by your possession of all those extrinsic circumstances which add weight and authority to truth. Do not spare them, we intreat you. Seldom are arguments so convincing in society as when supported by noise, and clamour, and violence, or even by an oath judiciously and seasonably introduced. And at a County Meeting, no syllogism can more justly be considered as a purely destructive hypothetical, than a stout oak stick or a hard flint stone.

It only remains for us to lay down a few rules for your final retreat. This you may effect either amicably or hostilely. We would generally recommend the latter: it serves to intimidate future

attack, and proves that you have truth on your side. If however you are compelled by circumstances to adopt the former, conclude your discussion by asserting, that after all the subject is not fitted for argument ; that it rests entirely on individual feeling and opinions ; that nothing you have heard has yet convinced you ; that you hope always to retain the same sentiments, and are full of apprehension and fear for the safety of the Country and the Church. This last is an invulnerable point. By the principles of our glorious Constitution every Briton has a full and indefeasible right to be at all times and on all occasions just as much afraid as he chooses : and if you will persist in continuing so, no one can possibly prevent it. Should you however prefer to retire in a formidable attitude, nothing is more easy. Every man, who does not anticipate from a measure the evils which you apprehend, is anxious to produce those evils. Your antagonist is therefore an enemy to the establishments of his country. All enemies to the establishments of their country are either Infidels, Socinians, Catholics, Radicals, or Methodists. You may take your choice ; and a hint will be sufficient.

To imply and insinuate the conclusion is better than openly to develop it. More shortly also in this way: all who wish to extend to others the advantages they enjoy themselves are Liberals, and all Liberals are Atheists: a truth which by frequent repetition has now become self-evident, and requires no demonstration. For your conclusion proceed as before.

It only remains that we should now fearlessly and unshrinkingly, in defiance of obloquy and abuse, and unintimidated by the sarcasm of that illiberal liberality which now so unhappily prevails, state boldly, both for your assistance and our own justification, the principles and reasons for our conduct.

And first. We hold it to be a self-evident and indisputable truth, sanctioned by the principles of our glorious Constitution, and confirmed in its utility by the experience of all past ages, that every body of men who are possessed of privileges or power, have a full, natural, and indefeasible right to exclude all others from the enjoyment of

them. We can discover no utility or gratification in possessing advantages which are common and open to all. We can discern no reason why seven millions of the Irish people, who confer no other benefit upon the state to which we belong than supplying the main part of its armies, consuming its produce and manufactures, increasing its internal resources, and contributing with the sweat of their brow to the maintenance and prosperity of our institutions, why these poor wretches, we repeat, should demand more in return, than permission to live and die on their dunghills or their hovels, without being massacred for discontent, or burnt for their religious opinions. The ingratitude of further expectations is obvious and heinous. The folly requires no refutation. Our Protestant ancestors, who founded our glorious Constitution, when the power of this country was in the hands of the Catholics, and they themselves formed but a part, and a small part, of the whole population, they never wished or attempted to obtain a share of political power, or access to civil distinctions. They never felt anxious for the safety of their property, their liberty, and their lives, when all

these were at the mercy of legislators, judges, and a populace inflamed with indignation at their opinions, and ignorant, almost universally, of the grounds and the motives of their dissent. They found the door of the Constitution closed against them in hatred and contempt ; and they remained peaceably and quietly on the outside, grateful for the liberty of breathing, convinced that every attempt to obtain a share in working out the glory of their country was rebellion against its best interests, and warmly and zealously determined to sacrifice both property and life in maintaining the system as it stood. Such was the conduct of our Protestant ancestors, and such we now demand from the Catholic heretics of Ireland.

We cannot moreover consent to deprive ourselves of the gratification which results from the possession of a coercive and vexatious legislation over a large proportion of our countrymen. We possess little influence in the State, and still less authority with our neighbours. Why should we abandon the only power which still remains to us, by suffering the Catholics to escape ? That such a

principle of enjoyment is implanted in animals by the hand of nature herself, is evident from the pleasure a cat takes in tormenting a mouse. Neither are we able to discover, though we have coolly and impartially considered the question, what advantage will accrue to the State from the admission of Catholics to the Constitution, or what danger will result from their exclusion.

We do not believe, whatever timidity or wickedness under the garb of liberality may profess, that the removal of a grievance will mitigate animosity; that parties equalized in privileges and united in interest, and that interest the happiness of their country, will be at all more inclined to amicable association, than when one is the victim of the legislature, and the other the instrument of torture; when one is the oppressed, and the other the oppressor; when one side is meditating rebellion, and the other expecting to be massacred. We see no cause to suppose that a reconciliation of mind and interest, even if it should be effected, should tend to tranquillize the state of Ireland; or how that tranquillity is desirable; or in what way it

can conduce to the accumulation of capital; or how it should improve the moral habits of the people; or why we should require any addition to the resources of the country, unincumbered as we are with debt, with all our manufactures in full vigour, and with Europe in a state of the profoundest tranquillity. Any addition to our intellectual resources for the proper administration of the State we do not require: for though affairs are at present in the hands of madmen and rogues, the majority of us are still sane; and long may we continue so.

It is also an indisputable principle of political wisdom, that to govern by force is far better and more effectual than to rule by affection; and seven millions of men, with nothing to lose and every thing to gain, in possession of a magnificent country, and organized by experienced leaders, will submit we are sure with delight to any conditions we impose on them, rather than hazard a struggle, whose failure will leave them as they are, and whose success will erect them into an empire.

And the whole history of the world declares, (at

least those who have read it assure us so,) that to maintain in the heart of a country an immense proportion of your subjects discontented, demoralized, and detached from it, is the most effectual of all methods to render that country tranquillized and happy ; abundant in its resources, and secure from all foreign interference. To this we may add, that as Ireland was conquered by our ancestors seven hundred years ago, we have in the present century an indisputable right to misgovern it just as we choose.

Satisfied therefore with the existing state of things, and anticipating no possible advantage from a change, neither do we discover any danger in remaining as we are. We believe that the state of Ireland renders existence there delightful, and property productive, and life secure. We hear of no murders committed there, no families abandoning it, no open violation of the laws, no obstruction or perversion of justice, no dangerous organization of physical force. We believe that the Irish populace are devoted to the cause of England, whose tender mercies they have so long and so thoroughly ex-

perienced. And we believe that all the accounts of the country, whether derived from personal observation, from public authority, or communication with government, are totally false; and that Mr. Peel's letters were forged to give a colour to his horrible treachery.

Since, possessing no property in Ireland, and living in the heart of England, we are much more competent to form a judgment of its state and exigencies than its inhabitants and governors, we neither anticipate a rebellion there, nor feel horror at the possibility of its occurrence. Our nerves, unlike those of the weak and vacillating Premier, are too strong to be shaken by the thought of a civil war. We can hear without shuddering of countrymen massacred, of towns pillaged, of property confiscated, of all the ties of social and domestic life broken asunder, and never to be reunited. We have an army to extirpate the Irish, and in God's name let us fight it out.

As to the threat which is held out, that the Irish seceding from England will unite themselves with

America or France, we treat it with the utmost contempt. We see no reason why the poor wretches should wish to desert the common interests of their country. And even if the event should take place, we contend from the history of antiquity that it would be no interruption to our happiness, or diminution to our prosperity, to make Ireland the Decelia of Great Britain.

Lastly, Gentlemen, on this point, we have no property or interest in Ireland, and but little in the funds of Great Britain. We are not likely to be called on to serve in the army; and if money is wanted, it may easily be borrowed: so that lying under no responsibility, and secure from any disturbance to our own enjoyment, we really feel very indifferent to any commotions which may result from the measure which we advocate. We are only extremely sorry for those of our Protestant brethren who are not so well off as ourselves.

Such, Gentlemen, are the unanswerable propositions by which we have proved to all impartial

and honest Protestants, that it is both our right and our interest to fight against Catholic Emancipation.

We see, as we have before stated, we are sure, to your perfect satisfaction, that no good can arise from the success of that measure, and no evil from its defeat. But the main, the vital question lies not here. In the face of our country and posterity, loaded as we are with contempt, and deserted by all who supported us, we still avow our sincere and conscientious conviction, and we are ready to die in its support, that once admit the Catholics to freedom, and the Church Property, the Christian Religion, and the British Constitution, are gone that moment ; that the sun of Great Britain has set for ever ! Listen, we intreat you, to the arguments by which you may support these positions.

And first, we hold it to be an unanswerable fact, that the State was formed for the Church, and not the Church for the State ; and that, therefore, every measure of public policy is to be viewed with reference to its effect, not on the happiness and pro-

sperity of the people, but on the wealth and security of the Establishment.

We believe in this Establishment, if any alteration were effected; if its revenues were equalized or diminished; if its patronage was removed from secular hands, and distributed solely in proportion to the religious utility of its Ministers; if the minds of its Bishops and Pastors were withdrawn from all political bias; if no excuse was allowed for indolence, and no hope held out to cupidity; if, in fact, the Ministers of the Gospel were released entirely from the world and its affairs, and exclusively confined to the salvation of souls; if by any approaching calamity these horrible anticipations should be effected, we believe that the spirit of Christianity will vanish from the face of the country.

Anxious therefore to protest against tamely submitting to this destruction of religion in the shape of its revenues, we warn you and the country alike, that the first Catholic Member who enters the House of Commons will, in conjunction with a majority of that Assembly, half of whom are ac-

knowledged to be Infidels, and the other half Dis-
 senters, strip Ireland of its wealthy Establishment.
 This measure, and the subsequent annihilation of
 Church Property in England, will meet with a ready
 assent and zealous cooperation from all the wealth
 and respectability of the country, none of whom are
 in any way connected with the interests of the
 Establishment, or have property involved in its
 security; and especially from the Ministry itself,
 by far the greater part of whose influence arises
 from their share in its possessions. And we need
 not apprehend any obstacle from the previous ne-
 cessity of annihilating the fundamental principle of
 society, the right of private property. Thus will
 Christianity be destroyed; and Ireland, instead of
 being, as it is at present, the garden of Protestant
 Divinity, be abandoned, as a desolate wilderness,
 to herds of Catholics, Socinians, or Mahometans.

We believe, that when the Catholics are made
 admissible into Parliament, that instant they will
 all be admitted, since whenever a thing becomes
 possible, that moment it is done. And if, when
 inflamed by resentment, and thirsting for the re-

dress of their wrongs, united in one common object, organized by experienced leaders, and driven on by spiritual terrors, the Irish have for years been unable to command the representation of their country; much more will they be able to command it when tranquillized by concession of their demands; when every bond of union is withdrawn, and the wealth and aristocracy of the nation are opposed to a quiet and divided peasantry. Remember also, that you never can hope to satisfy the cravings of Catholic cupidity. Be assured, that to the bulk of the people Emancipation is a matter of indifference; and that all this fermentation has been produced by the petty ambition of a demagogue, in his anxiety for popular distinction. But be also assured, that when he has obtained his end, he and the whole Irish people, indifferent and careless as they are, will crowd on us with additional demands. If we concede now, we must concede then; if we yield to justice, we must succumb to menace. Remember that liberality is folly, benevolence a weakness, and justice to others destruction to ourselves. Cling therefore to what you possess, and abandon not a tittle to the enemy: for no maxims can be more self-evident, than that

if you do right you must also do wrong ; that to grow twelve feet is as easy as to grow six ; and that if you pay a creditor his debt he will infallibly cut your throat.

We need not call upon you to observe, that the more elevated the rank, and more liberal the education, the greater is the probability that their possessors will submit themselves implicitly to the guidance of a vulgar and ignorant priesthood, and to the intrigues of a foreign interference. And the Catholic Members of Parliament, excluded by their property from any interest in the tranquillity of the country, and, from their intercourse with society and enlarged information, the bigotted supporters of Popery, with all its grossness, will have no other end or ambition than to encourage institutions of Jesuits, or preach a crusade against the Church.

For, Gentlemen, we cannot conceal it from ourselves, every Catholic, by virtue of the religion he professes, is an idiot, a perjurer, a slave, an idolater, a murderer in his heart, with cloven feet, and a forked tail ; and we cannot therefore conscientiously admit him to the privileges of a coun-

try, all the members of which are, by virtue of their name, wise, honest, free, religious, virtuous, charitable, with toes to their feet, and without tails.

Standing as we do before the great Maker of us all, with minds free from every error, and contaminated by no crime, filled with a sober conviction of our own infallibility, and warmed with ardent benevolence towards all who profess to be Christians, we feel it our duty, that men, who, by weakness and ignorance, and the influence of authority, have been led into errors in religion, should be stigmatized as damnable heretics, as hateful to God, and to be persecuted by men.

And we believe, that these errors of opinion are the fit subject for civil punishment; inasmuch as nothing is more easy than to detect, to measure, and coerce them; and nothing so effectually prepares the mind for the reception of truth as abuse, intimidation, and contempt. And it is upon these grounds that we have prepared a Bill, to be brought into Parliament by our next Protestant Member, which shall command every student of mathematics

to be previously placed in the pillory ; and subject to civil disabilities all those who believe in ghosts, witches, fairies, animal magnetism, Jacob Bryant, or Lemon's Etymologies.

We believe that the whole system of Romanism is a mass of pure and unadulterated corruption, arbitrarily invented by the Popes to enslave our consciences and destroy our souls ; that it sprung not from a gradual perversion of truth, and a mistaken pursuit of utility, but from pure unsophisticated wickedness ; that it never can be modified or improved, and will remain in an age of illumination precisely the same as in a century of darkness. And that such is the actual fact—that Catholics do continue to believe in the infallibility of the Pope, in his right of dethroning princes, in his encouragement of perjury, in unconditional and final absolution, and in the duty of murdering Protestants—is a fact most indisputably true ; since, though they profess to deny it, we are thoroughly convinced of its reality. Nothing indeed shall ever persuade us to the contrary, but their full and unreserved recantation of all the tenets and forms of their religion. And we think it just to require,

and natural to expect, in their existing situation, that such a recantation should be made: we, who to a change of opinion, with whatever sacrifices attended, instantly affix the stigma of interested motives, and consider the abandonment of error as treachery to reason and to honesty.

We have taken the most effectual means to encourage their acknowledgment of error: we have offered for it the premium of perjury, and damned it with the obloquy of interest: we have excluded every modified concession by imperious and indiscriminate proscription: we have chained them man to man, by shame, by honour, and by sympathy: and still they refuse to be converted. We know not what this may be considered by a foolish and false liberality; we call it perversion and obstinacy; and we think it an indisputable proof that Popery has never been changed; a fact which we farther infer with respect to the bigotry of Ireland, from observing the bigotry of Spain, or the customs of Portugal and Rome, since the crimes of one country are assuredly the crimes of another, and a Pro-

testant of England may be hanged for a murder by a Protestant of Holland.

We know that all the members of our profession, the poor and the rich, the ignorant and the instructed, the artizan and the gentleman, have all minutely scrutinized and approved the grounds of the religion they adhere to ; that none of us, who now are rallying around the temporalities of the Church, are ignorant of its tenets, and of all the nice and difficult questions connected with their final establishment ; that none of us have received our religion as an heirloom from the hands of our fathers ; and that none of us would hesitate to abandon it, if assured of its falsity and errors by arguments we could not understand, and by the mouth of a contemptuous enemy. And we think it extremely hard, that an ignorant peasantry should rather trust implicitly to the example of their ancestors, and to the advisers of their youth, than to the representations of men, who call their kinsmen idolaters, and themselves idiots ; who accuse them of crimes they abhor, and of absurdities they deny ;

and who commence the great work of conversion, not by warming their hearts into gratitude, but by treating them as rebels and as slaves.

Gentlemen, the Church of England is as far removed from the Church of Rome as one pole from another. They are totally distinct in their principles, perfectly incompatible in society, thoroughly irreconcilable in the State. The last point we may prove by a reference to all those constitutions of Europe which are at this moment striding on in the paths of prosperity under the united auspices of both ; the second by an appeal to all those who have resided in foreign societies ; and the first is as easily demonstrated.

For acknowledging with the wisest humility the truth of many mysteries in religion which we can neither explain nor comprehend, we believe that no man can assent to the mysteries of the Catholic Church but a villain, a madman, or a fool. Reverencing as we do from our nature the authority of our teachers, the sanction of our friends, and the advice of our pastors, and adopting half our reli-

gious opinions upon the faith and experience of others, we denounce every man as a slave who submits but his spiritual conduct to the guidance of his Church and his Priest.

We endeavour, both in religion and in life, to warm our feelings and stimulate our imagination, by external and visible objects, by painting, by music, by architecture, and sculpture ; and we believe therefore that no Catholic can employ the same mistaken means of devotion, without being guilty of idolatry, and worshipping the canvas or the stone.

We address all our prayers and petitions through the medium of a superior Being ; and we therefore reject with abhorrence such a notion so revolting to our reason.

We anathematize in the Catholic tenet the subjection of politics to religion ; and we zealously call upon our rulers at the present alarming crisis to sacrifice the State to the Church.

And such with innumerable others being the fundamental and irreconcilable differences of the two religions, we believe it impossible that by kindness, and conciliation, and respect, and a participation in one constitution, the perversions of the Catholic Church should be recalled to their original truths ; that reason should predominate over error, and knowledge ameliorate prejudice. And we think, that the best mode of conversion is to make them regard us as enemies ; and the most proper method to attract, is violently and hostilely to repel.

Of the moral character of the Catholics we say nothing ; they are universally sunk in the lowest and most abandoned depravity.

One point alone we shall remark ; that they consider themselves utterly exempt from all the obligation of oaths ; and believe that the Pope can dispense with their sanction, and that no faith is to be observed towards heretics. And for this reason we have always considered, that nothing could exclude them from power but the rigid enforcement of an oath ; and have never found a single individual

whom the offer of any power or emolument would induce to acknowledge or take it. We see in the morals of Catholicism nothing but a tendency to depravity. We discover there no rigid self-denial ; no check upon the secrets of the heart ; no ardent though misdirected zeal, no warm affections, no active charity, no sense of an all-present Deity ; no elements, in short, which as ignorance and cupidity perverted into superstition, so knowledge and example may redeem into virtue. That wherever this system has been established all free institutions have perished, we prove by the example of the countries which are at this present moment both Catholic and free.

And both of this and our former position we are irrecoverably persuaded, since not one of those of our ancestors who laid the foundation of our glorious Constitution, who died in the field to preserve it, who have left us as the heirlooms of the State our free institutions, and our boundless resources for charity, education, and religion, not one of these we know was a Catholic.

We believe that on the instant when Catholics are admitted into Parliament, this religion, thus senseless, thus depraved, and thus slavish, will be eagerly embraced and adopted by the body of the British population. Though between these two propositions we can discover no possible connection, except that hatred is the first step to love, and midnight comes on just at noon-day. We see at present no abhorrence of Popery in the general opinion of the nation, though we its numerical majority detest and abjure it with all our hearts, and with all our soul, and with all our strength. And we believe the great mass of the people is prone to political slavery, declaring, as we do on our conscience, that the tendency of this liberal age has rendered them licentious and ungovernable.

We believe that superstition and error will meet with a ready reception in an age of universal education; that the Clergy of the Protestant Churches, amiable, enlightened, refined, pious, and supported by the strength of Truth, and the assistance of Heaven, will be unable to retain their flocks against a few infuriated bigots, or an irrup-

tion of Jesuits from Ireland. And we think that the rapid increase of Dissenters will considerably augment this probability.

We believe, in short, that within six months after the measure has been carried, all England, with the exception of ourselves, will immediately become Catholics ; that the Pope will be installed in St. Mary's, attended by his Cardinals and Friars · that Mr. O'Connell will be Chancellor of Oxford, and Dr. Doyle Vice-Chancellor, and Mr. Shiel Public Orator, and that all the Fellows of Colleges will become either Dominicans or Franciscans. The Bodleian Library will immediately be burnt by the Catholic hangman ; the statues in the Radcliffe be converted into saints and martyrs ; high Mass be performed in our Chapels ; and while some of us are thrown into the Inquisition, and others tortured into recantation, a splendid auto da fé will be celebrated, consisting of the Heads of Colleges and Halls with their respective societies, Dr. Routh taking the lead for his opposition, and the Dean of Christ Church following for his neutrality ; while Drs. Whately, Macbride, and Shuttleworth will

stand by in their Cardinal's caps, as assistants to stir up the fires.

Lastly, Gentlemen, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.* We venerate antiquity, we detest innovation. We believe that it is a fundamental principle of the British Constitution, that it never grows old, never requires improvement, never admits of alteration. That circumstances are now the same as they were two hundred years ago; and that two hundred years hence they will be precisely the same as they are now: that nothing so impairs the strength of a citadel as to fortify a weak position, or clear away a ruined outwork; and that the Catholics never can be admitted to power, because they never have been. And we glory in the maxim of our ancestors—a maxim which they never asserted in the sense we have chosen to apply to it; which they never could venture to assert, without passing down to their children as fools; and to which if they had ever adhered we should be at this moment under the dominion of the Pope. Closing therefore our own eyes against the shifting varieties of circumstances,

adhering to the theory of our policy, without ever examining its practice, we abhor, and abjure, and despise the man who regulates his conduct by the exigencies of the times. We believe that no minister is honest who abandons a system once embarked on; that accumulating dangers ought not to affect a resolution conceived in security; that no man is convinced but by interest; and that from interest that man is a traitor, who, by the conduct he determines to adopt, abandons the lead of a most powerful party, who exposes his character to infamy; who embarks in difficulties, and perplexities, and toil, when an honourable ease is in his power; who knows that all political authority is in England annihilated by suspicion, and yet voluntarily incurs this suspicion, by quitting the friends who adored, and uniting with a party, that despise him. And we believe, that all those who dissent from us have been purchased, or blinded, or are mad. That all the great spirit of the age differing in all other things, and only united in this, in other points are idols to be worshipped, but in this are fanatics or idiots. We hold that they are all rogues together. That the Duke of Wellington

has been bribed by popularity, and Mr. Peel by his thirst of power, and the House of Commons by their love of Atheism, and the Heads of Colleges by Livings and Stalls. That £20 apiece are to be paid to each Master of Arts, and £50 to each of the Proctors, with the reversion of a place in the excise to be equally divided between them.

Here, Gentlemen, we pause. That Ireland should be benefitted by tranquillity, or England by the accession of her strength; that a civil war should be averted by pacifying sedition; that kindness should conciliate affection, or that liberty should encourage civilization; these distant, these shadowy possibilities of good arising from the adoption of this measure we banish at once from our minds. So also those contingencies of evil, to result from its rejection, which ocular observation asserts, and which we conscientiously deny. That seven millions of men, organized, disciplined, and infuriate, should rise up in arms against oppression; that Ireland should be lost to us for ever, or recovered as a devastated wilderness; that our Protestant brethren there should be massacred, and

our Protestant establishment annihilated ; and that the whole fabric of the Constitution—the Church and the State alike—should be shaken to its base by the convulsion ; these, Gentlemen, are vague, and distant, and visionary dreams, which we call on you to reject with disdain.

Weigh then against these improbabilities the certainty, the indisputable certainty, of the following evils. That twenty Catholic gentlemen, Christians and Britons like ourselves, will be Members of our Protestant Legislature ; that with these both the State and the Government will unite to plunder the temporalities of the Church ; that this plunder will undoubtedly be accomplished, and if accomplished will destroy Christianity ; and that the Sovereign, the Commons, and the Lords, the Ministry, the Clergy, and the Gentry, with all the Dissenters, and Socinians, and radicals, and infidels in the country, by the influence of these twenty gentlemen, and the agency of their priests and dependents, will immediately be converted to Popery.

We need not subjoin any more ; we know well that every honest man, every sincere Protestant, every humble Christian, and every genuine Englishman, will acknowledge our decision to be right.

With this solemn, and conscientious, and deliberate conviction, which we never have changed, and never will change, which we hope to carry with us to the grave, and which with the thoughts of all its consequences will solace us when lying on our death-bed ; we not only felt it our duty to struggle against the liberation of our countrymen, so long as that struggle could be effectual ; but we now are most deeply impressed with the wisdom, and propriety, and charity, of embarrassing a measure, which we do not expect to defeat ; of pouring poison (it is all that remains) into the cup of conciliation and peace, and, if God should prosper our endeavours, of letting loose all the horrors of war upon a country, our sister and ally ; and of going down to our last rest with the applause of our conscience in our hearts, and the blood and the

curses of seven millions of our fellow creatures on the heads of ourselves and our children.

Here at least we are safe—the walls of Oxford will not ring with the cries of Ireland. We shall hear of massacres, and pillage, and confiscation, but we shall not behold them. We shall set fire to the pile, but we shall not be employed to extinguish it. The God of mercies will pardon us for sacrificing seven millions of his creatures to our zeal for the wealth of his Church. And he never will call us into judgment for the crime of a perverse incredulity, dictated by the cowardice of selfishness.

Such, Gentlemen, are the principles which have uniformly regulated our conduct on this great and momentous question. And such are the arguments, which you may safely employ either for the conviction of others, or the defence of yourselves. We have omitted none. We have garbled none. They are open for the public examination.

And retaining them as we do with a firm and uncompromising consistency, we cannot elect as our Representative a man, who, with full information of the dangers which crowded on his path, and having pledged himself in the face of his country, that there lay on one side the remote possibility of detriment to the property of the Church, and on the other the immediate certainty of a bloody intestine rebellion; has yet shrunk from the course he was pursuing, and abandoned one horrible alternative. That we may stigmatize this cowardice and treachery with the brand of our indignant contempt; that we may join with all the rabble of the country in hurling from the helm the only men capable of its management; that amidst the convulsions of Europe, and the menaces of Russia, and the accumulating embarrassment of our resources, we may strip the State of its armies and its counsels; that we may stand forth for ever a triumph to our enemies and a wonder to Europe; and that with the vulgar, the ignorant, and the senseless, we may join our imperious clamour, adding fire to their fire, and fury to their fury. Such is the object of our efforts.

And we do not believe, that an awful, a most awful, responsibility lies upon the head of every single man, who by silence, or clamour, or even by an uplifted finger, shall plunge us into the gulf of civil war. We do not believe it—We cannot believe it—We will not believe it.

SO HELP US GOD!

Signed, &c. &c.







