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IRELAND AND THE HOLY SEE

A RETROSPECT  
1866 v. 1883

ILLEGAL AND SEDITIOUS MOVEMENTS  
IN IRELAND

CONTRASTED WITH THE PRINCIPLES

OF THE

CATHOLIC CHURCH

AS SHOWN IN THE WRITINGS

OF

CARDINAL CULLEN

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ROME

PRINTED AT THE PROPAGANDA-PRESS

MAY 1883

Houses of the Oireachtas

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The Writings of the late Cardinal Cullen, archbishop of Dublin, have lately been published in three large volumes by the Right Rev. Dr. Moran, Bishop of Ossory. These writings consist of Pastoral Letters, discourses on public occasions, addresses, and speeches. The following extracts from these Writings are published with a view to show the attitude adopted by the Holy See towards Fenianism and all illegal associations hostile to the established authorities. They prove that for a period of thirty years the efforts of the Irish Catholic Bishops were constantly and urgently directed to suppress sedition and check all attempts at illegal agitation.

God grant that the publication of these extracts may place in a clear light the teaching of the Holy See and serve to disabuse those ignorant persons who think they can remain good Catholics while they join secret, seditious associations which the Church has never ceased to condemn.

In the month of April, 1849, Dr. Croly, archbishop of Armagh, died, and at that time Ireland was still suffering from the effects of a terrible famine and was disturbed by rebellion. Pius IX adopted the unusual course of appointing to the Catholic primacy Dr. Paul Cullen, rector of the Irish College in Rome, an ecclesiastic of singular learning and

talent, but who was rather a Roman than an Irish priest. Dr. Cullen, while still in Rome and archbishop elect of Armagh, wrote his first pastoral letter to the clergy and laity of that diocese. In this letter he said: — “ Let no promises or provocations induce you to join in secret and illegal combinations which are the bane of society and bring ruin on those who engage in them ”. He thus alluded to the agitators of the day: — “ Others running into a contrary extreme, invade the rights of property and by preaching up socialism or communism endeavour to annul the commandments of God, by which we are forbidden, not only to take away unjustly but even to covet the possessions of others. What shall I say of those who, pretending to promote the interests of society, preach up sedition and licentiousness under the sacred name of liberty, and impugn that subordination and respect to established authority that are prescribed in the Gospel and are necessary for the welfare of every state? ”

In September, 1850, archbishop Cullen, as Delegate of the Holy See, presided over the National Council of Thurles and signed the address of the Synod. In this address we read: — “ We caution you also against those publications in which loyalty is treated as a crime, a spirit of sedition is insinuated and efforts are made to induce you to make common cause, to sympathise with, those apostles of socialism and infidelity who in other countries, under the pretence of promoting civil liberty, not only undermined the foundations of every government, but artfully assailed the rights of the Apostolic See and sought for the destruction of the Holy Catholic Church. ”

Violence and illegality are thus denounced: — “ But while defending the rights of the poor and announcing the woes with which the Gospel threatens their oppressors, it becomes our duty also to admonish the former that the merits, privileges and rewards which God has annexed to their state, can only be secured by the exercise of patience and resignation. The moment they become their own avengers, enter into secret and illegal combinations, condemned

so severely by the Church, and have recourse to deeds of blood and violence, they lose all resemblance to that Divine model, who in suffering for them left them an example that they should tread in his footsteps, as well as all right to that future joy in which none can participate save those who have shared in His afflictions here below . . . . . How important is the teaching of the Catholic Church upon this important matter ! Guided by Divine Charity she exhorts the rich to put on bowels of compassion for the poor, to consider them as brethren, to respect them as members of Jesus Christ; and at the same time she teaches the poor to respect the rights of property, to honour the rank and station of the great and powerful, to be obedient to those in authority, to be grateful for favours received and to pour forth fervent prayers for their benefactors ". This pastoral address, which was read and adopted in full Synod, concludes with this quotation from Scripture: — " Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for there is no power but from God; and those that are, are ordained of God. Render therefore to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due: custom, to whom custom: fear, to whom fear: honour, to whom honour. Owe no man any thing but to love one another, for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. "

In 1851, the Irish bishops issued an address in reference to the penal enactments of the Ecclesiastical Titles' Bill and urged their flocks " to adopt the best and surest means of defeating it, namely—the fulfilment of all your duties, loyalty to the crown, obedience to the constituted authorities, moderation, patience " etc. " But whilst exerting yourselves to impede an unjust measure, recollect that the man who outrages the peace of society and violates the law, not only offends against the moral code, but grievously injures the cause that he supports, and strengthens the hands of his enemies. Based upon the eternal principles of truth and equity, the cause with which you are identified cannot fail to succeed, when advocated by means which are consonant to its justice and holiness, and such,

dearly beloved brethren, are the only means which we feel convinced you are disposed to employ. ”

In 1853, when the convents were threatened with penal legislation, Dr. Cullen, then archbishop of Dublin, issued the Synodical address of the bishops of that province, in which occur the following passages: — “ When an institution so dear to you is thus threatened we exhort you to use all legitimate means of petition and remonstrance which the Constitution places at your disposal, to protest and to make every exertion to arrest the impending persecution. Should, however, God in His wonderful ways permit fanaticism and bigotry to have a momentary triumph over virtue and religion, it will be our duty to bear this affliction with patience and resignation, and never to allow ourselves to be betrayed into an open and violent resistance to authority. Persecution has been oftentimes our lot: its vestiges are indelibly engraven on the surface of our country; but no provocation, no trials could eradicate the spirit of submission, obedience and loyalty, with which our forefathers were animated. Let the past be the guide for the future, and whether in good or ill fame, whether protected or persecuted, let us be always good and faithful servants of the realm ”. After mentioning the behaviour of the early Christians under persecution from the Emperors, the address proceeds: — “ We cannot stray from the path of duty if we walk in the footsteps of our forefathers in the faith. Like them, therefore, let us be submissive, patient and obedient subjects, let us hate and reject every thing seditious; let us give due respect to all who are placed over us, and pray for them that God may give them wisdom and strength to know and to do what is pleasing in His sight. ”

In January, 1860, in a meeting held in the Dublin Catholic cathedral to express sympathy with Pius IX, archbishop Cullen thus vindicated the loyalty of Catholics: — “ Casting back those charges on the heads of their authors, we tell them that our principles as Catholics, render us hostile to all seditious practices, and that guided by the



inspired teaching of the Apostle who commands us to obey the higher powers not through fear but for conscience' sake and to love God and honour the king, we repudiate and condemn resistance to lawful authority and denounce treason and rebellion wherever they may spring up. This contrast between the Catholics of Ireland and their opponents has not escaped the attention of a former Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Normanby, to whom the country is still grateful for his zeal and energy in promoting its welfare; a nobleman, who having spent several years as ambassador of Her Majesty in Florence, is well acquainted with the history and crimes of the Italian revolutionary party: — " There are some original peculiarities ", says he, " in the present agitation in Ireland; for it is by the Ministers of the Crown that the cause of revolution is supported; it is in the meeting of the masses that respect for established authority is enforced. There is no blot in the whole condition of Ireland which has so much grieved her best friends as the proneness of the lower classes to secret societies for the purpose of assassination. It is by Ireland's popular leaders that this system of secret societies is now denounced. No part of Mr. Hennesy's speech at Dublin was more applauded than when he pointed out to execration the terms of the oath by which, as a member of a secret society, that strange idol of some of our statesmen, Garibaldi, bound himself to political assassination. And it was the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, who said the best government for Rome was that in which political assassination was so rife that he was at the time himself obliged to interfere through the Consul at Ancona. "

" These words of the noble lord place our proceedings in a proper light, and show how far we are from being liable to the charges which have been so unsparingly lavished on us by the British press. But it is not a new or a strange feature in Irish Catholics to be faithful to their sovereigns; respect for established authorities and obedience to law are hereditary among us " etc. . . . . " I do not indeed pretend that we have not many reasons for com-

plaint . . . . But no grievances, no afflictions will induce us to join with the enemies of the Holy See in chaunting the praises of sedition and rebellion; no provocation will ever drive us to act against the doctrines of the Gospel and of our Church: we shall be ever good and faithful subjects, not through any romantic or absurd sentimentality, but through principle and for conscience' sake. . . . .

“ The writers in the English press seem to think that we are all conspirators and that we desire nothing so much as a French invasion. . . . . but I am persuaded that every man of sense in Ireland would look upon any foreign invasion as the greatest calamity which could befall the country. For my part I would prefer the return of seven years of famine, of the cholera, of fever, to one month's occupation of our soil by a hostile army. ”

In April, 1861, archbishop Cullen enjoined the clergy of Dublin diocese to “ caution their flocks against secret societies which are the prolific source of all the present evils of Europe, the scourge of society, as well as the bane of religion ”. And at the same time the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops assembled in Dublin, issued a pastoral address to the Catholic clergy and laity of Ireland, containing the following passages: — “ Moreover, from the misfortunes now afflicting the fairest regions of Europe, let us learn the great evils of secret societies which undoubtedly are the scourge of humanity and the bane of religion. On account of such evils all who are sworn in as Freemasons or Ribbonmen, or join in any other similar illegal combinations, have been excommunicated by the Popes and cut off as rotten branches from the Church. If any designing men endeavour to promote such societies among you, continue as for the past to be on your guard against them, and preserve yourselves and your country from the dangers to which any participation in those deeds of darkness would involve you. If any invite you to bind yourselves by oath to engagements of which you do not know the nature, and which, if lawful, ought not to fear the light, you may answer in the words of the Apostle:

*What fellowship hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath the faithful with the unbeliever? ”*

In a pastoral letter in November, 1861, archbishop Cullen again condemns secret societies: — “ Those who engage in them ”, he says, “ only render more intolerable the grievances they are pretending to redress and frequently implicate themselves in the most serious crimes and outrages. Drunkenness is encouraged by the meetings of such societies, the members of them are taught to violate the rights of property, and how often do their deeds of darkness terminate in bloodshed and murder! ” . . . . . “ The leaders of the secret societies pretend that they are promoting human liberty, but what liberty could make compensation for the evils which accompany their machinations? And then, their promises are altogether delusive, for we find that wherever the secret societies are successful, and revolutionary principles prevail, a system of fell tyranny and of hostility to the best interests of man and especially to the Catholic religion, is almost invariably proclaimed. Any one who reads the history of secret societies for the last seventy years, and observes the effects of the revolutions which they have produced, will look on them with horror, and make every exertion to preserve himself and his country from so terrible a scourge. ” . . . . . “ Besides incurring the censures of the Church the members of secret societies generally expose themselves to severe punishment on the part of the State. These deluded men think themselves safe in their dark proceedings, because their accomplices are bound to secrecy by oath; but if they only consult their own experience, they will perceive that spies and informers, anxious for rewards, insinuate themselves into their ranks and become their betrayers; and if they go back as far as the end of the last century, history will teach them that many of those who were then engaged in the secret and revolutionary societies in Ireland, and who were most noisy in proclaiming hostility to Government, were at the same time traitors in the pay of the Castle

and in daily communication with the famous Secretary of State of that time. These facts have been brought before the public in a most authentic shape by a late historian: they ought to be a warning to all who are tempted to join secret societies. If they do not respect the censures of the Church, let them at least dread the perfidy of their own associates. »

In 1862, the archbishop devoted a great part of his pastoral to secret societies, calling on his clergy to warn the people « against all attempts to seduce young and unsuspecting men into secret and dangerous societies, associations or brotherhoods. » . . . . « Here in Ireland, some years ago, secret societies were established under various names. As they were frequently the occasion of ruin to their members, and of great evils to others, many prelates, and especially the celebrated bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, Dr. Doyle, and several distinguished laymen, and among others the ever lamented Liberator, Daniel O'Connell, publicly denounced them and succeeded in preventing their spread in the country. Lately, attempts have been made to introduce similar associations, some bound by oath, others professing to do nothing secretly, but to carry out their projects under the eyes of the public. In one of these associations, lectures have been delivered by Unitarians, Presbyterians or others, of a very anti-Catholic tendency—invectives have been uttered against the Catholic clergy because they would not consent to applaud wild and reckless projects of revolution or open resistance to authority; and it has been suggested that Ireland should renounce her obedience to the Church in order to assert her independence. In Italy the enemies of religion raise the cry of *Down with the Pope*, under the pretext that he is an obstacle to the unity and greatness of that country; in the same way here at home, it is pretended that the Catholic clergy are opposed to the independence of Ireland; and the people are invited to cast aside their spiritual guides, and to risk their faith, just as if our faith was not a treasure of inestimable value, worthy to be preferred to all the

privileges earth can confer. Suggestions not to build schools or churches and not to satisfy the obligations of justice have also been made in addresses published by members of the society beyond the seas. Men known to have been infidels, and to have died without any religion, have been held up to our people as models for their imitation, and pilgrimages to their graves have been proposed, and honours decreed to their memories. At the same time projects of resistance to established authority have been discussed, which, if carried out, would bring ruin and desolation to our poor country, making her condition worse than it is. . . . The promoters of such wild schemes are oftentimes mere enthusiasts, careless about involving others in ruin, or, whilst they themselves are far from danger, are ready, perhaps, to promote their own selfish purposes by betraying the victims they have deluded. . . . “ We are certainly to love our country ; our Redeemer gave us the example, and he shed tears over Jerusalem when foretelling its misfortunes. St. Paul loved his countrymen to such an extent as to profess his readiness to die for them. But the one commanded the Jews to give to Cesar that which was of Cesar, and the other declared that obedience was due to the established authorities. But our Divine Master and the Apostle of the nations, whilst loving their country and their people most sincerely, never proposed to them to rise up against their Roman masters, nor encouraged a spirit of insubordination or revolution among them. The Jews, however, acting on a foolish idea of their own valour; and led astray by a vain desire of recovering their independence, took up arms against the Roman empire, then at the zenith of its power, and by doing so brought final ruin and desolation on their city and nation. Those who excited them to the fatal step were great patriots in their own estimation, but in reality they were mere enthusiasts, and the worst enemies of their country. The experience of past ages teaches us that patriotism, if sanctified by religion and guided by prudence, justice and charity, is most meritorious and beneficial, but that when it rushes

into wild and impossible projects—when it is urged on by vanity and forgets the dictates of prudence and common sense, it degenerates into folly, and becomes a degraded fanaticism, bringing on those who indulge in it ruin and contempt. . . . Besides, the true lover of his country ought to contribute to promote its real interests by integrity, industry and energy in attending to business and the duties of life. He ought to promote its credit by avoiding every crime, and by cultivating and practising every Christian virtue, by patience in suffering, by resignation to the will of God, and by works of charity. The man who acts in this way displays a true spirit of patriotism, and raises the character of his country ».

« I shall now merely add », writes the archbishop in March, 1864, « one word of caution against secret societies, and the so-called Fenians or Brothers of St. Patrick. Such societies are only calculated to sow discord in the country and to weaken it, turning away the people's minds from every useful undertaking, and directing them to schemes of armed resistance and violence, and to utopian projects which can never be realized. The promoters of such societies and those who recommend them in the public press, are false friends, agents of evil, who come among you in sheep's clothing, under the pretence of being children of St. Patrick. They promise to render their dupes happy and independent; but far from being able to realise such promises, they would implicate those who listen to them in misery and difficulties in this world, and perhaps leave them without faith or religion, or any hope of happiness in the world to come. It is a folly to expect good results from secret conspiracies and from deeds of darkness, *Every one*, saith the Scripture, *who doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reprov'd.* » ..... « For all these reasons I exhort, in the most urgent terms, and with true paternal solicitude for their welfare, the faithful of this diocese to avoid all connexion with the aforesaid societies and brotherhoods, and not to frequent their meetings or to read their newspapers; and I call on those who have had

the misfortune to join them, to abandon them immediately, to make reparation to those whom they may have scandalized or led astray by their example, to do penance for the past and be reconciled to the Church of God. I know that many plead patriotism as an excuse for the course which they adopt, but they should recollect that no object to be attained, however good it may appear, will justify the taking of an unlawful oath or the performance of anything evil in itself. The best way to give proofs of patriotism is to be obedient to all just laws, and to seek, by lawful means, for the abrogation or correction of those that are unjust — to act the part of good citizens — to promote industry — to assist in carrying out works of charity and public utility, and, above all, to give general edification by the performance of the duties of religion and the practice of the virtues of the Gospel. Any one who acts in this way will be a true lover of his country; but those who neglect their religion, or act against its teaching and precepts, tend to destroy the principal national glory of which we have to boast. ”

Archbishop Cullen annexed to this Pastoral letter in 1864, a letter from Dr. Wood, the Catholic archbishop of Philadelphia, in the United States, condemnatory of secret societies. Archbishop Wood writes: — “ To say nothing of the *Masons, Odd Fellows, Sons of Temperance* etc., about whose condemnation no doubt can exist, these societies are known by various other appellations, such for example as the *National Brotherhood*, lately condemned by the bishops of Ireland; the *Fenian Brotherhood*, whose efforts to aggregate members to their association in this country are unscrupulous and unceasing, and, in addition to these, the *Molly Maguires, Buckshots* and others, whose spirit is equally objectionable, and whose name seems to be selected rather to conceal than to indicate the object of their association. ” “ A similar letter was written by the bishop of Chicago, the principal seat of the Fenians. ”

In his pastoral letter for the month of May, 1864, archbishop Cullen thus writes: — “ However, in seeking for

redress and protesting against the injustice and oppression which we have to suffer, no one ought to allow himself to be led astray by those politicians who can think of nothing but revolution and bloodshed, and who are anxious to drive into open resistance a people that has neither arms nor ammunition, nor any means of aggression or defence at their disposal, and who could not resist for a moment the first assault of a disciplined and well-organized army. Those who give such counsels are our greatest enemies, probably many of the leaders among them are in the pay of men who wish to divide and weaken the country..... To those who have evil designs in view, or who hope to promote their worldly prospects by encouraging revolution and violence, it is useless to address any advice. But there are good men, young and inexperienced..... I would exhort these in an especial manner to avoid dangerous reading; and to be on their guard against publications, which, under the pretence of being the organs of the *Irish People*, insult our religion, promote revolutionary doctrines and endeavour to drive the country into a foolish warfare, in which every thing would be lost that has been gained within the present century, and deprive us of the blessing of heaven. ” . . . .

“ A long experience teaches the world that revolutions in general produce the greatest evils, and that secret associations always inflict serious wounds on religion and society. Undoubtedly we have to suffer great wrongs; but let us seek redress for them by begging of God to relieve us, and by having recourse to all the lawful means at our disposal. It would be folly to embark in projects certain to aggravate our misery, or to do anything sinful and unlawful that would rob us of the merits to which sufferings borne for justice' sake give us a claim. ”

In the course of a speech at a public meeting in Dublin in December, 1864, archbishop Cullen said: — “ But whilst putting great confidence in God, it is meet that we should use all just and constitutional means to obtain relief from the evils that press on us. I say just, and legal, and constitutional means; for it is foolish, it is wicked, to speak



of having recourse to violence and bloodshed, or to expect anything good from illegal combinations and secret societies. On every occasion when our people were led to deeds of violence or induced by false friends to raise the standard of revolution, the evils of the country were exceedingly increased. It happened so in the end of the last and the beginning of the present century; and the recourse to force, which some mistaken patriots adopted a few years ago, only divided and weakened the country, and left us not only an easy prey but an object of contempt to the foes of our native land. I say, then, that those who invoke the aid of foreign armies, those who talk of civil war, resistance to established authorities, and revolutionary movements, are the worst enemies of Ireland and its ancient faith..... One thing appears certain that their whole system is directed more against religion than against tyranny and oppression; and hence we may conjecture why their menaces of treason and rebellion do not appear to be looked on with an eye of disapprobation by many who, though concerned in the safety of property and the state, forget their own interest in their hatred of Catholicity. It is our duty and our interest, my Lord Mayor, to walk in the footsteps of the great Liberator, Daniel O'Connell. By peaceable means and the force of reason, without violating any law, he broke the chains which bound Ireland for so long a period, and obtained Catholic Emancipation. The proposed association, my Lord Mayor, is determined to employ the same agency and I trust with equal success. Such an association by proceeding with firmness and courage, but always within the boundaries of the law, always respecting the dictates of religion, may be the means of salvation to our people."

In October, 1865, in a letter to the clergy of Dublin on Orangeism and Fenianism, the archbishop writes: — "As to what is called Fenianism, you are aware that, looking on it as a compound of folly and wickedness, wearing the mask of patriotism to make dupes of the unwary, and as the work of a few fanatics or knaves, wicked enough to jeopardize others in order to promote their own sordid

views, I have repeatedly raised my voice against it, since it first became known at the time of M'Manus's funeral four years ago, and that I cautioned young men against promising or swearing obedience to strangers with whom they were altogether unacquainted, putting themselves at the mercy of plotting spies and treacherous informers, and risking their lives and liberty, and endangering the lives of others, in attempting to carry out projects, hopeless in themselves, which, doing no good to any class, might involve the country in ruin and bloodshed. Would to God that more attention had been paid to such friendly admonitions. If they had been listened to, we would not now have to regret that so many young men are suffering the hardships of prison, and their families overwhelmed with affliction, whilst their seducers are far away from danger, laughing at the simplicity of their dupes and enjoying the wages of iniquity. But even if no advice had been given — if you, Reverend Brethren, in your affection for your flocks, had not cautioned them against Fenianism, should not those who were called on to join it have raised the following questions: Who are its leaders? What public service have they rendered to their country? What claim have they to demand our confidence? Would they sacrifice others to promote their own sordid views? Are they men of religion? Are they men remarkable for their sobriety, their good conduct, and attention to their own affairs? Have they been successful in business? Are they men to whom we would lend money or trust the management of our property? Were they to succeed, would they be good rulers and good magistrates? Would they better the condition of the country? or rather, as needy and desperate adventurers are always disposed to do, would they not introduce despotism and a system of confiscation, and the spoliation of all property, public and private? In the case of the leaders of the Fenians, if these questions had been seriously considered, no men of sense would have joined their ranks. " . . . . " I again beg of you, Reverend Brethren, to act as you have done for the past, making every effort

to save your flocks from the contamination of all secret societies. Remind them, from time to time, that good works are not afraid of the light of day, but that crimes seek to conceal themselves in the darkness of night. Remind them, also, that the Catholic Church condemns all secret societies dangerous to the State or the Church, whether bound by oath or not. All who join in such societies are excommunicated, and cannot be absolved as long as they continue connected with them." . . . "Fenianism, however, though powerless to obtain what it proposed, had great influence in bringing about mischief: it succeeded in inducing its dupes to engage in breaches of the law, to disturb the minds of others, and to bring public vengeance on themselves." . . . "It is our duty as ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which inculcates humility and obedience, to encourage a love of peace, to inculcate patience and forbearance in the time of trials and sufferings, and to prevent the spread of secret societies, and to check every thing revolutionary." . . . "But are we, then, never to seek for the redress of grievances?" . . . "Certainly not. Nothing is more conformable to reason and religion than to expose our sufferings to those in power and to call on them for relief. Among us it is most desirable that this should be done by selecting good members of Parliament, able and willing to state our case and defend our rights in the legislative assembly of the nation. We can also call on the press to expose our wants; we can petition and complain until we make ourselves heard." . . . "Following this course we shall be acting in conformity with the dictates of our religion, a matter of paramount importance in whatever we undertake. The teaching of the Scripture is quite clear: Let every one, says St. Paul, be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation. Whilst the Scripture lays down this doctrine, it is not only foolish, but it is wicked and sinful, and anti-Christian, to give up peaceable means

of redress, and to fly to violence, insubordination and revolution." . . . . "As the gigantic system of penal laws fell to pieces before the powerful and peaceful agitation of O'Connell, so will all other grievances disappear, if public opinion be properly appealed to." . . . . "But let us recollect that any conspiracies, any recourse to violence or arms, would only rivet our chains and make things worse than they are." . . . . "The dissipated, the drunkard, those who engage in and encourage secret plots and conspiracies, may think they are patriots, but they are the worst enemies of the country. Unhappily, we have patriots of this kind; patriots, who by dissipating their property and by extravagance, qualify themselves to be a burden in the workhouse on their parish; patriots, who spend their time in idleness or in smoking and drinking, who make it their business to interrupt and censure whatever is undertaken by others whilst they themselves never move a hand to serve their country. I need scarcely add that we have also other patriots who are loud in their promises and professions, but who, acting on selfish motives, are always ready to sell and revile their country where their own interests can be promoted by doing so."

Again, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, 1866, archbishop Cullen addressed his clergy on Fenianism, which he described as "a foolish and wicked conspiracy against the existing civil authorities and still more against the divinely constituted authority of the Church of God. Its effects have been most injurious to the country, turning away the minds of the people from their legitimate occupations to wicked, wild and impracticable projects, disturbing the course of trade, interrupting business, and giving a pretext to the Orange lodges to arm all their members and even reckless boys, to the great risk of the public peace, and to excite a bitter persecution against poor Catholics who had no connexion whatever with Fenians or their follies." . . . . "Let us observe that Fenianism has been very beneficial, in a temporal point of view, to its leaders and chiefs in America, but has been most fatal to their associates in Ireland. The

Head Centres in the United States have collected millions of dollars, they have been able to hire noble palaces, to live in great splendour, and to make ample provision for themselves. But what was gain for them has been ruin for their unfortunate dupes in this country, who have to deplore the miseries and calamities which they have brought on themselves. ”

In a Lenten pastoral in 1866, the effects of Fenianism are described. “ Has it not propagated principles of communism and sedition, subversive of all society, in the columns of its organ, *the Irish People*: and has it not endeavoured to stifle the pious feelings of our people and to inspire them with a baneful indifference for the things of heaven? ” . . . “ But recollect, in the mean time, that you are never to allow yourselves to be betrayed into resistance to authority. Like our forefathers, whether in good or ill fame, let us be always good and faithful subjects, always ready to make sacrifices for the public weal. ”

In June, 1866, archbishop Cullen was created a Cardinal, and in December of that year, renewed his denunciation of revolutionary agitation. “ It is to be regretted, ” he says, “ that emissaries from other countries, imbued with the spirit of the present times, and advocates of physical force and violence, have been labouring to make them (the Irish people) countenance secret societies or revolutionary movements. ” . . . “ My advice to you, dearly beloved, is the same which I have given you repeatedly during the last five years. Following the maxims of the Gospel, which teach you to be obedient to the higher powers, keep aloof from all those who advocate violence or revolution, or seek to bring on a collision with the established authorities . . . Remember the advice given so often by Ireland’s best friend, that any one who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy. ” . . . “ We cannot expect anything from physical force, secret societies or revolution, or any other means not blessed by heaven. ” . . . “ We can hope to obtain redress only by the use of lawful and peaceable means. ”

In his pastoral letter for Lent, 1867, the Cardinal refers

to the several admonitions against secret societies, issued by himself and the Irish bishops in 1861, 1862, 1864 and 1865, and repeating these admonitions, observes — “ While condemning Fenianism and all secret societies, you can assure your flocks that we are far from being enemies of rational liberty, or from being opposed to the employment of constitutional means to obtain the redress of grievances, and to establish our rights when we are oppressed. Let us complain; let us call on our representatives to plead our cause; let us cover the table of the House of Commons with petitions; but let us at the same time be convinced that it would be extreme folly to have recourse to violence or arms. . . . It is said that at present all the statesmen and the people of England are well disposed to redress our wrongs; by doing so, they would save themselves great trouble and expense. If the people of Ireland were fairly dealt with, revolutions and conspiracies, Whiteboys and Fenians, would no longer be heard of; Ireland would be happy and peaceable, and a source of strength to the nation at large; it would not be necessary to increase the military and police and double the taxation. Let us avail ourselves of the good feelings now prevailing to obtain all we want; but let us recollect that any conspiracies, any recourse to violence or arms, would only rivet our chains and make things worse than they are. ”

In his pastoral for May, 1867, the Cardinal says: — “ Whilst condemning the evil deeds of secret societies, from which we may expect nothing good, we cannot be indifferent to the sad and falling state of our country. The people are still flying from the land, and nearly three millions of its inhabitants have emigrated; our towns and villages are decaying, trade and commerce are at a stand, ruin and desolation are spreading at every side. ” In October, 1867, in a letter to the clergy and laity of Dublin on the resolutions passed by the Irish Episcopate, the Cardinal says: “ Whilst deploring the criminal folly of engaging in secret societies or open rebellion against the government of the country, the prelates of Ireland exhort you to avail yourselves

of all lawful and constitutional means to obtain redress of the many grievances which we suffer, and to secure for the Catholics of Ireland, so long persecuted, perfect equality with every other class of her Majesty's subjects. Elect, therefore, members of Parliament able and willing to defend your rights; apply to the legislature for the disendowment of the Protestant establishment, and for freedom of education; and petition for a law to regulate the relations between landlord and tenant, so that the fruits of their capital and labour may be secured to the agricultural classes. Call also upon the corporate bodies of the country, upon all men of influence and station, upon the writers of the public press, and especially on your members of Parliament, to bestir themselves in your behalf, to point out your claims and your grievances to the people of England, and to give a proper direction to public opinion, so that your cause may be brought to a happy issue. The use of lawful and moral means will in the end produce good results, but violence and bloodshed, and other deeds of darkness, promoted by secret societies, will bring certain ruin upon those who have recourse to them. »

« I request of you in a special manner, Reverend Brethren, » wrote the Cardinal in April, 1868, « to exert your influence in preserving the faithful from all connexion with those secret societies which are so hostile to religion, so dangerous to society, and so severely condemned by the Church. Within our own times many of these societies have become training schools for assassination, and the dagger and the revolver have been adopted as the best means for carrying out their unholy designs. Undoubtedly the wicked attempt lately made on the life of a youthful and unoffending prince, in the distant regions of Australia, has had its origin in secret agencies of this kind. »

In February, 1870, the Cardinal, after again denouncing secret societies, observes : — « Fenians appeal, indeed, to love of country, to enlist sympathy with their designs; but they may rest assured that the adepts of secret societies, and all those who would excite our people to bloodshed, or

other deeds of violence, are the worst enemies of our rights and liberties. It is not by such unlawful organizations, beloved brethren, that the interests of this country can be promoted, and your prosperity and happiness secured. ”

In May, 1870, the Cardinal writes: — “ The first great evil which I shall mention is the existence of the Masonic, Fenian, Ribbon, and other secret societies in this country. In these institutions the members swear that they will obey leaders whom they do not know, and who may be very dangerous men, and command wicked things, and they call God to witness that they will keep certain secrets, without knowing what they are, and which may turn out to be opposed to the teaching of the Gospel and the maxims of religion. ” . . . . . “ It is easy to understand why bands of robbers and assassins bind themselves by oath to conceal their deeds of wickedness; but why men professing to act according to the laws of honour, justice and religion, should swear to secrecy and to the concealment of their principles and actions, is a mystery quite unintelligible. ” . . . . . “ As to Fenianism, I have spoken so often of it that I have nothing new to say. All I shall now add is, that the experience of the last few years shows that the leaders of this organization, or many of them, have been men without principle or religion, and that, to carry out their own reckless projects, they have driven their unsuspecting followers into the most foolish undertakings and exposed them to the greatest dangers . . . . . They have displayed neither wisdom nor courage; so far from rendering services to their country and promoting its prosperity and its liberties, they have obstructed every useful improvement; they have turned the minds of their followers to foolish pursuits; and they have brought on the country and on its peaceful inhabitants, the evil of coercive and exceptional legislation. Of course there was not a shadow of hope for the success of this party; but, had it prevailed, or had the masses of the people joined in its undertakings, we should have had nothing but confusion, anarchy and despotism, and our poor country would have been overwhelmed with



unheard of calamities. . . . It is not necessary to refer to the murders and outrages latterly unhappily too frequent in this country, in which for many years such crimes were scarcely heard of. Denounce all such iniquities, endeavour to inspire your flocks with a horror of them, and with the greatest detestation of deeds of blood and of all conspiracies. And as a portion of the press has largely contributed to the promotion of such evils, instruct the faithful to be on their guard against its influence, and caution them especially to avoid those newspapers, which appear to have been established for the purpose of propagating corrupt maxims and revolutionary and anti-Christian doctrine. Unhappily newspapers of this description have been published both in this and in other countries and have been productive of the greatest evils. Their editors do not hesitate to spread poison on every side, and to undermine the good faith and the religion of the people. . . . All I insist on is that unlawful and sinful means of obtaining redress, all conspiracies, all violence, all resistance to authority, all deeds of darkness, so well calculated to bring the wrath of heaven upon us, should be avoided, and that the maxim of Ireland's greatest friend, namely, that any one who commits a crime is a traitor to his country, should not be forgotten. . . . The statesmen now (1870) in power, encouraged by the good dispositions and growing liberality of the English people, have determined to obliterate the memory of past wrongs, to bind up the wounds of the country, and to put us on a footing of equality with all other classes of Her Majesty's subjects. By a great measure, carried last year, they commenced the good work of conciliation, and they are determined to go on in the same direction, settling the relations between landlord and tenant, and providing protection for the existence and welfare of the great masses of our poor people. This is a great undertaking; but it is surrounded by innumerable difficulties in itself, and is opposed by the interests and passions of many." . . . "The distinguished statesmen who have displayed so much love for the public

good and the welfare of Ireland, by undertaking a work of such magnitude and difficulty, may be defeated by their opponents, but in any case they deserve our warmest thanks and the lasting gratitude of the country. In the meantime it appears to be our duty not only to avoid all uncalled-for opposition to a measure admittedly containing the seeds of much good, but rather to assist, as far as possible, in passing it, with any necessary amendments. In my humble opinion it would be a foolish and fatal policy to do any thing to weaken the hands of those who are anxious for our welfare, or to assist in driving them from power in order to hand over the reins of government to patrons, perhaps, and abettors of Orange lodges, always the curse and bane of Ireland, to men, who, if in power, would think of nothing but the interests of a faction, and the most efficacious means of upholding old abuses.”

In March, 1871, the Cardinal refers to seditious attempts. “It is necessary to do so, because attempts are made to spread the spirit of resistance to authority through our country. On one side bad newspapers and other dangerous publications endeavour to undermine the power of the Church, though our Lord has said that if any one listen not to her voice, he is to be regarded as a heathen and a publican. On the other hand, secret societies and dangerous organizations are seeking to weaken or destroy those temporal powers which we are commanded to obey in all lawful matters, not through fear, but for conscience’ sake. These secret combinations are the cause of the greatest evils; they introduce a reign of terror in every part of the country where they get a footing; the virtuous and peaceable inhabitants are kept in alarm for their lives and property. And, alas! how many attempts at assassination have we heard of, how many murders have been committed, and how much innocent blood has been unjustly shed! . . . The Catholic Church cannot look on with indifference whilst attempts are made to poison the minds of her children, and to lead them into the ways of perdition. Hence she has condemned all such secret and wicked com-

binations; and thus it matters not what name they assume—whether Freemasonry or Carbonarism, or Fenianism or Ribbonism—all Catholics who join in them incur excommunication and are cut off like rotten branches from the Church. Hence, all the faithful should look with horror on secret societies, and have no communication with those who encourage, propagate or abet them.”

In July, 1875, in a letter on the O'Connell Centenary, the Cardinal writes:—

“ The secret of O'Connell's success was his faith, which is the victory that overcometh the world. This divine virtue inspired him with a desire to serve his country and his religion, giving him courage to encounter and overcome the greatest difficulties, and adding power and force and fire to the eloquent words which flowed from his lips. It was his faith and his love for religion that filled him with hatred for conspiracies and revolutions, secret societies and communism, and made him condemn all resistance and disobedience to lawful authority, whether spiritual or temporal. ”

In the address of the Irish bishops to their flocks, in September, 1875, we read:— “ He who allows his indignation at the wrong done him to hurry him into unlawful resistance, is false to her (the Church's) teaching equally with him who sacrifices his conscience at the unjust bidding of those in power. The true Catholic is neither a rebel nor a slave, and while he cheerfully yields to authority the obedience which is its due, he refuses, with Christian manliness, to submit to claims, however specious, which invade the rights of God or of man. ”

The last allusion to illegal societies, made by the Cardinal, is contained in his letter to the clergy for the Festival of Christmas, 1877, where he writes:—

“ Before concluding, I beg of you to caution the good and peaceful people of your district against secret societies, which some designing and mischievous men are said to be attempting to organise in the country and in the towns. Caution them especially against any connection with the

Fenians and what is called the Skirmishing Society, and the Clan-na-Gael Associations, all of which organizations are said to have been lately set on foot in America, and which wicked men sometimes encourage in Ireland for the vile purpose of making money by selling those whom they have seduced, thus bringing ruin on their victims. The Church condemns all such dangerous societies hostile to the Church or to the State, and subjects them to excommunication; and this alone ought to be a sufficient reason to all Catholics for avoiding them. »

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IMPRIMATUR

Fr. Augustinus Bausa O. P. S. P. A. Magister.

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IMPRIMATUR

Iulius Lenti Archiep. Siden. Vicesg.

Houses of the Oireachtas