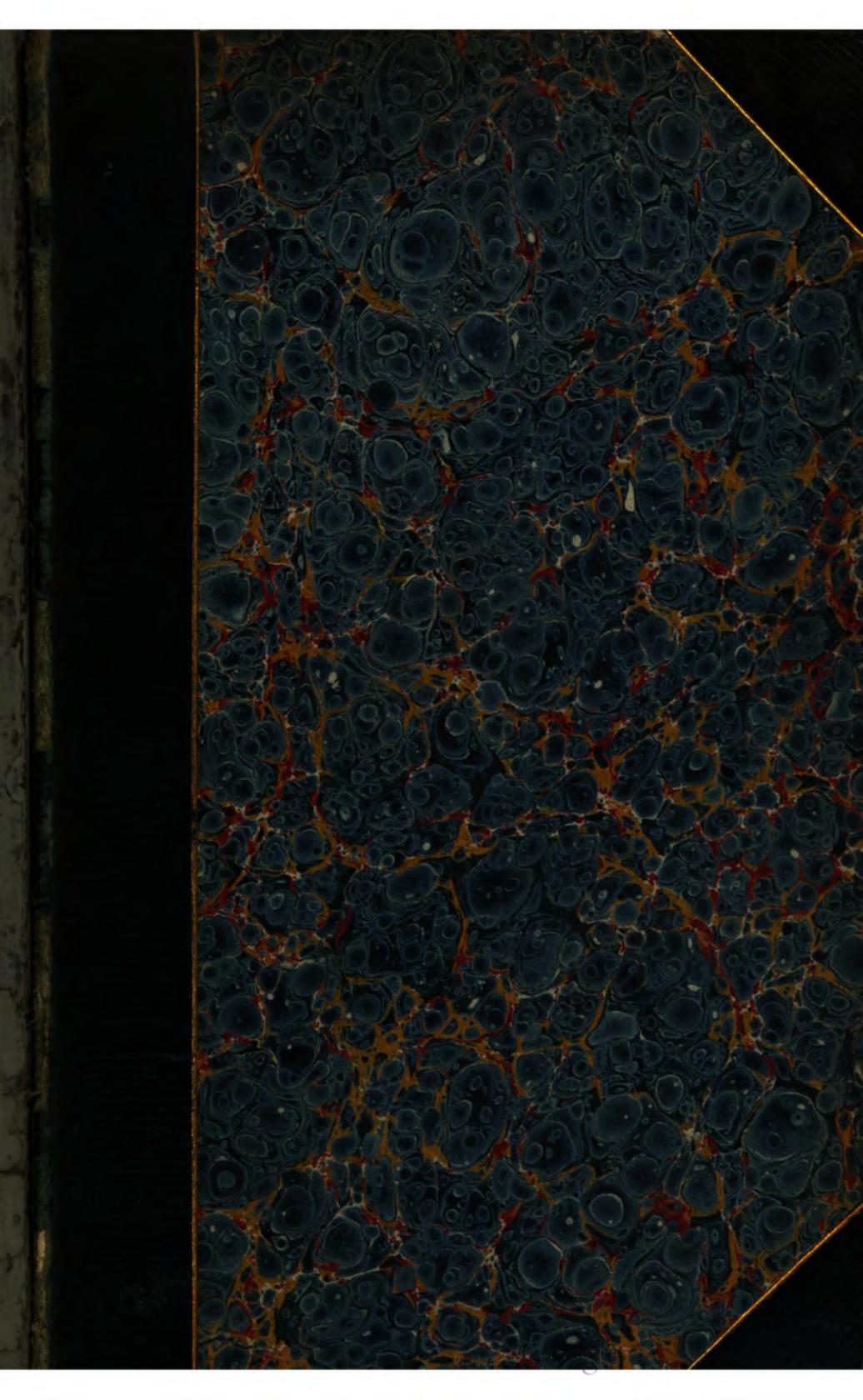
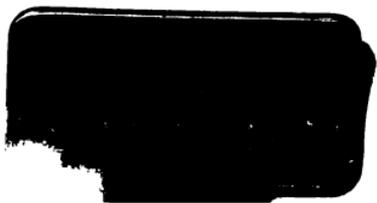
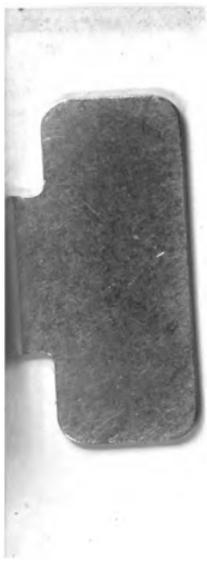

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April 56.

[Twenty-first Thousand.]

TO
THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IS MR. O'CONNELL IN PURGATORY?

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

As you are about to assemble in thousands around Mr. O'Connell's *body*, there to weep and lament over the Liberator's departure, I am anxious that you should not be altogether unmindful of certain circumstances relating to his *soul*. Are you not astonished at seeing it announced in the newspapers, that Grand Mass is to be performed in our Metropolitan and other Chapels for its release out of Purgatory? Your astonishment will increase as you again read the plain and graphic statements of his last hours, by his spiritual father and friend, the Rev Dr. Miley, who, in a letter from Genoa, remarks—

“The worst has befallen us: the Liberator—the father of his country—the glory and the wonder of Christendom—is dead! Dead! No, I should say rather O'CONNELL IS IN HEAVEN. HIS DEATH WAS HAPPY; he received in the most fervent sentiments the last rites, and up to the last sigh was surrounded by every consolation provided by our holy religion. At thirty minutes past nine, the hand of the priest of God, privileged ‘to bind and loose on earth even as it is done in heaven,’ was extended over him. There was no struggle, no change visible upon the features, except that, as we gazed, it was plain that a dread mystery had cast its shadow over him. The spirit which had moved the world, took its flight so peacefully, that all who were there, except the angels who were in waiting for it, were in doubt if it had departed. He died as an infant sinks upon its mother's breast to sleep. It was by the soft and beautiful transition of the prayers that we were reminded that we had before us only the noble body of O'Connell, as if listening, hushed in attention, for the summons to a glorious immortality.”

What language can be plainer? “*O'Connell is in heaven.*” What more consolatory to the millions of Roman Catholic Ireland? “*The angels were in waiting for his spirit,*” which now was “*summoned to a glorious immortality.*” And what more sure or certain? “**THE HAND OF THE PRIEST OF GOD, PRIVILEGED TO BIND AND LOOSE ON EARTH EVEN AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, WAS EXTENDED OVER HIM.**” And yet, after all, we are told O'Connell is in Purgatory—a place, by universal consent, very different from heaven; for as to its locality, the generality of the schoolmen say, “*it is in the bowels of the earth, on the borders of hell;*” and as to its character, Bellarmine says it is a *prison*; others, that it is a *little hell, a place of torment, a condemned place, a world of the damned!* There is serious difference in the two worlds; and how full of sorrow to the bleeding heart of Ireland is the thought that, notwithstanding the first



intelligence by Dr. Miley, that, "O'Connell is in heaven," he is now, alas, in a place of misery, a pit of fire!

Now, consider—

1. *There is no certainty after all in the efficacy of the "last rites."* The Liberator, writes Dr. Miley, had every consolation of our holy religion. The hand of the priest of God was extended over him, to liberate his spirit, for "the angels to convey it to a glorious immortality." And yet O'Connell is in purgatory! in a world of fire and damnation. Of what use is it, then, to have the "last rites" at the hour of death?

2. Supposing O'Connell had left unpaid to Divine justice some "utmost farthing," and had for a little time gone to purgatory, *why is he not long ere this released?* Consider who O'Connell was, what has been done for him. He was no ordinary character. His life was full of labours for his country and his religion. His capacious powers, his imperial influence over millions of minds, were all made subservient to the advantage of the priests. The *Universe* sums up his character in these remarkable words:—

"By his wonderful works, by the splendour of his faith, by the glory of his indomitable courage, by the fruitfulness of his genius, he was magnified and elevated so as to be not only the greatest citizen of Ireland, but the great citizen of the Catholic world, as Pius IX. is the great king!"

Such, then, was O'Connell; and yet he, even *he*, is in purgatory. A poor look out for "the greatest citizen of the Catholic world." Yes, in purgatory after all that has been done to avoid his being there, or at least to avoid his being there long. He himself, besides what we have noticed, went in his old age, at the close of a pious life, on a long and arduous pilgrimage to the tomb of the twelve apostles. Then at *Genoa*, THE PRIEST OF GOD—other priests—bishops—Jesuits—friars—nuns—and many others on the spot where he died some time ago, set about the work of his release.

Besides all this, prayers have been said in a myriad churches for his repose, and masses are being performed, and paid for, in every country under heaven. Alas! how gloomy the thought, that if all this, and even more than this, be required for the ransom of O'Connell, how long must poorer men suffer who have fewer friends to pray or to give, and who have committed a greater number of sins! But—

3. *WHEN WILL O'Connell be released?* If I believed, as Dr. Miley does, I would not wait a single moment for money or property. No, no; I would covenant with my eyes that they sleep not day nor night until I had emancipated poor souls crying unto me from purgatory. What wicked ingratitude in any of the priesthood and bishops to allow *O'Connell*—their best friend, their Liberator, their chief citizen—to lie down in misery and woe. O'Connell is the last man to be thus allowed to suffer the vengeance of consuming fire. The

Catholic world cannot be at ease until they know that "his noble soul" is at rest. Oh, if there be a ransom price, let Ireland know it, and out of her famine-stricken sons it shall be paid.

4. *This whole affair of purgatory, on the very face of it, is a bad one.* Nobody knows who made it; God did not—angels did not—the devils did not. It was made by the Church of Rome. It is altogether a money-getting affair. Even O'Connell must go there, and for this plain advantage, millions will pay of their hard earnings to get him out. The church will make a million of wealth by it. Now, if he were in heaven, of course no one would give a penny to disturb him or remove him from thence.

5. *The most wonderful thing of all is, that men's eyes are not opened to see the absurdity of such priestcraft.* O'Connell in a little hell!! The late pope in purgatory!! Only masses *paid for* can get them out!!—and, of course, to a money-getting church, it is its interest to keep them in! The priests among themselves, however, are not sure that O'Connell is there! Dr. Miley, in Genoa, says "*he is in heaven.*" Dr. Miley's congregation in Dublin are praying and paying him out of *purgatory!* Even this glaring absurdity, rather than *not* "make merchandise of the souls of men."

6. *How different is the religion which the Bible teaches!* There we read, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous;" and if "made righteous," there is no condemnation—no punishment—no purgatory. What can be sufficient to pay the uttermost farthing, if *the death of Christ* be not? By sin we do owe a fearful debt to inflexible justice, but Christ, as our surety, paid all demands upon us by infinitely more than an equivalent. It was the knowledge of this that made Luther change his religion. As soon as he understood the Bible, he left Rome. He rejoiced in the new light that now shone upon his mind. One day he said to Philip Melancthon, "Melancthon, you did not eat the apple—Luther did not eat it—but the sin is imputed to us. Melancthon, you did not die on the cross—Luther did not die there—but the merits of it are imputed to us." If *Christ* suffered and died, why need *we* suffer and die? Justice had no charge against *him*, but against *us*. Therefore, the debt he paid was not for himself, but for us. When a man sees this, away go all notions of any more suffering, any more dying, and any more purgatory. To help to atone for our sin, then, by our own pains, is "to deny the Lord that bought us." Oh that O'Connell had seen this!

7. *Alas for the poor people of Ireland, who are unable to gain light on this momentous topic!* Could I command an interview with all the priesthood of Ireland, in the spirit of Christian kindness I would say—Gentlemen, Ireland is in your hands; for the people to be without knowledge is not good. Search the Scriptures; search the *originals*;

and if you can find one word of the insufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, and of the need of purgatory, I will profess myself a willing convert. But if you cannot, let the people know the result. What responsibility is upon you! Millions of souls are hurrying onwards to heaven or hell. Time is rapidly bringing the judgment. You and I must pass the solemn test, not of man's examination, but of God's. *Woe*—infinite woe—be upon us if we preach not the gospel. If Christ be sufficient for salvation without this purgatory, then *Christ*, and *Christ ONLY*—Christ without pains and penances. To preach such a Christ would be glad tidings indeed. Think of it before it be too late. The day of God will make many startling developments regarding right and wrong, truth and error, the saved and the lost, heaven and hell. The Lord grant that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day.

PEOPLE OF IRELAND!—Truth, philanthropy, and religion, demand that this question cannot rest where it is. The love for O'Connell, in the hearts of many, is still intense. The bishops are at issue respecting his repose. Drs. M'Hale and Miley are at variance. The mind of the people halts, and is agitated between the two opinions. Awake to the vital importance of this subject, bearing as it does on your own dying hour and the eternity beyond, and rejecting the influence of all sectarian or party spirit, come to a judgment of its real merits, like men who feel they have minds of their own. Happily the facts of the case are before the public; and the press, which is "a king of terrors" to all works of darkness, will not fail to send home to the very conscience and soul of Ireland the irresistible conviction that even the *hierarchy are fallible men*—that *no one, for certainty, can tell who will, or who will not go to purgatory*—and that, after all, *purgatory itself has no existence* but in the ill-directed and gloomy imagination of such as have given blind obedience to man, and have turned their back on the revelation of God. "I SPEAK AS UNTO WISE MEN—JUDGE YE WHAT I SAY."

With deepest love for the people of Ireland,

I am, friends and fellow-countrymen,

Yours most faithfully,

Kingstown, Dublin.

J. D. SMITH.

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