

A LETTER

TO

THE PRINTER OF THE "PUBLIC ADVERTISER."

OCCASIONED BY

THE LATE ACT PASSED IN FAVOUR OF POPERY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DEFENCE OF IT, IN TWO LETTERS

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL," DUBLIN.

SIR,

SOME time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, "An Appeal from the Protestant Association, to the People of Great Britain." A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious. On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object or design, kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract, by a few plain arguments.

With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as "boundless a freedom in religion" as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point: I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. Suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable, and the Koran to be the word of God. I consider not, whether the Romish religion be true or false; I build nothing on one or the other supposition. Therefore, away with all your common-place declamation about intoler-

ance and persecution for religion ! Suppose every word of Pope Pius's creed to be true ; suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible ; yet, I insist upon it, that no government not Roman Catholic ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

I prove this by a plain argument : (Let him answer it that can :)—That no Roman Catholic does, or can, give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus : It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a public Council, that “no faith is to be kept with heretics.” This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance ; but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But as long as it is so, nothing can be more plain, than that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security to any Government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour. Therefore they ought not to be tolerated by any Government, Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan.

You may say, “Nay, but they will take an oath of allegiance.” True, five hundred oaths ; but the maxim, “No faith is to be kept with heretics,” sweeps them all away as a spider's web. So that still no Governors that are not Roman Catholics can have any security of their allegiance.

Again : Those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the Pope can give no security of their allegiance to any Government ; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this : Therefore, they can give no security for their allegiance.

The power of granting pardons for all sins, past, present, and to come, is, and has been for many centuries, one branch of his spiritual power.

But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power can give no security for their allegiance ; since they believe the Pope can pardon rebellions, high treason, and all other sins whatsoever.

The power of dispensing with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the Pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power must acknowledge this. But whoever acknowledges the dispensing power of the Pope can give no security for his allegiance to any Government.

Oaths and promises are none ; they are light as air ; a dispensation makes them all null and void.

Nay, not only the Pope, but even a Priest, has power to pardon sins! This is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they that acknowledge this cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any Government. Oaths are no security at all; for the Priest can pardon both perjury and high treason.

Setting then religion aside, it is plain, that, upon principles of reason, no Government ought to tolerate men who cannot give any security to that Government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds that "no faith is to be kept with heretics;" but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution, or the spiritual power of the Pope.

"But the late Act," you say, "does not either tolerate or encourage Roman Catholics." I appeal to matter of fact. Do not the Romanists themselves understand it as a toleration? You know they do. And does it not already (let alone what it may do by and by) encourage them to preach openly, to build chapels, (at Bath and elsewhere,) to raise seminaries, and to make numerous converts day by day to their intolerant, persecuting principles? I can point out, if need be, several of the persons. And they are increasing daily.

But "nothing dangerous to English liberty is to be apprehended from them." I am not certain of that. Some time since, a Romish Priest came to one I knew, and, after talking with her largely, broke out, "You are no heretic; you have the experience of a real Christian!" "And would you," she asked, "burn me alive?" He said, "God forbid!—unless it were for the good of the Church!"

Now, what security could she have had for her life, if it had depended on that man? The *good of the Church* would have burst all the ties of truth, justice, and mercy; especially when seconded by the absolution of a Priest, or (if need were) a Papal pardon.

If any one please to answer this, and to set his name, I shall probably reply.—But the productions of anonymous writers, I do not promise to take any notice of.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

CITY-ROAD,
January 21, 1780.

TWO LETTERS

TO

THE EDITORS OF THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL,
DUBLIN.

TO THE READER.

SEVERAL months since, Father O'Leary, a Capuchin Friar in Dublin, published Remarks upon this Letter in the Freeman's Journal. As soon as these were sent to me, I published a Reply in the same Paper. When I read more of his Remarks, printed in five succeeding Journals, I wrote a second Reply; but did not think it worth while to follow, step by step, so wild, rambling a writer. Mr. O'Leary has now put his six Letters into one, which are reprinted in London, with this title, "Mr. O'Leary's remarks on the Rev. Mr. W.'s Letters in Defence of the Protestant Associations in England; to which are prefixed Mr. Wesley's Letters."

Is it by negligence or by design, that there are so many mistakes even in a title-page?

1. "To which are prefixed Mr. W.'s Letters." No: the second of those Letters is not mine. I never saw it before.
2. But where are the two Letters published in the Freeman's Journal? Why is a spurious Letter palmed upon us, and the genuine one suppressed?
3. "Letters in Defence of the Protestant Associations in England." Hold! In my first Letter I have only three lines in defence of a Tract published in London. But I have not one line "in Defence of the Associations," either in London or elsewhere.

If Mr. O'Leary will seriously answer the two following Letters, he may expect a serious reply. But if he has only drollery and low wit to oppose to argument, I shall concern myself no further about him.

LONDON,
Dec. 29, 1780.

LETTER I.

GENTLEMEN,

1. MR. O'LEARY does well to entitle his Paper "Remarks," as that word may mean anything or nothing; but it is no more an answer to my Letter, than to the Bull Unigenitus. He likewise does wisely in prefacing his "Remarks" with so

handsome a compliment : This may naturally incline you to think well of his judgment, which is no small point gained.

2. His manner of writing is easy and pleasant ; but might it not as well be more serious ? The subject we are treating of is not a light one : It moves me to tears rather than to laughter. I plead for the safety of my country ; yea, for the children that are yet unborn. " But cannot your country be safe, unless the Roman Catholics are persecuted for their religion ? " Hold ! Religion is out of the question : But I would not have them persecuted at all ; I would only have them hindered from doing hurt. I would not put it in their power (and I do not wish that others should) to cut the throats of their quiet neighbours. " But they will give security for their peaceable behaviour. " They cannot while they continue Roman Catholics ; they cannot while they are members of that Church which receives the decrees of the Council of Constance, which maintains the spiritual power of the Bishop of Rome, or the doctrine of priestly absolution.

3. This I observed in my late Letter. Whoever, therefore, would *remark* upon it to any purpose, must prove these three things : (1.) That the decree of the Council of Constance publicly made, has been publicly disclaimed. (2.) That the Pope has not power to pardon sins, or to dispense with oaths, vows, and promises. And, (3.) That no Priest has power to pardon sins. But has Mr. O'Leary proved these three points ? Has he proved any one of them ? He has, indeed, said something upon the first : He denies such a decree was ever made.

4. I am persuaded Mr. O'Leary is the first man that ever made the important discovery. But, before he is quite sure, let him look again into Father L'Abbe's "*Concilia Maxima*," printed at Paris in the year 1672. The last volume contains a particular account of the Council of Constance ; one of whose decrees (page 169) is, " That heretics ought to be put to death, *non obstantibus salvis conductibus Imperatoris, Regum, &c.*, notwithstanding the public faith engaged to them in the most solemn manner. " Who then can affirm that no such doctrine or violation of faith with heretics is authorized by this Council ? Without putting on spectacles, which, blessed be God, I do not wear, I can read a little Latin still. And, while I can, I must fix this horrid doctrine on the Council of Constance.

5. But, supposing the Council of Constance had never advanced this doctrine, or the Church of Rome had publicly disclaimed it, my conclusion stands good till it is proved, (1.) That no Priest has a power of pardoning sins; and, (2.) That the Pope has neither a power of pardoning sins, nor of dispensing with oaths, vows, promises, &c.

Mr. O'Leary has proved neither of these: And what has he proved? It is hard to say. But if he proves nothing, he either directly or indirectly asserts many things. In particular, he asserts, (1.) "Mr. Wesley has arraigned in the jargon of the Schools." Heigh-day! What has this to do here? There is no more of the jargon of the Schools in my Letter, than there is of Arabic. "The Catholics all over the world are liars, perjurers," &c. Nay, I have not arraigned one of them. This is a capital mistake. I arraign the doctrines, not the men. Either defend them, or renounce them.

"I do renounce them," says Mr. O'Leary. Perhaps you do. But the Church of Rome has never renounced them. "He asperses our communion in a cruel manner." I do not asperse it at all in saying, these are the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Who can prove the contrary?

(2.) "Mr. O'Leary did not even attempt to seduce the English soldiery." I believe it; but does this prove any of these three points? "But Queen Elizabeth and King James roasted heretics in Smithfield!" In what year? I doubt the fact.

(3.) "Mr. Wesley is become an apologist of those who burned the chapel in Edinburgh." Is not this said purely *ad movendam invidiam*? "to inflame the minds of the people?" For it has no shadow of truth. I never yet wrote nor spoke one word in their defence. "He urged the rabble to light that fire." No more than he urged them to dethrone the King.

(4.) "Does Mr. Wesley intend to sound Alecto's horn, or the war-shell of the Mexicans?" All this is cruel aspersion indeed; designed merely to inflame! What I intend is neither more nor less than this,—to contribute my mite to preserve our constitution both in Church and State.

(5.) "They were the Scotch and English regicides who gave rise to the Irish massacre." *The Irish massacre!* Was there ever any such thing? Was not the whole account a mere Protestant lie? O no! it was a melancholy truth,

wrote in the blood of many thousands. But the regicides no more gave rise to that massacre than the Hottentots. The whole matter was planned several years, and executed before the King's death was thought of. "But Mr. Wesley is sowing the seeds of another massacre!" Such another as the massacre of Paris?

6. "Was he the trumpeter of persecution when he was persecuted himself?" Just as much as now. Cruel aspersions still! designed and calculated only to inflame. "Did he then abet persecution on the score of conscience?" No, nor now. Conscience is out of the question. "His Letter contains all the horrors invented by blind misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language." Is this gentleman in his senses? I hope not. Else I know not what excuse to make for him. Not one bitter word is in my Letter. I have learned to put away "all bitterness, with all malice." But still this is wide of the mark; which of those three points does it prove?

7. "In his Second Letter, he promises to put out the fire which he has already kindled in England." *Second Letter!* What is that? I know nothing of it. *The fire which he has kindled in England.* When? Where? I have kindled no fire in England, any more than in Jamaica. I have done, and will do, all that is in my power to put out that which others have kindled.

8. "He strikes out a creed of his own for Roman Catholics. This fictitious creed he forces upon them." My words are these: "Suppose every word of Pope Pius's Creed to be true." I say not a word more of the matter. Now, I appeal to every reasonable man, Is this striking out a creed of my own for Roman Catholics? Is this forcing a fictitious creed on them, "like the Frenchman and the blunderer in the comedy?" What have I to do with one or the other? Is not this dull jest quite out of season? And is the creed, composed by the Council of Trent, and the Bull of Pope Pius IV., a fictitious one? Before Mr. O'Leary asserts this again, let him look into the *Concilia Maxima* once more, and read there, *Bulla Pii Quarti super formâ Juramenti professionis fidei*.* This *forma professionis fidei* I call Pope Pius's Creed. If his "stomach revolts from it," who can help it?

9. Whether the account given by Philip Melancthon of the

* The Bull of Pius IV. concerning the form of the oath on the profession of faith.—EDIT.

words spoken (not in Hebrew, but in Latin) be true or false, it does not at all affect the account of Miss Duchesne, which I gave in her own words. And I cannot but observe, that, after all the witticisms which he has bestowed upon it, Mr. O'Leary does not deny that the Priest might have burnt her, "had it been for the good of the Church."

10. "Remark a Missionary inflaming the rabble, and propagating black slander." Remark a San Benito cap, painted with devils; but let him put it on, whom it fits. It does not fit me: I inflame no rabble: I propagate no slander at all. But Mr. O'Leary does. He propagates a heap of slander in these his Remarks. I say too, "Let the appeal be made to the public and their impartial reason." I have nothing to do with the "jargon or rubbish of the Schools," lugged in like "the jargon of the Schools" before. But I would be glad if Mr. O'Leary would tell us what these two pretty phrases mean.

The whole matter is this. I have, without the least bitterness, advanced three reasons why I conceive it is not safe to tolerate the Roman Catholics. But still, I would not have them persecuted: I wish them to enjoy the same liberty, civil and religious, which they enjoyed in England before the late Act was repealed. Meantime, I would not have a sword put into their hands; I would not give them liberty to hurt others. Mr. O'Leary, with much archness and pleasantry, has nibbled at one of these three reasons, leaving the other two untouched. If he chooses to attack them in his next, I will endeavour to give him a calm and serious answer.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

MANCHESTER, *March* 23, 1780.

LETTER II.

GENTLEMEN,

SOME time ago, in a Letter published at London, I observed, "Roman Catholics cannot give those whom they account heretics any sufficient security for their peaceable behaviour."

1. Because it has been publicly avowed in one of their

General Councils, and never publicly disclaimed, that faith is not to be kept with heretics; 2. Because they hold the doctrine of priestly absolution; and, 3. The doctrine of Papal pardons and dispensations.

Mr. O'Leary has published "Remarks" on this letter; nine parts in ten of which are quite wide of the mark. Not that they are wide of *his* mark, which is to introduce a plausible panegyric upon the Roman Catholics, mixed with keen invectives against the Protestants, whether true or false it matters not. All this is admirably well calculated to inspire the reader with aversion to these heretics, and to bring them back to the holy, harmless, much-injured Church of Rome. And I should not wonder, if these six papers should make six thousand converts to her.

Close arguing he does not attempt; but he vapours and skips to and fro, and rambles to all points of the compass, in a very lively and entertaining manner.

Whatever has the face of an argument in his First Letter I answered before. Those of the 14th, 16th, 18th, and 21st instant, I pass over at present: I have now only to do with what he advances in your Journal of March 12.

Here I read: "For Mr. Wesley's Second Letter, see the last page." I have seen it; but I can find no more of the Second Letter in the last page, than in the first. It would be strange if I did; for that Second Letter was never heard of, but in Mr. O'L.'s "Remarks." "But why then does he mention it over and over?" Truly, I cannot tell.

He begins: "Fanaticism"—Hold! There is no fanaticism in my Letter, but plain, sober reason. I "now expect" (they are his own words) "a serious answer to a serious charge."

My argument was: The Council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics: But it has never been openly disclaimed. Therefore those who receive this Council cannot be trusted by those whom they account heretics. This is my immediate conclusion. And if the premises be admitted, it will infallibly follow.

On this Mr. O'L. says, "A Council so often quoted challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with all possible precision and impartiality. At a time when the broachers of a new doctrine" (as new as the Bible) "were kindling the fire of sedition, and shaking the foundations of thrones and kingdoms,"—big words, but entirely void of

truth!—"was held the Council of Constance. To this was cited John Huss, famous for propagating errors, tending to—wrest the sceptre from the hands of Kings."—Equally true! "He was obnoxious to Church and State." To the Church of Rome; not to the State in any degree.

"Protestant and Catholic legislators enacted laws for burning heretics." How wisely are these jumbled together; and the Protestants placed first! But pray, what Protestant legislator made such laws, either before or after the Catholic ones? I know, one man, Servetus, was burned at Geneva; but I know not that there was any law for it. And I know, one woman, Joan Bocher, was burned in Smithfield, much against the mind of King Edward. But what is this to the numbers who were inhumanly butchered by Queen Mary; to say nothing of her savage husband? "But the same laws were executed by Queen Elizabeth and King James." How? Did either of these burn heretics? Queen Elizabeth put two Anabaptists to death; but what was this to the achievements of her sister?

He adds a well-devised apology for the Romish persecutions of the Protestants as necessarily resulting from the nature of things, and not from any wrong principles. And this he illustrates by the treatment formerly given to the Methodists, "whose love-feasts and watch-nights roused the vigilance of the Magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble." Indeed, they did not. Not only no Magistrate ever objected either to one or the other, but no mob, even in the most turbulent times, ever interrupted them.

But to the Council: "Huss strikes at the root of all temporal power and civil authority. He boldly asserts, that all Princes, Magistrates, &c., in the state of mortal sin, are deprived, *ipso facto*, of all power and jurisdiction. And by broaching these doctrines, he makes Bohemia a theatre of intestine war. See the Acts of the Council of Constance in L'Abbe's Collection of Councils."

I have seen them, and I can find nothing of all this therein. But more of this by and by.

"He gave notice that he would stand his trial; but he attempted to escape." No, never; this is pure invention. "He is arrested at Constance,"—whence he never attempted to escape,—"and confined. His friends plead his safe-conduct. The Council then declared, 'No safe-conduct granted by

the Emperor or any other Princes, to heretics, ought to hinder them from being punished as justice shall require. And the person who has promised them security shall not be obliged to keep his promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged."

And did the Council of Constance declare this? "Yes," says Mr. O'Leary. I desire no more. But, before I argue upon the point, permit me to give a little fuller account of the whole affair:—

The Council of Constance was called by the Emperor Sigismund and Pope John XXIII., in the year 1414. Before it began, the Emperor sent some Bohemian gentlemen to conduct John Huss to Constance, solemnly promising that he should "come and return freely, without fraud or interruption."

But before he left Prague, he waited on the Bishop of Nazareth, Papal Inquisitor for that city and diocese, who, in the presence of many witnesses, gave him the following testimonial:—

"We, Nicholas, do by these presents make known to all men, that we have often talked with that honourable man, Master John Huss, and in all his sayings, doings, and behaviour, have proved him to be a faithful man; finding no manner of evil, sinister, or erroneous doings in him, unto this present. PRAGUE, *August 30, 1414.*"

This was attested by the hand and seal of the public notary, named Michael Pruthatietz.

After this, Conrade, Archbishop of Prague, declared before all the Barons of Bohemia, that "he knew not that John Huss was culpable or faulty in any crime or offence whatever."

So neither the Inquisitor nor the Archbishop knew anything of "his making Bohemia a theatre of intestine war!"

In October he began his journey, accompanied by two noblemen, Wencelat de Duba, and John de Clum. On November 3d, he came to Constance, and was treated with great respect. But not long after, he was suddenly arrested and cast into a noisome prison. Here he quickly fell sick. During his sickness, his accusers exhibited twelve articles against him. But none of them charge him with sedition. They relate purely to the Church.

May 14, 1415. The Nobles of Bohemia complained to the Council, "When Master John Huss came to the Council, under the Emperor's safe-conduct, he was, in violation of the

public faith, imprisoned before he was heard." They add : " And he is now grievously tormented, both with fetters, and with hunger and thirst."

June 8. His accusers brought thirty-nine articles more, and afterward twenty-six others. But both the former and the latter relate wholly to the Church.

Seven more were brought next. The First of these is, " If the Pope, Bishop, or Prelate be in deadly sin, he is then no Pope, Bishop, or Prelate." But this he himself explains in the same tract whence it is taken. " Such, as touching their deserts, are not worthily Popes or Pastors before God ; yet, as touching their office, are Popes and Pastors."

After these, six more articles were exhibited ; but all relate to the Church, as do nineteen more that followed them. In fine, nineteen others were preferred by the Chancellor and University of Paris. One of these was, " No man being in deadly sin is a true Pope, Prelate, or Lord." This seems to be the same with the preceding charge ; only they have mended it by adding the word *Lord*. Another was, " Subjects ought publicly to reprove the vices of their rulers." It does not appear that ever he held this.

In the Seventeenth Session, the sentence and condemnation of John Huss was read and published. The Emperor then commanded the Duke of Bavaria to deliver him to the executioners ; for which glorious exploit he was thus addressed by the Bishop of Landy, in the name of the Council : " This most holy and goodly labour was reserved only for thee, O most noble Prince ! Upon thee only doth it lie, to whom the whole rule and ministration of justice is given. Wherefore thou hast established thy praise and renown ; even by the mouths of babes and sucklings thy praise shall be celebrated for evermore."

From this whole transaction we may observe, 1. That John Huss was guilty of no crime, either in word or action ; even his enemies, the Archbishop of Prague, and the Papal Inquisitor, being Judges.

2. That he never preached or wrote anything tending to sedition ; neither was there in fact any sedition, much less intestine war, in Bohemia, while he ministered there.

3. That his real fault, and his only one, was, opposing the Papal usurpations.

4. That this " most noble Prince" was a bigoted, cruel,

perfidious murderer; and that the Fathers of the Council deserve the same praise, seeing they urged him to embroil his hands in innocent blood, in violation of the public faith, and extolled him to the skies for so doing; and seeing they have laid it down as a maxim, that the most solemn promise made to an heretic may be broken.

But says Mr. O'Leary, "This regards the peculiar case of safe-conducts granted by Princes to heretics." If you mean, they took occasion from a particular case to establish a general rule, this is true; but what then? If the public faith with heretics may be violated in one instance, it may be in a thousand. "But can the rule be extended farther?" It may; it must; we cannot tell where to stop. Away then with your witticisms on so awful a subject! What! do you sport with human blood? I take burning men alive to be a very serious thing. I pray, spare your jests on the occasion.

But you have another plea: "Sigismund only promised to guard him from any violence in going to the Council." Why, this was just nothing. What man in his wits would have moved a step upon such a promise as this? "But this was all it was in his power to do." It was not. It was in his power to have told the Council, "My own honour, and yours, and that of the empire, are at stake. I will not upon any account suffer the public faith to be violated: I will not make myself infamous to all generations. My name shall not stink to all future ages. I will rather part with my empire, with my life." He could have taken John Huss out of their hands, and have sent him safe to his own country. He would have done it, had he been an honest man; had he had either honour or conscience. I ask Mr. O'Leary, Would not you have done it, had you been in Sigismund's place? If you say, "No," a Protestant ought not to trust you, any more than he would trust a wild bull.

I am afraid this is the case, for you strangely add: "It was nugatory in Sigismund to grant him a safe-conduct; for neither King nor Emperor could deprive the Bishops of their right of judging" (add, and of murdering) "heretics." It is plain, Sigismund thought he could, that he could screen Huss from all dangers; else he had been both a fool and a knave to promise it; especially by a public instrument, which pledged his own honour, and that of the whole empire, for his safety.

Now for flourish: "Thus the superannuated charge of violation of faith with heretics"—no more superannuated now, than it was while John Huss was in the flames—"vanishes away." No, nor ever will. It still stares us in the face; and will do so, till another General Council publicly and explicitly repeals that infamous determination of the Council of Constance, and declares the burning of John Huss to have been an open violation of all justice, mercy, and truth. But flourish on: "The foundation then of Mr. Wesley's aerial fabric being sapped,"—not at all,—"the superstructure falls of course, and his long train of false and unchristian assertions." What can this mean? I know of no "long train of assertions," whether true or false. I use three arguments, and no more, in proof of one conclusion.

"What more absurd, than to insist on a General Council's disclaiming a doctrine which they never taught!" They did teach it; and that not by the by, not incidentally; but they laid it down as a stated rule of action, dictated by the Holy Ghost. I quote chapter and verse: I say too, "See 'L'Abbe's Councils,' printed at Paris, in 1672." Yea, and they were not ashamed to publish this determination to all the Christian world! and to demonstrate their sincerity therein, by burning a man alive. And this Mr. O'Leary humorously compares to the roasting a piece of beef! With equal tenderness I suppose he would compare the "making the beards of heretics," (that is, thrusting a burning furze-bush in their face,) to the singeing a fowl before it was roasted.

"It is sufficient to disclaim it, when it is fixed upon us." Then disclaim it without delay; for it is fixed upon you, to all intents and purposes. Nay, and you fix it upon yourselves, in every new edition of the Councils; in all of which, this Council stands *in æternam rei memoriam*,* and this very determination, without the least touch of blame! It must therefore stand as an avowed doctrine of the Church of Rome, that "heretics ought to be condemned and executed, notwithstanding the most solemn assurances to the contrary:" In other words, that "the public faith, even that of Kings and Emperors, ought not to be kept with heretics."

What security then for my life can any man give me, till he utterly renounces the Council of Constance? What security can any Romanist give a Protestant, till this doctrine is pub-

* As a perpetual memorial of this matter.—EDIT.

liely abjured? If Mr. O'Leary has anything more to plead for this Council, I shall follow him step by step. But let him keep his word, and "give a serious answer to a serious charge." Drollery may come in when we are talking of roasting fowls; but not when we are talking of roasting men.

Would I then wish the Roman Catholics to be persecuted? I never said or hinted any such thing. I abhor the thought: It is foreign to all I have preached and wrote for these fifty years. But I would wish the Romanists in England (I had no others in view) to be treated still with the same lenity that they have been these sixty years; to be allowed both civil and religious liberty, but not permitted to undermine ours. I wish them to stand just as they did before the late Act was passed; not to be persecuted or hurt themselves; but gently restrained from hurting their neighbours.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

CHESTER,

JOHN WESLEY.

March 31, 1780.

A DISAVOWAL OF PERSECUTING PAPISTS.

I HAVE read a Tract lately sent me, and will now give my free thoughts upon the subject.

I set out early in life with an utter abhorrence of persecution in every form, and a full conviction that every man has a right to worship God according to his own conscience. Accordingly, more than fifty years ago, I preached on those words, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And I preached on the same text, in London, the 5th of last November. And this I extend to members of the Church of Rome, as well as to all other men.

I agree not only that many of these in former ages were good men, (as Thomas à Kempis, Francis Sales, and the Mar-