

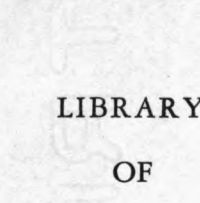
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Andrew B. Cross

PRIESTS' PRISONS
FOR WOMEN

RECAP

Annex



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PRIESTS' PRISONS FOR WOMEN,

OR

A CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION,

WHETHER UNMARRIED FOREIGN PRIESTS OUGHT TO BE PERMITTED TO ERECT
PRISONS, INTO WHICH, UNDER PRETENCE OF RELIGION, TO SEDUCE OR
ENTRAP, OR BY FORCE COMPEL YOUNG WOMEN TO ENTER, AND AFTER
THEY HAVE SECURED THEIR PROPERTY, KEEP THEM IN CONFINEMENT,
AND COMPEL THEM, AS THEIR SLAVES, TO SUBMIT
THEMSELVES TO THEIR WILL, UNDER THE PENALTY OF FLOGGING OR THE DUNGEON?

IN TWELVE LETTERS

TO

T. PARKIN SCOTT, Esq.,

MEMBER OF THE BALTIMORE BAR, AND VICE CONSUL OF THE POPE.

BY ANDREW B. ^{LOYD}CROSS.

—1859.

"Having no friends on whom I can rely, I throw myself on the public for protection."—Miss OLEVIA NEAL, when she escaped from the Convent in Baltimore, August, 1839.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE BALTIMORE CLIPPER.

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BALTIMORE:  
PRINTED BY SHERWOOD & CO.  
N. W. CORNER BALTIMORE AND GAY STREETS.  
1854.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

During the past year Mr. Scott presented himself as an advocate for the division of the School Funds, to sustain Roman Popish schools. He not only avowed the determination of the Papal party to nominate members of the City Council, who should be in favor of so doing; but declared privately his determination to take the stump on the question.

Having read his note in the Sun, I concluded to call his attention to those Prisons for women, which their priests were building, and before he had accomplished the work designed of breaking up our public schools, I thought it would be as well for him to give the weight of his influence, and his legal attainments to the breaking up of these Prisons. My reason for addressing him by name are given in my introductory letter to him.

I believe there is not a more iniquitous institution in the United States, than the Popish Convents, that they are the abode of licentiousness, deception, oppression and cruelty. That they are entirely anti-American, and ought to be broken up totally and for ever.

## LETTERS TO T. PARKIN SCOTT, ON THE CONVENT SYSTEM.

SIR: I address these letters to you, because—

1. I am personally acquainted with you.
2. You are an American citizen, which no priest can be without he renounces his allegiance to the Pope.
3. You are a married man, and perhaps a father, and have no personal interest to subservise in the perpetuating of the convent system.
4. You are a lawyer, and by the course of your study and practice of your profession, have become familiar with the rights, liberties, and privileges of an American citizen.
5. Your name has been more prominent than any of the priests of the city in regard to the public schools, and they seem to have chosen you as their organ.
6. Being a layman and an American, I can but hope that you will use the influence which you may have in your church to have the convent system abolished, so far as it regards this country.
7. You will not understand me as holding you responsible for this system, nor for the tyranny and corruption connected with it; but I should be satisfied to see you, or any responsible person that the Archbishop may select, show cause why in this country the whole system should not be suppressed and broken up.

Yours, respectfully,

Baltimore, Dec. 3, 1853.

ANDREW B. CROSS.

# LETTERS

ON THE

## PAPAL CONVENT SYSTEM.

### LETTER I.

In a communication from Georgetown, of November 13, published in the Baltimore Sun, I read an account of the imprisonment in the Georgetown convent of three young ladies. In the communication there occurs the following language, which I extract :

“I believe it is not generally understood, that ladies thus entering upon their novitiateship *have the privilege to withdraw therefrom at any period during a year.*”

I do not know upon what authority the writer makes his statement, that young ladies have this privilege during the first year. The inference is, that they have not this privilege after that year, and consequently, after the first year of novitiateship, in which they are voluntary prisoners, they become, in fact, *prisoners against their will*, prisoners without the privilege of withdrawal or escape.

If this correspondent is not mistaken, there has been good reason on the part of many young ladies, for the desperate efforts which they have had to make in getting out of the prison walls of the convents in which they have been confined, and instead of the harsh judgments which have so often been passed upon them, for their escaping, I really think they are deserving of the sympathy and compassion of every humane man or woman, whether Romanist or Protestant—and should be protected and defended by every lover of civil and religious liberty.

Can a jury be found in this community, that would retain in the keeping of a jailor, a colored boy or girl, where no evidence of their being slave could be produced? Certainly our city does not contain in it a jury who would give over into bondage to any man a boy or girl who give undeniable evidence of having been free born. If any man should succeed in enticing a boy or girl upon a steambot or to live in his house as a hired servant for one year, and should then silently ship him off into bondage, and on his way, or after reaching his destination, he should succeed in escaping, and by careful and diligent watchfulness should evade the eye of his guard, and make a successful escape to the place from which he was enticed, would any person think of blaming the poor fellow who was born free, for having made his escape? Not a man, or woman, or child, in the State of Maryland—and he does not deserve the character of a man who had not an emotion of pleasure on hearing of the successful escape.

Why then is it that a young woman who has been enticed, under influences pressed upon her mind from her very childhood, within the walls of a convent, and who during the first year may have had her path strewn with flowers, but after that year finds things so changed.

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that she cannot longer remain within those walls, and would as soon die as be compelled to remain there, and in her desperation risks her life to escape; why is it, I say, that such a young woman, fleeing for her life and her liberty, on reaching the society in which she had formerly lived, meets with so little sympathy from the community, and is followed by such bitter reproaches, and vindictiveness, by the members of her own communion? Why is she not entitled to the sympathy and kindness and protection which the laws would give to a free man or a boy of color?

Do you say she is? Then, I ask, why have they not found this aid kindly extended to them by the members of the communion to which they belong? Where is the case in which the members of the church have stood up for an individual against the priests who have charge of these convents, and after the first year will not suffer them to escape?

A case did occur in this city a few years since, in which a young woman who had been a nun in a convent of this city, escaped from her prison. The priest who had charge of that convent followed her, caught her, and compelled her to return. Who interfered? Who helped her? Had it been a colored boy or man there would have been many ready to help, and it would have been all right. The law would have followed up the man, and not only have compelled him to deliver up the man or boy, but would have punished him for depriving that colored man or boy of his liberty.

Before your present county court is a case where a man in supposed ignorance of the freedom of a colored woman whom he had inherited, sold her as a slave. What did the grand jury of Baltimore county, with its attorney, do? Did they wink at it? Certainly not. It is a serious matter to the party doing such a thing even in ignorance. If the facts clearly proved that he did such a thing knowingly, the consequence would be that he would find a home in our State Prison. But a priest may compel a young woman into perpetual slavery in a convent under his control, and no grand jury, no attorney for city or county looks into the matter.

This young lady, after being compelled to return, received the punishment which the prison required—that inflicted by severe masters upon runaway slaves—or which is sometimes inflicted in prison, confinement to the dungeon and flogged. She said that she actually suffered the usual punishment, which, according to the doctrine of the church, is *stripes and the dungeon*.

She escaped the second time. The priest as before pursued her, and would have compelled her to return again. Remember, her privilege to withdraw only lasted one year, and she had been in there a number of years. Why did he not succeed in his endeavor to compel her back? A few individuals withstood him. First, the man into whose house she was so successful as to find admittance, told the priest that he should not enter; that if he attempted it he was a dead man. This very decided stand cooled down the priest to consent to her remaining for the present.

It is now a number of years since this took place, but I have not heard of any member of the Catholic Church in this city taking any

steps to have the individual personal rights and liberties of that young woman protected. No grand jury has found a bill, nor attorney meddled with the matter. It seems to have been considered all right and proper for the priest to have acted thus. But if it be so, then is it the case that a young white woman, a native born citizen of Baltimore, who has been enticed into a convent, after one year becomes *bona fide* the property of the convent, or the priests, or the Church, and loses all her right to personal liberty, which is the fact under this convent system. Your daughter might be tempted to abide for a year in that which professes to be a boarding school, and then at the end of that year, the priest in charge of the convent school claims her as his or their property. There is not a free negro in the State of Maryland that has not better protection from slavery under our laws than the daughters of free white citizens have against the priests in charge of the convents.

The very fact that after one year the privilege of withdrawal is at an end, seals up the bondage of the individual, and the young lady becomes the slave, the victim of the priest. All rights and privileges cease. The soul of the individual is under the guidance, and the body under the control of men, who have gloried in tyranny, reveled in licentiousness, while they have boasted of extra holiness.

Whether these institutions are consistent with the rights of individuals within them; and whether the families of this country who glory in their liberty and protection to every interest, have not beside them an institution whose object is to *kidnap* their daughters, and *imprison* them as *free white slaves*, the property of the priests, are subjects which are of the greatest importance, and are worthy of a consideration and attention which they have not heretofore received.

The importance of this subject will apologize for my addressing you by name, and under my own signature.

Baltimore, Dec. 1, 1853.

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## LETTER II.

"About once a month, upon an average, a family in Saragossa was robbed of a daughter to recruit the seraglio of the holy Fathers of the Inquisition."—*Gavin's Narrative*.

"That is the most perfect and popular government," said Solon the Wise, "in which an injury done to any private citizen is an injury done to the whole body."

Upon this principle, about a year since, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania sent her Attorney General and an ex-Judge to aid in the defence of two colored girls who were taken from her soil and brought to this city. The court of Baltimore county patiently and carefully heard the testimony in the case, and the girls were given up. The State of Maryland acts thus when a slave has been carried off. The Congress of the United States have passed a stringent law to protect slaveholders in the possession of their property against those that would entice them away. When a man is convicted of enticing away slaves, the penalty is the penitentiary, in this State.

In Roman Catholic countries, the priests are so much above the law that their crimes pass unpunished, and the people suffer under their vengeance without daring to open their mouths. Indeed, parents vie with each other in the haste with which they strive to show their readiness to yield to the priests' desires.

A young woman, the daughter of a lawyer in Saragossa, visiting with her mother at the house of a friend, met the lady's confessor, to whom she was introduced. "He gave me," said she, "his hand, which I kissed with great respect and modesty; and when he went away he told me, 'My dear child, I shall remember you till the next time.' I did not know what he meant, being quite inexperienced, and only fifteen years old. Indeed, he did remember me; for that very night, when in bed, hearing a hard knocking at the door, the maid, who lay in the room with me, went to the window, and asking who was there, I heard the reply, 'The Holy Inquisition.' I could not forbear crying out: '*Father, father, I am ruined for ever!*' My dear father got up, and inquiring what the matter was, I answered him with tears, 'The Inquisition.' He, for fear that the maid would not open the door so quickly as such a case required, went himself to open the door, and like another Abraham, to offer his child to the fire; and, as I did not cease to cry out, *my dear father, all in tears, stopped my mouth to show his obedience to the holy office*, for he supposed I had committed some crime against religion. The officers took me into the coach, and without allowing me the satisfaction of embracing my father and mother, they carried me into the Inquisition."

After she had been there a short time one of her companions in prison told her:

"*We are strictly commanded to make all demonstrations of joy, and to be merry for three days, when a lady comes first here, as we did with you and you must do with others; but afterwards we live like prisoners, without seeing a single soul, but the six maids and Mary who is his house keeper.*"

Giving a further account of herself she says:

"I have been in this house six years. I have had one child. We have at present forty-two young ladies; and we lose every year six or eight; but where they are sent we do not know. We always get new ones in their places; I have seen here seventy three-ladies at once. Our continued torment is to think that when the holy fathers are tired of us they will put us to death." When M. Legal, the French Commander, had opened the doors of this prison, the wickedness of these inquisitors was exposed to the world. Four hundred prisoners got liberty that day; and among them sixty well dressed young women, who were found to be the private property of the three inquisitors, and of which they had robbed the families of the city and neighborhood."—*Gavin's Narrative*.

This systematic robbery of families was done with impunity, and where the priests have control, we can but expect to find them perpetrate the same outrages. But in this country it may be truly said, this thing cannot be done. Americans so jealous of their rights, and so resolute in defending their personal liberty, will not allow any such attempt to be made without the most determined resistance. Indeed the mere idea possessing the mind of any community in the United States, would not allow any such institution to stand. It was this idea of imprisoned helplessness possessing the minds of the people of Charleston, Mass., in regard to the convent at that place, that brought about its destruction. Our laws are to be upheld, and



violence in every shape forbidden. We are a free people, but we are a people of law. If there be not laws to protect *every citizen*, then let us have such laws. If there be institutions which hold principles, and perpetrate practices which are contrary to the rights of individuals, then let such institutions be abolished, no matter who are the founders, or who are their friends and protectors. This is not the country, and we are not the people who hold the doctrine, that the priests, and bishops, and Pope, are above law. Some silly judges, whose minds have been warped by the influence of priests of the Church of Rome, have been inclined to give decisions which would make them above the law, but such judges have run their day.

An institution with such priests, ought not to be allowed by any country where they are able to put them down. The kidnapping of young women cannot be allowed in this country when considered by the people. You, as a Roman Catholic, could not sit quiet were such a thing to take place in regard to one of your daughters. You could hardly put your hand in the mouth of your own daughter to suppress the sobs of her grief when seized by the holy fathers, as did Belabriga, a lawyer of Saragossa, and aid in hurrying her to the sacrifice. With all the instructions from the priest in regard to the excellence and holiness of the individual that will become entirely submissive to the priest, there will be found very few parents in the bosom of the Church in this country, who would willingly bring forth their daughters, and sacrifice them to the priests in the manner in which they have been compelled to do it in papal countries.

There is, nevertheless, the same spirit among the priests. They are trained in the same doctrines—they are men of the same passions. Many of them are from abroad, where they have grown up in all the tyranny and abomination of the system. The mere fact of a voyage across the ocean has not changed the nature of the men. The same authority which has cultivated the inquisition in papal countries, has planted and is cultivating the convent and orphan asylum to work hand in hand in this country.

Almost every year we have evidence of the fact that the convents of this country, and the orphan asylums, are becoming places in which young women are entrapped, and after a time imprisoned. It is true our families are not visited thus far in the manner and with the authority of the inquisition, but influences are using, and have been used to bring individuals into those institutions, where they have been detained in forced imprisonment until the parties have by law been compelled to give them up.\*

There is Mary Elizabeth Little, of this city, in 1835, sent by Dr. Deluol in company with a young woman from New York, to Emmittsburg, contrary to the will of her friends who had her in charge, and all of whom were opposed to it.†

There is again the case of Eliza Burns, of this city, who in 1837 was recovered through the influence of H. Davey Evans, E. L. Finlay and R. Moale, Esqs.‡

Then the case of Miss Neal, of a convent of this city. In her

\*See Letter 10. †b. ‡See Letters 3, 4, 11.

youth she had been brought under the rules of the convent, and twice did she attempt her escape. The second time she said she had no friends in whom she could confide, and was obliged to throw herself on the public for protection.

One case after another has occurred at Georgetown. Milly McPherson, at Bardstown, Kentucky—but the other day a young woman at Troy—and in August the case of Ann Fallen, at Providence.

Then again, Louisa Wortmann at St. Louis. She in her affidavit before the magistrate testifies, that under the pretext of procuring her a situation, they succeeded in getting her into the Convent of the Good Shepherd. When she began to cry for fear on finding where she was, one of the sisters came to her and asked her if she would not stay there, to which she replied in the negative, and ran toward the door to escape, but found it locked. The superior then came with the other sisters and told her that she had to stay, and dragged her up the stairway to a room. They brought a negro child to her to nurse, and gave her some sewing. She often attempted to escape, but was too closely watched. The windows of her room were painted, and the walls of the yard were so high she could not climb them. Here she was, and her mother and brother searching the town for her. For a long time the brother could not find out where she was. On applying for information at the Nunnery, they denied time after time that she was there, and when he knew of her being there and demanded her, the Superior said *she should not go out*, and they did not let her out until he had a writ of *habeas corpus* from Judge Colvin served on them.

I might fill half a dozen letters with statements in regard to the abduction, enticing, kidnapping, and keeping in the Convent, or removing to some other place, young women who have been in connection with these institutions. But the main point which I make in this letter is, that the same spirit which built and put in practice the prisons of the inquisition in Papal countries, and kidnapped their daughters, is building up a Convent system in this country, in which young women are enticed, until they have been persuaded to take the vows of the Convent, and that then they are deprived of their individual, personal liberty, and become the abject slaves of the priests.

Dr. Rice, of St. Louis, says on this subject :

"The vow by which they bind themselves makes them the slaves of the clergy." "In Kentucky they have been seen in the harvest field, putting up fence, driving the ox cart and the like, with a priest acting as overseer. And when the priest returned home it is their *privilege* to take his horse!"

"If you get her, you get her by force," was the answer of the President of a Catholic Orphan Asylum of this city, in 1839, to Mrs. O'Neal, when she demanded her daughter. And when the mother, with several female friends, went to rescue the child, "a person, in the appearance of a gentleman, attempted to take her from the arms of her mother." See Balt. Sun, July 1839, in which the above fact appears as an advertisement.

By deception, fraud and force, those who are in the charge of these convents have been endeavoring to obtain and then retain possession of daughters and sisters against their own will and that of their parents

and friends, and when any thing has been said upon the subject, some guilty priest will cry out persecution, and his followers will try and screen him by echoing the same cry for him.

This "stop thief" cry of the kidnappers of young free born white women is now being pretty well understood. Some of your own communion think, that if the doctrine of the forced celibacy of the bishops and priests was abolished, the convents would die out and the Orphan Asylums be greatly modified; and a very large portion of the people of these United States are thinking that it is time that these prisons of the priests should be opened and the oppressed be permitted to go free.

I confess publicly, to you and the Archbishop, that I am also one of that number.

Baltimore, Dec. 6, 1853.

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### LETTER III.

"Gentlemen, the man must be given up into some hands on shore, else I will take him. My cause is that of justice and I cannot fail. I have stated the time."—*Capt. Ingraham in harbor of Smyrna, July, 1853.*

Officers of the Austrian Government, arrested a man named Koszta, a Hungarian who had been in this country and declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States. Captain Ingraham, the commander of one of our vessels of war, being at that time in the harbor of Smyrna, hearing of the arrest, with that prompt and noble spirit which has characterized the commanders of our navy, in the above language is said to have demanded his release.

Does any American citizen condemn the course of Capt. Ingraham? The President of the United States did not, and in his message to the two houses of Congress, says he has examined the case, approved his course, and that the whole military and naval power of the United States is ready to defend him in what he did. Congress was not more than constituted when resolutions were introduced approving of his conduct. The people of the United States do approve it and will stand by him, the President and Congress, against Emperor and Pope.

The Popish press in many cases have expressed their disapprobation, and the Papal priests who are ever found opposing the liberty of the people, condemn his course.

Not long since a young lady of Great Britain was arrested and imprisoned under the Duke of Tuscany, that echo of the Pope and personification of the priesthood, for giving away a copy of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Did England remain quiet, and suffer the young lady to waste away in a Popish dungeon, as thousands have done under the Pope's power? Her Prime Minister spoke the mind of the people of England when he informed his Dukeship that England would expect her liberation without delay, the meaning of which was, that if diplomacy did not operate quickly and effectually, a little powder and ball would. How soon was it announced that Miss Cunningham was liberated.

The principle is settled in England and the United States, that the individual personal liberty of one of their citizens must be preserved in foreign countries. Their whole power stands pledged for that protection. This is an expression of the value put upon human life and liberty by enlightened nations. Is it too strong? Do they value life and liberty at too great a price?

*Is this protection in life and liberty not to be secured to our daughters and sisters, in the land where their fathers shed their blood to secure these blessings to them?* Is it to be the case that here foreign priests are to build prisons for our daughters, and then abduct or tempt or force them into them, and there keep them under lock and key or bolt and bar? Are they to erect houses in which to carry on a system of kidnapping, and when the parent of a child, or a brother or sister, shall come to inquire, deny that the woman or girl is there—or return answer that she does not wish to see them—or when they write to her, or she to them, suppress the letters, and thus cut off all communication until they have accomplished their purposes?

These prisons are built and controlled by authority of the Pope, are under men opposed to our institutions, men who are sworn to uphold, defend and promote the tyranny of Rome. Was this same Pope whose Nuncio (Bedini) was among us endeavoring to take away the liberties of the people of the Roman Church, and secure them to the Pope by breaking up their Boards of Trustees and making the Bishop the Pope's sole Trustee. Are the people of the Church of Rome in this country prepared for this?

The subject before us is the imprisonment of our daughters, whether by artifice, fraud or force—and the erecting and maintaining in our midst of prisons for that purpose. There is no difficulty as to the fact of imprisonment, and no doubt as to the existence of the prisons. Be the parties who they may, and be the institutions where they may in this country, the time is coming, when, in the language of Capt. Ingraham, the people of the United States will say: "*Gentlemen, the women must be given up, else we will take them; our cause is that of justice, we cannot fail.*"

The reason for saying this, is in the fact that the convents have contained, and we believe do now contain, young women who desire liberty, and who are kept in them contrary to their will. They never have committed any crime against the laws of the State, but are held in bondage in prison by men who are sworn servants and subjects of the Pope, and who never can be honest citizens of this country. If the people of this country are not in the discharge of their duty as citizens, in bringing to an end this imprisoning of women by the priests, certainly Capt. Ingraham was not in his determination to take Kozsta from Austrian authority.

Kozsta was only *intending* to be a citizen. These women are our sisters and daughters, are American born citizens, and their captors are not the agents in Turkey of the Emperor of Austria, but the agents of the Pope of Rome, on American soil.

It does not matter how they take them, or where they take them. It is the simple and naked fact, that they have the prisons, and having gotten them there, they keep them in prison as slaves, against their

will and that of their parents and friends—to serve those Foreign Priests.

One of the glorious provisions extorted from King John, and embodied in the *magna charta* of English and American liberty, was “that no freeman shall be imprisoned but by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.” Tell me then by what authority Miss Olevia Neal was kept in prison in the convent in Aisquith street? Whether she went there of her own will at first, we do not undertake to say. But she did escape from the prison. It matters not from what cause, but she escaped because she did not want to remain there. Had she not a perfect right to escape?

But Miss Neal was imprisoned the second time, not of her own accord, not willingly, not by temptation, but BY FORCE. The priest in charge of that convent caught her in the street and absolutely compelled her against her will and by force into that prison, and there she was punished for her endeavor to escape.

To this point I would call your legal ability, I would like you to show the Priests’ authority TO FORCE A FREE WOMAN, a Native born American citizen, into the prison of a Foreign Priest. I know your church teaches that the Pope’s authority is above our laws. But shall our laws protect, or can our laws protect our sisters and daughters from being forced into prison by Roman Catholic Priests? And when forced in, if so successful as to escape, shall the priest have the audacity to come and force them back, and then flog them and put them in the dungeon because they tried to be free?

Miss Neal after being forced into this priest’s prison for women, the second time, and being punished for wanting to be free, attempted a second escape. The fact must then be beyond question that she did not love the prison and did not want to stay there. Probably she had been raised a Roman Catholic—was such in the prison, but did that give the priest authority to drive her into prison? Had she not as much right to her liberty as any Protestant?

You certainly knew of her escape. Nearly every leading Catholic of the city knew of her escape. Did you? did any member of the Roman Catholic communion in the city come forward to protect this woman, one of their sisters, from being again imprisoned and flogged by the priest? Had you shown as much zeal on her behalf as you have shown in other matters, you might be able to answer that question which has so often been put to the priests: Where is Olevia Neal? Let me renew the question: *Where is Olevia Neal?* Is she in the Aisquith street prison, or the Parke street prison, or Emmetsburg, or Georgetown, or has she been hurried off to Canada? Rest assured of it, the question will meet you time and again. Before we give you the school fund, we will ask you to give liberty to the young women in bondage, and will call upon you as a Church to bring back Olevia Neal; we will ask for the opening the prison doors to them that are bound. Our State has abolished imprisonment of men for debt. Ere long we shall ask them to abolish the imprisonment of women who are not in debt to the priests. The imprisonment for debt or for crime was under authority of law and had an end; but the imprisonment of young women by the priests, is contrary to right and law,

and has no end but death. "*Our continual torment,*" said the daughter of Belabriga, "*is to think that when the Holy Fathers are tired of us, they will put us to death.*" We never hear of any young women from the prisons of the priests, discharged because their time was out, but on all sides we hear of their endeavors to escape, and the efforts of the priests to put them in again.

If the Episcopal preachers, or Methodist, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, or any Protestant denomination, should erect prisons for men and women, and there keep them against their will, or in any case force an individual into such a prison, I would go forth myself and say to the parties: If you don't open this prison I will apply to the civil power. If we have not a law to break it up, I would apply to the legislators to pass such a law; and if they would not pass such a law, I would call upon the community not only to frown upon the denomination keeping such prison, but, if a case of imprisonment occurred, I would urge the community, as a duty, to enter the prison, break every bar, open every cell, and bid the inmates go free. Would you not say I was doing that which was right? What, then, is there in a prison kept by your priests to save it from the same treatment? Being a law-loving and law-abiding people, we ask for the opening of your prisons by law. I believe that laws with us are strong enough to accomplish this result. I have great faith in a free people. All that our people want upon this subject is to be acquainted with the fact of the prisons and the nature of the imprisonment, and they will put men in office who will make laws that will burst every bar, bolt, lock, chain, fetter, in house or dungeon, which may retain an American woman. The priests must either give them up, or the law officers will take them. *This is the cause of Justice, and it cannot fail.*

There cannot be a stronger argument in favor of the toleration and forbearance of this Protestant nation, than is exhibited in their not razing to the foundation every convent on this soil. There is not, on the other hand, a stronger evidence of the arrogance, tyranny, iniquity and oppression of Rome, than her daring to erect these prisons of the priests in this country. The fact of forbearance is not to be presumed upon as a right. Possession is a strong point in the law, but you know that it does not convey a right. It is not by right, but by sufferance that these prisons exist. While you are demanding of us that we change our system to accommodate the Pope and priests, it is but proper that we should remind you that it is time that these prisons were abolished.

Baltimore, Dec. 16, 1853.

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#### LETTER IV.

"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?"  
*Paul the Apostle.*

#### WHERE IS OLEVIA NEAL?

If any Roman magistrate chastised or condemned a freeman of Rome without hearing him speak for himself, and deliberating upon the whole of his case, he was liable to the judgment of the people, who

were exceedingly jealous of their liberties. Cicero says, "according to their laws it is a crime to bind a Roman citizen, but an unpardonable one to, beat him." Knowing these laws, and the strict account that the Roman people required their officers to give for their conduct, Paul asked the above question. A centurion who stood by hearing Paul, ventured into the presence of the chief captain and said to him: "Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman," Paul informed him that he was also a *free-born Roman*.

Ovid tells us that Jupiter having metamorphosed himself into the form and shape of a beautiful snow-white bull, feigning great gentleness and affection for Europa, the daughter of Agenor, King of the Phenicians, succeeded in carrying her away. Addison, translating Ovid, says:

When now Agenor had his daughter lost,  
He sent his son to search on every coast;  
And sternly bade him to his arms restore  
The darling maid, or see his face no more.

Such was the regard for the life of his daughter, that he commanded his son Cadmus to enter upon a most vigorous search, and pronounced the curse of banishment upon him if he did not succeed in finding out and restoring his sister. Thus teaches the heathen mythology, and thus dearly did they value human life and liberty in Pagan Rome. What a shield had Paul or any man in the days of Pagan Rome, who could exclaim—"I am a Roman citizen!"

Who would venture to imprison and scourge a Roman citizen without charge of crime, or without an investigation into his case, and without hearing him answer for himself, and without the testimony being sufficient for the condemnation?

What court in the United States would pass sentence upon the meanest, lowest, most vile and guilty criminal without trial, and without charges against him? Long as you have practiced at the bar, I venture to say you have never known the case of an individual, however notorious his wickedness, however desirous the community may have been to see him convicted, that any Judge or Jury would pronounce guilty, and imprison or punish without the case being fairly and fully made out, and that after the individual accused had benefit of counsel. Is it not the case, that if a criminal is not capable of defending himself, or is not able to employ counsel, that the court appoints some one for his defence?

Why do the courts act thus? Simply that wrong may not be inflicted upon an individual—that his life or liberty may not be taken away without good and lawful cause. The law goes upon the principle that it is better for an hundred guilty ones to escape, than one innocent person suffer unjustly.

Shall Pagan Rome, the Mythology of the heathen, set up a higher standard for the value of life and liberty than the laws of this country, which are made at the will of the people? That father who would send his son into banishment if he did not find his daughter, did not exhibit stronger feeling of affection and grief of heart at the loss of his daughter, than do parents in this country. In papal countries, and I am sorry to say there seem to be cases in this country, where

Roman Catholic parents appear willing to sacrifice the character, peace and comfort of their daughters, to protect and defend the priests who have been charged with their ruin. In such cases the dread of the anger of the priest must be very great, or the regard for the welfare of the daughter must be very little, but in most instances parents will leave no stone unturned to protect their children. There is a feeling of humanity in breasts that have not become unnatural, that will aid in the rescue.

We have a very remarkable case in our own day, in which the affection of a wife, the sympathy of individuals and even of nations has been drawn out in an unexampled manner. Every accessible place has been searched in those cold and frozen regions where the foot of man had never before trodden. The pulse of the civilized world really beat faster or slower as tidings came from the various expeditions. The most trivial incident reported by any passing voyager which only alluded to the case, when published, was read with breathless silence until it was known whether it gave any ground for hoping that Sir John Franklin yet lives. This is the real sympathy of human nature for a man of whom not one half of the civilized world knew any thing until they read that it was feared that he was imbedded in ice. Was there too much feeling? Would not that broken-hearted wife consider every thing she had spent, every exertion she had made, well spent, to learn that he and his companions were yet alive, or even to know when, where, and how they died? Would the expensive and perilous expeditions which have gone on be considered money and labor lost if they were only successful in unbosoming him and his companions from the ice-bound prison in which they may be?

If satisfactory intelligence should reach England or America that one of Franklin's band was alive, how soon would hundreds of men in England and the United States, hasten to save him? Men do not value money and labor where human life and liberty is concerned. If one of our citizens were seized on the wharf and hurried on board a Spanish vessel and taken to Cuba, what indignation would be excited in all our borders? A demand would be instantly made, and if that citizen were not given up, an army of one hundred thousand men, and vessels equipped for the rescue would be in readiness in forty-eight hours.

Let there be a fire in any part of our city, and it be rumored that in the burning house was a sleeping child, or woman, or man, how soon will there be found men who will encounter the destructive element and peril their own lives in the hope of delivering another from death.

Our courts from time to time have interposed and protected bound children from those guardians who have not treated them with the kindness and care which the courts judged was required of them; and our courts have been called on time and again to require Papal institutions to give up children whom they were endeavoring to keep under their control.

Some years back it was published in this city, "that a man who was at work upon a house adjoining the convent in Aisquith street, heard a noise which appeared like the lashing of a whip or cowskin. and on turning round he saw a man dressed in black flogging a woman with what he supposed was a cowskin."



This woman could not say as Paul, I am a Roman citizen, or "is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?"

Might she not say, it is true I am an American citizen, I was free-born, but I am only a woman, and I am the servant, slave, *the dog*, of a priest who is not an American?

Miss Neal was an American citizen. She received the usual punishment, *flogging and imprisonment*. Who condemned her? By what law was she imprisoned? By what law in the State of Maryland was she scourged? Miss Neal was imprisoned the second time, no court investigated it—and has not until this hour. Why not? Was she only a woman, the daughter of an American citizen?

We hold in this country the doctrine, that no priest of Rome or any one else has a right to imprison and flog a woman, and that the life and personal liberty of any young woman is a matter of such importance that the officers of the law ought to inquire into it, and if they have not done it, that it is incumbent on every citizen to use his influence to have such an investigation.

Europa was no more to her father Agenor than is the daughter or sister of any American to him. The Life of Sir John Franklin could not be dearer to his wife than is the daughter or sister imprisoned out of sight, and away from the home of her parents, to the father that begat her or the mother that bare her.

"Search—search!" was the watchword to Cadmus. "Search—search!" has been that of those seeking for Franklin, and "search—search!" is the language of the American people, in regard to the prisons which foreign priests have built for women in this country.

If it were known that Sir John Franklin was imprisoned by priests, who wished to keep back his discoveries, what power on the earth would be able to keep their prison without a search? We know that females are in these prisons, why should they not be searched? Is there any other such institution not searched?

Before the eyes of the people is built a prison for women. Into it a poor helpless female, whose friends, willingly or unwillingly, have given her up, is forced by a priest. She pleads for protection—she is rescued, placed at the hospital, afterwards given up to her relatives, but further report saith not. We only hear the inquiry, WHERE IS OLEVIA NEAL? and echo answers *where?*

As you are the Vice Consul for the Pope, and are doubtless in the confidence of his Holiness and the Priests of the State, and can get the information which is desired by many, will you please give to the public some information as to the whereabouts of Miss Olevia Neal? Where has she been since she was removed from the hospital?

When it is known that she was put in the prison against her will, and when it is known that she again escaped, and having been put in the hospital was removed by those who were on friendly terms with the priest, and when it is known that at her second escape she threw herself upon the public for protection, because she had no friend on whom she could rely to keep her from the priest and the prison, it does seem that as a community we have been guilty of an inhumanity towards her which we cannot too soon redress.

We owe it to ourselves as American citizens to inquire into this

case, and you owe it to your communion and to the community in which you reside, to answer satisfactorily to the question, WHERE IS OLEVIA NEAL, the nun who twice escaped from the convent in Aisquith street? Why shall women be scourged and imprisoned when they have never been accused, tried or convicted?

BALTIMORE, Dec. 23, 1853.

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## LETTER V.

“Suppose one Nun in ten thousand wished vehemently for that liberty, which by a few words in one moment she had forfeited, what law of God has entitled the Roman Church thus to expose even one human creature to dark despair in this life, and a darker prospect in the next?”—*J. B. White.*

A few days since I said to a gentleman, a member of the Baltimore bar, with whom we are both personally acquainted, what would you do in case the priests should entrap and imprison your daughter in one of these nunneries or prisons for women? “Nothing but loss of life should keep me from going in and taking her.”

Cases are continually occurring in which some father or mother is losing a daughter, to be shut up in these prisons, and unless arrested by a writ of *habeas corpus*, and the power of the civil law, that daughter, to the grief and anguish of parents, becomes the slave of the priests who keep the prisons.

The plea which is in the mouth of every Romanist that they go there *voluntarily* is the most shallow of arguments to cover up this wickedness. Take an innocent, unsuspecting girl of 12 to 16 years of age, who is trying to perform whatever advice she receives from the priest who is her father confessor. As she regularly visits him, he impresses on her mind the purity and holiness of a single life, secluded from the world. He praises the nuns as the holiest of women—as angels on earth—teaches her that it is the surest way to get to heaven, and indeed to some that it is the only way which affords them any opportunity of being saved. He works upon their imagination, upon their hopes and fears. An impression is produced on the minds of such that a convent must be the door to the kingdom of heaven—a sort of paradise on earth, where care and trouble and sin cannot enter. What is the effect? Before they are 16 or 18 the desire is kindled up within them to enter a convent. The same anxiety and longing desires are there that are exhibited by young women towards the man who has won their affections. They wait almost with impatience the day which has been fixed for consummating a relation in which they look for nothing but joy and comfort.

Are these impressions which the priest has cultivated likely to turn out according to the expectation? If they do not, is the young girl or inexperienced young woman to be bound to stay, where, instead of finding it a place for saints, and for the cultivation of holiness and purity, she finds it to be the abode of tyranny, and oppression?

Will you say that because through deception a man has passed upon an ignorant person counterfeit money, the individual imposed upon is bound to keep the counterfeit, and that the individual making and

passing it is to be held harmless, that the man who lays a snare for his neighbor and catches him therein, is entitled to every thing which he can plunder from him? Upon this principle the highwayman is innocent, and the individual whose life he threatens, and succeeds in robbing of his watch and purse, is the guilty one.

It is one of the most remarkable things which have ever come under my observation, that a young girl or woman who has been deceived into these *women traps*, and there held by the priest, on escaping should be regarded as an outcast, and guilty of a crime or misdemeanor.

Let a young woman but come out of a convent who has belonged to a strict Roman Catholic family, no matter what the cause be for her escape, she instantly loses caste. Her early associates will upbraid her, her own parents will cast her off, and the papal community in which she lives will avoid her as if infected with leprosy. In papal countries she will scarcely be able to get food to keep her from starvation, if they do not rally around her and drive her back to her prison, and penance, and punishment.

Why is this? Is it not very plain that the instructions of the priests to their people are of such a kind that they train them to believe that if a nun escapes, no matter for what cause, she is disobedient to the priest and will certainly be damned, and though it may appear cruel to treat her so harshly, yet in the end if they succeed in compelling her to go back to the convent, the cruelty to the escaped nun will be considered meritorious for their and her salvation.

To make ample provision for retaining them in these prisons, the priests teach that there is no sin which can be committed while in the convent that will bear comparison with that of leaving off the convent life and being married. Having gotten the idea in the minds of their people of this dreadful sin of escaping from the convent, the people never pretend to inquire for what cause, or under what circumstances the individual has escaped.

Now I will admit that one half, two thirds, nay, that all of the nuns enter willingly, but ignorant really of what is before them. Tell me of what immorality or crime they are guilty when on finding the convent not to be what they supposed and were taught it was, they desire to leave, and on finding themselves imprisoned they venture upon an escape.

I know that your priests, and the people, echoing their continued teaching upon the subject, say *they enter willingly*. So the man takes the counterfeit coin willingly, but it is in ignorance. So the traveler at night as he passes along congratulates himself that he has company, but he does not know that it is one of a band of robbers who has thrown himself in his way to entice, entangle, betray and rob him.—When in the dark, and when the traveler feels the hand of the robber and murderer pressing to his breast, shall he not cry out? shall he not endeavor to escape, because he had willingly rode along with him during the afternoon and evening?

I cannot persuade myself that you would condemn the man for escaping. But suppose when he had escaped from this one he should find that the whole band were lying in wait, and ready to compel him to go back to the place where the first one attempted to rob and mur-

der him. Would you condemn him because he was not able to resist them? Would he become the guilty party? must he really stay there and no body venture to take his part, simply because in ignorance of his company he rode along willingly a few miles with him? Would you, acting as counsel for the band, come into court and make this as a plea? or would you go further, and say it was a rule of this band that when any man rode along with any of them willingly for a few miles, they therefore claimed a right to his person and property, and the court had no business to interfere, and the people have no business to aid in helping the man to escape? He becomes a doomed man. His life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness are all forfeited—there he must stay. Would you plead thus? Would any lawyer plead thus?

Let us change the application. Suppose a young woman quietly, gently, pleasantly, with all the arts and address of a deceiver, practiced upon her, has been led into a convent. After a time she finds the outer gate closed, then the restrictions enforced requiring her to abide in a certain portion of the house or the yard, then narrowed down to a certain room, then her diet reduced, then penances inflicted, then shut up where none even of her companions in tribulation can speak to her, where her food is placed in a cylinder and turned round to her that she may take it without seeing a human being. No visiter speaks to her, no parent, no friend—none but the priest and the lady superior, who rigidly carries out his instructions. Around her thick walls, barred windows, bolted doors, the priest the keeper of the key of that prison, and only by whose permission can she go out.

But this poor imprisoned female, unwilling to be utterly annihilated in soul and body, hesitates to do some command. She is seized—she is punished. Is it improper—is it criminal in her to cry out, when no other help can come to her? "HELP! HELP! OH LORD, HELP!" A passer by, hearing such a cry, could but infer that a poor, defenceless, imprisoned woman wanted help. She would not want help against the people out of doors, for bars, bolts and thick walls were between them. She would most probably be wanting help against the priest who had control of her in the convent. Now, would there be any crime in her wanting help, and crying for help?

Well, sir, you cannot be ignorant of the fact, that the voice of a woman was heard in the same convent from which OLEVIA NEAL twice escaped.

It was thus published at the time :

"Our attention was suddenly arrested by a loud scream issuing from the upper story of the convent. The sound was that of a female voice indicating great distress; we stopped and heard a second scream, and then a third, in quick succession, accompanied with the cry of Help! help! oh Lord, help! with the appearance of great effort "

This statement was certified to by six respectable citizens. Has any answer or explanation been given of it up to this time?

Who the individual was I know not? It is in vain that the law is called upon to interfere. Who is there that can tell the person? It may be that some oppressed broken-hearted young woman who would rather die than remain in the shame and bondage in which she finds herself, is there pleading for help. None can tell her name out of the

prison. What friend could interfere? Hence the necessity that the people say there shall not be such prisons in our midst.

Will the law protect a band of robbers who have their den well defended, and not listen to the cry of a man who has fallen into their hands, because they do not know who he is? Must we, as citizens, keep our mouths closed, or if we say we have heard of cries for help, must we be accused of doing evil because we call on the officers of the law to look into the matter?

It has been your position for many years to defend the institutions of the Papal church, when they have had a case before the courts, and according to the report of one of the daily papers, you are the counsel of an Asylum now resisting an application of *habeas corpus* in regard to a child. I wish to ask of you if there ought not to be some explanation given of the terrific scream for help to which I allude? Ought it not to be satisfactorily accounted for? Ought not that woman to be permitted to come out and give a fair statement of what evil was befalling her? If the priests will not do it, as they have not done after long time and repeated calls to do so, it certainly cannot be out of place for the people of Maryland to inquire into it. If they will not explain, then I say let us investigate.

I have always believed that violence was committed on the person of one of these nuns. Can you show us to the contrary? Was it the seizing of a young woman to put her in the dungeon? Was it the cowering of one refractory? The cry was terrible, the very agony of desperation.

Heretofore the action of the priests has been with impunity. They have held in absolute bondage those who have been enticed into their prisons. They have produced the impression that it is a sacrilege even to inquire into the condition of a Nunnery. Added to the judgments which they look for upon any person saying aught against them, they have been wont to vent their rage in threats of bodily damage. That day, however, they have brought to a close. They won't kill us, but if we say don't imprison our daughters, don't cowhide them in prison, don't wear out their lives in slow tortures—don't bring them to a violent death, they cry out, this is persecution! Poor, dear, harmless, innocent priests. Just as if a man interfering to save a lamb from the jaws of a wolf, would say don't tear its skin, don't drink its blood, don't take its life, the poor, dear, harmless, innocent wolf, might cry out—persecution! persecution!

If there be in any Convent in the United States *one* young woman, who feels that she is in bondage, and desires to escape, no matter what be her reason—I say let her escape. And if any young woman finds the Convent to be a prison from which she desires deliverance, there is no law of God or man except in the Church of Rome, that does not say, open the prison doors and let her out. Let no woman have to scream for help, and it be said that there was no help for her. No help for a young American woman!! Don't believe it. Help will come. The Sons of America will rise to protect the daughters of America from the bondage and imprisonment of foreign priests. Our fathers bore long with the oppression of the mother country, and it is the case with mankind that they bear long under evils before they redress them.

But our fathers ceased bearing, called on their fellow-countrymen to think and then to act. They went to work and left as they thought, freedom and protection to life and liberty, for their children. Rome had not then built her prisons for women among us. Will not their sons say the prisons for women are inconsistent with our free and glorious institutions, and that there is no place for them among us? If God and our country say our daughters shall be free, what priest, bishop or pope, shall imprison one of them?

Baltimore, Jan. 3, 1854.

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## LETTER VI.

“Do not fail to encourage her in her desire to become a Nun; she is a precious subject; her name, her beauty, her musical talent, her knowledge, her family, and her dowry, all are a good fortune to our house. Werè she to leave us, all these would be lost. Go, and, holy priest as you are, warm her zeal.”

This was the counsel given to a young priest who had been honored by the permission of the Bishop, and requested by a novice, to hear her confession. She had been in the convent for some time. In two months she was to take her vows. Her mind was troubled at the prospect. The jealous eyes of her regular confessor had watched her. He saw her unhappiness. He endeavored to persuade her that it would all vanish, and she would be filled with joy when she had taken her vows; that her state of coldness and indifference to a convent life was a trial from God, which would cease as soon as she became a nun.

To secure so desirable a young lady was a great matter; just as men choose a good horse, or slave dealers desire a likely man or woman, so these men, who deal in the “bodies and souls of men,” (*Rev.* 18: 13,) looked upon her as a likely young woman—a very desirable object for a bishop or priest in a convent. The rules could easily be laid aside to secure her. A young priest, who had not yet been learned in the iniquities of the confessional and the convent, happened to perform mass in her convent. On hearing him, she desired to speak to him. The privilege could not be denied, as it was in her novitiateship, and until that was ended—just as during the time of bargaining for a horse or slave, until the bargain is sealed the purchaser cannot claim right and exercise control. So the father confessor had to yield; but, in yielding, he gives the young priest the advice at the head of this letter: “DON’T FAIL TO ENCOURAGE HER TO BECOME A NUN; SHE IS A PRECIOUS SUBJECT.”

The young woman did not wish to confess, she only asked in confidence his advice as to her remaining. Her confessor reiterated to her but one thing—and that was, “that she must be a nun.” After stating her case to this young priest, he told her that such a life did not suit her, and that in it she would be miserable. It relieved her mind to find one who agreed with her. “I have said this to myself,” said she, “a thousand times; but I feared it was a crime. My confessor told me so, and directed me to drive all such ideas from my

mind ; because, he said, my calling to a religious life was certain. I ought to forget the world and my family, and be entirely devoted to God."

" Suddenly she fell into her former sadness. Her cheeks which were just now blooming, took again their usual paleness—the fruit of the corporal penances of the convent and mental thralldom. How shall I manage, said she, to leave this house ? There is the difficulty."

" The poor girl was right. Such are the prejudices, that when a young girl enters a convent only in order to try her calling, it is almost impossible for her to return again to the world with a good reputation. The Superior says to those who are desirous of entering convents, that if they are not satisfied after some months' residence, they can return again to their families. But not so ; many of them indeed conceive a horrible disgust for the cloister after some time. But how can they go back to the world to be called runaway nuns, apostates, to be laughed at and marked ? They like better to drown in silence their sorrows, to remain alive in their grave, than to be the sport and jest of their fellow creatures. France is filled with these houses, these abodes of unfortunate girls whom imagination or seduction brings there, and whom prejudices ever after condemn to an eternal prison."

" A few months previous to this another young novice, unable any longer to bear the awful life of the same cloister, and finding nobody to whom she could trust herself, leaped over, in her despair, the walls of the enclosure, and made her escape. The Holy Superior and the most Holy Bishop, published that she was mad. It was an infamous falsehood ; but their design in saying so was to diminish the scandal arising from her probable revelations.

" The young priest enjoined upon her carefully to keep secret from the confessor what advice he had given, and called on the physician of the convent to obtain his service in liberating her. He was the only person that could effect it. On his next visit to the convent, the physician carefully examining her, said it would not do for her to remain in the convent, as she was far gone in consumption, and, as she was not under her vows, advised her instant removal to her family. It was a great disappointment, but she was sent to her family for some months. In this way she succeeded in escaping before her vows were taken. She was afterwards married to a young man whom she had been engaged to, but to hinder which her mother had united with the priest in breaking it off, by getting her into the convent."

(See the confessions of a French Catholic Priest, edited by Morse, with a warning to the American people against the modern crusade of Rome on our liberties.)

A handsome, intelligent, rich young woman of excellent family, with an estate attached to her, is a precious subject for an unmarried bishop and priest, when she is secured within the walls of a convent, and her estate made over to them. They can revel in the inheritance which has been plundered and secured to them, and they can when the vows are complete, make her the slave of their desires.

" *Don't fail to encourage her in her desires to become a nun ! Don't fail. A desperate effort must be made to secure her. She is a prize. "She will be a fortune to our house."* "*Were she to leave us, all these would be lost.*" "*Go, holy priest, warm her zeal.*" Stir her up with holy desires to become a nun. She will not suspect you. Give her counsel, and let your advice be to abide with us. Tell her how holy, how pure, how heavenly is the life of a nun.

*Her beauty.* Who would suppose that a long-faced sanctimonious priest, bound to celibacy, should talk of the beauty of a young novice ? Perhaps he forgot the advice of the bishop to a priest who had a young maid in his house ; "take care of scandal, and remember that a woman drove Adam out of Paradise."

“Her musical talent and knowledge.” The better trained and the more skilful the more desirable. When it is remembered that the nuns are worked up to their ability and often above it in school, teaching music, embroidery work, &c., for which they get nothing, they pay all going to the convent, it is no small prize. Men are willing to pay a good price for a servant who is a good cook or house servant, or a man servant who is a good wagoner or carriage driver; or farm hand, they command a good price and ready sale. In our city and all slave States there are regular advertisements, “highest prices in cash given for negroes with good titles, slaves for life or a term of years.” Here is a fair offer to pay, and pay the highest prices for slaves. These slave dealers have not gotten up to the priests of the Church of Rome, who teach and train the children from the time that they are able to get the idea into their heads, that it is the most holy thing they can do to give themselves up to the priests in soul and body. “Blessed is the family which furnishes either a priest or a nun,” is a maxim in the church.

This father confessor, following out the spirit of others, strives to secure one who can serve them well without wages, and one who can bring a dowry to the convent. This is procuring slaves with good titles for life, and a dowry with them.

Suppose there was a band of men scattered over this Southern country, with private jails, who were constituted a society working to each other's hands, and in every place, by deception enticing away slaves from their lawful masters, and after enticing them within their houses, should imprison them—change their names—as far as possible alter their appearance—and whenever any suspicion should rest upon them in one place, they should be found hurrying them off to distant places where their owners or masters could not find them. Such a gang of robbers or kidnappers would not only have a reward offered by the owners, but every Southern State would offer a reward, and laws would be passed that would scarcely exempt any of the gang from the gallows. But in our midst we have a class of men, required to be unmarried by the law of the system under which they act. They have their secret institutions, their secret rules, their carefully arranged plans, and their selected agents to carry them out. They set their eyes upon a young woman—perhaps at confession—they advise her for her salvation to become a nun, which means, a priest's slave in soul and body. They work up, to the securing of that young woman by all manner of means, all the priestly influences that can be brought to bear, all the matronly influence of the women of the church, until she is secured. She is young, she is beautiful, she has a dowry. Don't fail to encourage her, all these will be a good fortune for the priests. Perhaps she is the daughter of a Protestant. A different course must be adopted. We must reach her in a school, or through some of her young friends. We will educate her in all the accomplishments of our school or convent without cost to the parents. Oh, how generous the priests are! Teach our daughters without cost; “and perhaps finish,” as said Bishop Flaget, “by converting them;” that is by securing some of them as slaves.

Look into “Miss Reed's Six Months in a Convent,” and you will find that these priests have a standing arrangement from convent to



convent, and when any suspicion arises in one convent, a coach with swift horses is in readiness to remove the nun to another place where there will be no suspicion. Go to the convent and inquire for a nun supposed to be there and supposed to be dissatisfied: she is not there, she is at Emmitsburg, at Bardstown, in New Orleans, at Charleston, or in Canada.

This is a band scattered over the land to kidnap, to make slaves for life of the daughters and sisters of American citizens, and that band is mostly composed of foreign priests, and bishops, and all their arrangements under the head and guidance of that Pope who sent Bedini, *the man skinner*, as his Nuncio to this country.

The atrocity connected with this kidnapping that surpasses the pirate and the slave trade on the coast of Africa, is, that it is all done, planned, prosecuted, completed, and our daughters shut up in perpetual slavery, in the name of religion.

Is it to be expected that when a man comes out from such a company, and makes a fair statement of the rules and regulations, with the practice of the parties, that he will meet with any favor at their hands? Thus, every priest or nun that escapes, is belied and slandered, and accused of insanity. They say Olevia Neal was insane, and Milly McPherson, Miss Harrison, &c. They were not so insane while they would stay, or until they escaped, that they were not considered worth keeping,—yes, and when they escaped they were worth the most desperate exertions of the priests to get them back.

At this time, by means of schools, the agents of Pope Pius X. are doing their utmost to persuade our daughters into their schools and convents, and then tempt them to become nuns. A few slaves for life with dowries will pay up for many children taught gratuitously. But the fact that they have kidnapped and enslaved one daughter of an American citizen is enough to call forth the decree from the American people for the destruction of the whole system.

Hoping that we shall both see that day, and hear the reports of the enslaved daughters rejoicing in their restored liberty, I am, &c.

Baltimore, Jan. 11, 1854.

P. S.—I had just finished the above when I received a letter by mail from an old citizen of Baltimore, calling my attention to a fact which occurred about the time of the opening of the Park-street Convent. It was reported as follows:—The daughter of a citizen of Baltimore county, by her father's death, became heir to a large fortune. She was also young, beautiful, and accomplished, born in the Church, educated at Georgetown Heights, persuaded into the Convent, and promised the situation of Lady Superior. On the day she came of age, the papers and parchments necessary for conveyances and transfers of the property, &c., were in the convent, and the time set for their being executed, when, lo, and behold, her executor and guardian came in with a copy of her father's will, and read the clause which provided, that in the event of her dying without *legal* heirs, the principal and unused interest should be turned into other channels. This produced a tremendous overturning among the priests—such a getting down stairs, such an overturning of tables, breaking of bottles,

&c., as occurred that day! Aye, and disappointed Lady Superior. Having failed in getting her fortune in full, she failed of her office of honor, and is reported now to be in the nunnery at Frederick City. Can you give us any further particulars of this case?

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## LETTER VII.

“The priests, in taking the vow of renouncing marriage, engage themselves to take the wives of others; and, in assuming the vow of poverty, bind themselves to take possession of the property of their people.”—*Confession of a French Priest.*

A key never fitted a lock more completely than the above remark fits the history of the priesthood of Rome. They are sworn to remain unmarried, and yet, “the confession of the female sex is the great triumph, the most splendid theatre of priests. Here is completed the work which is but begun through all their intercourse with women; for all our relations with them begin from their birth and continue till their death. In their baptism we sprinkle their head with holy water—at their death, their grave. The space between them is filled with a thousand ecclesiastical duties.”

“So soon as the first light of reason has appeared in their tender minds, we have girls at our confessional; and here, with all the resources of cunning and lessons of theology, we sow the seeds of our future power in their hearts, the foundation of our future designs. Those young girls, from seven years of age, come and kneel with all the innocence, the purity, the experience of childhood; beautiful as the lilies of the valley, of which our Saviour speaks in the Gospel; they come, sent by their mothers, by the orders of the priest, who watches his prey with eager eyes; they come with all the fear and respect of their age for the man of God. He, seeing in them the tool of his passions, fills their minds with prejudices, repeats to them that he is the minister of heaven, that they must look to him, revere him, almost worship him as a God. He accustoms their minds to obey him absolutely and blindly, to believe him infallible. He gives their thoughts the direction he pleases; he prepares his batteries; he informs them upon subjects which they ought never to know. At first they do not understand those lessons at so early an age—but by and by they bear their fruit, when developed by time. Thus confessors instructs those girls from seven, or even six, years of age; for the youngest are the best.”

“Thus young girls, well indoctrinated and bound to their confessor, are not heedless enough to abandon his orders; they come again to the confessional, through custom and habit, with the same simplicity, and entertaining the same respect and fear of their spiritual father, as in their childhood.”

“As soon as the young girl enters the confessional, if she is an ugly, common girl or woman, she is soon dispatched; but on the contrary, if she is pretty and fair, the holy father puts himself at ease, he examines her in the most secret recesses of her soul, he unfolds her mind in every sense, in every manner, upon every matter.”

“Many times the poor ashamed girl does not dare answer the questions, they are so indecent. In that case the holy man, ceasing his interrogations, says to her: ‘Listen, daughter, to the true doctrine of the Church. You must confess the truth, all the truth, to your spiritual father. Do you not know that I am in the place of God, that you cannot deceive him? Speak then; reveal your heart to me as God knows it; you will be very glad when you have discharged this burden from your mind. Will you not?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Begin, I will help you;’ and then begins such a diabolical explanation as is not to be found but in houses of infamy, or in our (papal) theological books. This is so well

known, that I have often heard of wicked young men saying to each other, 'come, let us go to confession, and the curate will teach us a great many corrupt things which we never knew,' " &c.

Thus writes a French priest who came out from the abominations of this Babylon of iniquity. No person can believe that he has exaggerated the practice, who will read the questions which are required to be answered at confession. Those that are printed in an American edition of the manual of devotion called the *Garden of the Soul*, are so infamous, that the priest who could ask them of a young or married woman, is a subject fit for a —, and ought to be driven from the priesthood by the woman whom he insults by such questions. At the same time be it remembered that these questions in English are incomparably more decent than in the books of theology in which the priests are trained.

"The confession of men is of high importance in political matters, to impress their minds with slavish ideas, but their aim with husbands and fathers is to get in their minds a high opinion of their holiness, that they may be induced to send their wives and daughters to the confessional without fear. For if they knew what passes at the confessional between the holy man and their wives and daughters, they would never permit them again to go to these schools of vice. Priests command most carefully to women never to speak of their confession to men, and they inquire severely about that in every confession."

Will any man in the Church of Rome with the Manual of Devotion in his hand, and the question at confession before his eyes, wonder that a priest should make the remark, "in renouncing marriage they engage to take the wives of others."

We have the remarkable phenomenon in the world, of a class of men, swearing to renounce marriage, which God has said "is honorable in all," which he instituted in Paradise, which has bound the families of earth together, which is the most enduring source of peace and joy to mankind, and in the relations growing out of which are the tenderest emotions and the strongest ties which endear man to man. We have a class of men sworn in youth to renounce all the tenderest relations of life, to live alone, and yet we find that the greater part of their confessions is with females of their churches in private places, and then that they are diligently engaged, and consider the glory of their work accomplished when they have succeeded in getting a young woman into a convent. Can the members of your church be so blind as not to see why the priests are so zealous for the confession and convent?

The vow of *poverty* is as prominent in the Church of Rome as that of celibacy. When they become priests the whole of their property is said to go to the church, and so when they become nuns all their property goes to the church. But from the baptism to the burial, there is one continual tax, from which they never suffer their people to be released.

"The bed of the sick is the harvest of priests, with their inventions of purgatory, masses and indulgences, they obtain whatever they wish. Some years their exactions were so heavy and exorbitant, that the French Government prohibited, by a change in the code, donations made to the confessor who attends in the last sickness. But what is the wisdom of Government compared with the craft of the priest? Mere blindness. This law only stopped open regular donations; but the boons and fees of gold and money remain as formerly, and more abundant in order to indemnify them for the loss of their pretended

rights. In the sickness of men influential by their riches, talents, stations, or family, and who have during their lives despised confession, priests display the most astonishing exertions. They put in motion all the springs of the most refined artifice for the salvation of his soul.

"As soon as an unhappy wife or daughter has a husband or father whose life is endangered, you see their inquietude, uneasiness, unwearied exertions to have him confessed, to save his soul. Vainly does he represent that he does not want to confess, or that he does not believe in confession, that it is useless. Vainly does he plead that they would let him die in peace. He is tortured without rest until he consents to receive a priest. Thus the priest, through his kind wife or daughter, triumphs over the dying man. The watching priest comes to see him, 'you are a saved or a damned man as you receive or reject him.' He seems to think only of the soul of the man, but he thinks only of his money. He confesses him, his is a desperate case, a long confession, those fearful flames of purgatory flash almost in his face, and nothing will allay them but masses, &c. The fear of the dying man is that enough may not be done for him. The more he pays, robbing his wife and family, the more comfort and stronger hope the priest gives him. He dies and his death is a source of riches to the church. 'Such,' says the aforementioned priest, is, the true picture of the persecutions and the conduct of the priest at the death-bed of Catholics.'"

The priests among us have not departed in this matter from their predecessors. Any person conversant with their history in this city for twenty-five or thirty years will be able to supply his memory with facts confirming nearly every word of it. Baltimore County Court contains the record of the zeal of Roger Smith, late a priest at the Cathedral, who did not stop his exactions from the living, but when the man was actually in law dead, had a pen put in his hand, and the property which should have gone to his widow and children, was turned over to the priest and church by a will which the priest had prepared for the purpose. Being myself personally acquainted with some of the heirs, and having in my possession a copy of the original publication on this subject, I feel at liberty thus to allude to it. The doctrine of purgatory, the paying for masses, &c., have afforded the priests more certain pay than would the mines of California. In evidence of their success we point to the buildings, the lands, the riches of which they now boast in this country—whence did these all come? Partly from deluded Protestants who thought they were acting charitably, partly from the Legislatures of the different States, when they have made grants to them, but principally from their people, and now having them built, and in some cases held by trustees, the bishops are trying to have the deeds of the entire property in this country made to them as *sole trustees*, which would cut the people off from every dollar, and make the whole amount, the property of "the church,"—which means, "Pope, Bishop and Priest." This is said to be one of the principal objects of *Bedini's* visit to this country.

Nunneries contain the wives which these sworn *celibates* have taken from the families of their own people and from Protestants. There also is invested much property which in their poverty they have gotten from the deluded women whom they have taken.

In the time of Richard the 2d of England, the Religious Houses, as they were called, (monasteries and nunneries,) had engrossed *one full third* part of the whole land. Their annual income, when Henry the 8th suppressed them, amounted to 1,600,000 pounds sterling, or nearly eight million dollars.

In a Roman Catholic nation the priests or the church, through convents and the priesthood, take possession literally of the wives and daughters and the property of their people. This will account for the fact that when in a Papal country there is any riot among their people, they generally vent their rage upon the convents.

In a Protestant country no rioters would be permitted to injure a woman in a convent. The people in a Protestant country are always on the side of the women that have been deluded by priests, and go in for protecting them in life, liberty and deliverance from their priestly masters.

Baltimore, January 17, 1854.

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## LETTER VIII.

A Roman Catholic Bishop, ALVARUS PELAGIUS, said "he wished that the clergy had never vowed chastity (not to marry), especially the clergy of Spain; wherein the sons of the laity were not much more numerous than the sons of the clergy."

The Ambassador of the Duke of Bavaria, in the Council of Trent, said, "That there were not more than three or four priests in an hundred who did not keep concubines, or were secretly or openly married."

Every reader of history knows that forbidding the priests to marry (1 Tim. iv. 2.) has been the great source of immorality and corruption in the priesthood. Pope Pius II, confessed,

"That if there were reasons in former times why marriage should be taken from the clergy, there was now much greater cause why it should be restored." Polydore Virgil said: "This will I affirm, that this forced chastity is so far from surpassing conjugal chastity that even the guilt of no crime ever brought greater disgrace to the holy order, greater damage to religion, or greater grief to good men, than the stain of the clergy's lust. Wherefore it would be to the interest as well of Christianity as of the holy order that at last the right of public marriage were restored to the clergy—which they might chastely pursue without infamy—than defile themselves with such brutal lusts."

When Scipio de Ricci was appointed Bishop of Pistoia and Prato, during the reign of Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, he endeavored to reform the convents. To do this, he had to inquire into the conduct of the priests visiting them. Six nuns of the convent of Catharine of Pistoia presented a declaration to the Grand Duke, of which the following is an extract:—

"Instead of allowing us to remain in our simplicity, and protecting our innocence, they (the priests) teach us, both by word and action, all kind of indecencies. They frequently come to the vestry, of which they have almost all the keys; and, as there is a grate there, they commit a thousand indecorous acts.

"If they get an opportunity of coming into the convent under any feigned pretext, they go and stay alone in the chambers of those who are devoted to them. They are all of the same stamp; and they are not ashamed to take advantage of the visitation for these purposes. They utter the worst expressions, &c.

"They allow every kind of indecency to go on in the parlor. Though often warned by us, they do not break off the dangerous intimacies that are formed; and hence it has often occurred, that men who have contrived to get the keys have come into the convent during the night, which they have spent in the

most dissipated manner. They also suffer the nuns to neglect the sacraments. The sisters who live according to their maxims are extolled by them, and indulged in every extravagance; and the others must either go with the stream, heedless of conscience, or live in a state of perpetual warfare," &c.

"While De Ricci was Vicar of the Archbishop of Florence, it was reported to him that in a convent of that diocese where the nuns all slept in a common dormitory, the two last beds were for the father confessor and his lay brother, that they might have them to assist any sick sister during the night."

"The Prior and the Confessor take the liberty of going whenever they please into the vestry to converse with their favorites. In the letters of the nuns, they prove how far the immodesty of the refractory nuns, and of the monks, their paramours, went. The former openly threatened the lives of such of the sisters as had ventured to reveal that tissue of debauchery," &c. They said, "we put ourselves into the hands of the devil, when we put ourselves into the hands of the priests," &c.

The same corruption, he says, on the authority of Flavia Peracinni, prioress of Prato, took place in other convents and at Prato.

"It would require time and memory to recollect what had occurred during the twenty-four years that I have had to do with monks, and all that I have heard tell of them. Of those who are gone to the other world I shall say nothing; of those who are still alive and have little decency of conduct there are very many."

"With the exception of three or four, all that I ever knew, dead or alive, are of the same character; they have all the same maxims, and the same conduct. They are on more intimate terms with the nuns than if they were married to them.

"It is now the custom, when they come to visit any sick sister, that they sup with the nuns, they sing, dance, play and sleep in the convent. They deceive the innocent, and even those that are most circumspect; and it would need a miracle to converse with them and not to fall."

"The *Priests are the Husbands of the Nuns*, and the lay-brothers of the lay-sisters. In the chamber of one of those I have mentioned, a man was one day found—he fled, but very soon after they gave him to us as confessor extraordinary!"

The reader who may wish to examine the subject more fully, is referred to the Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci—edited from the original papers of De Potter, by Thomas Roscoe. London, 1829.

The gloss on your canon law, *canon Maximianus*, Dist. 81, says:—

"It is the common opinion that no priest should be deposed for simple fornication, because there are but few priests free from it!"

The Catechism of Trent, printed Balt. 1833, pages 94-95, makes provision for such infamy in your priesthood, in the following language:—

"However wicked and flagitious (the priests) it is certain that they still belong to the church, and of this the faithful are frequently to be reminded, in order to be convinced, that were even the lives of her ministers to be debased by crime, they are still within her pale, and therefore lose no part of the power with which her ministry invests them." This power, on page 242, is said to be "really to absolve from sin."

The Council of Trent has a decree on "the sons of the clergy." The children of those holy fathers, who were under the curse of the council if they were married.

The whole of the preceding statements are by your own Church. Not one statement is by a Protestant. It is out of thine own mouth that thou art judged. Many Protestants could not be induced to believe these statements if they were made by those opposed to

Rome. But they are your own witnesses. Disprove them you cannot. Being a lawyer, you know that you cannot impeach them.

If you do not, your priests do know that the morals of our clergy are not much improved on that of their predecessors. Corruption among them is now reduced to a system. They are taught it as priests. They are trained in the most licentious and abominable manner. They are indoctrinated by *Dens*, who is the modern standard theological teacher for the priesthood. His teaching is a concentration of the infamy and pollution of all the abomination and corruption that had preceded him.

"His theology," says Dr. Edgar, "in which contamination lives and breathes, is a treasury of filthiness that can never be surpassed or exhausted. He has shown an unrivaled genius for impurity; and future discovery can, in this department of learning, never eclipse his glory, nor deprive this precious divine of his well earned fame and merited immortality."

Very few men are as good as their principles—but to imagine a man as bad, as immoral, as debased, as abominable as the principles of the theology which are taught the priesthood by *Dens*, (and if I mistake not he has the approbation of our present archbishop) is to imagine one of the vilest of men. The priests must be better a thousand fold than the teaching they there receive, if they are fit to come into the same house with any decent female.

Some person in this city offered a reward of one hundred dollars for the priest or layman of standing who would read five pages of a book of devotion called the Garden of the Soul, before a public audience in the Maryland Institute. But those five pages with all their abomination, are decency itself compared to the pollution of *Dens* which is taught the priests.

Now, sir, I maintain that no married man would be so debased as to teach such a system. They are the morals of the basest debauchee. The light of day could never have shone upon such immorality. An inquisition or nunnery with the morals described above, could only have produced such a book.

Bear then in your mind that the priests who are taught and trained under this teacher *Dens*, are the priests that endeavor to persuade our daughters and sisters into these convents, and who there are under their absolute control.

Does any man in this community not make up his mind in regard to the object of the convents? Is there any man so blind as not to see the operation of cause and effect? As I mentioned to you in a former letter, if celibacy in your priests was abolished, your convent system would die out in a short time.

But if your church will not allow your priests to marry, it is reason in the fact that they keep up prisons in which to kidnap and imprison young women, why the same convents should be by law prohibited.

You are aware that in Roman Catholic countries, the State has suppressed and broken up the convents; and if in papal and monarchical countries they have been suppressed, it is time that they should be in this. The people of our country have borne this outrage upon their principles, and their daughters haled to prison, if they have not there met with death, at the hands of priests. It is time this should cease.

If I am "to swing" (I suppose by the neck) for having ventured to speak so freely to you, of the imprisonment of young American women, by corrupt priests, let it not be in the dark dungeon of the inquisition or in the secret chamber of a convent, where our sisters may have to wear their lives away under priestly executioners—but let me swing under the judgment of twelve American citizens, who shall pronounce upon my guilt or innocence.

Being yourself born in this country, and not trained for a priest or inquisitor—but a lawyer by profession—I should have thought, that you would have had some other argument than a priest's rope with which to answer my charges against the convent system.

One of our merchants remarked to me that you would not be able to buy rope enough for the swinging of myself, &c., but he did not take into account the amount which the priests could furnish. Remember, however, that hanging ought to be done very quietly.

The *finale* of a Nun, a refractory, unsubmitive Nun, I suppose to be very quiet—but sometimes they will *scream out and be heard in the street*.

I wish to have the privilege, before you have the rope put on my neck, to say to every American citizen, make up your mind, whether prisons for women, kept by such priests under the pretext of religion, ought not to be broken up.

Baltimore, February 14, 1854.

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## LETTER IX.

### THE ABDUCTING OF THE DAUGHTER OF A LAWYER, OR A RAY OF LIGHT UPON CONVENT LIFE.

"The resistance to papal tyranny on the part of Protestants is the only security which Roman Catholic parents have for the protection of their daughters from the snares and cruelty of the priests and inquisitors of their own church."—*Anon.*

Belabriga, a lawyer of Saragossa, had a daughter torn from him at dead of night by ruthless priests, and put in the inquisition. He died of grief, after losing her, without daring even to mention to his confessor the cause of his trouble and sorrow. See Letter 2, in which I gave the account of the abduction. After that statement, she proceeds in her narrative to tell her fears, and through what she afterwards passed:

"I expected," said she, "to die that night; but when they carried me into a noble room, well furnished, I was surprised. The officers left me there, and immediately a maid came in with a salver of sweetmeats and cinnamon-water, desiring me to take some refreshment before I went to bed. I told her I could not, but would be obliged to her if she could tell me whether I was to die that night or not. 'Die?' said she; 'you do not come here to die, but to live like a princess, and you shall want for nothing in the world *but the liberty of going out*; so be not afraid, but go to bed and sleep easy, for to-morrow you shall see wonders in this house—and, as I am chosen to be your waiting maid, I hope you will be kind to me.' I was going to ask some questions, but she told me she had not leave to tell me any thing more till the next day, 'only nobody shall come to disturb you;' so she left me for a quarter of an hour. The great



amazement I was in took away the exercise of my senses to such a degree that I could neither think of my parents nor my own dangerous situation. In this suspension of thought, the maid returned and locked the chamber door after her. 'Madam,' said she, 'let us go to bed; and be pleased to tell me at what time in the morning you will have the chocolate ready.' I asked her name, and she told me it was Mary. 'Mary,' said I, 'for God's sake, tell me whether I come here to die or not?' 'I have told you that you came to be one of the happiest ladies in the world.' I went to bed, but the fear of death prevented me from shutting my eyes, so that I rose at break of day. Mary lay till six o'clock, and was surprised to find me up. She said but little, but in half an hour brought me, on a silver plate, two cups of chocolate and biscuits. I drank but one cup, and desired her to drink the other, which she did. 'Well, Mary,' said I, 'can you give me an account of the reasons of my being here?' 'Not yet, madam—have a little patience.' With this answer she left me, and an hour after came with a fine Holland shift, a Holland under petticoat finely laced round, two silk petticoats, and a little Spanish waistcoat, fringed all over with gold, combs, ribbons, and every thing suitable to a lady of higher quality than I; but my greatest surprise was to see a gold snuff-box with the picture of Don Francisco Torrejon in it. Then I understood the meaning of my confinement. (See Letter 2.)

I considered with myself, to refuse the present would be the occasion of my immediate death; and that to accept, it was to give too great encouragement against my honor. But I found as I thought a medium in the case; so I said to Mary. Pray give my services to Don Francisco Torrejon, and tell him that as I could not bring my clothes along with me last night, honesty permits me to receive what is necessary to keep me decent, but since I do not take snuff, I beg his Lordship to excuse me if I do not accept this box. Mary went to him with this answer, and came again with a nice picture, nicely set in gold, with four diamonds at the four corners, telling me that his Lordship had mistaken and that he desired me to accept the picture. While I was musing what to do, Mary said. Take my advice, accept the picture and every thing he sends you; for consider if you do not comply with every thing he has a mind for, you shall soon be put to death, and no body can defend you; if you are obliging to him he is a very complacent gentleman—will be a charming lover, and you will be here like a queen. He will give you another apartment with fine gardens, and many young ladies shall come to visit you; so I advise you to send a civil answer and desire a visit from him; or else you will soon repent it. Dear me, cried I, must I abandon my honor without remedy? and if I oppose his desire he will by force obtain it. So, full of confusion, I bade Mary give him what answer she pleased. She was very glad of my humble submission, and went to give him an account of it. In a few minutes she returned with great joy to tell me that his Lordship would honor me with his company to supper. In the mean time he desired me to mind nothing, but how to divert myself, and to give Mary my measure for some new clothes, and order her to bring me every thing I wished for. Mary added—I may now call you mistress, and must now tell you that I have been in this holy office this 14 years, and know the customs of it well; but as silence is imposed on one under pain of death, I cannot tell you any thing but what concerns your person. So in the first place do not oppose the holy father's will; secondly, if you see some young ladies here, never ask them any questions, neither will they ask you, and take care that you never tell them any thing. You may come and divert yourself among them at such hours as are appointed. You shall have music and all sorts of recreations. Three days hence, you shall dine with them; they are all ladies of quality, young and merry. You will live so happily here that you will not wish to go abroad; and when your time is expired the holy fathers will send you out of this country, and marry you to some nobleman. Never mention your name nor Don Francisco's to any. If you see some young ladies you have formerly been acquainted with, no notice must be taken of them, and nothing must be talked of but indifferent matters. All this made me astonished, or rather stupified, and the whole seemed to me a piece of enchantment. She left me, saying she was going to order my dinner; *every time she went out she locked the door.*

In about two hours she brought dinner, at which was every thing that could satisfy the most nice appetite. When dinner was over she left me alone, and

told me if I wanted any thing, to ring the bell. I think I was really under some enchantment, for I was in a perfect suspension of thought, so as to remember neither father nor mother. Mary came and told me that Don Francisco was come home, and that she thought he would come and see me very soon, and begged me to receive him with all manner of kindness.

At seven in the evening he came in his night gown and cap, not with the gravity of an inquisitor, but with the gaiety of an officer. He saluted me with great respect, and told me that his coming to see me was only to show the value he had for my family, and to tell me that some of my lovers had procured my ruin, having accused me in matters of religion; that the informations were taken, and the sentence pronounced against me to be *burned alive in the dry pan with a slow fire*; but that he, out of pity and love to my family, had stopped the execution of it. Every word was a mortal stroke to my heart. I threw myself at his feet and said, 'Ah! Seignior, have you stopped the execution for ever?' It only belongs to you to stop it, said he; with this he bade me good night.

As soon as he went away I fell a-crying, but Mary came and asked me what made me cry so bitterly? Ah! good Mary, tell me what is the meaning of the *dry pan* and the gradual fire, for I expect to die by it? Oh madam, said she, never fear. You shall see ere long the *dry pan* and the gradual fire, but they are made for those who oppose the holy fathers' will—not for you that are so obliging to obey it. But pray was Don Francisco very obliging? I do not know, for his discourse has put me out of my wits; he saluted me with great civility, but he left me very abruptly. Well, said Mary, you do not know his temper; he is extremely kind to people that are obedient to him, but if they are not, he is as unmerciful as Nero; so for your own sake, take care to oblige him in all respects. She bade me be easy and go to supper; but the thoughts of the *dry pan* so troubled me that I could neither eat nor sleep that night.

Early in the morning Mary got up and told me that nobody was yet stirring in the house, and that if I would promise secrecy she would show me the *dry pan* and the gradual fire; so taking me down stairs, she brought me into a large room with a thick iron door, and within it was an oven burning, and a large brass pan upon it, with a cover of the same and a lock to it. In the next room there was a great wheel covered with thick boards; opening a little window in the centre of it, she desired me to look with a candle on the inside of it. There I saw that all the circumference of the wheel was set with sharp razors. After that she showed me a pit full of serpents and toads. Now my good mistress, said she, I will tell you the use of these things. The *dry pan* is for heretics and those who oppose the holy fathers' will and pleasure. They are put naked alive into the pan, and the cover of it being locked up, the executioner begins to put a small fire in the oven, and by degrees increases it until the body is reduced to ashes.

"The second is designed for those who speak against the Pope and the holy fathers, for they are put within the wheel, and the little door being locked, the executioner turns the wheel until the person is dead. The third is for those who condemn the images and refuse to give due respect and veneration to ecclesiastical persons; for they are thrown into the pit and become the food of serpents and toads. Mary then said to me, that another day she would show me the torments for public sinners; but I was in so great an agony at what I had seen, that I desired her to show me no more places; so we went to my room, and she again charged me to be very obedient to all the commands of Don Francisco, for I might be assured if I was not, that I must undergo the torments of the *dry pan*."

The consequence of all this terror was to make her yield implicitly to every thought or desire of the Inquisitor. Gavin proceeds to give a further account as he had it from her own lips.

"About 10 o'clock Mary came and dressed me. We left Don Francisco in bed. She carried me to another chamber very delightful and better furnished than the first—the windows lower, where I could see the river and gardens.—She told me that the young ladies would come and pay me their respects before dinner, and take me to dinner with them; begged me to remember her advice; she had scarcely finished when I saw a troop of beautiful young ladies finely dressed, who came one after another, to embrace me and wish me joy. My surprise was so great that I was unable to answer their compliments; but one of them seeing me silent, said—'Madam, the solitude of this place will af-

fect you in the beginning, but when you begin to feel the pleasures we enjoy, you will quit your pensive thoughts. Now we beg of you the honor to dine with us to-day and henceforth three days in a week.' I returned them thanks, and we went to dinner. That day we had all sorts of exquisite meats, delicate fruits and sweetmeats. The room was long, with two tables on each side, and another at the front of it; and I reckoned in it that day 52 young ladies, the eldest not exceeding 24 years. After dinner we went up to a long gallery, where some of us played on instruments of music, others at cards; and some walked about for three or four hours together. At last Mary came up ringing a small bell, which was the signal to go to our rooms, but Mary said to the whole company, 'Ladies, to-day is a day of recreation, so you may go into what rooms you please until 8 o'clock.' They all desired to go into my apartment. We found in my ante-chamber a table with all manner of sweetmeats, &c., upon it. Every one ate and drank, but nobody spake a word about the sumptuousness of the table, or the Inquisition, or the holy fathers.

They returned to their apartments at 8 o'clock, when Mary came to conduct me to Don Francisco, with whom I was to sup and spend the night. In the morning when I returned to my chamber, I found ready two suits of clothing and every thing else suited to a lady of the first rank. I put on one, and when I was quite dressed the ladies came to wish me joy, all dressed in different clothes, much richer than before. We spent the second and third day in the same manner of recreation; Don Francisco continuing in the same manner with me; but on the fourth morning after drinking chocolate (which was the custom to do in bed,) Mary told me that a lady was waiting for me in her own room, and with an air of authority desired me to get up. Don Francisco saying nothing to the contrary, I obeyed and left him in bed. I thought this was to give me some new comfort, but I was very much mistaken, for Mary conveyed me into a lady's room not eight feet long, *which was a perfect prison*, and told me this was my room, and this young lady was my bed-fellow and companion, and without saying any more she left me there.

What is this, dear lady? said I, is it an enchanted place, or hell upon earth? I have lost father, mother, and what is worse, have lost my honor and my soul for ever. My new companion, seeing my agitation, took me by the hands and said: Dear sister, forbear to cry and grieve, for such extravagant behaviour will only draw upon you a cruel death. Your misfortunes and ours are exactly of a piece. You suffer nothing that we have not suffered before you; but we dare not show our grief for fear of greater evils. She advised me to be sure and show no uneasiness before Mary, who was the only instrument of their torment or comfort. I was in a most desperate condition, but my new sister prevailed upon me so that I overcame my vexation before Mary came to bring our dinner, which was very different from what it had been for three days before.— After dinner another maid came, took away our plate and knife, which we now had between us, and having gone out locked the door. Leonora, my companion, said we would not be disturbed again until 8 o'clock, and if I would promise to keep secret what she would tell me while I remained in the house, she could reveal to me what she knew. I told her I would.

She then said, you think your case very hard; but I assure you that all the ladies in this house have already gone through the same. In time you will know all their histories as they hope to know yours. Mary has been the chief instrument of your fright as she has been of ours. She has shown you some horrible places, but not all. At the mere thought of them you chose the same way we did to redeem yourself from death. By what has happened to us we know that Don Francisco has been your Nero. When any of the Holy Fathers has a mind for any of his slaves, Mary comes at 9 o'clock and conducts us to his apartment. Some nights she leaves the doors of our rooms open and that is a sign that one of the fathers has a mind to visit us that night; but we do not know whether it is our patron or not. If one of us becomes unfit for company, she is removed to a better chamber, and she sees nobody but the maid until she is delivered. The child is taken away and we know not where it is carried. So though we cannot oppose the command of the Holy Fathers, we pray God to pardon those ills which we are forced to commit, and to deliver us out of their hands; so my dear sister, arm yourself with patience for there is no remedy."

She found every thing as was related to her, and there was compelled to stay until liberated by the French troops. M. Faulcant, an officer, became acquainted with her, sent her with others to his father's, and afterwards married her, and at her house Gavin had the above narrative from her own lips.

See Gavin's Narrative of Inquisition, at Saragossa, for further particulars. Being a lawyer's daughter, and all being Roman Catholics, the case may interest you and throw a ray of light on convent life.

Baltimore, March 2, 1854.

## LETTER X.

*Abduction of Mary Elizabeth Little—Dr. Deluol—Eliza Burns. Children of Huet De Lachelle, the French Teacher—Resistance of John Scott, the Lawyer for the Priests—Priest De Barth imposing on the Ignorance of a Servant Girl—Defence conducted by Scott—Late Case in which T. Parkin Scott was Counsel against the Guardian of two Children from York County, Pa.—Gave up the Children without Trial—Times Changed.*

"The seizures of children (says De Felice, author of the history of Protestants in France,) were multiplied in the Provinces, particularly in Normandy. These abductions were ordinarily made at night, like the expedition of brigands, by companies of soldiers led by Parish Curates. When the door opened too slowly they broke through; and these soldiers with sword in hand, and blasphemy on the tongue, overturned every thing to discover their prey, reckless in their insults of the despair and cries of mothers, striking down fathers who dared to complain, bearing off their children, especially young girls, and forcing them into the Convent."

The Church of Rome always aims at being very politic in her measures—so the individual Priests. After the revocation of the edict of Nantz, feeling themselves very strong, they acted without restraint, little thinking that a day of retribution was coming. Hence the indiscriminate and murderous seizure of young women and children.

In our day and in parts of our country they have fortunately been not only largely in the minority, but have had as much as they could do to hold their position at all. And yet wherever they have had a tolerable hold as in this city and State, they used to puff and blow until they were almost induced to believe that this was a Catholic city and a Catholic State, and at liberty to do as they pleased. Such was the assumption on their part, that the editors of most of our papers seemed to concede the fact, and yielded their necks to bear the burden which the Priests had put upon them.

A few facts out of many that have occurred in this city may throw some little light upon the mode of supplying the Convents and Orphan Asylums, and of bringing converts to a religion which, when in favor, exercises the sword to convert its enemies.

In my second letter is mentioned the abduction of a Protestant girl named Mary Elizabeth Little, whose case, with a few others, may appropriately follow the lawyer's daughter in my 9th.

*Mary Elizabeth Little* was 16 years of age, July 1st, 1835. Her

father died while she was an infant; she was brought up by her grandmother. The grandmother had been a cripple for about four years before she was abducted—was at that time between 70 and 80 years of age, and had for some years been almost exclusively dependent on her grand-daughter for personal care and nursing. The grandmother, with the girl, for some time resided in Paca street, in the rear of St. Mary's Seminary.

Mary Elizabeth was an intelligent and affectionate tempered girl, of good character, and, until she became acquainted with the Catholics, was a great comfort to her grandmother.

On the 2d of September, 1835, about daylight, she left the house of her grandmother, and has not since been seen by her mother or grandmother. Two days after she left the house, the grandmother received a note from her dated on the morning she left home, stating that she was in as decent and safe a place as there was in the city of Baltimore; that she was to go into the country the next morning, and that when she arrived at the place of her destination, she would let her grandmother know.

The mother of the girl went in search of her immediately, inquiring at several of the Catholic Institutions in the city, but for five or six days could get no correct information about her child. At length she heard that she had been sent from the Catholic Orphan School in Franklin street, under the care of sister Clotilda. The girl had never been sent to that school. The mother called on sister Clotilda, who told her that the girl had come to her with an order for admission into the institution at Emmittsburg from Dr. Deluol, who was the Superior of St. Mary's Seminary, in this city, and that *she had been sent there by his direction in company with a young woman from New York*. After a time Dr. Deluol received a letter acknowledging her arrival at Emmittsburg.

About ten days after Mary Elizabeth left, her grandmother received a note from her, which was brought from St. Mary's Seminary, dated September 6, 1835, but without stating where it was written, in which the girl said *she had got a place for life*—she had found a friend—God was her friend—he had opened her eyes—she was happy, &c., &c

The circumstances of Mrs. Geddes, the situation of Mary Elizabeth Little, her place of abode, and all about her was fully known to Dr. Deluol. The grandmother, mother, and uncle of the girl are none of them Catholics, were all ignorant of any purpose to carry off the child until she was privately removed out of their reach, and were informed by legal advisors that there was no legal method to recover the girl or get redress.

The mother, grandmother, and uncle of Mary Elizabeth Little, declared the above to be all true. Who of the parties are now living, I do not know, except Dr. Deluol. I have not heard from any quarter of his having denied his agency in the matter, but it would not be too late for you to do justice to him, or inform the community what has become of her.

I would recall your attention to the case of the abduction of Eliza Burns, to which I refer also in my second letter.

An Irishman by the name of Burns married a Protestant Irish girl

by the name of Walker. In 1834 or '5 she died, leaving three infant children, all girls. In her last illness she was greatly harassed by priests trying to proselyte her. She remained steadfast, dying in the faith of her fathers. In the house with her lived a woman also an Irish Protestant, named Eliza Gifford, to whom she committed her children, and with whom they remained until her death, June 21, 1837.

Burns, the father, had been hired as a gardener in the neighborhood of the city, and after the death of his wife removed near to Harper's Ferry, where he died in the summer of 1836. He had left his children where his wife wished, from the time of her death, and aided according to his ability in maintaining them. Mrs. Gifford took care of them, doing all that a mother could for them, and during all this time though she was poor, not a Catholic any where helped her at all to support them, or took any interest in them before or after their father's death. On Mrs. Gifford's death, she entrusted them to Mrs. Keyworth, to whose husband she had regularly bound the eldest, with the dying request that she would get a suitable place for the second, and place the third in the orphan school in Mulberry street.

On the 22d of June, the morning after Mrs. Gifford's death, about sunrise, a Catholic woman by the name of Hammond stole the two youngest from the house in which the dead body of their last earthly protector lay unburied. Next morning Dr. Henshaw and Mrs. Keyworth called for the children, but were informed that Mrs. Hammond claiming to be the godmother to the second child, had carried both off. The second one she carried to her own house, and placed the youngest in the Catholic Orphan Asylum near the Cathedral.

Mr. and Mrs. Keyworth and other friends, in furtherance of the dying wishes of Mrs. Gifford, set to work to find the children and rescue them. Mrs. Hammond was found, and after persuasions on their part, the wishes of the child, and threats of legal prosecution, she gave up the child, and it was placed with those to whose care she had been entrusted.

Not so, however, the one in the Orphan Asylum. The Archbishop, Mrs. Tiernan and Miss Spaulding, who seemed to have charge there, were not so ready to yield. Again and again were they visited, but they would not consent to give her up. During the whole day the friends of this child went back and forward to each of the above named parties, and to the orphan school, but they could not get her released; the only satisfaction they could get was, that they must apply to Mr. John Scott, a lawyer well known to the older members of the Baltimore bar. "You must go to Mr. John Scott," said the Archbishop, and so said each of the others.

Before going to Mr. John Scott, they applied to R. Moale, Esq., E. L. Finley, Esq., and H. D. Evans, Esq., also members of the bar, who readily agreed to advocate their case. On the Monday following the Orphan's Court having heard the case, promptly decided it. The second child was permitted to remain in care of Mr. Paul to whom it was bound, and the youngest, which Mrs. Hammond declared she had carried to St. Mary's Asylum, which the Archbishop, Mrs. Tiernan, Miss Spaulding and the sisters at the asylum admitted was there, which

was obtained by fraud and retained by force, the court placed under care of Mr. Paul, by appointing him guardian.

Mr. Paul, now with the order of the court in his hands, proceeded to demand the child, but the answer of the parties was still "go to Mr. John Scott." To Mr. Scott they went, showing their legal authority. But Mr. Scott positively refused to cause or allow the delivery of the abducted and secreted child, to its proper friends and legal guardians, and angrily announced his resolute purpose to contest the matter to the furthest extremity, and by every possible means.

It was no trifling matter in those days to encounter a lawyer whose zeal was so great for Rome, but with all his desperation and the influence of Catholics brought privately to bear upon the case, the child Eliza Burns was rescued from the hands of her kidnappers and jailors, and placed in the care and keeping of her lawful friends and guardians, and by them put in the Orphan Asylum in Mulberry street, where her friend and protector in her dying moments had requested she should be placed.

It is due to the credit of H. D. Evans, Esq., to say that the principal labor in this case fell upon him, Mr. Finley being prevented by sickness from attending to it, and Mr. Moale having for reason retired from the case.

I cannot but commend your prudence, if not your sense of justice, in giving up the two orphan children to the keeping of their guardian, Dr. Free, of York county, Pa., who had so long been retained in the keeping of these sisters, and thus in charge of the Orphan Asylum; but it was to my surprise, as I have no doubt it was to that of their counsel, that you, the counsel for the Asylum, should give up the children and send them home to their legal guardian, the day before the case was to have been tried before Judge Krebs. Truly, we who have lived in this goodly city the past 30 or 40 years, may say "the times have changed."

Formerly it was kidnap, secrete, and keep. Friends who would even venture to speak out upon the subject did it not only at the cost of misrepresentation, but slanders and threats of personal violence; now your priests and the members of your church answer all these things by saying they are lies, and beneath your notice. But the day was when it was not beneath the notice of John Scott, Esq., to defend to the utmost the abducting of an orphan child; and to undertake the defence of Priest De Barth, who had imposed on a poor ignorant servant girl who had *nigh mare*, telling her it was her mother's ghost choking her because she had not masses said for her soul, and who bargained with her at ten dollars to have 20 masses, at 50 cents each, said to deliver her mother's soul out of purgatory, that gold mine of the priests.

The extent to which this kidnapping of children and young women has been carried, it would be hard to tell. The numbers in convents and orphan asylums will in some measure indicate—but many are removed to supply other places where the success of the priests has not been so great.

I would mention only another case—the daughters of Huet de Lachelle, formerly a French teacher in this city. On the death of their

mother, they were taken by stealth, and through the influence of some of the families high in the church, were secreted in the Asylum. It was a long time before he could find them. One morning, happening to pass the Asylum, he unexpectedly saw one of them. Calling it by name, and with the fond feeling of a father and a Frenchman was going to kiss it, when it turned and said: "That is not my name now—you must not touch me, nor speak to me." "Why, my dear child, what is your name? Don't you know your father?" "They call me —, but the sister says I must not speak to you, nor own the name you gave me." The child went in. The father spoke of it to his friends, who advised him to employ a lawyer. He consulted one and another, but eventually, I believe, succeeded in getting E. L. Finley, Esq., to attend to his case. Mr. Finley, with the assistance of Judge Brice and the authority of the State of Maryland, succeeded in bringing out these children, to their joy and to the grateful heart of a fond parent. They are both living in this city, both married, and feel grateful for the providence which delivered them from their robbers, and the persecutors of their father.

It would be robbery and the penalty the State Prison—to steal a shoulder of bacon or a pair of shoes; but it is a meritorious act to steal a daughter for the orphan asylum or convent. That which, in the days and in the country where the priests rule, is done by soldiers led on by a priest, must in a country and city like ours be done by cunning, crafty agents, as seducers and kidnappers, until they are lodged in the priests' prisons, under the names of orphan asylums and convents, and then there is counsel found to keep them there until by the strength of the law they are rescued.

A criminal could not be put into a jail or penitentiary but by law, and unless guilty cannot be kept there. Let me a thousand fold rather have a place in either than in a priests' prison.

Baltimore, March 15, 1854.

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## LETTER XI.

"The Church which kidnaps young women and children and immures them in convents to convert them to her religion, and which, when she does not succeed, buries them in the cells of her prisons, lest they should reveal the iniquity of her proceedings, betrays the spirit of the prince of darkness, and not that of the Church of Jesus Christ."—*Anon.*

"If a Nun says that she took her vow under the influence of force, or fear, or before the age appointed by law, or any like cause, she shall not be heard unless within five years of her professing, and then not unless the causes which she pretends induced her have been brought before the superior. And if she laid aside the habit of her own accord, she shall not be permitted to complain, but be compelled to return to the convent and punished as an apostate, and deprived of all the privileges of her order."—*Decree of Council of Trent, ch. 19. ses. XXV.*

If a young woman who has been forced into a convent, from fear of her parents or her priest, or any such like cause, shall venture to express her desire to escape; or if she shall say that she was too young and did not know what she was doing, your Church requires that she shall not be permitted to complain of her hardship or her unwillingness to stay, and if she attempts to escape, requires that she



shall be compelled to return to the convent, and be punished as an apostate.

The modes of punishment laid down by a standard writer of the Church of Rome are five, and *two* of those are by *stripes or flogging and imprisonment*. Of the flogging of women at present I shall not speak. Concerning the imprisonment and punishment connected with it, I beg your attention to the prisons of the Church, and the holy chastisement which the holy fathers, the Popes, have visited upon their rebellious children at the very fountain head, in the city of Rome.

"The rubbish having been removed in one place, indications of a stone staircase were observed, which were cleared and persons went down thirty steps. At the bottom was found a small chamber, filled up with a mixture of earth and lime, and which proved to be the first of many others like it. \* \* \* There, it appeared, from what was observed, the condemned were buried alive, being immersed in a kind of mortar up to their shoulders. In some instances it was evident they had died slowly and of hunger. This was inferred from the position of the bodies which people in great numbers that most horrible abode; and marks were seen in the earth of movements made in the convulsive agonies of the last moments to free themselves from the tenacious mortar, while it was closing round their limbs."—*Roman Republic of 1849*, by Theodore Dwight, p. 105-6.

On page 102, says the same author, "In order to obtain a place to stable the horses a space was opened in the walls; when the workmen discovered an aperture. The ardent curiosity which had always, up to that time, surrounded every thing relating to the Holy office, and the hatred against the Government of the priests, suspended their labors. The rubbish was removed, they descended into a small subterranean place, damp, without light, or passage out, with no floor but a blackish oleagenous earth resembling that of a cemetery. Here and there were scattered about pieces of garments, of ancient fashions—the clothes of unfortunate persons who had been thrown down from above, and died of wounds, fear or hunger.

"The rich soil had hardly begun to be removed, before human bones were uncovered in some places with some very long locks of hair, which had doubtless ornamented the heads of females. The hands trembled, as well as the hearts of those who went to uncover and collect those funeral reliques. What temples had been shaded by those tresses? What opinions had been their crime? Who had sent spies to seize these victims? Poor martyrs of ignorance and fanaticism, torn perhaps from their mothers' arms, to be thrown into a cloister, and from the cloister into such a dungeon, without light or door; still young and beautiful! These locks of hair were disheveled in their agonies of death, and there they expired, disconsolate, forgotten by the world, without a kiss from a friend, without receiving a sigh or a tear, or even a handful of dust upon their corpses."

Here and there in the cells were found worn out cushions, coverlets, chairs and tables, and old clothes of prisoners who died in the cells many years ago. In a certain very small cell were things which indicated horrible secrets; a piece of a woman's handkerchief, of large size, and an old bonnet of a girl about ten years old. Poor little child! What offence, perhaps unknown to you, could it have been, which threw you into this place and destroyed the innocent peace of your infantile years; which taught you to weep in the season of smiles, and perhaps deprived you of your dear and early life? In another cell were found four sandles, and several Nuns' cords, a little spindle, caskets containing needles, crucifixes, and unfinished stockings with knitting needles still well pointed, and an infant's coach."

"Under the two courts subterranean apartments abounded, communicating with each other. A few only were solitary, and to those there was only one way of access, viz: a *trap door*, which denoted death. Some of them were prisons at first, and afterwards converted into store rooms. To their ceilings were still fastened iron rings, which formerly served to give to the torture, and afterwards to suspend provisions. In one cell on the ground floor, in the second building, a square piece of marble was observed in the floor, which looked

like the cover of a hole. It was raised and beneath it was a vault, which proved to be a place of *silent death*. Not a ray of light could ever have entered, except when that funeral marble was lifted for a moment, and then it soon fell again, over the head of the condemned person, who was left to die of hunger, in the cold and darkness, and amidst a stillness unbroken unless by his own cries or prayers."

"When a trial was finished, and it was important to the Holy Office to dispose of a condemned person without giving a public spectacle, he came in, conducted by the first Father Companion, who exhorted him to repent, to consign every thing to the hands of divine compassion, which punished him on earth to glorify, and purify him in heaven; he pressed him with insidious interrogations in order to discover more of his offences, and to find traces of other offenders; and finally blessing him if he confessed and was contrite, he pretended to send him to the second Father Companion. The guard who awaited him on the occasion, well knowing the arrangement, conducted him towards the apartment on the other side, opened the door, and stopped short without passing it. *As soon as the miserable prisoner touched the spot near the threshold, the floor gave way, and he fell through the trap down into his tomb.*"

The Council of Trent provides that incorrigible nuns who are unwilling to stay in the convent shall not only be imprisoned, but further and more extreme remedies should be used. For my own part I cannot conceive of any more extreme remedy being needed, than that which the opening of the Pope's prison in Rome exhibits, and if they here have cells and trap doors, and beds of mortar, in which to place the refractory nuns, I do not wonder at all that they are never again heard of.

Can any one wonder why *Olevia Neal*, or *Milly McPherson* is not heard of if they have been immersed in mortar up to their neck, or if they have been inducted into a room with a trap door over a dark cell where a ray of light or a breath of air can never come?

Would it be insulting to the faith of a man, or church whose members all swear true obedience to the Pope, and hold him to be a God on earth, to intimate that these prisons are rather unmerciful, and that the church, which makes people religious by the terrors of the prison and more severe remedies, does seem more like a demon from the bottomless pit, ravening in his rage to destroy? But your church stops not here.

The Council of Trent "commands all Bishops, under pain of divine judgment and dread of eternal wrath, to take especial care for the cloistering of the nunneries, diligently to restore the disobedient by ecclesiastical censures, and *other punishments*, laying aside all appeal;" and further, the Council threatens to "excommunicate all magistrates who will not render the aid of the civil power to *compel Nuns to return*;" and further, the Council declares that "*it shall not be lawful for any Nun, after profession, to leave the convent, even for a short time, upon any pretext whatever.*"—[Sess. xxv., cap. 5. de Regularibus, &c.]

The insolence of priests in this country, in forcing back nuns who had escaped, is sufficient. Would one of your priests again venture to do it publicly? I am almost persuaded that our Archbishop would scarcely call upon the Mayor to send him help to force a young American woman back into a convent from which she had escaped.

Your church sets up these prisons for women as a part of your religion. The decrees of your councils are framed, looking to them; but the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, and the spirit of the people of the United States, are all against such institutions. If your church is not prepared to stop the building of

these private prisons for women, or if they claim that those now in being are still to stand, retaining within them the victims that they have seduced and forced into them, your church has made a woful mistake in her calculations.

That there is a settled and determined spirit in this country upon this subject, you will not even question; that it is growing with a rapidity and strengthening with a strength which cannot be resisted, must be apparent even to a careless observer.

The name of Olevia Neal, who twice escaped from a convent in this city, will become as familiar to the present generation in this city as any name that has ever been recorded among its inhabitants.

She escaped—a priest seized her and forced her back. He did what his church required—but he did what the laws of this State would not allow to be done with a negro boy or girl, and shall he do such a thing with a free-born white woman, the daughter of an American? I say, No.

We want security for the personal liberty of a young woman in a convent. That liberty was bought at too dear a price to be sold to priests of a church whose tender mercies and christian chastisements are imposed in the secrecy of a cell which has no opening but at the top, in which silently to drop the unsuspecting victim, or whose arms of compassion enclose a living human body in a cell filled with soft mortar.

Who can tell how many young women have already perished in the cells of the convents of your church in this country? "No crime," said a Frenchman, formerly a priest, "could deter a priest from its commission if it is necessary to efface the traces of others." "By their fruits ye shall know them," said our Saviour. What must the spirit of your church be when these are the private sanctuaries of her priests? What must be their object when such are the receptacles which they have for the refractory? Who can doubt that men who would kidnap our daughters and seduce them into a convent, would not hesitate to make any disposition of them that would save themselves from conviction and punishment?

What perfect mockery of truth is it for Papists to talk about a Nun coming out if she wants, when the church, by the solemn decrees of her great council at Trent, declares that she shall not come out *under any pretext whatever, not even for a short time*. And, if perchance they do escape, the Magistrates, under penalty of excommunication, must aid in forcing them back. Grand work for some of our police!

Having the most abundant evidence of the fact that your priests will spare nothing to secrete and cover up crime which they have committed, and believing that most gross wrong has been perpetrated upon the young woman Olevia Neal, as well as upon others, in the close of this, and before my last letter, I wish through you and the public press of the country to ask the priests of your church the question—*What has become of Olevia Neal?*

Baltimore, March 29, 1854.

## LETTER XII.

"A religion that has deluged your island in blood, and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder and rebellion through every part of the world." *Address of the Continental Congress to people of Great Britain, Oct. 31, '74.*

"Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake"—*Washington's Farewell Address.*

"If ever the liberties of the United States are destroyed, it will be by Roman Catholic priests."—*General Lafayette's last conversation with Professor Morse.*

"If it were not for the strength of Protestantism at this day, the burning of heretics would be a holiday amusement of our cities; and a dozen concubines would be considered evidence of moderation in the priests of Rome. As it is, they can only punish heretics and disaffected papists privately, and enlarge the convents according to their ability."—*Anon.*

The doctrines of your Church put the salvation or damnation of a soul entirely in the power of your priests. They are exalted above God, and the mass is substituted in the stead of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. Your priests profess in consecrating the wafer to make it God, absolute, perfect, entire, and also man, so as to be that very same God-man Christ Jesus, who came down from heaven and died for sinners. After this impious lie, and horrible impiety, they profess to crucify him afresh daily in the sacrifice of the mass.

Your Church pretends to put in the hands of the priest power to forgive the sins of a murderer, who will confess to him, and to cut off from hope of heaven, a Mason, an Odd-Fellow, a Soa of Temperance.

It seduces into convents young women, and then teaches them that it is commendable in them to prostitute themselves to a priest, but criminal for them to marry.

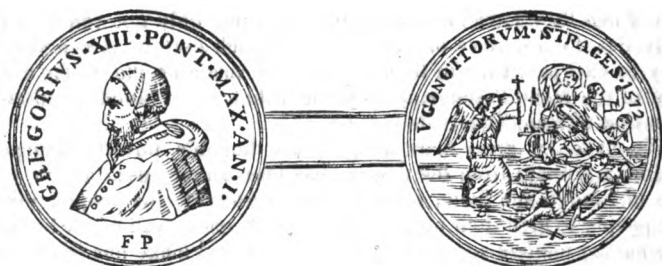
As a religion, it has cursed every nation where it has prevailed; has degraded and tyrannized over every people that have yielded to its teachings; has corrupted and debased their morals—plundered them of their property, of their daughters, of their personal, civil, and religious liberty—filling their country with beggars and prostitutes, and making all servants of the priests.

A religion which has kept the people in ignorance, sapped their vital energies, buried enterprise, put bands upon the intellect, upon commerce, upon every improvement. A religion that deluged Great Britain in blood, and left her murderous mark upon every part of the world where she has had power.

The unerring pen of inspiration has placed before mankind a description of her morals, in calling her the great scarlet-colored whore—of her practice, in saying that she is drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. The memorable epochs in her history are scenes of massacre and blood, the most hideous and horrible, perpetrated in violation of the most solemn, sacred, and sworn covenants; the perfidy and perjury palliated, excused, justified, and even gloried in as having been more meritorious to commit perjury than to have kept faith with heretics, when they had the power and opportunity to plunder, slay and murder. The aged father, the decrepid old woman, the mother in the hour of her pangs of travail, the enfeebled mother and new born infant, the tender youth, the innocent and unoffending child, every age and condition have been slaughtered at the bidding of

her priests, and that butchery gloried in as meritorious of heaven to the murderers.

Not the priests alone, or the armies of murderous Rome, but high exalted Pontiffs, claiming to be representatives of Jesus Christ upon earth, have been the impious tyrants who have planned, connived at, urged on, and enforced these brutal murders. Holy councils have decreed, eminent theologians have taught it as a duty. To immortalize and glory in that fearful butchery of the night and day of St. Bartholomew, Gregory XIII, the reigning Pope, had a medal prepared, on one side of which was his face, with his name, on the other side was an angel with a sword in his right hand, employed in slaying a group of both sexes; in the left hand is a crucifix; around the picture written, *Hugonotorum Strages, 1572*—"The Slaughter of Huguenots."



Go to the Waldenses and Albigenses and read the history of papal perjury and murder, which led Milton to burst forth in that eloquent and touching sonnet:

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold!  
In thy book record their groans,  
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled  
Mother with infant down the rocks.  
Their martyred blood and ashes sow  
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway  
The triple tyrant."

To escape the curse of this religion, our fathers, who had been persecuted by it in Europe and Great Britain, fled to this country. They hoped here to find a spot where the sword of the triple tyrant should not drink their blood and their children's. As the seed of the woman, (Rev. xii, 12—16,) they fled into the wilderness. Here they laid the foundations of "free Protestant colonies." Our Continental Congress calls them "these Ancient Free Protestant Colonies." But no sooner had they entered the wilderness, than (Rev. xii, 17) "the dragon, wroth with the woman, went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rome planned our ruin. Thus our fathers thought, and in their protests to Great Britain they declare the danger which they dread from the emigrants of this murderous religion. See Address, Oct. 31, '74)

In the days of our fathers it was but beginning. The plans laid

embraced teaching of schools, building of colleges, erecting of convents, multiplying churches and priests, and acquiring influence politically to accomplish their end. Of late the foreign Catholics who have come here, directed by the priests, have made so much ado in politics, that our silly, half-hearted Governors and Mayors have put them into every office they dared to give. Within a few years they have in their papers even ventured to tell us that they know that in a little time they will have the majority of the votes, and then the men who hold the principles of Washington "shall not be tolerated"—that the very word "Liberty," as well as the principle, shall be blotted from the vocabulary of the nation.

These Priests hope, believe, and declare that they will put down American principles. They have laid down their platform, they declare to us the principles of their church, as war to the very knife, that when they have the power they will not only not tolerate, but carry out the doctrines of their church, which declare it as a solemn duty to extirpate us. In their annotations made on the Rheims version of the New Testament, they teach that "our blood is no more than that of mankillers, thieves, &c."

We have the great marshaling of the dragon's power among us. Bedini, a Nuncio from the dragon, has been among us arranging matters of Church and State, settling difficulties with the people, urging the people to give their property to the Bishops instead of the trustees, and having matters so ordered that Rome could make her onset upon us more effectually than she did in her attack upon our public schools.

The great struggle of the dragon to overcome us is approaching. We did not go to Rome to trouble her, we treated her subjects kindly, giving greater liberties and comforts than they could obtain in any Papal country. Not satisfied with this, she has attacked us in our own land, she has sought to undermine our institutions, to rule our elections, to break up our schools to aid her schools and colleges and churches—she has sought to plunder us of our daughters and make slaves of them, and bury them in her convents, and now you and her priests have the audacity to dare us to the conflict. Yes, *you* the vice consul for Pius IX, and a leader on the school question, have dared us out to meet you, and have given us the assurance that the struggle has begun.

I say then—let it come. And on their heads let come the judgment which they would bring upon us. I assure you that Young America, energetic and resolute, will demean herself in that conflict, and show herself worthy descendants of those noble sires, who spoke what they thought and felt concerning the impiety and oppression of Popery.

The Pope of Rome has sent his priests to conquer us. He holds out his flag, and assures us that he will conquer us. If he does, it will be his hardest fought battle. The scars which his priests will bear before that flag of stars and stripes is trampled in the dust, beneath the feet of the dragon, will be such as they have never had before.

The madness of your priests in their hatred of our principles, has stirred up a feeling in this country, however much to be dreaded, only that which any thinking man could have looked for. And unless your

priests do take the back track, they will without doubt bring on one of the bloodiest battles which have been fought on this continent.

In my youth I had hoped like many now, that the modified doctrines which were taught by the priests among your intelligent people and among Protestants, would have prevailed, and that in the growth of your church in this country this element would have overcome the old doctrines which had murdered the Saints. I have long since changed my mind. I have found that your priests have been teaching on one hand to gain over Protestants, doctrines that were almost identical with Protestantism, trying to deceive them into a belief that your church has changed, while to another class of their people they have taught all the persecuting doctrines of the church, *as soon as they have power.*

Your presses now teach the doctrines of Gregory XIII and Boniface VIII, &c.; doctrines denied before 1834-35 by your priests and denied or equivocated on by the present Bishop Hughes. They declare that it is their intention to do what they have formerly done, that not one murderous decree has been repealed, that the instructions of theologians who taught that it was a Papist's duty to murder a heretic when he could do it with safety to himself, or of Papists to exterminate heretics whenever they have the power, is standard. That all these are in full force and only waiting the opportunity to carry them out.

When I see these doctrines avowed among us I cannot but expect a very great change in the minds of American citizens. It is no longer a question of social and civil intercourse in the relations of life or the commercial operations of society. Within the walls of the Cathedral of this city publicly has it been taught, in spirit, that a Roman Catholic had better die than employ a Protestant physician. A German priest of this city has publicly exhorted his people to destroy newspapers that teach any thing contrary to the church, that the church required it of her people.

All these things indicate the mind of your church, and so on the other hand there is brought out by it an exhibition of American feeling which cannot be misinterpreted. The politician that cannot understand these things will have to bid adieu to public affairs.

Americans are bearing, forbearing and enduring, but *they are Americans.* If there is one feeling ingrained, which flows freely and rapidly with their blood, it is their inveterate hatred of tyrants and tyrannical principles. This feeling has been called up on so many occasions by your priests and bishops, that it only bides the time when you show your hand, to sweep the Papal power from this fair land.

Who has created this state of feeling? Your priests and bishops, and Bishop Hughes, the Jesuit politician, pre-eminently, who volunteered his aid to keep quiet in the city of New York, intimating the inability of the Mayor and the civil powers. Your bishops and priests have brought this on, but they can no more control it or check it than you can direct the whirlwind.

God has declared that Babylon (the Papal power) shall be destroyed. It will be destroyed here as well as in Rome. She will bring on her destruction. In that very hour when she glories in her safety and success, it will come. (Rev. xviii.) Not one word which he has spoken shall here fail. If the civil power of the people was not held

back by Austria and France at this very time, her end in Italy would come. The children of the State—the people of Italy would make a speedy end of Pope, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests. But God's time has not yet come. It will, however, come as a thief in the night, and Papal Rome as such ceases from the earth, for "strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

In the destruction of this mystery of iniquity, I believe the people will among the first things abolish the convents—then rid the world of those ungodly and iniquitous monsters, who while swearing to live a single life have debased and made slaves of the daughters of their people. It has been a remarkable fact that in Papal countries the people under any excitement break open the convents, liberate the nuns, and visit their indignation upon the priests who have robbed them of their daughters.

One of your bishops said that in his day "the nunneries were as publicly prostituted as the common stews." (*Onus Ecclesia*, cap. 21.) When Pius V undertook to put down the stews in the city of Rome, the priests instigated the Senate to plead for their continuance. (*Thuanus*, Lib. 17.) Cardinal Hugo after the adjournment of the Council of Lyons, addressing the citizens, boasted that at the beginning of the council there were only two or three stews in the city, at its adjournment there was only one, but that it extended from the eastern to the western gate. (*M. Paris*, 702.) The Holy Council of Constance which burned John Huss and Jerome of Prague, for preaching the gospel and rejecting the Pope, had only 1500 strumpets in attendance upon the Holy Fathers. (*Labbe*, 16, 1435.) Are such Holy Fathers fit keepers for convents of unmarried women?

Now, when a council meets, the decency of the community in which they hold their sessions, forbids the presence of strumpets; but the Holy Fathers are very desirous of increasing the number of Holy Nuns. The announcement of a girl captured and secured for the convent, seems to send a thrill of joy through the whole priesthood. It is another bird caught in the snare of the fowler. May the snares be speedily broken and the captives freed.

Pierce Connelly says: "I have known a young lady, not eighteen years of age, the daughter of a widowed mother, the mother also a Roman Catholic, seduced into a convent under false pretences, kept there in spite of every effort of her family, with the approbation of the Papal authorities, and only delivered by my own threat, as a priest, of application to the civil power and consequent fear of scandal."

"I have known a priest get up very successfully, a miracle, when as an amateur in wickedness, he was experimenting in seduction, and practicing the indecencies of the confessional, as he would try poison on dogs and cats; but nothing could be done with him."

"I have known a priest, received and honored at a Prince Bishop's table, when the bishop knew him to have just seduced a member of his own family, but nothing could be done."

"I have been mocked with false promises by dean and bishop, for denouncing a young priest, in whose bed-room, and before there was time for him to dress himself, in broad day, under the convent roof, I had myself found a young Nun, apparently as much at home as her confessor himself."

"I have been forced to let pass, without even ecclesiastical rebuke, a priest's attempt upon the chastity of my own wife, the mother of my children, and to find instead, only sure means taken to prevent the communication to me of any similar attempt in future."—Pierce Connelly's Reasons for abjuring allegiance to Rome. Dec. 27, 1851.



If kidnaping of negroes is not allowed in this community, and if any man's jail would be broken open and he driven out of the community who would there imprison free negroes, I for one am prepared to say that a class of priests, whose character is as described by their own historians, should not be allowed to set up women traps to catch young women, and then keep them in prison subject to them. And I freely and unhesitatingly say that I hope the day is not far distant when the American people will not suffer the existence of one in the whole country.

Those Nuns and young women who are going about praising the holiness and happiness of the convent life are only *decoy ducks* that the priests send out in the community to enable them more effectually to accomplish their purposes.

Let the people address this subject to their law makers and law officers—and if neither will act, let them put such men there as will. But let us Americans and freemen fix it in our own minds and the minds of our children—that iniquitous, tyrannical, licentious foreign priests shall not build prisons to incarcerate the daughters of the land of Washington, whom they may succeed in kidnaping or seducing.

Respectfully yours,

ANDREW B. CROSS.

Baltimore, May 12, 1854.

P. S. In closing these letters I would simply say, that I will hold myself in readiness to discuss with you or any person the Archbishop may approve, in any public hall in the city, or on the stump—the question, “Ought the American people to permit unmarried priests to erect prisons for women, or having erected, suffer them to incarcerate young women whom they have seduced or kidnaped.”

It was *John Knox* that said, “the best way to keep the rooks from returning was to tear down their nests.” So in regard to these papal rookeries for kidnaping young women, break them up. Put in prison and punish with the severity of the law, any individual, from the Archbishop or the Pope's consul, down to the Priest or Sexton at St. Patricks, who may be caught or convicted in conniving at or conspiring with any other person or persons, in seducing any free born American young woman into one of these Prisons.

The Priests of Rome are not to be dealt with as a young, modest maiden, but as artful, cunning seducers, conspiring at the liberties of our citizens, and standing ready as soon as they have the power to bind us for their prisons and dungeons. God has given us liberty, and we are bound to secure the same to every American citizen. If any young woman wants to retire from the world, let her stay at home with her parents, and not put herself into the condition of the Nuns of Pistoia, (page 38,) who said “we put ourselves into the hands of the devil, when we put ourselves into the hands of the priests.”