

DANGEROUS BOOKS.—ENGLISH PUBLISHERS.

It is a noteworthy fact that Great Britain, the most Protestant of all Protestant countries, is remarkable above all other countries for the ability and learning of her infidel writers. During the last century David Hume, in Scotland, and Edward Gibbon, in England, were *facile principes*, the most prominent masters of the European school of infidels. The enemies of revealed religion in every country rallied round their standard. The influence of the celebrated Voltaire, as an infidel teacher, was probably small compared with that exercised by Hume and Gibbon in the literary and political world. The manner in which Gibbon sought to undermine Christianity was a masterpiece of cunning, worthy of the great enemy of man himself. He and Hume were both historians, and we may say the founders of the modern school of English history, along with Dr. Robertson, the friend of Hume and Gibbon, but a man of a very different character and principles. They were—the two former—the artful and deadly enemies of the religion of Christ, and, as a necessary consequence they hated the Roman Catholic Church above every other church, and lost no opportunity of attempting, by fair means or foul, to prejudice the public mind against it. They were the natural successors of Luther, Knox and other reformers. From the pernicious principles, which the writings of Luther and Knox, Hume and Gibbon inculcated, sprung the first great French Revolution; for a revolt against the authority of Christ, and the Pope, his lawful representative on earth—the supreme visible head of his Church is ever associated with rebellion and treason in the civil order of society. The French Communist of our day, and the disciples of Bradlaugh, at Home, are only “advanced” reformers and lineal descendants of Luther and Knox. England, as a Protestant country, is still true to her mission as the chief propagator of infidel principles by the writings of the most learned of her scholars. I notice, by a letter from a London correspondent of the Auckland ‘New Zealand Herald,’ that the English press has just had the honor of publishing one of the most able attacks on Christianity that has ever appeared in modern times. It is more than an attack on Christianity. Its tendency is to destroy, in the mind of the people, all belief in the deity—“to substitute an inexplicable abstraction for the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all mankind.” Such, we are told, is the aim of this dangerous book. It is issued by one of the oldest and most celebrated publishing firms in the metropolis. John Bright once said that the English newspapers were ready to barter every interest, however sacred, for money. It appears that this severe remark may be justly applied to publishers as well as newspapers. We see one of the most respectable publishing firms in London—the Messrs. Longman—for the sake of filthy lucre, publishing a work which, if it served the design of its able author, would banish the Christian religion from the world. To make the matter worse, the work is supposed to have been written by an Anglican divine, Bishop Sherlock. This has been denied, it is true—not by Bishop Sherlock himself, but by a church brother, Dr Plumtre, of King’s College. The very fact, however, of such a suspicion being entertained speaks volumes against the Anglican clergy. That a member of their body should be deemed capable of such an act is tantamount to regarding them as fit for any treachery. Well might a writer in a recent article of the ‘Westminster Review’ say that the English clergy are coming to be regarded as valuing their office simply for its pecuniary emoluments. Such events as those must precipitate the downfall of the Anglican establishment, and the triumph of atheism at the same time. The Catholic Church alone can save society from the attacks of the infidel party; and as the English Church loses ground, thank God, the Catholic Church keeps advancing. *Magna est veritas et prevalebit.* Truth may be borne down for a while, but will triumph at last. England will yet prove a tower of strength to the Catholic cause and to the cause of loyalty, peace and order throughout the world. England and France united will curb the wicked crew of infidels and revolutionists who now seek to disturb society, in spite of the malign influence of such dangerous books as that imputed to Bishop Sherlock. These books, though they fail in their ultimate aim, will yet do much mischief. They will upset the Christian faith of many, and lead to a widespread laxity of public morals, as other works of a similar kind have done in past times. This new apology for infidelity, we are told, is written with a consummate knowledge of “modern thought,” whatever that may imply, and evinces great ability and learning, and is “immensely read,” the style being fascinating. It may, for anything I know, be read to some extent—if not “immensely” read—in Auckland. No wonder Bishop Cowie and his clergy should address themselves by “special sermons” to counteract its power, and the power of all such publications.

THE MARQUIS OF RYON.—The ‘Hour’ gives the following account of the manner of Lord Ripon’s secession:—It would seem that it is only within the last six months (it says) that the marquis directed his attention to the controversies between the Anglican and Roman Catholic creeds. He was first led to do so by the intention he had to write a pamphlet in defence of Freemasonry, and against the pretensions with regard to the craft. But after a long course of reading he became a convert to what he formerly disagreed with. He never saw or consulted, directly or indirectly, any Romish bishop or priest, until he had fully made up his mind to be received into the Catholic Church. He then came to London, called at the Oratory, and asked to see one of the fathers whom he knew by name. The latter saw him, but had no idea who he was until after he had been examined as to his religious knowledge, baptized, and formally received into the Church. He was then asked his name and residence, in order that the same might be entered in the registry of the Oratory, and surprised those present not a little when he said he was the Marquis of Ripon. He attended Mass, and partook of Communion for the first time on the following Sunday, a day or two before his resignation of the office of Grand-Master of Freemasons was read at the meeting of the Grand Lodge. The Marchioness of Ripon has not, as yet, followed the example of her husband.

THE IRISH AND AMERICAN RIFLEMEN.

GREATEST SHOOTING ON RECORD.

THE long-looked for shooting match at Creedmoor, New York, between the Irish and American Rifle teams which aroused so warm but friendly a rivalry between the two countries, has come to a fruition. The result is one creditable to both parties as presenting the best and probably the most closely contested match of the kind ever witnessed. This is evidenced by the figures, which show that while the Irish were superior both at the nine hundred and the thousand yards range, the Americans came out victors in the final aggregate, showing 934 against 931 points. The fact that there were only three points difference out of almost a thousand, will give some idea how uncertain and pluckily contested the match proved. A preliminary practice took place on Thursday, the 24th. The firing, says the ‘New York Herald,’ commenced at 800 yards, and exhibited a decided improvement on the part of the Irish marksman, due to their better acquaintance with the peculiarities of the atmospheric changes, which are so puzzling even to the practised Creedmoor marksman. The preliminary contest at this range was most spirited and gave magnificent results. Dr. Hamilton, the great Indian shot, led the Irish score from the beginning, making at this range 12 bull’s eyes and three centres, equivalent to fifty-seven out of a possible sixty. This magnificent shooting was tied by Lieut. Fulton, of the American team, who was destined to render himself famous during the day by reaching the highest score ever attained, 168 points out of a possible 180. In order that the quality of the shooting may be better understood, we give the score of Dr. Hamilton and Lieut. Fulton in figures at 800 yards.

4 4 4 4 3 3 4 4 4 4 3 4 4 4—57.

At this range the gentlemen who composed the competing party succeeded in making 328 points out of a possible 360. The Americans were not so successful, but they came closely after their rivals with 324. This is chiefly important as showing a marked improvement in the shooting of the Irish team, as at this range on the last practice day they were considerably behind the Americans. A comparison of notes having been made at this range a tie was declared, but the after examination of the score showed this to be an error. It had, however, the effect of making the competition at the 900 yards still keener, and when the captains of the teams compared notes a second tie was proclaimed, which led to the exchange of mutual compliments. The shooting was certainly splendid on both sides, and far in advance of anything that had been done at Wimbledon. The final examination of the scores showed, however, that a second error had been made in the hasty comparison of notes. The Irish having scored at the 900 yards range 319 out of a possible 360, while their antagonists had made 318, making a difference of one point only. The affair began to look very serious for the Americans as the 1000 yards range was looked upon as the one in which the Irish riflemen would be most likely to assert a superiority. When the teams went back to the 1000 yards range the American riflemen braced themselves for a final effort, and began their firing with much deliberation, taking council of each other as to elevations, condition of wind, etc. The result astonished themselves, as they succeeded in distancing their competitors, at what was looked on as their favourite range. Out of a possible 360 they succeeded in scoring 302. Lieutenant Fulton making 56 out of a possible 60, while the highest score made by the Irish riflemen at that range was 52, scored by Captain Walker.

The following is the *resumé* of scores made at the three distances:—

SCORE OF THE IRISH TEAM.

	800 Yards	900 Yards	1000 Yards	Totals
Dr. J. B. Hamilton	57	55	46	158
James Wilson	54	57	47	158
Captain P. Walker	54	51	52	157
Edmund Johnson	55	53	49	157
J. Rigby	57	51	49	157
J. K. Milner	50	52	48	151
Totals	328	319	291	938

Mr. Johnson’s score, at the 1000 yards range is only an approximation, as he fired only five shots, and was obliged to leave before completing in order to return to the city by the 4.42 p.m. train. In the five shots he made 19 out of a possible 20.

SCORE OF THE AMERICAN TEAM.

	800 Yards	900 Yards	1000 Yards	Totals
H. Fulton	57	55	56	168
Colonel J. Bodine	54	50	54	158
T. S. Dakin	54	56	48	158
L. L. Hepburn	53	55	48	156
H. A. Gilderleeve	52	52	50	154
G. W. Yale	54	50	46	150
Totals	324	318	302	944

This is the best average that has ever been made, the American eight having scored 1244 out of a possible 1440, while the highest score ever made for the Elcho shield at Wimbledon was 1204. This is certainly very creditable to our amateur marksmen, as they have not only improved on their own work but beaten the highest recorded practice. The Irish average was better than their performance when they won the Elcho shield. On that occasion with eight men, they made 1196 being an average of 149, while the average above was 156. On account of the formidable character of the American team the Irish decided on confining the number competing to six, although the American, having a strong reserve, were very desirous of putting eight Richmonds into the field. In view, however, that four of the best shots of the Irish club were prevented by business engagements from going to America, Major Leech decided not to risk the reputation of his country with any but the best shots. As the Irish reserved the right to name not less than six, there can be, of course, no objection to this course.—“Pilot.”