

Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by our Correspondents.]

THE LONDON TABLET AND THE ENGLISH CATHOLICS.

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to say a few words on the controversy now going on between your correspondents "J. K." and "P. O. T." on a question in which we are all more or less interested, but which, I am afraid, will not be settled at this side of the Millennium. Still, although we may not hope to settle it, we should not on that account neglect to seek for clearer views upon it. It appears that "J. K." wrote to you on June 17, taking exception to some remarks made by you on the English priesthood and their Irish flocks. To this letter "P. O. T." replied the following week in a way that did not apparently suit "J. K.," for he has in last week's TABLET another letter in defence of his first contention. It appears to me that English and Irish Catholics in these colonies are quarrelling on questions which, if properly stated, neither side would dispute, and it is to be deplored that those who kneel at the same altar and partake of the same Sacraments should not be able to entertain more kindly feelings towards each other. Whoever brings about, even in a slight way, a better understanding between the two races will accomplish a great work of charity. That there are many excellent English priests who never allow political feelings to prevent them from doing their duty as priests to their Irish flocks, no one ever questions for a moment. To those men every sinner is stamped with the image of his Maker and that consideration swallows up all others. But that there are also very many priests whose actions are not governed by those high motives, even "J. K." will not deny. There are many Father Anguses in England and elsewhere who do not disguise their feelings towards Ireland and her children. These men draw their inspiration from the London *Tablet*, which has lately been pursuing a course of the most undisguised hostility towards the cause of Ireland. That paper has condemned the Plan of Campaign, it has condemned the Land League, it has condemned every effort by which the Irish leaders have tried to wring justice from England, while it has only words of praise for Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Balfour, and Edwin de Lisle, *et hoc genus omne*. Now, if "J. K." doubts that this paper is the exponent of English Catholic opinion, let him open it at page 416, in the issue for March 12, 1887, and he will see the following words, written by an English priest, on the Irish question:—"You, sir, have with great care and sagacity discerned and expressed the view most prevalent amongst English Catholics. So far as my experience goes most English Catholics agree with you, at least in principle." This, then, is conclusive. The *Tablet* professes to be, and probably is, the leading representative Catholic paper in England, and hence a large number of English Catholics, clerical and lay, who draw their politics from its teachings, are bitterly opposed to Irish nationality. How could they favour Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill when the *Tablet* opposed it? How could they condemn Mr. Balfour's Crimes Bill when the *Tablet* approves of it? The *Tablet* is the avowed and admitted enemy of the Irish cause, and the *Tablet* is the accepted exponent of English Catholic opinion. Seeing that this is the case, we may reasonably conclude that that paper is responsible for a great deal of the ill-feeling which at present exists between English and Irish Catholics, and which will only die out when there is an Irish Parliament in College Green. I have not settled the difference between "J. K." and "P. O. T." I have only tried to throw a clearer light upon it.—I am, etc.,
X.

Christchurch, July 4, 1887.

"P. O. T." IN REPLY.

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—Your correspondent "J. K." displays some ingenuity in fighting shy of the extracts from Irish history, contained in my letter. No doubt such facts must be very unpalatable to all advocates of English spiritual domination. Nevertheless, those facts, and many more of the like nature, cannot be ignored. They stand recorded in letters of blood on the pages of our country's story. They are burnt into the hearts of Irishmen with a fierceness that leaves an indelible mark. And they remain for all time as a monument of English ecclesiastical perfidy in Ireland, and as a warning to Irishmen of what they may expect from such of those English clerics as are true to the traditions of their class. But "J. K." does not see any connection between the past and present treatment of the Irish people by English priests. In his view they have changed their tactics altogether, and they now present to the world a spectacle of the most irrepressible affection and goodwill towards the members of their congregations that hail from the Green Isle. He has found them, during an experience extending over some twenty years, to combine the qualities of perfect gentlemen with those of the most zealous apostles. What a delightful picture, must not the contemplation of all their perfections conjure up in the mind of "J. K."! Only fancy the dear Father Angus hob-nobbing with my Lord the Marquis of so and so at his dinner table in Belgravia amongst all the snobs and aristocrats of the West End, and suddenly called forth at the voice of duty, beaming with benignity, and filled with zeal and something else, to seek some poor member of his dear Irish flock in the fever ward or the cholera-stricken house. Your correspondent probably knows that it is the duty of every priest, charged with the care of souls to give the last consolations of religion to the members of his flock, even though his life is thereby endangered. So when he tells us that the English priests in the large cities visit the sick members of their congregation, he merely informs

us that they attend to the letter of the law that binds them under the pain of sin. But if we would know the spirit that sometimes animates those English gentlemen, who, we must believe, on the authority of "J. K." never flinched from the call of duty, we may learn something from those facts mentioned in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal* of not much more than a year ago. Amongst other incidents, we find the expression of his sentiments given by the rector of a regular church in a great English city, on hearing of the death of a priest. "Another of our priests dead," said he; "another valuable life sacrificed through attending a filthy Irish family." "He must," says the writer of the article, "have had in his mind the *Times's* description of the 'filthy and felonious multitude.'" No doubt this English rector sometimes visited filthy Irish families himself. Possibly "J. K." in his 20 years' experience of English priests, met him at some time or other on his mission of mercy, and must have been highly edified by his suavity of manner, and his happy way of consoling the filthy Irish in their afflictions. But will it be believed the writer in the *Freeman* tells us that it took very active intervention on the part of a certain popular Irishman, to save the church of this gentleman from being boycotted? What a shock it must have given to the refined and sensitive nerves of "J. K." to learn that the ungrateful Irish congregation should, for a moment, think of leaving such a dear, good rector as that all alone in his glory, to preach to empty benches.

But I forget. "J. K." in all his 20 years' experience of English priests, never met an Irishman who was treated with contempt by one of them. Well, it is never to late to learn; and if your correspondent has gone through life with his "eyes" bandaged, lest any faint glimmer of light might penetrate those orbs, on the subject of English priests' treatment of their Irish flocks, there may yet be some hope left that the experiences of others will undeceive him.

That there are other causes at work to account, in the past, for the vast leakage from the Church in England, I have no intention of denying. Nevertheless, I repeat that the gross insults heaped by English priests on their Irish congregations have a great deal to do with that falling off, which is a source of great grief to all Catholics. Speaking of the dislike entertained by English priests for the Irish, the above-mentioned writer says in the same place:—"In many examples which have come to our knowledge, it amounts to something not far removed from monomania. God alone knows what multitudes of souls have been lost through this horrible, unpleasant feeling.

Why don't you go to Mass," said a missionary lately to an Irishman in a northern English town. He replied, "Would your reverence have me to go and hear my country abused from the very altar?" The ordinary Sunday morning's sermons of his pastor were flavoured with remarks on the "dirty Irish." "These," continues the writer, "formed some thirty to one of his congregation, and though he banished numbers of them from his church, they yet gave him a handsome living." But why multiply instances? What purpose can be served by dragging before the public gaze things that are so disgraceful to those concerned? "J. K.," who talks so glibly of malicious libel, ought to reflect seriously on his ill-advised championship of such a cause, by which he compels people, in the interests of truth, to speak out plainly.—I am, etc.,
P. O. T.

THE JUBILEE HIBERNIANS.

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—In reading your article in last week's TABLET on "Irishmen and the Jubilee," I began to think there is hope for us after all. We may yet be saved from the curse that seemed likely to descend upon us—the curse of having the bleached bones of Irish nationality strewn the plains of Canterbury—a sickly spectacle for any West Coast Irishman that might happen to pass by. And I was turning with grateful eyes towards my countrymen of the Coast for the noble example which had nerved us of Christchurch to stand by our colours, and to reflect that while the Queen's favoured subjects were right madly profuse in thanksgiving for the fifty years' favours, we had a right to look moodily on and think of fifty years' persecution, and even that to be outdone by the intensity of bitterness which prompts the "Jubilee Crimes Act."

The Queen's most trusted and favoured Prime Minister, the man who declared his Irish policy to be "Manacles and Manitoba," is signalling this Jubilee year by that policy; and, no doubt, unless the one great English statesman is successful in his efforts to thwart it, the Queen's royal hand will soon sign the Act that will place manacles on our countrymen or transport them to Manitoba. Will any high spirited Englishman blame us for withdrawing from the festive scenes when we think of these things? Ah, we would be cowards and sycophants had we done otherwise. I was congratulating myself on your being able to write such an article, to say that "you had not heard whether the members of the Society in other localities were also invited, but you had no doubt that where such was the case a refusal was given." That all made up a very brilliant picture of patriotism, but a friend of mine has just pointed out a huge black spot upon it. I am afraid to look at it, much less to touch it, for I have already seen what threatened to befall a stronger hand that dared to touch it. Mr. Editor, it is no less a place than the hitherto immaculate West Coast. Now, ye outraged correspondents who may set upon me, I say nothing against it, only enclose to Mr. Editor a scrap cut from the *Weekly Press*, wherein is graphically described the loyal demonstrations at Hokitika. I pass over the list of those who engaged in the light fantastic at the Jubilee ball, although there are amongst them many old Irish names, and I come to the order of jubilee procession on Tuesday. It runs thus: Volunteer Band, Rifle Cadets, Fire Brigade, Oddfellows, Foresters, St. Mary's Band, Hibernian Society, school children. Now, sir, it is quite possible that this account of the Jubilee procession on the Coast may not be correct; in this case I shall have done good by giving an opportunity to contradict it, but if it be correct I would respectfully suggest to my countrymen there that they also not in unity with their townsmen in perpetuating the event. I notice that his Worship the Mayor planted two oak trees in the square fronting