

temporary clasping of her gloved hand with the mailed fist of the soldier was not, as Lecky points out, an expedient that suited her pacific nature, but a policy forced upon her 'by the terrors and the example of Mohammedanism.'

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Opposed as the Church has always been to the spirit of war, the calling of the soldier was not, as we have already said, regarded as sinful; and even the Dunedin Presbytery—though some of its members half hinted at it—would hardly be prepared to boldly affirm that all war is *per se* unlawful. Those who, like the Quakers, deny altogether the lawfulness of war, on Scriptural grounds, are easily refuted; the case of the soldiers instructed in their duties by St. John the Baptist, and that of the military men whom Christ and His Apostles loved and familiarly conversed with, without a word to imply that their calling was unlawful, sufficiently prove the point. 'Time would fail me,' says the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, 'to tell of those who by faith conquered kingdoms . . . became valiant in war, put to flight the armies of the foreigners.' It would be better to-day, for good order in the community and for all the social virtues, that even numbers of lives should be lost in a just war, than that individuals should perish in the lawless riots and revolutions which multiply round the Socialists who speak of universal peace. With all this said, war is an evil; and it is one which, in a large proportion of cases, is brought on a country, not because of its military strength, but because of its military weakness. The visible weakness of a nation is a perpetual temptation to its more powerful neighbours; and the justification of the Church's approval and sanction of military training is that adequate preparation for defence is, humanly speaking, the very best means available for preventing war.

Spiritual Independence: Scotch Presbyterians and Rome

The dust-storm of controversy over the *Ne Temere* decree—initiated some time ago by the exploiters of the McCann case—has not yet completely died down. All over Scotland, Presbyteries are still busy condemning the measure; and recent cables from Sydney tell us of sundry vehement protests passed by various Protestant synods in New South Wales. It may help to preserve New Zealand Presbyteries and Conferences from falling into similar foolishness if the widest publicity be given to a remarkable 'special article' in a recent number of the *Scotsman*, in which that staid and sober journal severely rebukes Presbyterians for their ridiculous inconsistency in rebuking the Catholic Church for adhering to a principle which they themselves have always staunchly proclaimed and maintained. The article is so clearly and vigorously written, and is of such permanent value, that extensive quotation is more than justified.

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'There are,' says the writer of the article ('A Scottish Presbyterian'), in the *Scotsman* of April 8, 'two exponents of the principles of spiritual independence which stand at the opposite extremes—the Church of Rome and the United Free Church of Scotland. The attitude of the Church of Rome towards the State cannot be better expressed than in the great saying of Ambrose when the Emperor Theodosius made penance in the Cathedral of Milan—"The Church is not in the Empire, but the Emperor is in the Church." That expresses the proud claim of the Church of Rome to the fulness of power independently of the State. The State was only one of its provinces. The claims of the voluntary Churches may differ in form, but they are the same in spirit. "They claim independence in the sphere of spiritual matters as full as even that of the Church of Rome. But the remarkable thing is that the one exponent of the doctrine of Spiritual Independence condemns the other exponent. The extremes meet in the one claim of independence—but in their meeting the one protests against the other.'

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'This is apparent in the attitude which the Presbyteries of the United Free Church are adopting towards the *Ne Temere* decree of the Church of Rome. All over the country Presbyteries are condemning and protesting against that decree. The Presbytery of Edinburgh this week condemned it because—"first, that it is in opposition to the law of the land, inasmuch as it declares certain marriages contracted in accordance therewith to be invalid; secondly, that it directly leads in the case of mixed marriages, celebrated otherwise than it prescribes, to the repudiation of moral obligations, which have been solemnly and legally undertaken." This decision of the United Free Presbytery of Edinburgh condemning the action of the Church of Rome in the exercise of its spiritual independence is based on the fact that the decree *Ne Temere* is in "opposition to the law of the land." This is, surely, a curious ground of condemnation to be taken up by the United Free Presby-

tery. Frequently Presbyterian Church Courts in Scotland have found themselves in opposition to the law of the land. During the "Ten years' conflict" the Church of Scotland waged a war against the law of the land—but the fact of that opposition could never be condemned by a United Free Presbytery. In recent time the United Free Church has been in opposition to the law of the land—but it never thought that such opposition was anything but a matter of conscience and right on its part. Yet it condemns the Church of Rome for similar opposition. The second cause of condemnation is weaker still, for there is no evidence, as Professor Martin pointed out, that the Church of Rome sought to undermine the moral responsibilities incurred by those who marry according to rites other than those of the Roman Church. All that the Church of Rome has done is to declare the law of marriage according to which discipline shall be maintained within her communion. It is but a matter which is within the jurisdiction of every Church—a matter of domestic policy, with which there is no call for other Churches to interfere.'

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'If the Church of Rome has set herself in opposition to 'the law of the land,' so have other Churches, including those who now condemn her. The Anglican Church has one law regarding marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and the State has another law—yet the Presbyteries of Presbyterian Churches have not condemned the Church of England for this opposition to the law of the State. The Church of Scotland and the United Free Church have a common standard, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and its terms are clear that marriage with a deceased wife's sister is illegal—"nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man." That is still the law of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, though ministers have been relieved from fears of legal processes should they officiate at such marriages. Thus on a matter of marriage laws the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland are at variance with the law of the State, and yet they condemn the Church of Rome for its marriage laws being at variance with the law of the State. There are indeed matters regarding which such opposition is inevitable. The law of the Church expresses the ideal; but the State legislates for the imperfect realisation of the ideal in an imperfect world. The Church of Rome has ever held up a high ideal of marriage as a sacramental ordinance. "Those who, otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest . . . and in the presence of two or three witnesses, shall attempt to contract matrimony, the Holy Synod renders altogether incapable of contracting marriage, and decrees that contracts of this kind are null and void"—thus the Council of Trent. "Only those marriages are valid which are contracted before the parish priest, or the ordinary of the place, or the priest delegated by either of them, and at least two witnesses . . ."—thus the decree *Ne Temere*. "The above laws are binding on all persons baptised in the Catholic Church," explains the decree. . . . "Non-Catholics, whether baptised or unbaptised, who contract among themselves, are nowhere bound to observe the Catholic forms of betrothal or marriage."

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'What the Church of Rome declares is the law of marriage for those within its own communion. It has done this in the exercise of its full spiritual independence. In doing so it is in opposition to the law of the land; but in that position it stands by the side of the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Churches in their own degree. It is a grim irony to find Churches which are upholders of spiritual independence condemning the Church of Rome for her exercise of spiritual independence. The solemn resolutions of Presbyteries in Scotland condemning the exercise of its spiritual independence on the part of the Church of Rome provide an instructive spectacle. . . . In no country have the claims to spiritual independence been pitched higher than by Churches in Scotland; in no country have greater sacrifices been made for its realisation. But the old spirit which claimed freedom for itself and denied it to others is not yet dead. It survives in the action of those who stir up excitement regarding a Church laying down the marriage laws for its own members. Every Church has the right to formulate the terms on which admission is given to its membership. 'The Protestantism,' concludes the *Scotsman* article, 'which is continually demonstrating its "godly attitude towards the Papacy," and continually raising the cry "We are betrayed," is a Protestantism no longer assured of its own strength.'

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"Fresh as the Shamrock."—The Sons of Erin are great consumers of Ceylon Houdai Lanka Tea; 1s 6d to 2s 2d.