

The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

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[From the London Tablet.]

SWITZERLAND, LUCCA, AND PARMA.

We have great pleasure in inserting the following article from an able and accomplished writer, but in doing so we think it necessary to express a partial dissent from it. We believe that the out-cry against the Jesuits in Switzerland is in a certain sense a pretext; this is, the most intelligent Swiss Radicals have no such dread of the Jesuits as they pretend to have. In that sense, the out-cry raised last century against the Jesuits by the Monarchs, the Philosophers, and the Harlots, was a pretext, and a most dishonest pretext to boot. But, this being so, the design of those who raised the pretext had not the less a direct bearing upon religion. They struck at religion through the Jesuits. Some of them wished to get rid of an inconvenient restraint; some to exalt the civil power above the Church; some were animated by the fanaticism of impiety.

We apprehend that in Switzerland in the present day the case is pretty much the same. The conversion of Lucerne from the Radical party to the Catholic cause—with which the Jesuits are indissolubly mixed up—did, we are persuaded, strike a real irreligious fear into the minds of the Radicals. They desire, it is true, to bring about the Unity of Switzerland, but they have also a great deal of Infidel fanaticism; and from the moment Lucerne threw her weight into the Catholic scale, and terrified them with the prospect of a religious reaction, they vowed the destruction of her independence.

A recent Swiss writer, M. Cherbuliez, a calm, thoughtful, and moderate Conservative writer and a Protestant, describes his own countrymen as peculiarly intolerant in matters of religion. Of course, he does not exempt the Catholics; and he himself, to all appearance, writes under a sincere though composed apprehension of ultramontanism and Jesuit influence. But the sects, he says, are even more exclusive and intolerant than the Catholics. On no side, he adds, "is there a complete understanding of the liberty of worship?" And, in accordance with his political opinions, he finds the explanation of this fact in the very principle of democracy. "The people," he says, "is always intolerant." "It wishes its belief to reign alone, as being alone true. It would proscribe other beliefs as fatal errors; it would prohibit their practice as the gravest of all crimes, as a crime against the Divine Law." With the validity of this explanation we have nothing to do. But of the fact M. Cherbuliez is a competent witness; and we shall but ill estimate the contest now raging in Switzerland if we do not bear in mind that to oppose the religious Catholic spirit, which is strictly on the defensive, there is a great deal of fanatical Infidelity.

Nothing can be apparently more different than the spirit which now animates the movements of contending parties in Switzerland, from that which dictates the arrangements which seem to be now nearly completed for settling the affairs of the Government of Lucca and Parma. In the one case the people appear to be arranging everything for themselves; in the other it looks as if the ruling power cared for nought but their own pleasure and benefit, and counted the wishes and the happiness of tens of thousands, as not worthy of a moment's consideration, in comparison with the family arrangements of a noble or a princely house. The Swiss might be taken for an essential popular movement, originating in the people, and directed purely and honestly for the sole and real benefit of the people; while the changes in the petty Italian dynasties seem nothing better than the ins and outs of the domestic matters of the houses of Austria, Bourbon, and Lorraine.

Yet, to an English eye, there is little enough to choose between the two. The autocratic spirit is the moving principle in both of them. The tyrant is at

work both in the mountains of Switzerland and the plains of Lucca and Parma. Neither in the mountain nor on the plain are our notions of good government recognised or revered. In both of them the more powerful party, or that which deems itself the more powerful, is steadily consulting its own wishes and imaginary interests, and quietly rejecting every other consideration. The real end for which all governments are instituted, the welfare, protection, and enlightenment of the great body of the governed—never troubles the breast of Bernese orator or Viennese diplomatist. How to gain their own end in the surest and quickest way; this is the one object of their anxiety, the subject of their waking and sleeping thoughts. The Grand Duke of Lucca cares for his cash and his comforts; and when the mob of "Lucca l'industriosa" gets too noisy or too strong for him, away flies the valiant Prince, and vacates the glorious throne so long honoured by his possession. He hies him straightway to the chambers of the statesmen; hands over his principality, with all it contains to Tuscany, "for a consideration;" passes quietly from the roll of European sovereign princes, and subsides into a private nobleman?

By-and-bye, it is true, he is again to emerge from obscurity, to mount a throne, to possess the power of life and death, and to rule his thousands of souls. Whenever the reluctance of Napoleon's widow to vacate her throne also can be overcome, the abdicating Bourbon is to mount the empty chair, and to reign over the honoured people of Parma. Happy inhabitants of Parma and Lucca! How exalted your lot and blissful your destinies, to be allowed thus to be the materials for arranging the difficulties of two or three royal houses! Why do not we at home take example from you, and learn to submit with delighted smiles to the interference of Dukes and Earls in our petty principalities, our boroughs, and our counties?

In the Alps the same game is played under a different name, with different pieces, and with different movements; for with all our sympathies for everything that may seem to be the desire of a great and valiant people, we can discern no difference between the despotic notions of the Government at Berne and of those who have just bought and sold the people of Lucca. All our fear, indeed, is, that no such good result will follow upon the machinations in Switzerland, as will be the issue of the abdication of the money-loving Duke of Lucca. Absurd and monstrous as those absolute ideas may seem to us in our island, at least they have in the present instance worked well for the Luccaese, and given them the more sensible and enlightened rule of Tuscany; while the poor Parmesans can hardly be worse off under their promised Prince than under the dominion of the Ministers of Maria Louisa. But in Switzerland no such fortunate change is apparently to follow. The majority of the Federal Government are tyrants to the very core of their hearts. They care not for religion or liberty, when either of those two sacred causes is arrayed against their ideas of political expediency. Whether or not the Sonderbund are unwise and injudicious in their opposition to the reforms in the executive and administrative government of the Confederation, it is more than clear that even if wrong in some details they are right in principle. They have the fundamental laws of the State on their side; and the blame is not to be laid upon Lucerne, or Zug, or Unterwalden, but upon the nature of a republican Government itself, and upon those marked and fundamental differences in religion, manners, and language which (it is said) renders a real union of the States into one homogeneous kingdom almost an impossibility.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for a foreigner to enter satisfactorily into all the minutiae of the subjects which are the real ground of the quarrel between the different cantons. How far some of them may be practicable; how far others may be visionary; how far they may be, one and all, inexpedient, a mere looker-on from a place hundreds of miles distant can probably know

little. One thing, however, seems sufficiently evident: the expulsion of the Jesuits is a mere pretence. There is no real religious question at all involved, except the general feeling of dislike which men of the world always entertain for those who are professedly and manifestly governed by the dictates of a strict religious belief. The Jesuits are attacked, not because they are Jesuits, but because they happen in this case to take the side of those who are opposed to the political changes which the majority desire. They have great influence in education, and as they hold those opinions which happen to be now unpopular in the Protestant cantons, the old cry is raised, a religious aspect is given to the warfare, and a variety of topics and ideas are introduced into the affair, which serve only to complicate the whole, and confound every one who would penetrate into the real spirit of the movements of the two parties.

The fact is, that there is neither Catholicism nor Protestantism, nor Jesuitism nor anti-Jesuitism, nor any religious doctrine at all, at the foundation of the dispute. Nor has it anything to do with Toryism, or Whiggism, or Radicalism, or democracy, except so far as the individuals and cantons concerned happen to be previously imbued with any special religious or political creed. If there is any one political principle involved in the matter, the minority are more influenced by ultra-democratic sentiments than by any other. The Jesuits, those supposed foes of popular rights, are *Conservative*, it is true; but of what are they *Conservative*? Of a political system which is essentially popular and democratic in its spirit; of a state of things maintained by the most rigidly-enforced universal suffrage! Yet such is the result of the nonsensical cries that are raised, and of the introduction of religious and party names into the discussion, that they are denounced by the democrats of half the countries in Europe as upholders of absolutism and enemies of popular and representative government. The fact simply is, that the numerical majority of the inhabitants of Switzerland desire to introduce certain internal changes in their political arrangements, while the constitution of the Confederation upholds the minority in rejecting the proposed alterations; and that upon this the majority are resolved to play the autocrat, and *force* the minority to submission. Catholicism, and Jesuitism, and Toryism, have no more to do with the matter than the people of Lucca and Parma have to do in the negotiations which are now giving them one sovereign instead of another.

[From the Novascotian, Nov. 17.]

THE MISTAKE.

All the violent Tories affect to believe and to make others believe, that the whole matter at issue in Nova Scotia, is Howe *vs.* Johnston, and that the present state of the country is mere a case in Chancery, where the Chancellor may take his time to draw up his decision at his leisure and convenience. They say, 'we have the ear of the Chancellor—he leans to us—and therefore, we can lose nothing by delay; we have all the power that exists—all the offices we want, and all the salaries; we are not, therefore, the party that desires to urge on the suit—*continuation is our object*—and any body may see how Sir John agrees with us.' Here lies the *mistake*—the case is not one of personalities but principles—it is not one in which the Chancellor can decide for one man or another, but for the principle upon which he himself holds his office, and upon which every man under him must hold his. He has not to decide as to justice done to Mr. Johnston or to Mr. Howe, but the justice to be done to a whole Province of the British Empire, that demands free institutions and free representation upon the plan, as near as it can be applied, of the British Government itself. We fear that Sir John may overlook this important consideration, and this is the point upon which he is most likely to split—and we are sorry to say not altogether without danger of meeting the fate of Sir Colin