

## Letter from John Mitchel.

PARIS, 25th June, 1861.

It is not my habit to comment on the letters of Paris Correspondents of other journals. They all, I suppose, gather up news and gossip as well as they can, and retail it with more or less accuracy, pungency and piquancy, varying it with occasional more or less profound remarks or inferences of their own, as I do myself. Those assiduous writers, however, come in occasionally for a sharp rebuke; of which the *Constitutionnel* has just administered to the correspondent of the *Times* a fair sample. The *Times*, as everybody knows, must please the English people, and reflect the feelings of that amiable community; and there is no surer way to their heart at present than damaging or vilifying the Emperor Napoleon and his government, his ministers, his law courts, or anything else that is his—but gently it must be done—almost covertly; for the Anglo Saxon does not want to quarrel with him yet. Now, the aforesaid *Times* correspondent, ministering to this exigency of Mr. Bull, constantly finds something grievously wrong here in France. One morning he discovers justice is not administered to his mind—that Mires is an oppressed man—hints that there must be a conspiracy against Mires, and that the fair fame of high personages may possibly be involved. Another day he laments over the hard lot of poor journalists, exposed to such terrible warnings and suppressions: and of late he has occupied himself in gathering up stores from all the departments about government influence in the election of Councils General: he regards it as an awful grievance that there should be candidates sustained by the influence of the *prefet*; and dwells with much delight upon the few cases in which the government candidates were defeated. For sometimes they are defeated. Sometimes the earnest advice and influence of the worthy *prefet* won't do; the personal claims of the opposing candidate prevail; for in fact, there is no money to bribe the tens of thousands of universal suffrage electors; neither are there landlords to eject them, nor bailiffs to drive them to the polls. Instead of drawing from all this the obvious moral—that those defeats of government candidates prove freedom of action in the voters, and that the immense preponderance in favor of the government, upon the whole, proves the confidence which most of the people repose in said government, and their attachment to it—instead of all this, the shrewd correspondent, by hints and innuendos, gives his readers to understand that there is a profound and desperate disaffection against the Emperor, that it would show itself all over France in the return of Orleanists or Republicans, or anything but Imperialists—only for the horrible tyranny of those wicked *prefets*. It seems, that in this hot pursuit of facts damaging to the government, the zealous correspondent is sometimes humbugged; he is a little credulous apparently, and innocently writes down whatever Frenchmen choose to tell him. For example: he triumphs in the election of a M. Duperron at Torrigay, in Normandie, as a success of the opposition, whereas, it turns out that the said Duperron is a hot Imperialist, and so declared himself in his address to the electors, ending with *Vive l'Empereur!* The *Constitutionnel* at last thinks it worth while to correct a few of the correspondent's misstatements, and with a contemptuous sharpness, unusual to the Paris press, charges him with "ignorance," and adds "If the Paris correspondent of the *Times* is always as well informed, its readers must be better instructed as to what passes in China than in France." Really the *Constitutionnel* is too harsh; he does not consider that it is not what is actually passing in France that forms the French intelligence fit to spread out upon every Briton's breakfast table every morning. In fact, the true Briton who takes the *Times*, would stop his paper if he did not find these continual proofs of the debased and afflicted condition of France, of the hateful tyranny of the Emperor, and of the attachment of the people (which they would show but for those savage *prefets*), for the brood of that much-regretted "Citizen King," whom the English keep in hand for future use, and feast and flatter, and address as Royal Highness, and make chairmen of literary dinners.

France ignominiously chased away that absurd old king and his brood in '48, but now we would have them back, only for these devils of *prefets!*

ANOTHER CORRESPONDENT.

The *Tablet*, Catholic organ in London, has also its correspondent in Paris; and it is his business, as another faithful Englishman, to see and represent everything that passes here in the most unfavorable light. There is one thing, that no true Briton, you are aware, can regard without disgust—I mean the law and practice which regulate the press in France. Accordingly this *Tablet* correspondent, enlarges, last Saturday, upon the shocking restrictions, the awful advertisements, the suspensions, and utter annihilation that a journal is exposed to at the hands of M. de Persigny. And the writer makes this remark—which is the occasion of my noticing him at all—"Such is the system Mr. John Mitchel proclaimed a few months ago freer than our own—To be sure he wrote in the *Constitutionnel*"

No, he never had the honor of writing in the *Constitutionnel*. The *Tablet* undoubtedly refers to an article which really did appear some months ago, signed "H. Marie Martin," comparing the system pursued towards the press in France and in Ireland: and inasmuch as that eminent writer showed minute acquaintance with the tricks of the Crown office, and the Attorney General—and inasmuch as Englishmen make it an especial point that those doings in Dublin might not, must not, cannot be known to foreigners, it very naturally occurs to this English writer that it could be no other than a factious Irish refugee who described so faithfully the packing of the panel in the sheriff's office—the packing of the jury out of the packed panel in the court on occasion of any pretended "trial"—the religious exclusion of all Catholics—the peremptory challenge even of most of the Protestants who answered to their names, and, lastly, the predetermined "conviction" and ignominious banishment to a penal colony. The inference of the English writer is natural: such things are supposed not to be known in Europe. The cue is, to hold up England as the grand exemplar of freedom of the press, and also of fair, open and impartial judicial proceedings. And when Irishmen venture to mention some incidents which give the lie to this pretension—(as the '98 trials—the Magee trial in 1813—the O'Connell trial—the '48 trials—the Phoenix trials, or the like)—the cue is, to pretend you do not hear, to turn your head away, and speak of something else. Therefore it is quite natural that an Englishman, finding this plain narrative of my pretended trial in a French newspaper, should conclude I had written it myself.

I do not deny also that I furnished the facts of the case to the distinguished writer. They have never been contradicted: and being too notorious in England, it is probable they never will be; but if the writer in the *Tablet* dislikes those facts, perhaps he would like to try his hand at invalidating them a little.

In the meantime—awaiting the *Tablet's* examination of that "trial"—I must go a little farther. The short sentence I have cited contains a well-known British equivocation, which I wish once for all to turn inside out. The writer says I proclaimed the *regime* of the French Press "freer than our own." Pray which is our own?

The article in question did not compare the French system with the English. In truth I know little, and care nothing about English law or practice in prosecutions of the press; and could give Marie Martin no information upon that head. But as to the law and practice in Ireland I am a perfect adept and expert. Accordingly I informed the writer in the *Constitutionnel*.

First—That whereas in his country a journal might be suspended after two warnings, in our country it is confiscated finally without any warning at all.

Second—That whereas in France a journalist after trial and condemnation may be mulcted in a pecuniary fine—and that is the worst they can do to him—in Ireland a journalist may be chained up and sent to the hulks as a common felon without any trial at all. For I carefully explained to my friend that a form of trial before a carefully packed jury, all of one religious sect, is no trial.

Third—That whereas in France, even after warnings, suspension, and suppression, there is no confiscation of the property of the journal to the State, but the proprietor can sell it to whomsoever he pleases—in Ireland, on the contrary, the pretended conviction before a false jury is followed by immediate robbery of the premises, by burglars in the garb of policemen.

Fourth—That whereas in France all proceedings against the press are open and straightforward, in Ireland there is kept up an insulting pretence of law and justice as if there was actually a species of judicial trial going forward, when in truth the foreign viceroy for the time being might just as well at once waylay his enemy with a band of cut-throats, on a dark night gag him, chain him, and pack him off to a penal dungeon. In fact, the latter would be much the more honorable proceeding.

Fifth—When he remarked that in practice Irish journalists seem to say whatever they pleased; and that those prosecutions, although terrible when they do come, are exceedingly rare—I bade him observe that the French government indeed may be obliged to manage the press with a tight rein, because Frenchmen are armed men, because France has six hundred thousand soldiers, all Frenchmen and all readers of newspapers, and because public spirit is there high and public resentment perilous—in Ireland on the contrary, the mass of the people being carefully disarmed, the foreign government can allow them this apparent "freedom," in contempt. The opinions or resentments of unarmed men signify about as much as those of fish or fowl; and those who own them and manage them can safely allow them a free press and free speech (or rather freedom of whining, howling and mauling)—are rather glad, indeed, to see them ease their minds in this way, because it carries off the bad humors and leaves the creatures more fit for their work. In short England (thus I expounded the matter to my friend) says to Ire-

land—Cry away dear sister! Curse a little my jewel, it will do you good! You would like to call me a few bad names? Oh! by all means; it will make you feel easier, dear!

Such was the information I gave to the writer in the *Constitutionnel*. He believed it entirely; and thereupon wrote the searching article which the *Tablet* correspondent does me the honor of attributing to me. It was the writer of that article also, and not I, who on full consideration preferred the French *regime* "to ours"—meaning by *ours*, not the English system, which was not in question, but the Irish system. He thought that on the whole he would rather pay all he had in the world as a fine than go to a penal colony for fourteen years. He would rather have a real trial (such as is to be had in French courts) than the impious pretence of a trial in the Irish ones.

But, perhaps, the correspondent of the *Tablet* will tell me that in Ireland there is, in fact, a real trial by jury for political offences. Truly I am glad, when any English journal has imprudently alluded to this controversy, that it is a Catholic journal; and I would ask the writer whether he considers that a transaction in Ireland such as I have described—where every Catholic in that Catholic country is deprived of the common civic office of juror—is a trial, ay or no? If he, being a Catholic, shall be base enough to say that a pretended trial in the city of Dublin before twelve men selected out of one small sect of the population, about a tenth of the whole, to the exclusion of every Catholic, without exception, and every Protestant who did not belong to that small sect—was a trial, then I have no further remarks to make to the address of that individual. If he shall say it was not a trial, why then I defy him to find in all the history of the French press, within the present reign, so infamous a transaction. It is not then a question of more liberty or less liberty; there is just simply in Ireland no liberty, because there is no law. If it be true that the highest test and noblest use of a good government is to bring an impartial jury into a jury box, then the British Government in Ireland is the very worst that ever cursed any land under Heaven.

## KINGDOM OF ITALY.

The *Moniteur* of this day contains, for the first time, the formal announcement that the Emperor has recognised Victor Emmanuel as "King of Italy." It also mentions the reserves concerning which there has been so much rumor—namely, that he couples his recognition with a declaration beforehand that France will have no *solidarity* in any movements to disturb the peace of Europe; and also, that French forces shall remain in Rome, "until the interests which caused their presence there shall be protected by sufficient guarantees." This, I presume, means until the Pope's temporal dominion over his present remaining territory shall be secured. So, if there is to be unification of Italy, it seems the body is to do without the head. The knot of this troublesome business is not yet unloosed: and, in fact, the present situation cannot continue long. Naples is still greatly disorganised in the country districts, and troops are concentrating there to shoot down the peasantry, whom the Liberal press thinks proper to term brigands. There have been violent differences in the Turin Cabinet; and Cavour's successor, Ricasoli, was for refusing the French recognition coupled with any sort of reserve or condition. That difficulty has been got over, for Count Vimercati arrived in Paris, and also Aresse, with the autograph thanks of Victor Emmanuel upon this happy resumption of diplomatic relations.

## CAMP AT CHALONS.

An officer at Chalons, in a letter to *Le Nord*, describes the encampment as it now stands. The troops are all undergoing drill by regiments and battalions, in anticipation of grand manoeuvres which the Emperor desires to direct, when he visits the camp. "The cavalry from Lunéville will come at the same time; and then our plains will be the scene of magnificent manoeuvres where in forty thousand will take part." The writer says the several foreign sovereigns are expected to visit the camp this summer. The letter concludes thus:—"Madame de MacMahon is installed these ten days back at Bouy, a short league from the Imperial quarter. Her excellency occupies two peasants' houses, to which a gallery has been added to join them together; besides some other works, to make them a little habitable. She is residing there with her sister and her children. On the day of her arrival, the entire population went to meet *La Marchale*, and young girls presented her with bouquets. His Excellency the Marshall has also been the object of ovations, and was harangued by the Mayor in a highly official manner."

## AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

The Spanish government has issued a proclamation precisely similar to the French one. Absolute neutrality is proclaimed; prohibition of Spanish subjects to accept letters of marque; prohibition of privateers with their prizes, belonging to either of the belligerents, to enter a Spanish port except for twenty-four hours, or except in case of necessity, &c. It may be observed that both the French and Spanish proclamations are more favorable to the Southern States than the English one; for the latter forbids privateers to enter any of her ports at all; and it is the South, not the North, which employs privateers. Indeed the London *Examiner* states distinctly, that it had been the wish of the British government to take the part of the North more decidedly, but that their resolution was modified in order to be in accordance with France upon that subject. I think there may be a kind of race between France and England for who shall recognise the Confederate States first. They will both be watching for the first fair opportunity. J. M.

## Who are in the Right—The North or the South?

The following letter has appeared in a Southern paper on the 22d of February, 1860, relative to the then approaching "irrepressible conflict" which now, alas, has all the appearance of a stern reality. Its forewarnings have been lost on its readers, but the principle maintained as to both sides of the question, remain, at least, we trust, to interest the reader of to-day:—

"The aggressive spirit of the North in this country is quite in keeping with the same disposition of that of Europe in ancient times, when the Teutonic barbarians, restless and warlike, drove all before them like an avalanche. Thus began that warfare, the fruit of rapacity and covetousness, from which the pious, the refined, and the improving Celts of Western and Southern Europe suffered such cruel wrong, which is not ended at this day. The North of this country, with far less bravery and manliness than the Northerners of old, rejoicing in a higher aspiration of constructive morality, are driven headlong by a species of unscrupulous conscience—not so much impelled by rapacity, but actuated by conscience—a sort of vainglorious self-sufficiency that approves the destruction of other men's prosperity or maintenance, no matter by what means accomplished, provided they obey—not "the still, small voice," that tells of slumbering rectitude—but the phantom of a crooked conscience! Those are the identical pseudo-Republicans—spoilers of true and generous republicanism—who are ever in

the van against the national and personal peace and happiness, and against the religious freedom of their fellow men—and whose motto, had they candor to carry it out, would be "Death or the Koran!" None shall think but as they think, on any subject where religion or nationality is involved. Hence their former political proscriptions and modern literary derision of the Celtic families of Christendom—for whom there is no forgiveness, save where there appears an occasional recreancy to the faith that is in them, or a willingness to forego their manhood and truculently succumb to the views of the Saxon. The same intermeddling spirit of fanaticism infests them to day that wrangled in their hearts against the Cavaliers of England, the loyalists of Ireland, and against their doubting co-religionists of New England. The doughfaced Yankee—a modern patronimic for Puritan—stands isolated towards the rest of mankind—a hater, hated by his fellow man. He is better known through society by his rudeness, his bigotry, and his ingratitude, than his philanthropy. And a rude ungrateful bigot must be the closest representative possible of the Goth and Vandal type. He rants in the pulpit more like a Cromwellian captain than a divine—he fulminates on the literary rostrum as like a very distorter of history as a selfish gladiator—he inculcates in the political arena more as a self made censor than a statesman—doctrines subversive of all authority that should bind all other men by the conscience, or at least lay hold upon their honor, but which doctrine he inventively excogitates a *higher law*—suited solely to the saints, which unktion, as a matter of course, he arrogates to himself.

Thinkest thou, oh, versatile reader, that I lay those weighty charges at the door of every man who religiously dissents from the views of a privileged episcopacy; or even against every such denizen of New England? I should be sorry to bear so strong a resemblance, so far, to the overwhelming majority of Northern Yankeeism in an intolerant hatred of whole peoples, for daring to think in our presence—for presuming to call their souls their own, when they are flung down to the lowly condition of hired servants, wood hewers, or other menials, where they have the honor to be free! That there are good and true exceptions to the Yankee notions of self-sufficiency, North and South, is as true in this as in other general rules; but they are far from forming a respectable minority.

Behold those sleek faced enthusiasts of a righteous theology, east of the Atlantic, wielding the lash of proscription to the death against a non-conforming tenantry "at will," who are goaded to fly in hundreds of thousands to the pauper prison, the emigrant ship, or the unconfined grave!—exclaiming in triumph, "They are gone with a vengeance!" and in the same breath forcing their hypocritical compassion on unappreciating and unwilling negroes! Behold the selfsame doctrinaires plying the keen lash of slander, derision and exclusion, in word and deed—in their homes, in public, in their books, in their multitudinous newspaper press—against that white race of nobler extraction than they; but who now seem as if doomed to a martyrdom inflicted by the sympathetic clamorers for the licentiousness of the African, of evidently ignoble blood! Oh, consistency! where is thy blush? We answer not in the face of an Abolitionist!

Shall we, by virtue of this aggressive fanaticism of our Yankee dictators, esteem the dwellers south of the line of demarkation, blameless during the present conflict? Very far from it. Why? Simply because they encourage their threatening neighbors by evincing as much alternate braggadocio and fear of the North as England does of France, when the latter frowns or breathes a word of menace. Thus we daily hear of the South threatening to do wonders—to do that which the North believes is not within her reach; or, if it be, the latter presumes she would not permit it to be done. The North have audacity enough to use the word *permit*—and none need be surprised at this when she counts her comparative strength. She hears the South vaunting of war, of secession, of opening up negotiations with England. This is pitiable in each and all; but, in the latter threat, however free-traders may approve the design, as a portion of the Union, there savors a want of sagacity or of public principle, as if faith could, for any length of time, be reposed in her who has not yet quite relinquished her designs of making use of her lost colonies of the West.

The sole question left for animadversion is that of secession. The potential *would, could and should* might herein be investigated in this connection. That thousands of influential Southerners *would*, I am grieved to say, secede, admits of little doubt. That they *could or should* remains to be discussed. The Democracy—the bone and sinew, and the truly potential elements of the Union—though its sympathy runs in high favor with the South, would, in the event of even a prospective loss, by revolt to the Union, of which they are justly proud, of the most inconsiderable of the States, nay a promontory, an island, would turn all their prowess on the erring member. They adjudge rightly that North nor South—neither Maine nor Carolina, Rhode Island nor Oregon—exists for itself—each is there as part of the great machinery of freedom, as it were, to do the office of the whole; they are all there—the providential and the fortunate result of a successful revolt, of a steady growth—to work out the noble design of crushing a rampant aristocracy, who aimed but for this Union of States, to crush the commonality of the world—to prove that this asylum of human freedom is no failure—and no "pent-up Utica" shall spoil the aspirations of the oppressed nations of the world. Separate, and all is lost! Attempt it, and we await the vanquished, and the victors! Dismember this Union, and from that she is a hissing thing before the wily diplomacy of kingcraft. Can she then, as now, keep her foes at bay? Ah, men too often, when led on by passion, and environed by apparent security, forget how easily they may fall, as greatness has fallen, by the first untoward act of internal weakness—the first injudicious or impolitic step. Need we point to Greece, or to Rome, or in our own day, to the first French empire? And, oh, what weakness or madness can compare to the suicide of internal strife. Separate, and you are one and all on a dead level with the unfortunate States of Central and South America. And again, has our old enemy learned, or can she ever learn to forget her nature—her intermeddling with other nations? Compare her *past* treatment of Spain, of Portugal, of Holland, of nearly all the States of South America, with her *future* towards an unannexed State or minority of States of our now invincible confederacy. Who can secure a young nation, no more than a young man of fortune set adrift from the accustomed tie of family surveillance, and against the designs and assaults of a mercenary world?

It is not, surely, to the interest of the North to make enemies at the South, neither is it in consonance with the natural tendencies of her majority; but England, who has, through her emissaries, thrown the apple of discord among us, covertly at the first, with a view of carrying on a crusade against the Southern peculiar institution, and so divide us now, when she supposes that apple to be ripe, steps forward to abet the South, saying: "Well done, thou upholders of a system against which I have long railed; proceed in that direction,—but be sure to give me your cotton and purchase my merchandise!" Shall the South take the bait with her eyes open? It can be done, doubtless, without a consultation with other portions of the Union; but will she do so merely to vex the North?