

as Christian; and both the genius of Burke and the piety of Hall had appealed to the Protestant sympathies of England in their behalf. The singularly anomalous position and palpable inefficiency of the Irish Establishment had created a very general diversion in favor of the Popish majority of Ireland; the Voluntary controversy united Evangelistic Dissent and Roman Catholicism by the bonds of a common cause, — at least Evangelistic Dissent was fond enough to believe the cause a common one, and learned to speak with respect and regard of “Roman Catholic brethren;” the spread of Puseyism in the English Establishment united, by sympathies of a different but not weaker kind, the Papist and the High Churchman; the old anti-Popish feeling has been gradually sinking under the influence of so many reäctive causes; and not since the times of the Reformation was it at so low an ebb as in England at the present day. It would seem as if every old score was to be blotted off, and Popery to be taken a second time on trial. But it will ultimately be found wanting, and will, as in France and Germany, have just to be condemned again. The stiff rigidity of its unalterable codes of practice and belief, — inadequately compensated by the flexibility of its wilier votaries, — has incapacitated it from keeping up with the human mind in its onward march. If it be the sure destiny of man to rise, it must be the as inevitable fate of Popery to sink. The excesses of fifteen hundred years have vitiated and undermined its constitution, intellectual and moral; its absurder beliefs have become incompatible with advanced knowledge, — its more despotic assumptions with rational freedom; and were it not for the craving vacuum in the public mind which infidelity is continually creating for superstition to fill, and into which Popery is fitfully rushing, like steam into the condenser of an engine, again and again to be annihilated, and again and again to flow