

# DAMNATION!

## ETERNAL DAMNATION

TO THE FIEND-BEGOTTEN,

### “COARSER FOOD”

# NEW POOR LAW.

*A Speech*

BY RICHARD OASTLER.

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The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.—DAVID.

The Poor Law Commissioners are *bloody and deceitful men*.—TRUTH.

*Minister*.—Cursed is he that removeth his neighbour's Landmark.

*Answer*.—Amen.

*Minister*.—Cursed is he that maketh the blind to go out of his way.

*Answer*.—Amen.—

THE COMMINATION SERVICE.

Then the Poor Law Commissioners are cursed of God and of Man,

TRUTH.

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—  
1837.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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"OASTLER, this is not the speech you delivered at Huddersfield, on the evening of January 14th. 1837, the night the people of Huddersfield welcomed Feargus O'CONNOR."

"You are mistaken, friend ; it is."

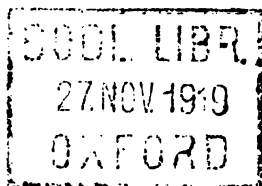
"I heard you, Oastler, and sure I am, you did not say all that is here printed."

"Now, you are right ; Friend, I'll tell you why, because the hour was late, ten o'clock at night ; the people had been out five hours, and I feared to tire and starve them ; so I then gave the outline ; now, I print, what, if circumstances had permitted, I should have spoken ;—you will find all I then said in print, and something more."

CHRISTIAN READER.

Be not alarmed at the sound of the Title. I can not *bless* that, which GOD and NATURE CURSE. The Bible being true, the Poor Law Amendment Act is false ! The Bible containing the will of God,—this accursed Act of Parliament embodies the will of Lucifer. It is the Sceptre of Belial, establishing its sway in the Land of Bibles !! DAMNATION ; ETERNAL DAMNATION to the accursed Fiend !!

RICHARD OASTLER.



*J. Hobson, Printer, 12, Market Street, Leeds.*

## A Speech, &c.



Mr. OASTLER had no sooner presented himself to the Meeting, after the Huddersfield Address had been presented to FEARGUS O'CONNOR, Esq., than he was met by a cry, from a person on the right of the Hustings, who shouted, "a Tory and a Radical!" Mr. OASTLER immediately commenced, and said:—

Will that Gentleman, who shouted "*a Tory and a Radical*," be so obliging as to inform me who he is?—— Will that very busy man, favour me with his name?—— No, not he; he is a skulker, a back-door warrior, a Whig, I'll be bound. But, before he escapes, I wish you to examine his pockets; it may happen that they are well filled with stones. I will tell you more about the Whig stones, before I leave you.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS,—You have heard from a base, and skulking, and cowardly Whig, that "*a Radical and a Tory*" are here together before you. You know that our cause is good, that our purpose is patriotic. But, how is it, friends, that we have not a single Whig amongst us, excepting that one with a stone in his pocket? I'll tell you;—simply because we hope to benefit the poor: and we need not *now* be told, that every genuine Whig is the sworn enemy of the poor. There can be no doubt, that the snarling Whig, who has just spoken, has got a stone ready, either for FEARGUS O'CONNOR, or myself; because he knows full well, that we are determined, that the Working People shall no longer be deluded by the Whigs; that they shall no longer fight the battles of the Whigs, and then be rewarded with contempt, and imprisonment, and swords, and bludgeons, and banishment, and slavery.

You are met to night, my friends, to do honour to FEARGUS O'CONNOR; and truly you honour yourselves, by endeavouring to honour that honest man. I ask that "*bloody and brutal*" Whig, what he has to say against FEARGUS O'CONNOR? For myself, I can assure you, that I have enquired respecting him, of both Whigs, Tories, and Radicals; of the Aristocracy; of Members of Parliament; of Bankers, Merchants, and Shopkeepers;

aye, and of Operatives, too ; and I never yet knew or heard, save from the greatest thief and liar that ever disgraced his native land, that "no confidence ought to be placed in F. O'CONNOR." I believe, nay I am sure, as far as I have heard, that he has always been considered an honest man. The only reason why the Begging-Scoundrel hates him, is, because O'CONNOR is too honest to do *his* dirty bidding.

It is perfectly true, & you all know it, that there is a wide difference, in our abstract political principles, between Mr. O'CONNOR, and myself ; but our ultimate object is one and the same. We both seek for the happiness, the contentment, and the security of all : and, for that very reason, we are neither of us Whigs. I should indeed be ashamed of myself, if I could not assist in honouring any man, of whatever party, or of whatever creed, who is sedulously devoting the energies of his mind and his body, and spending his fortune, for the promotion of truth and for the spread of happiness, and who is endeavouring to expose the villany of those who are enslaving their dupes, whilst they pretend to "liberalize" them. Yes, Mr. Whig, I am proud to find, that a "Tory and a Radical" can yet meet together, to advocate the rights, the christian and natural rights of Poverty and Labour. Sorry I am, that you will not find many Tories, willing to rub off their party prejudices. I have, however, as you well know, long since sworn to sacrifice *caste* and *party*, and to unite, hand and heart, with any, and with every man, who will assist me in establishing the Christian rights of Labour, in this wilderness of Mammon ; and I do feel proud to stand by that Radical Patriot, who is banished from his native land, by the most rapacious Beggar that ever stole a potatoe from a starving Irish pauper.

But do not think that I intrude. I am here at the bidding of the Radical Committee, who had the management of this glorious procession, and who are entrusted with the confidence of the Radicals of Huddersfield. They know me perfectly well ; they know that I never blink any question ; they know that I am an out-and-out-ultra Tory : but, I received their thanks and their invitation, because they know also, that I am the Workman's friend—the friend of Labour. I accept their invitation with gratitude ; and in spite of the prejudiced Whig, Tory, or Radical, I will never fear to accept any invitation, to speak in Labour's cause, when I think that by doing so, I can do good.—[*Some confusion.*] Who is that ? The snarling Whig again ? Poor wretch ; he cannot stop or tease me. A snarling Whig is only sport for me. No doubt the cur is some well paid lick-spittle, hired by the gang. Do examine the fellow's pockets, and take the stones therefrom. I was not aware that I should be so much honoured, as to receive the expiring snarl of the poor dying Whigs. Poor things ! they are nearly finished—nearly done ! No doubt this is the last of the breed. To-morrow we shall treat them as a matter of history ; and the only enquiry will be, in what ditch did they rot ? Poor Whig, I pity thee.—But I do rejoice to meet FEARGUS

O'CONNOR, on this occasion. I am proud, that you have done yourselves the honour to receive Ireland's "Present," so worthily. I know that he is the friend of the poor, and that he enjoys their "confidence;" indeed, so far as I know, the only individual who ever declared him "to be unworthy of confidence," is, the very man, who has always proved himself to be a curse to every person, and to every party, who have, in their turns, entrusted him with their "confidence;" I mean the "base, bloody, & brutal" Irish Whig; the Beggar-Patriot, whose proudest boast, is, that "Irishmen feed and fatten on bad unwholesome food!"—and, whose finest emblem of national happiness and contentment is exhibited, when a pauper and a labourer are nibbling together at each end of the labourer's last potatoe, and the Patriot-Beggar is standing by, to snatch it from their famished lips!

But, I told you that I had something to say about stones. You see this Hat.—[Mr. Oastler *here held up a Hat, and, thrusting his hand through a large hole on one side of it, said,*—Give me a cheer, for Whig Liberty! This is Whig Liberty, my friends!—Look also at my Coat—rent from bottom to top, by Whig Patriots. And then, you have not forgotten the Whig Bullets, from Netherton; a cheer, my friends, for Liberty-Bullets!—Such are the only arguments my foes can use.

But now for this Hat. It is not mine. Do you see this large hole. Now, Mr. Whig, look at this hole, and tell me, does that stone of yours fit it? Nay, nay, don't look so shy and shame-faced—it was a Whig stone that went through this hole; have you one that will fit it?—[*He is off, Mr. Oastler.*—Oh; his "bloody and brutal" deeds have shamed him, have they? Well then, I must tell you all about this Hat, and this great big hole.—The last time I had the honour to appear in this place, 'twas that night I introduced our Lancashire Champion, STEPHENS, to you. Well, on that night;—(now, my friends, if there are any Whigs here, do feel in their pockets. Not that I am afraid of their stones; not I indeed: but I *am* afraid for their own lives, and for their mills and houses); on that night, this Hat was worn by the son of a respectable dissenting minister. He was close beside me. You will remember that I told you something about one Learoyd; just when I had finished, and was sitting down, (I was without Hat), the wearer of this Hat rose to make way for me. I am taller than he. If I had retained my position, the stone which went thro' this hole, and afterwards carried this Hat about five yards from its owner, would have gone in search of my brains, as, I have no doubt, the cowardly assassin who threw it intended. Now ye "brutal Whigs!" throw your stones!! ye "bloody" Whigs! fire your bullets!!—You see me here again, without hat, *defying* your malice and your power.—But let me tell you, it is well that the hired assassin did not kill me. Kings seldom get slain alone! One hundred of you, at least, would that night have gone, both cold and pale to bed, had I been murdered by your base, cowardly assassin,—One hundred of your Houses or Mills,

would have been very hot and clothed in scarlet, that night, had I been murdered.—Have a care of playing with edged tools, children. Once establish the reign of bullets, and stones, and ropes, and lamp posts; and then I know who will be your match. Then, Messrs. Whigs,—beware!

Who is that old Thief-catcher you had here lately?—[*Dalton.*]—Aye, that is the name. I don't know the Villain, but he talks about "hanging me on the first lamp post." The assassin must be hired to talk such "bloody and brutal" talk. *Why* should Dalton hang me? I don't even know the scoundrel by sight.—I never injured him, never spoke of him, or to him, that I know of: yet the fellow wants me hanged! If he thinks the gallows are hungry, and that ropes are plentiful, *let him hang himself!* I have no relish for these ropes, and stones, and bullets;—but I fear them not: let those who threaten, FEAR; not I.

Throw stones as thick as hail, if it suit your purpose, Whigs. I shall not send my foes to *Hall-on-Garden*, but to a place where Hats are scarce. I am sorry to occupy your time about these matters; but if our enemies will use force, and seek our lives, 'tis well we told them of the consequences. We seek to save life, not to destroy it; to protect property, not to burn it,

But, my friends, I have more important business with you, than to expose the dastardly meanness of these assassin Huddersfield Whigs. I have been requested to give you my opinion, on that infernal measure, proposed by that Traitor, whom the Whigs so lately made a noble; he, who, fancying some time ago, that he had lost his character, went tramping, like a common bag-man, 'till his soles were worn, even to the northern confines of Scotland, in search of that, he could not lose, because he ne'er possessed it: I mean that characterless-knave, the "great Westmoreland Pauper."

I am, at the request of the Committee, about to talk to you, upon a subject which is most important to every man, woman, and child in England, whether they are Whigs, or Tories, or Radicals. Whether they be Episcopalians or Dissenters; Aristocrats or Paupers:—yes, it matters not whether you be rich, or whether you be poor; you have, all of you, an interest, and a great interest too, in the subject I am about to speak upon.

Allow me then, to call your most serious attention to this all-important question. For a moment forget your party strifes, and your party prejudices. Call home your reason, and use it; and let that christian principle of love to all of every rank, predominate. Remember you have wives, whom you have sworn to cherish; children, whom it is your delight to protect and comfort;—homes, which you are prepared to defend from traitor's grasp. Hear me, friends, for I will speak right out, without fear; I will, this night, tell you what I think about that damnably accursed thing, which is intended to root out of England, every principle of natural and revealed Religion; which is intended to make us all more wretched and more base, than the brutes;—I mean the New Poor Law!

I am not however, going to ask you, as Britons, whether it is right that three stinking Commissioned funguses, should be allowed to feed upon the root of the Royal English Oak, to drain its nourishment, and aspire to out-top its branches, and overpower it with their noisome pestilential effluvia?

I am not about to enquire, of you, whether it is befitting, that, now in England, the King's Commissioners should be permitted to skulk in the dark, from province to province, from town to town, pretending to establish a measure for Registration, when, in reality, their object is, to bring "coarser food" or imprisonment?

I am not about to ask you, rate-payers, whether you are now so far enslaved, as to be prepared to pay your money, when you are to have no power whatever over its application? Or you, Overseers, whether it is right that you should be the slaves, the collecting slaves of the Guardians, just to take the trouble and the odium of collecting the Rates, and of paying them to the Board? Nor you Guardians, to be chosen by the rate-payers, whether you are willing to sit at the Union boards, to be dictated to by three briefless lawyers in London; to receive their cruel mandates, and, at their bidding, to act the parochial Despots; *liable*, if you disobey your Tyrant Masters, to be fined to any amount, and to be imprisoned, and tread-milled! and, if you obey their orders, *sure* to receive the curse of all around you?

No; I am not about to ask such questions, but I will tell you an anecdote, about one of your own Overseers, and the hungry Spaniel who wants to fatten, after the rate of £800 a-year, off the leavings of your paupers; I mean *Mr. Power*, the Poor Law Commissioner:—and then I will read you a clause out of the Act itself—and if, after that, you don't, with the Bible and the Church, CURSE the whole affair, I shall be surprised, and then fancy that you are not Englishmen.

*Howgate*, your Overseer, met *Power*, the "Runner," at the George Inn, the other day. *Howgate* asked *Power*—

"I will thank you to tell me, Sir, what will be the duty of the "Overseers of the Poor, when you have established the new Poor "Law Unions?"

*Power*.—"To collect the Rates, and then to pay the amount to "the Guardians."

*Howgate*.—"Will the Overseers have no vote or influence, in "the payment or distribution of the money, which they will have "the trouble of collecting?"

*Power*.—"None, whatever."

*Howgate*.—"And, pray, what will the Guardians have to do?"

*Power*.—"To disburse the Rates, *under the orders and directions "of the Commissioners."*

*Howgate*.—"Then the Guardians will have no 'say' in it themselves?"

*Power*.—"THEY MUST OBEY THE INSTRUCTIONS OF "THE COMMISSIONERS."

*Howgate*.—"Good night, Sir; I will take my hat, and be after

"getting a glass of Brandy and Water: but before I leave you, "I may as well tell you, that, if that be so, the *Commissioners will have to collect the Huddersfield Rates themselves!*"

So far, for Howgate and Power:—whilst the former is taking his glass, and the latter is running away, like a Spaniel bitten by a Bull-dog, I will read you, men of property, just so much of the Book from Hell, as will make you sick. Hear it, men of Huddersfield, and bless your stars for the "straight waistcoats" thus provided for you, by Act of Parliament.—It is Clause 98, in the Devil's own Book:—

"And be it further enacted, That in case any person shall wilfully disobey *any* of the Rules, Orders, or Regulations of the said Commissioners or *Assistant* Commissioners, or be guilty of any *Contempt* of the said Commissioners sitting as a Board, such person shall, upon *conviction before any Two Justices*, forfeit and pay for the First Offence, any Sum not exceeding Five Pounds, for the Second Offence any Sum not exceeding Twenty Pounds nor less than Five Pounds, and in the event of such person being convicted a Third Time, such Third and every subsequent Offence shall be deemed a MISDEMEANOR, and such Offender *shall be liable to be Indicted for the same Offence*, and shall, on conviction, PAY SUCH FINE, NOT BEING LESS THAN TWENTY POUNDS, AND SUFFER SUCH IMPRISONMENT, WITH OR WITHOUT HARD LABOUR, AS MAY BE AWARDED AGAINST HIM BY THE COURT BY OR BEFORE WHICH HE SHALL BE TRIED AND CONVICTED."

Now, there's for you, men of property! If these Hell-Hounds order you "to keep the paupers on a bean a day, and to force them to sleep naked on Iron rails," and you should *dare* three times, to refuse—why then, this Hell-begotten Law says, "that you shall be liable, at the will of the Court before whom you shall be tried," to forfeit every farthing of your property—and shall be liable to spend the remainder of your life on the tread mill!!!—Every English man is *now* subject to this punishment, and that without either Judge or Jury! Two MAGISTRATES may *now* dispose of both Property and Liberty, and there shall be no appeal!!—Monsters!!—Horrible!!—Curses; eternal Curses on this accursed Law!

It is a fact! This is *now* English Law!! English *Reformed* Law! English *Amended* Law!!!—It is a fact, I say, twist, twine, wriggle, and wrangle, as you may; this is *now* the Law of England!! Two Neighbours have *now* the power to imprison, with *Hard Labour, FOR LIFE!*—They have the power also, to *Fine to the extent of any man's Property and Estate!*—Oh, NICHOLAS, thou art an Angel of light, compared with the Author of this accursed Act!!!



I ask not the Magistrates, if they are prepared to have their authority and influence destroyed, and to become, instead of the King's servants, the *slaves* of the Commissioners?

I ask you not, if you be Churchmen, if it be right, that the Bishops of the "*poor man's Church*" should be degraded from the high office of Ambassadors of the Living God, to be the mere dirty, crawling lick-spittles of a Secretary of State, whose chief boast it is, that his Family are nourished, and fed, and educated, on the plunder, the rapacious plunder, of the Church of Christ?—Nor, whether it is fitting, that a Bishop should curse a Curate of the "*poor man's Church*," at the bidding of a Church thief, a sacrilegious Secretary of State, simply, because that Curate was resolved, to prevent the poor of Christ's flock from being plundered? I allude my friends to the Secretary Russell, the Bishops of Ely and Norwich, and that excellent Curate, Maberley.—The tiny Lord has lately sent these two Bishops, just like blood-hounds, to hunt down poor Maberley, because Maberley has had the *un-christian* courage, to help and defend the poor! I ask you not, ye members of "*the poor man's Church*," if this be right?

Nor do I ask you, who are dissenters, if you think it right, that the Act, which is intended to enable you to marry with a good conscience, should be grafted on, and worked by the same machinery, as the Act which is intended to *un-marry* and to starve the poor? And that a skulking Lawyer, because he is dubbed a King's Commissioner, should be allowed to wheedle himself into the good graces of the very scum of Ramsden Street, & that, under pretence of granting a boon to the Dissenters, by introducing the new Act for registering Births, Marriages, and Deaths, he should be allowed to establish the most accursed machinery of the Poor Law Act? I ask you not, dissenters, if this be right; I know what I think, and what you think, if you be Christians. You are insulted by the gift: if government will not relieve your consciences, without robbing the poor, it is plain that they wish to insult you. The object of uniting these two Acts, under the same machinery, was, either, under the aid of your popularity, to wedge the Poor Law Act, into the Manufacturing districts; or, by the curse of the Poor Law Act, to make the people, curse the dissenters. In either case, it was dishonourable to the government, and insulting to you.

I do not intend to ask you, Englishmen, whether it be right, that a set of hungry Lawyers and Doctors, (whose brains were never valued at a guinea, by those who lived near to them,) should, like Dr. Kay, be allowed £800 a-year, and be sent into our agricultural Hamlets and Villages, "to crouch and lurk in those secret places" (as the Psalmist has it,) to entrap the Poor; distributing lying Tracts, and Advertisements to delude the poor innocent agricultural labourers (whose labour is all required in tilling their native fields), with false promises, telling them, that "if they will only come here, into the manufacturing districts, they will soon wear white cotton stockings, earn good and regular

wages, be able to buy the best beef for two-pence half-penny per pound, flour at one shilling and sixpence a stone, clothes for almost nothing, and as many coals for sixpence as will last them a month. That they will here have fine houses, with four rooms each, and all well furnished, and will be able, as factory-workers, to save £50 a year!" This same lying, tramping vagabond, has himself lived, for years, in Manchester, and has written a book, describing the Factory-hands, as the most hard-worked, miserable wretches alive; and Manchester, as a very Hell upon Earth! and the Factory system, as the most damnable system under the sun. But then, he tells the wretches, if they come not here, "they shall be Bastilled—banished from the sight of Wife or Child!"

I do not ask you, if it be right, that English families, the subjects of King William the Fourth, should, after having been thus cheated, trepanned and deluded, be absolutely sold, as "so much goods and chattels," by the Union Guardians, to our Factory Tyrants?

Look here!—I hold in my hand an Invoice of a family of the name of Markwell, sold by the Guardians of Oxon Union, in Suffolk, to Mr. George Stansfield Wells, Factory Master, of Soyland, near Halifax; it states their number, ages, and sexes; and the prices are put down too; but they are not as faithfully paid, as they would be, were the 'goods' black Slaves. My friends, we paid £20,000 000 some time ago—was it, think you, to establish White Slavery in England?—At all events, *we now have the Slave Trade in England!*—The buying and selling of English men, women, and children!!—I hold the *damning proof* before you! This Gang, counts Ten; seven males, and three females! These Slaves are now in the adjoining parish of Halifax! They were kidnapped by the Officers of the King of England! This stain shall, however, soon be removed from England, let the price, in Blood or Gold, be what it may.

I do not ask you, my friends, whether it is right and just, that after English flesh, blood, and bones have been thus sold, invoiced, and delivered! Aye, delivered!! This gang of Slaves, *ten* in number, was actually delivered in this very Town, to the Slave-Owner, who sent his cart here, to drag them to his Slaughter-House in Soyland:—I do not ask, is it right after all this, that the Man-dealer, the Woman-buyer, the Child-butcher, should only pay half the bargained price? Neither do I enquire of you, were the Magistrates justified, (when poor Markwell found himself thus cheated, and gave notice, that as the bargain was not fulfilled, he should leave Wells, in a fortnight), in sending him back again to his Owner, like so much "Goods"—and also in making him pay for his temerity, in supposing that his Owner had not a right to cheat him?—Look once more at this paper.—this *Invoice!*—Mark it well!—It is the *Invoice of Markwell*—Mark it well, men!—I blush when I see it;—but mark it well, men!! IT IS THE HAND-WRITING AGAINST THE WALL!!!

I don't ask you, neighbours, whether it is right, that Poverty

should be declared a Crime, and that Riches, should be enthroned as Virtues? I ask you not, if you are prepared to feed and fatten on unwholesome food, at fifteen-pence-half-penny, per head, a-week? Or, if you should be visited by sickness, after nine o'clock at night, that you should be refused all Medical aid, because you are poor? I ask you not, whether, because you may be poor, you are prepared to be visited with a punishment ten-fold heavier than if you were vicious and thieves? That you should have your wives and children separated from you? Be shut up in a cursed Bastile? Be banished from the sight of every thing, but walls, and keepers, and chains, and bars, and grates, and dungeons; and be denied those little kindly helps, which even the friends of the poor, are, sometimes, enabled to *enrich* themselves, by granting? I ask not, if man has a right, thus to separate those whom God has joined together? Or whether, when a poor widow is unable to maintain her children, that they should be torn from her, and be bastilled? And if, by interest, she can, now and then, get leave to see her own dear babes, the pledges of her husband's faithful love, and that her maternal feeling, even overcoming her penury and want, should induce her to take each of her three fatherless Infants, an apple; to make them love the name of mother, and to see them, smiling, eat the dainty bit;—I ask not, is it right, Englishmen, that a monster called a keeper, paid, clothed, housed, and provisioned by yourselves, should be permitted, in a christian country, to revel in the cowardice of Hell, by snatching, in the widow's presence, her little present, from her orphan babes?—[*Mr. Oastler was here affected to tears.*].—It is true, that this damnable system laughs at the tears of widows and of orphans!—Oh it is a damnable Act! But, never mind; God has not gone to sleep! the Bible is not yet put out! the light of Nature is not quite extinguished!!

I ask not the Landlords of England, if they are such brainless dolts, as to hope to keep up the value of their Estates by robbing, and banishing, and pining the poor? Nor, if they are so weak and foolish—whether they are so dastardly, mean, and base, as to try that horrible experiment? I ask not, how can the produce of the Land be valuable, when the mass of the people are unable to buy clothes or food? Nor, how can property be valuable or secure, when the great mass of the people are unhappy, murmuring, and discontented?

I ask not the King, if he is so tired of Royalty and Rule, as to surrender to three Commissioners, whose Assistant is prowling round the country, telling the people “that the King, himself, *cannot controul his three Masters*?”

I ask you not, if it be right, that on Christmas day, the three Commissioners should forbid *their* prisoners any addition to the usual “coarser food,” and forbid even the *children* a dinner of Beef and Pudding, on that festive day, when the same *was offered them at PRIVATE expence*, whilst the King was allowing, at the public charge, his felon prisoners in Newgate and other prisons, their usual Christmas treat?

I don't ask you, whether it is right, that your innocent Daughters, should, by law, be delivered into the hands of their seducers? Or, whether the laws should favour Bastard-getters and Infanticide? I ask you not, if it be just, that poverty should be deprived of the comfort and solace of Religion? And of the right of Burial? I ask you not, because you are human; nor would I need to ask you, were you beasts; nay, devils themselves would blush to have the question put to them, but *Poor Law Commissioners can never blush*: I ask you not, then, shall your wives, if in poverty, be refused, in Nature's severest trial, a place of retirement, to bring forth a free-born Briton? Or if the door of the Poor House shall be shut against them? Or shall they bring forth in the street? Or shall their nakedness, in Nature's trial, be exposed to the gaze of strangers? Or shall their blood———No! my friends; the scene was past description—but it was a real one!

I ask not, whether you are disposed to pinch, and pine, and starve your paupers, to try to save £500, or £800, or £1,000, or £2,000 a-year, a-peace, for a set of idle, proud, ignorant, cruel Scoundrels, who fain would fatten, on what their cruelty and villany can teach you to plunder from the paupers' plates, beds, and backs? No, no; I know who I am addressing. These questions would all be negatived, by the indignant—NO—NO—of every christian, rich or poor. I know they would.

Now to the point. I ask not, whether all these things are as Christ would have them be?—But I come to tell you, that if the diabolical Poor Law Act, which has raised all these questions, and many more, is about to be thrust upon these districts,—*I will resist its introduction,—I will resist its workings,—I will not submit to it! It is an Act of TREASON against the Constitution, against Christianity, against the State, and against the King, as well as against the Poor!*

I tell you plainly, and openly, and honestly, *I will not submit to it!*—I speak not from the fervour, or the heated influence of the moment. What I am now going to say, *I have written beforehand*, in order that there might be no mistake, and that I might afterwards know what I have said.—[*Mr. Oastler here read from the MS. in question, as follows*]:—

“I tell you, deliberately, if I have the misfortune to be “reduced to poverty, that that man who dares to tear “from me, the wife whom God has joined to me, shall, “if I have it in my power, receive his Death at my hands! “If I am ever confined in one of those hellish Poor Law “Bastiles, and my wife be torn from me, because I am “poor, I will, if it be possible, burn the whole pile down to “the ground. This will I do, if my case shall be thus “tried, if I have the power: and every man, who loves his “wife, and who is unstained by crime, will, if he can, do “the same.—Further, I will not pay any tax imposed upon

“me, under this Act. I will ‘resist,’ as the Dissenters are “resisting the Church Rates.”

Now there you have it, friends. Such is my advice—thus will I act. Let the Devils of Commissioners say what they please. Nature’s Laws, and the Laws of God, are stronger than the curse of three Devils, embodied in Commissioners.

I deny the authority of Parliament to make that infernal, anti-christian, unsocial Bill.—[*A cry of it never would have passed, if we had had universal suffrage.*.]—I don’t know whether it would, or not: Mr Assistant Poor Law Commissioner Power, told the people of Bury, the other day “that general satisfaction prevailed, and that there was great anxiety to have the Act more extensively brought into operation.” So says Power; it may not be true, for all that. But I do know that Morpeth and Hume, and Molesworth, and Protheroe, who never fail to have, at elections, universal suffrage, by show of hands, and who always seem to be the great pets of the people, have, with others, who make a great noise about universal suffrage, been great supporters of the accursed measure.

However I am not about to discuss the question of universal suffrage to night—but, I have no hesitation in saying, as I have said a hundred times, that I would infinitely prefer universal suffrage, to the present £10 and £50 suffrage. Lord John Russell, and Sir Robert Peel may say what they please, but I hope the Reform Bill is not “*a final measure.*”

I deny the power of the King, to Commission the rates and the paupers, and to appoint a court, which shall make laws and defy his royal authority. *He cannot have* power to appoint an authority GREATER *than his own.* There can be no doubt, that he has been betrayed by designing advisers.

Now Tory, Whig, and Radical, hear me; the accursed Poor Law Act, cannot, with justice, be charged upon any separate political party. The Tories call it a Whig measure; but I know that the Duke of Wellington supported it; it is then a Tory measure, as well as a Whig measure; and it is a Radical measure, as well as it is a Tory and Whig measure.—It was supported by the Tory, Wellington,—the Whig, Brougham,—and the Radical, Hume.—Let us hear no more then, about its being a Whig measure. It is only fair to give the Devil his due. It is an Act passed, by the Union of every faction, in the hope of their being able to crush the rights of the people,—the working people. But it will as assuredly undermine the Throne, and the Aristocracy, as it will, if enforced, enslave the Labourer. This, the Aristocracy cannot *yet* understand, but the Jews, the Slaughter-house money-changers can.

Some one said, (Lord Althorpe, I believe), that “he would be a bold Minister, who dared a second time, to introduce this Bill, supposing it to have been rejected by Parliament;” and I say to night, before you all, that he will be both a bold, a foolish, and a

cruel Minister, who dares to enforce it, in these northern districts. I am about to speak freely to you on this subject, but not more freely than I have spoken to the Duke of Wellington, before it passed; not more plainly than I have spoken to other nobles, and have, over and over again, printed and published, and sent to the King.

I told the Duke of Wellington, "if that Bill passes, it is clear that there can be no more any security for property. That Bill lays the axe to the root of property, and undermines the Throne. If the King is prevailed on, to sign that Bill, he signs his own abdication. If your Grace supports that Bill, you support the principle which must remove your Coronet, and destroy your title to your own property: for the rights of the paupers and of the rate-payers, are as sacred, as the rights of the King and the nobles, and if it be right to Commission the property of the *poor*, it is right to Commission the property of the *rich*." I told my master, that "if that Bill was ever enforced, his own Estate must, in the end, be Commissioned." And, I am sure, I told him the truth.

They say that the rates have not been well managed, by the rate-payers; is it likely that Lawyers will manage them better? But, supposing that the rates have not been well managed, what then? Are the PENSIONS well managed? Are the DIVIDENDS all prudently disposed of? Or, are the RENTS, so free from taint, that the manner of spending them produces no evils to society? *Is there no mal-appropriation* with regard to Landlords Rents, as well as Paupers Rates?—Aye, but I dare say the pensioner, the fund holder, and the landlord will exclaim, "Have we not a right to do what we like with our own." No, doubt. Who disputes it? Not I. It is *yourselves* who raise the question;—you say that the rate-payers and the paupers, have no such right? The constitution, the law, protect *you*, but *you* have Commissioned *them*, and removed them from under the protection of the Crown. *Prepare to be Commissioned in your turn*;—or repeal the accursed Act.

Yes, my friends, if it be right to Commission Rates, because they have been squandered—it certainly is right to Commission Pensions, and Dividends and Rents, because *they* have been squandered.—

But Lord Brougham, that same Lord, who was raised from the common herd, by yourselves, asserts, that "ye are idle,"—"ye are idle;" "that Englishmen, would rather live on parish pay, than earn a living by their labour."—A fouler libel was never uttered, save by his Lordship, when he said that "your wives and daughters were prostitutes!" Oh, my friends, it is too bad, that a man should be permitted, with impunity, when he has set his mind on plundering you, that he should also be allowed to defame your character, and that of your Wives and Daughters. But supposing this charge were true;—what then? Do idleness and lust form *reasons* for the confiscation of *your* property and rights? If so let

Lord Brougham look to himself, and his own order. What right has a fellow, about whom, and about whose wife, so much has been said by the rich, to assert, in his place in Parliament, as a reason for the confiscation of the property of the poor, "that their wives and daughters are immoral?" The Aristocracy and the Factory-Lords, must, if all be true, be Commissioned next, or what every body says, and the reports of the courts of law, are false.

But there is such a *saving*, they say; fifty—sixty—seventy per cent! Indeed! I do not believe it. They don't tell us how much they formerly paid in *wages*, out of the old poor rates. Let them bring the wages now paid, by the farmers, which were formerly paid out of the rates, into the account, and also the Salaries of these Lawyers and attorneys who are swarming around the carcass of John Bull. We shall then see how much is *saved*. I'll never believe it is a *saving* concern, when the Lawyers and Attorneys are so thickly spread about, and all around it. But, supposing, there be a *saving*—what then? *a saving by robbing the poor!* What a proud boast for "*an English Gentleman!*" *Save*, if you will, as much as you choose, but don't save out of the pauper! Save out of the Pensioner, the Fund-Lord, and the Land-Lord. Oh, what a *saving* there will be, when Pensions, Dividends, and Rents shall be Commissioned!! And sure I am, they soon will be, if this Law remains and is enforced; "what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander," is an old saying, and a very true one. How easy it would be to save seventy per cent out of Rents—would it not? Yes, if the Commissioners were empowered to order us Stewards to receive only thirty per cent, of the present amount: and sure I am, it would be more just, to rob the Landlord than the Paupers.

When I was talking with the Duke of Wellington, about this accursed Act, I said to him, "My Lord Duke, if that Bill passes, "the man who can produce the greatest confusion in the country, will be the greatest patriot, and I will try to be that man." I believe so now—I believe, as sure as I live, that the principles of that Act, must inevitably dethrone the King, destroy the Aristocracy, and annihilate the title to every kind of Property, and fix us in a state of Anarchy, or of Despotism. It lays the axe to the root of the social compact: it must break up society, and make England a wilderness.

But, I told you, that I denied the right of the Parliament, of the King, the Lords, and the Commons, to pass a Law like that.—They either are, or they pretend to be, our Legislators; and they have, doubtless, a clear constitutional right to make laws for our government: but there, their authority ends. Now, mark what I say, and let any constitutional Lawyer contradict me, if I am wrong. *They have no right, no CONSTITUTIONAL right, to DELEGATE the power of making Laws for us, to other people,—to three Commissioners.* They have no right to TRANSFER that power from themselves, and then expect us to obey the Laws, made by these Commissioners. The Legislature have a right to our allegiance,

but they have no right to transfer that allegiance to the King's enemies. If they are tired of us, let them say so; but let them not transfer us over to the *tender mercies* of these Commissioners. I have never sworn allegiance to the three Poor Law Commissioners; *I defy them*. I am a liege subject to the King—I am the foe of his enemies, and will not swear allegiance to them; 'altho' the traitors proudly declare, that "the King cannot controul them."

I know a little spot, not far from here, the rate-payers of which, are panting for a tug with the Commissioners. I know one field, which will change its tenant, before it will recognise Commissioner-made-Law. Parliament has no right to empower any set of men to make Law for us; but they have made a Law by which they have empowered three blood-hounds; "beyond the controul of the King," to hunt down our property and our lives. Three men, who was too idle to gain an honest living by their labour: these men are now enthroned in Somerset House with powers greater than the King—powers to repeal and to make laws! The Star Chamber; nay, the Inquisition itself, would be tolerable, in comparison with this Triumvirate of Tyrant Traitors. Please God, they shall not reign long; there can be no doubt, when Parliament has regained its senses, these Commissioned Kings, will be removed to the Tread Mill. No Tory can transfer his allegiance to these three Traitors; if he should, he will sin against every article of his political creed. He swears to the King and the Constitution—but these Traitors assert a power greater than the King or the Law. The Constitution makes no room for Treason: yet Treason is now enthroned in three Commissioners!

If the King and the Parliament, have really discovered that the national affairs have become so intricate, and are so deranged, that they can no longer manage them: if the Landlords have at last found out, that their rents are melting in the Crucible of Capital, and that, instead of finding their way into the Landlord's pocket, they are running down the drain, in the shape of interest on mortgages, into the Misers' Coffers: If this is at last discovered—what then? Rob the pauper? No! no! Rob the ratepayers? No! no! Transfer our allegiance? No! no! What then? Why simply this. Call together a NATIONAL CONVENTION, composed of the wise and good of all parties; and let them determine, what is best to be done. If our difficulties have reached beyond the cure of King and Parliament, a *national convention*, is the only constitutional plan. But if our difficulties are not so great, the Parliament cannot be justified, to surrender their power, into the hands of three pennyless Commissioners, whom they have found, by scouring and raking the filthiest ditches of the courts of Law.

You are aware, that POWER came here the other day, to the George Inn, Mr Laycock was sorry, I understand, that he was not treated with proper respect, he [Mr Power] being a very civil respectable gentleman. Mr. Power may be very respectable; and I am sure you have not a pauper in Huddersfield, who would



not be "very civil," for £800 a-year—and you know, that that sum would, at once, make the pauper as "*respectable*" as the Commissioner.

If Mr. Power be really respectable, he will go home, and try to get an honest living, by digging, or ploughing, or breaking stones, rather than come here to plunder the poor, and to break their hearts. I have no notion of your "respectable" Poor Law Commissioners. I cannot understand it, Mr. Laycock:—a respectable person is not "bloody and deceitful;" but the Poor Law Commissioners are both. Why did not Power tell the truth, when he came? Why were not the Rate-Payers called together,—if not the People? What had he to do with the scum of Ramsden Street? If we are to be enslaved by Mr. Power, there is no need that he should trick, and delude, and deceive us. We are neither afraid to meet Mr. Power, nor Mr. Laycock; but before we will wear the chains, we will *see*, and have a few words with, the Gaoler.

Whether Power be "respectable," or not, he is a great man in his own estimation. He told my friend, and your friend, Mr. Fletcher, at Bury, "that the KING had not the power to CONTRoul the Poor Law Commissioners." These are his very words, or the Newspapers have libelled him.

Now, there's for you, Laycock. There's for you, Tories! There's for you, Whigs! There's for you, Radicals!—Upon my word, it is indeed a pretty go!—"The KING cannot CONTRoul THEM!"—Poor King William!! I said it would be so. The only security for thy Throne, is in the hearts of thy people. But these Commissioners have stepped in, like traitors, between thee and thy people, and dare to tell them, that they are no longer under thy controul!!!—What next?

What say you, friends? Don't you see, that they have got the rope round the King's neck, and the noose is ready for drawing. Don't you think that it is high time that the troops of "King Richard" should come to his rescue? We are a million strong, and we will very soon let this "respectable" traitor know, that we are loyal subjects of King William, and that we recognize no Commissioners, who "are beyond *his* controul." The King is not going to be beaten by these idle Scoundrels, so long as we have the power to protect him.

But Laycock says, "he is an honourable man." Be it so. Let him then resign his pauper's pay—his eight hundred pounds a-year from the Parish. No doubt, Laycock will think himself "respectable," and I am sure he will be very "civil," when he gets the "Clerkship," and five hundred pounds a year, from the pauper's table. But no matter.—Laycock was angry with Tinker, for telling the Commissioners, something about bullets. Why, my dear Mr Laycock, bullet-talk, is now quite common, in these parts. Why were you not angry when Wrigley first begun to talk about bullets? A bullet would do the Commissioners no more harm than "King" Richard. You should have told

Mr Power, not to be frightened, that there was no danger to be apprehended from bullets, so long as he kept out of Netherton. It is a pity that Power ran away. Besides Laycock lost a good job, and he might have been very useful in putting the handcuffs on to this "Union."

But what are we to do, friends? Laycock says, *submit*. I say RESIST.—I will tell you how, by and by.

I was talking with a very "liberal" man the other day, and he said "would it not be better to *try* this Poor Law Act first, before "you find so much fault with it?" "Ah," said I "let them once "get the Ruffles on, and it is all over;" we are then disarmed, and "they can easily enslave us. It will be a difficult matter to get "them off, when they have turned the screws and fastened them."

Mr Laycock and myself, are at issue; he writes to Mr Pitkethley as follows:—"Of course, you can scarcely expect that to "what is done, as an uniform system throughout the Kingdom, "Huddersfield can be made an exception." Now, the system is not uniformly established. No—no.—But if it were, I should have hopes of Huddersfield. Do not be alarmed Mr Laycock; though the "Clerkship" should be the sacrifice, *we will not be enslaved*. We are not alone, mind you; there are other towns resisting as well as Huddersfield. Manchester, and Bradford, and Bolton, and Halifax, and Bury, and Keighley, and Preston, and Leeds——no, not Leeds. Leeds is married to Mr Baines, and she is coquetting with Sir William Molesworth; so, she will of course, yield at the bidding of those two Patriots. But there are the other places, and scores besides, yet loyal to King William, & opposed to those traitors, "who are beyond his controul." And if all yield besides, I heard some voices, the other night, which made me believe, that Huddersfield will not yield. I was cheered by the sound: some day I may tell you all about it.

But, whilst the Nation is nauseated, with the scoundrelism of this accursed new Poor Law, there are, here and there, a few knaves or fools, who, ever and anon, praise its *Principles*, and its *Effects* and *Tendencies*. These *honest* rogues and *intelligent* fools; these men of all sorts of learning, and of all sorts of sense, but common sense; these men who fancy that they monopolise intellectuality, storm and rave at those who condemn this hellish monster. They charge us with *ignorance*, forsooth. They say that we have not read the Act; that we are ignorant of its *Principles*; and that we disregard its *Tendencies*.

Now, then, ye learned Owls, let me have a word with you. *I have read the Act* I have read every word of it—aye, and of the original Bill too, and of the Parliamentary Debates, consequent upon that Bill.—Now then, rub your eyes, that ye may see; singe your ears, that you may hear: and mark what I say respecting the PRINCIPLES and the TENDENCIES of your pet new Poor Law.

Take the Bible in one hand, and that Devil's Book, the new *Poor Law Act*, in the other; and I tell you, that if the one be true in its *Principles* and *Tendencies*,—then, the other is false! I am ready to meet you, in any place, to prove this point.

The Bible teaches, that the poor shall *not* be oppressed.

The Act teaches, that they *shall* be oppressed,

The Bible, that Husbands shall cleave to their wives.

The Act, that the Commissioners may separate them.

The Bible, that they shall increase and multiply, and replenish the earth

The Act, that they shall be barren and unfruitful.

The Bible, that the soul of one pauper, is of more value than the whole world.

The Act, that the souls and bodies of paupers are lighter than Vanity, compared with the saving of a few pence!

The two Books are as much opposed, as Heaven and Hell!!

Now then, lay down the Bible, and take up the Constitution of England, and again I say, that if the one be **TRUTH**, *then, the other is falsehood!* Here again, I am at issue with you. I am ready to meet you on this point, too; fix your time and place, and I will then let you know whether I have read the Act or not, and whether I am *ignorant* of its *Principles* and its *Tendencies*

The Constitution informs me, that the Legislature of this Nation is composed of King, Lords, and Commons. The Act says, "No; the **LEGISLATIVE BOARD** consists of **THREE COMMISSIONERS.**" If so, the Game is up! The **KING** is checkmated by three *Traitors!*

The *Principles* of the Act are the following:—

1. That the poor have *no right* to dwell in the land and be fed.
2. That the poor have *no right* to have the Gospel preached to them
3. That poverty, is a crime.
4. That female virtue, shall not be protected.
5. That Infanticide shall be encouraged.
6. That the poor are idle and dissolute.
7. That the Rate-payers are fools.
8. That the Magistrates are rogues.
9. That the King, Lords, and Commons are imbeciles.
- 10 That because all wisdom is, all power should be, locked up in three Commissioners.
11. That Centralization ought to displace the Constitutional principle of domestic self-government,
12. That the hangers-on of *any Ministry*, are, hereafter, to be fed and to fatten on the scrapings of the Paupers' plates, beds, and backs.
13. That every Town and Hamlet is to be placed under the espionage of three all-powerful Commissioners.
14. That a "*Legislative Board*" is to exist in this Nation, independent of the Legislature of King, Lords, and Commons,—above the controul of the King, and against whose tyranny the subjects of the King have no appeal.
15. That the People of England shall, hereafter, live on a "*coarser sort of food.*"
16. That the poor have neither natural, social, nor domestic feelings.

17 That God is a Liar.

18. That Jesus Christ was an Imposter.

19. That Emigration is a Social Virtue, and a National Blessing.

20. That the poor have no right to obey the commands of God, because Population is a National Curse.

21. The last *Principle* of this accursed Act, which I shall name here, is, that Property shall be confiscated, and that Liberty and Life shall be destroyed, at the will of three rascally scoundrels.

Then, as to the *Tendencies*. Here they are,—either in one word,—SLAVERY;—or, in four words,—*THEFT*,—*FIRE*,—*SEDUCTION*,—*MURDER*.—Yes, yes; think you, ye fools and madmen, who admire this hateful and hated Act; think you that Englishmen will bear it? No, no. We have resolved, that Christ shall not be dethroned by Moloch and Mammon. We have resolved, that the Word of God shall not be put out, by this Word from Hell. We have determined, that our Constitutional Charter shall not be destroyed, by this Scrowl of Treason against our King, and against our rights.

I am prepared, my friends, to argue the question, in any place, with any body; and I will engage to prove, that if this new Poor Law be TRUTH, Christianity is a LIE: if the Constitution be OURS, this Law is TREASON:—and further, if the Poor-rates, the Rate-payers, and the Paupers, are to be Commissioned, then that we must have an open Rebellion against this Law, or that the Pension and the Pensioners, the Funds and the Fund-holders, the Rents and the Landlords, the King and the Taxes, must also be Commissioned.—Yes, yes; the owners of Property must soon have it demonstrated to them, that if they will thus remove the title from the poor man's property—they also lay the axe to the root of their own.

Let then, those men, who charge us with *Ignorance* and *Prejudice* & all that sort of thing, accept my challenge—let us have a fair discussion, with the Bible and the Constitution in one hand, and this damnably accursed New Poor Law in the other—and let us then determine which is *Truth* and which is *Falsehood*.—I say, let God be true, tho' every man be proved to be a Liar.

But now my friends, for my answer to the question, what plans shall we adopt, to resist the introduction of the accursed Poor Law Amendment Act? I'll tell you. We will not do as the Whigs did. We will not "bloody-axe the King," nor "groan at the Queen," not we. But I will tell you what I will advise you to do. Go on with your old system of officers, rates, and payments. Appoint your officers; levy and pay your rates; and distribute to the paupers, after the old constitutional law. Let the three Poor Law Commissioners in London, do all the rest. Let them send their orders, *but take no notice of them*.—Let them appoint their own Overseers and Guardians and Clerks, *but take no notice of them*. Let them levy their own rates, *but take no notice of them*. Take a leaf out of Lord Fitzwilliam's, and Mr. Wm.

Brougham's book; "refuse to pay *their* rates." Take a leaf out of "Dissenters grievances," that leaf about "refusing to pay Church rates." Let "passive resistance" be your motto, for *their* rate, and "prompt payment" your watch word for your own rate. Then let them sell, for the Commissioner's rate. They will not sell often,—that I do know. Forget all your little petty, party, and parochial differences; be united; be firm; and thus defy these hateful and hated Commissioners. If any are injured by "process," or otherwise, *protect one another out of your own rates*. Call meetings, to encourage one another, and to shew the Commissioners, that you are united, and are resolved to be free.

Act thus, and without axes, or bullets, or stones, or ropes, you will be able to save yourselves from the power of the Commissioners, and thus will you be instrumental in saving the King from the power of those traitors, who despise his authority, and will not be subjected to his controul.

And when Power comes again, don't frighten him with bullets, or stones; but, do by him, what I never did to man, woman, or child, but what the Whigs did to the Queen: hiss at him; hoot him; groan at him; I don't mean at the "respectable" Mr. Power, but I mean, at the traitor assistant Poor Law Commissioner. Follow him into every corner; mark the company he keeps; never mind whether *they* be Whigs, Tories, or Radicals, hoot them, hiss at them; groan at them; *but do not stone them*, as the Whigs do me; do not bullet them, as the Whigs threaten to do me.

Let Power feel that however excellent a man he may be, the public character which he holds is abhorrent to every man who loves his Wife, his Child, and his Liberty. Then turn him over to that old thief-catcher Dalton, but tell him not to "hang him on the first lamp-post."

Perhaps you may be frightened, by hearing tell of Dragoons, Infantry, and Artillery. What! think you, that the Kings' Troops will charge upon those, who only resist the men who defy the *controul* of the King? Indeed! Will English Soldiers attack the men whose only crime is loyalty—loyalty to the Throne, and to the Cottage hearth? will the heroes of Waterloo fire upon, or Sabre, the men who wish the Soldiers' Fathers and Mothers to live together—their children to be dandled on their Granny's laps—and themselves, when they have been discharged, allowed to live at large with wife and children? Think you, men of Huddersfield, that our Army is composed of such hardened monsters?—No, No; NICHOLAS has no troops so bloody and so base. His Russian bears, would turn and rend the three Commissioners, rather than murder *us*. No, no; if this accursed Act be thrust down our throats, it will not be by Soldiers—but by those bands of women-traders, intended to be let loose by Joseph Hume and Company, under the title of *Rural Police*.

But, if after all, these three Commissioners should prove our masters, why then, we must submit to their rule: they will have earned our allegiance—but what then? We shall not need the

King, nor the Lords, nor the Commons : we shall *'save'* all that expense, at least. Yes, yes, if the Commissioners can succeed in humbling us, the King will then dispise us. We shall be unworthy of him—and he will seek for more worthy subjects in Hanover. The Lords will be ordered to the right about, by Daniel O'Connell—and the "reformed" House will be ordered to disperse by the three Commissioners whom they have created : and, oh ! what a happy nation will England then be !—and what a "respectable" thing a Poor Law Commissioner will be in those days ! But believe me, Laycock, they will not then be very "civil."

But after all, the Enemies of God and of the poor, will say, *try the measure, and if you find it does not act well, then AMEND and REFORM it.* "Try the measure" indeed ! "Reform the Act" indeed ! "Amend the Curse," indeed ! Why my friends it is the Catechism of Hell ! It is the Devil's own book ! It must be *burnt*,—out and out *burnt*. I know that the hang man's fingers will be defiled by the touch,—so let him fork it on the flames ; "try it ?" "amend it ?" "reform it ?" *Try the Devil as soon !* Get thee behind me, Satan ! "Amend" Belial, as easily ! "Reform" Hell, if you can ! !

It is the Devil's own spawn, begotten by him, when in a very bad humour. Lord Brougham, is its Mother ; Joe Hume was Man-midwife ; Lord Althorpe was its wet-nurse. The Bishop of London baptized it ; the Duke of Wellington and Daniel O'Connell were its Sponsors ; Sir Robert acted as registering Clerk—and the Bishops of Norwich and Ely have since confirmed it. May the Bishop of Exeter, and good Parson Maberley, both live to see it destroyed, and both refuse to give its ashes Christian Burial.

**DAMNATION ! ETERNAL DAMNATION,** to this Accursed Fiend—this "Coarser Food"—Starvation—Hell-begotten Brat !

And let all the People say, as the Bible and Prayer Book say,

**AMEN.**

## ERRATA.

Page 8, 10th. line from bottom, for *Monsters*, read *Monstrous*

Page 16, 16th. line from top, for *was*, read *are*.

## To the Reader.



SINCE the foregoing was put into the hands of the Printer, Meetings in many parts of both Lancashire and Yorkshire, have been held, relative to the introduction of the Treasonable—"Coarser-Food"—Fire-Brand amongst them, at all of which, the most determined resolution was evinced, not to submit to the "orders" of the three Somerset-House Despots, who send their "*runners*" round and about the country, to enslave the people, and insult them at the same time, by openly declaring, that "*the King cannot controul their three Masters!*"

At SALFORD, the Meeting was, really and truly, a glorious one. The Churchwarden occupied the Chair, and some famous speeches were made, all against the infernal New Poor Law, to the great chagrin and discomfiture of as nice a little squad of "PRIGS" as any Town in the Kingdom can boast of; a squad led on by a dolter-headed, lubberly mass of corruptibility, *ycleped* John Edward Taylor. But, the Salford People were not to be humbuged. They passed a Resolution, which is such a very queer one, that I will here give it; requesting every one who reads it to reflect deeply upon it, and ask himself, if it be true? For, if that question should be answered in the affirmative, we are indeed, "in a Bonny Mess." The great National Game of a thousand years is then ended! The Resolution was as follows:—

"Resolved,—That this Meeting, while it asserts its allegiance "to the constitutional authority of the three estates of King, "Lords, and Commons, *does not recognise the power of the Legislature to transfer that allegiance to three Commissioners.* If the "Legislature has discovered, that the affairs of the Nation are so "desperately intricate, that they cannot, by their wisdom, secure "either life or property, then the only rational and constitutional "plan is, to call a *NATIONAL CONVENTION*, and not to deliver us over to three Commissioners."

At Oldham, at Bury, at Bolton, at Halifax, at Bradford, at Huddersfield, and at many other places which I have not room to mention, the same spirit of resistance prevails. And as it may be of use to know, how the feeling runs against Satan's own Act, in these parts, I will here give a string of Resolutions passed at a Meeting of the Rate-payers of Fixby Township, called to consider what they should do respecting the "orders" of the three Poor Law Commissioners. The Churchwarden was in the Chair here also, and the following Resolutions passed unanimously:—

1.—That we cannot understand why our Township's affairs

should be taken from under our own management and controul : nor, why we should be removed from the protection of the Legislature, and be expected to obey the laws, passed by three men, whom we never constituted as our Law-makers, to whom we have never sworn allegiance, and of whom we know nothing, save that one of their "assistants" has declared, respecting them, "THAT THE KING CANNOT CONTOUL THEM."

2.—That we do not understand the papers which the Churchwarden and Overseer have laid before us, the papers alluded to being signed "J. Frankland Lewis, J. G. S. Lefevre, Geo. Nicholls."

3.—That if the Churchwarden and Overseer can, by any means, satisfy themselves what the Law requires of them, we advise them to do their duty, and no more than their duty.

4.—That we will willingly pay any expences incurred by these officers in trying to ascertain what their duty is.

5.—That we are satisfied with our own management of our own affairs, that we have made no complaint, nor sought for advice or assistance from other quarters.

6.—That we will not be united to Halifax, or to any other Township.

7.—That we will not nominate or appoint any officer, or accept the appointment to any office, in the Halifax, or in any other Poor Law Union.

8.—That we will continue to appoint our Township's officers as heretofore; and also to levy, pay, collect, and distribute our Township's rates, according to our ancient customs.

9.—That if any other person or persons, from any other Township, shall make any demand upon our rates, for Poor Law Union purposes, we will not pay them; we will resist as far as we legally can; and if we are compelled to pay, we will leave the law to take its regular course, by distraint, auction, &c.

10.—That we will defend each other from foreign interference out of our domestic rates.

11.—That we most solemnly deny the power of the Legislature to appoint a "LEGISLATIVE BOARD," and thus to transfer our allegiance to three men, *who are above the controul of the King.*

Such are the determinations of the Fixby Rate-payers—determinations, which, I have no doubt, will be acted upon to the very letter. I am glad to find, that the people of England have so much spirit left, as to set their faces, in the most unequivocal manner, against the cold-blooded Malthusian Philosophy. Thank God! the People of England have resolved, that they will not be brought to live on a "*Coarser sort of Food,*" in which resolution no one joins more heartily than

**RICHARD OASTLER**

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*J. Hobson, Printer, Market Street, Leeds.*

