

The True Witness

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 1874.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

Friday, 5—Of the Octave. Saturday, 6—St. Norbert, B. C. Sunday, 7—Second after Pentecost. Monday, 8—Of the Octave. Tuesday, 9—Of the Octave. Wednesday, 10—Of the Octave. Thursday, 11—Octave of Corpus Christi.

THE PROCESSION.—On Sunday next within the Octave of Corpus Christi, the usual Procession in honor of the Blessed Sacrament will take place. It will gather at the usual hour in front of the Church of Notre Dame, and passing across the Place d'Armes to Craig St., will follow the line of St. Lawrence and St. Catherine Sts., to St. James' Church and returning by St. Denis and Notre Dame Sts., to the place whence it started.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The health of the Holy Father caused some anxiety during the first days of the week, as at his advanced age, any indisposition is serious. We are happy to see that latest telegrams report the health of one so dear to the Catholic world, as improving.

The arrival in safety at Paris of the pilgrims from the United States who, on the 16th ult., sailed for Europe in the SS. *Pereire* is announced. The Archbishop of Paris received them, and sent them on their way with his benediction. After having paid their devotions at the shrines of Paray-le-Monial, and of Lourdes, the pilgrims will proceed to Rome, to assure the Holy Father of the love and veneration which his children on this side of the Atlantic entertain towards him, and which prompt their prayers, day and night, to heaven, for the speedy discomfiture of his enemies and their enemies.

There are Ministerial troubles in Italy as in France; the financial question threatens, shall we say, a speedy break up of the political edifice constructed at the cost of so much treachery and violence by King honest-man and his advisers. A dissolution of Parliament is spoken of as imminent.

The great political problems of France are as far from a solution as ever. The government of Marshal McMahon secures peace for the moment; but he cannot last for ever, and after him the deluge.

There is nothing new from Germany to report. There, as in revolutionized Switzerland the persecution of the Catholic Church continues with undiminished severity, and is met by the Catholic Bishops and Clergy with unflinching resolution. Bishop Reinkeus, whom the new Protestant sect called Old-Catholics set up as their head has come to grief. His moral conduct has, in consequence of what appeared in the press, been made the subject of judicial investigation, and the result has been by no means favorable to this unhappy Bishop Reinkeus.

In England the strife betwixt the Farmers and the Agricultural Laborers continues to rage; neither are there as yet any symptoms of peace.

The excitement in New Brunswick is great over the School Question, which is the question on which the pending elections turn. Perhaps the best course for the Catholics to pursue would be to unite with those who would do away with State-Schoolism altogether, and leave education like religion to the support of the Voluntary system.

It will be seen by a paragraph in our Foreign Intelligence, copied from the London Times, that the Roman Official Gazette denies "with authority" the reported underhand dealings betwixt King "honest man" and Bismarck, which in our last we also copied from the Times. That paper meets the denial of the Roman Official Gazette with something more than the "retort courtois," nay, with something close akin to the "lie direct," for it reiterates its charge, and affirms that the authenticity of the source from which it derived its information "cannot be contested."

OUR EVANGELICAL MARTYRS.—The way these gentry are coming the "confidence game" over our separated brethren is really too bad. Not only do they swindle the latter out of their cash, harrow up their soul with tales of the secrets of the Romish prison houses wherein they have been confined, making each particular hair of their hearer's beard and whiskers to stand on end like quills from a fretful porcupine; but they, unkindest cut of all, manage to get themselves found out, and exposed—so bringing ridicule upon their allies, and spoiling a good business, which has thriven for years, and which might thrive for years to come, were it not for the imprudence and want of skill on the part of those who of late have taken it up.

With the general outlines of the "Evangelical Martyrdom Dodge" our readers are of course familiar. There is of course—this is *de rigueur*—either the young lady of great personal attractions, who has escaped from the subterranean dungeons of a convent, full of the bones of little infants, and murdered nuns; or else we have the pale, emaciated victim of the Jesuitical Inquisition, who after having languished in one of its cells for many years on bread and water, to say nothing of having been regularly subjected to the torture once a week—contrived at last to effect his escape, with his beloved Bible in his pocket, through one of these mysterious underground passages which, as all intelligent Protestants are aware, abound in all Jesuitical institutions. These, we say, are the outlines; the sketch however is completed or filled in, according to the popular demand at the moment existing for spioy stories, and sensational anecdotes. Much no doubt of this filling in is done for the "martyrs" by the sympathising evangelical ministers with whom they take refuge after their miraculous deliverance from the Convent or Inquisition aforesaid; and to whom they, the interesting fugitives from Romish persecution, hasten to unfold their wrongs, and cruel sufferings.

We do not think so meanly of the intelligence of our separated brethren as to believe that in general they are really taken in by these pretended martyrs and confessors. They, many of them at least, must know that the fellows who come to them with their stories of cruel persecutions and miraculous deliverances, are liars, and swindlers; that the "escaped nuns" are, invariably something which we will not sully this sheet, or insult the eyes of our readers with, by particularising. Men might be found to swallow the absurd story told by Arthur Orton; but there are limits to human credulity, limits which are far overstepped by the gentry to whose stories we are alluding. No! Protestant ministers who espouse the cause of these gentry are not deceived; but so intense is their hatred of the Church, so unscrupulous are they as to the means which they employ for gratifying that hatred, that they gladly lend their aid to circulate and obtain credence for calumnies, no matter how incredible, against the Church and her institutions. They are not the dupes, but for the most part merely the accomplices, of the scoundrels who go about practising the "Evangelical Martyr Dodge." Of course we do not deny that in a world like this, where fools abound, there are some who really do give credence to the stories that they read in evangelical papers about "Escaped Nuns" &c., and which pretty tales are reported with great pathos and unction from evangelical platforms and pulpits, by reverend men of God clad in sable broad-cloth and white chokers.

But, as we said above, it sometimes happens that the fellows who play this "Evangelical Martyrdom Dodge" are found out, and exposed; and then even papers like the Witness turn round against them, and denounce the fraud. This perhaps is the most instructive feature in the case.

In illustration of the above remarks we lay before our readers the history of two of these "Evangelical Martyrs" who have been carrying on their game with much success in Montreal, and other cities; but who, having been unfortunately for themselves and their patrons, found out, are now abandoned to public indignation even by the Witness, who in its issue of the 29th ult., thus roughly handles them.—Alas! like another well known personage, the "Evangelical Public" is a hard taskmaster, one who abandons his most faithful servitors at a pinch.

The first of these Martyrs found out, and consequently thrown overboard by the Witness, is an Italian who calls himself Corregghini, and represents himself as one of a family which for centuries has suffered many things for the Holy Protestant Faith—in which, in a word, the *Evangelical Martyrdom Dodge*, has become hereditary, like gout in certain families. A New York paper, the *Echo d'Italia* first found itself obliged to expose this fellow, and his doings, cautioning the public against them. Whereupon the Witness of date above mentioned, publishes the following paragraph. It will be noticed that Corregghini tried his little

game on in Montreal; and that here "he applied to one of our ministers"—(name suppressed)—"who having examined his credentials! certified to his character!!! and commended his cause to the benevolent Protestants of Montreal."

CAUTION.—In *L'Echo d'Italia*, published in New York, the public are cautioned against a "martyr of the evangelical faith" who solicits aid for building a Protestant church in Favale in Italy. This individual is described as tall, plethoric, of dark complexion, of oily countenance, black hair and whiskers, and dressed in the style of a Protestant missionary. He claims to belong to the Protestant family of Corregghini, who have suffered much for their faith, and assumes this name so well known both in Italy and America. This same individual last month after making collections for churches in Albany, Troy, and other places, came to Montreal. Here he applied to one of our ministers, who, having examined his credentials, certified to his character and commended his cause to the benevolent Protestants of Montreal. This recommendation was followed by the declaration of several other clergymen endorsing this certificate. Fortified with this he commenced his begging from door to door for "depersecuted Italians," and was so successful, that a gentleman on subscribing questioned him as to the disposition of his funds for the church, and not receiving a satisfactory reply, examined carefully his documents, which consisted of a number of greasy papers and extracts from magazines, in which the name of Corregghini occurs, and that the only evidence of his "mission" was a note from a lady in New York, well known on both sides of the Atlantic for her benevolence and interest in every effort for the benefit of humanity, saying that the Corregghini family had for three centuries suffered persecutions for their faith. On this "Missionario Evangelico" refusing to pay his collections into the hand of a responsible party here or at New York, subject to the order of the Church at Favale, a little enquiry from the Italian Consul and others proved the man to be an impostor, differing only from the prodigal in that the latter wasted his own substance in riotous living while his self-styled martyr wasted other people's.

His excuse for being drunk is that the wines of this country are much stronger than *vino Italiano*; and for spending days in improper places—that he was led there by friends. His excuse for assuming the name of Corregghini is that his mother was twice married. We learn that this self-appointed collector has carried on this trade of asking aid for the persecuted Italians for several years. With reference to this case it would be well to observe that if there are any benevolent individuals wishing to aid distressed Italians or churches, there is an Italian committee who will take charge of funds for that purpose, and that in case of Italians applying for aid they should be endorsed by the Italian Consul, who is always ready to afford every information regarding the country he represents or its subjects. Clergymen, to make their recommendations respected, should only grant them after the strongest evidence of the deserving nature of the claim. We have no doubt other cities will have a visit from this "martyr della fede."

In the same number of the Witness we find the story of another *Evangelical Martyr*, an article of home manufacture, for the scene of his sufferings and long martyrdom is laid, not only in Montreal, but in the Jesuit's College. The fellow calls himself Vercoe. Here is his story as now told by the Witness:

"About six months ago a would-be gentleman represented to several prominent and benevolent citizens that he had been for some time confined in what is usually termed the Jesuits' College, in this city, contrary to his wish—that he had escaped in a very mysterious manner, and consequently implored pecuniary aid to get away from Montreal in order to evade incarceration again. His statements were very plausible and well calculated to cause the benevolently disposed to sympathize with him in his grievances so bitterly complained of.

"One gentleman in particular, not only supplied the necessary expenses, but also provided an escort to accompany the martyr-fugitive as far as Woodstock. Before leaving, however, he gave his name as Vercoe, and related a sorrowful tale as to his misfortunes. He said his father was a ship captain, his mother the daughter of a Presbyterian minister; that he had a brother a priest and two sister nuns, one in Quebec and the other in Montreal. The one in Quebec he represented as a twin sister very like himself, and much after his disposition, as she had also made her escape, but was afterwards secured by a certain doctor whose name he gave. He said his father had placed the whole family in charge of the Jesuits, and unfortunately for him, his property also, for the maintenance of the family, previous to embarking upon a long sea voyage.—After many days' wondering as to the long-continued absence of the father they all concluded that he had been lost at sea.

"About this time the Jesus brought their powers to bear upon the so-called fugitive in order to change his mind, he having held views contrary to the teachings of his religious instructors, but he was determined they should not do it, and resisted all their efforts. For this offence he was ordered bread and water for his diet, and placed in solitary confinement, from which he mysteriously escaped, according to his own showing. He implored sufficient funds to get out of the reach of his supposed pursuers, and mentioned Woodstock as his destination whither he was accompanied as already mentioned.

It was supposed that Vercoe had got safely away and would not be likely to return again; but not so for we are credibly informed he is back again, and once more appealing to the sympathies of Protestant clergymen and others, in this city, by saying that whilst in training here to be a priest he was caught reading a Protestant Bible, punished and imprisoned for the offence. Having escaped in his *soutane*, he made his way to the house of a well known Protestant gentleman, where a change of clothing was provided for him, &c. &c.

"This statement was made known by a pastor to the benevolent individual that had been already victimised and the latter immediately repaired to the place where the supposed fugitive had been located to find that he was the person who gave his name as Vercoe last fall, but notwithstanding that he was fully recognized, he pleaded innocence to the charge. To settle the matter the person who accompanied the supposed fugitive to Woodstock was brought forward, and not only recognized him, but also pointed out conclusive evidence on the person of the impostor that he was the veritable Vercoe."

Now, when Mr. Newdegate's Bill for subjecting convents and monasteries to Government inspection—although these are as much the private homes of the inmates, as is the mansion of any gentleman in England, his private home, or castle—it is well to remember that the only grounds assigned for such an invasion of the rights of domicile, for such an infraction of the time honored liberties of Englishmen, and Englishwomen are stories of no higher degree of credibility, than that of this Vercoe. A popular prejudice founded upon such "cock and a bull" stories, to the effect

that young men and women are forcibly detained in monasteries and convents, is the sole argument adduced in favor of Mr. Newdegate's proposed measure. What that argument is worth let the true history of these interesting martyrs Corregghini and Vercoe show.

As long however as the demand for sensational stories against Romish priests and Romish nuns exists, so long we may be sure the supply will be forthcoming, in accordance with the well known law of political economy. The frequent exposures however which have occurred of late will inculcate the necessity of greater prudence. It won't do, in Montreal, to make the Jesuits' College in Bleury Street, the scene of the thrilling experiences of the marvelously delivered victim of the Inquisition, neither will it be considered expedient to locate the imprisonment of the next "Escaped Nun" in any of our City convents. We must import our martyrs from distant lands, not manufacture them, for the future; and so by the exercise of a little more prudence on the part of the "men of God" who take the martyrs by the hand, carefully examine their credentials, certify as to their exemplary character and recommend their cause to the benevolent citizens of Montreal, the business known as the *Evangelical Martyrdom Dodge* may again be revived, and made to flourish as briskly as ever. *Verb. Sap.*, is enough, and reverend men of God will take and apply the hint.

ANGLICAN TROUBLES.—The Public Worship Regulation Bill, introduced by the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, for determining by Act of Parliament how, and in what terms, members of the Establishment shall worship God, is of course provoking much criticism both within and without the Courts of Legislature. All are agreed that if the peculiar form of religion by law established in England is to be maintained, something must be done, and that quickly. What that something is, is the difficulty; and there seems to be a pretty general aversion to placing too much power in the hands of the office-bearers of the Establishment.

In the debate on the second reading of the Bill, some very strong facts were brought forward by the Archbishop of York, to show the necessity of some stringent legislation to repress the audacity of the so-called ritualists. He cited, for instance, prayers which, by some Protestant ministers holding office in the Establishment, are substituted for the form of prayer enjoined by law to be used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and in which illegal prayers, the doctrine of a Eucharistic Sacrifice, profitable to the living and the departed, is clearly implied. He also cited the case of an Anglican church in which, besides the legal communion table, there is another table styled an altar, and, worst of all, an altar of the Blessed Virgin! on which, terrible to think of, appears the soul-destroying formula, "pray for us." There it stands, said the poor, helpless, much bewildered Anglican prelate; there it stands in spite of us; "and will remain, so I presume, till some power interposes to remove it." There can be no doubt but that the promoters of the Bill have fully made out their case in so far as the necessity for doing "something" is concerned.

The "something" proposed, however, by the Bill does not meet general approval; consisting chiefly as that "something" does, in the conferring upon Anglican officials of additional powers, so as to enable them to silence ministers praying in a form of words, not authorised by law, and to knock down all offensive ornaments, and superfluous communion tables.—The Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the pillars of the Establishment, objected strongly to the constitution of the Court before which, by the Bill, it was proposed to try ministers accused of worshipping the Lord in terms and with ceremonies not authorised by Act of Parliament. Too much power, he thought, was given to the Bishops; whereas a sound "secular lawyer" was the more fitting person to preside in the proposed Courts; "and"—so his Lordship added, with no doubt a good deal of truth, but not a little irreverence in his remarks—"if the Bishops were not allowed to interfere at all, the public would have some confidence in our legislation." A loud laugh greeted this expression of opinion, which amongst the laity of the Establishment will meet with general approval, as expressing their sentiments. Again, pointed out Lord Shaftesbury, significantly, "if a movement is made against the ritualistic party for extravagancies, they will take action against the low church party in regard to their omissions." Ay! there's the rub:

That maketh ritualism of so long a life." The whip which the Bill proposes for the ritualists, may turn out to be a scourge also for the low churchman's back; and a tribunal competent to repress excess of what is called ritualism, on the one hand, might take it into its head to enforce full conformity with the ritual on the other hand; and where would the low

churchmen, the evangelicals whom Lord Shaftesbury represents, be then? Who knows! said this prudent nobleman; the proposed Court might try to enforce the recital of the Athanasian Creed in every parish of the Kingdom! and the consequences of such an enforcement of the law, are, to the friends of the Establishment, fearful to contemplate.

Nor was this all. The proposed Bill did not touch, no Act of Parliament could touch, that which, in the judgment of Earl Shaftesbury, and of low churchmen in general, was the monster evil, the plague spot of the Establishment, menacing it with death—to wit, Confession. Here the noble Earl became positively eloquent, whilst he enlarged on the horrors of the Confessional. He had spoken to the Lord Chancellor on the subject, to see if by any process known to Courts of Laws, men and women might be prevented from confessing their sins; and by which ministers of the Establishment could be rendered liable to punishment for hearing such confessions, for giving spiritual consolation to their penitents, and for pronouncing absolution over them in the form prescribed in the Ordination service. Alas! For this abuse it seems that there is, that there can be, no remedy at law. The Lord Chancellor, when consulted with on the subject, spoke of Confession with much horror and indignation; and so with regret, Lord Shaftesbury admitted, that the evil cannot be checked by any ordinary legislative enactments. The only remedy he could suggest was the stirring up of "a universal public sentiment of indignation," which looks very much like a suggestion to supplement the defects of our ordinary legal tribunals, by an appeal to the tribunal of Judge Lynch. But even this mob, or indignation remedy would be of doubtful efficacy.

The Bill, after a stormy debate, got through its second reading in the House of Lords, on the understanding that in Committee it is to be much amended. Do what they will with it, however, the Bishops will find that they have got themselves into a mess; and that any attempt to repress what are called Romish practices in the Establishment by Act of Parliament, will but hasten the breaking up of the entire concern.

To outsiders the most suggestive view of the business is this: that, for the purpose of enforcing internal discipline, and of regulating the public worship of the established church, resource is by its chief officers had to a body whose members are, many of them, not members of the Anglican Church at all, nay, who are not even Christians by name. Parliament is composed of Catholics, Protestants of all shades of Protestantism, of Jews, and of Atheists, or Free-Thinkers; and it is to a body so constituted, that the Bishops of the Church of England appeal for a law regulating the forms of worship to be by them used in the service of God! and for powers to enable them to enforce that law when it shall have passed.—Never, surely, never since there was a religion, or a body calling itself a Church, upon earth, has there been witnessed such an absurdity; such abject humiliation; for put it as you will, thus stands the fact: That the Public Worship of the Protestant Church of England is to be regulated by the legislation of, not only Catholics, but of men who are not even professed Christians, by Jews, and avowed disbelievers in Christ!

Mr. Brooks in his speech on the second reading of the Libel Bill is reported in the *Gazette* as having delivered himself as follows:—

"But there are one or two journals which exist by slander, by pandering to the base appetite for scandal, and as I have been credibly informed, by extorting money under the threat of publishing paragraphs reflecting on the honor of families. If they are prosecuted for libel, they immediately complain of the law of libel; they say they are victims of the law; and conscious of the utter falsehood of what they have just published, they represent that if they were permitted, they could prove the whole to be true.

We wonder much what journal the honorable member could have had in his mind's eye when he thus delivered himself. Perhaps if examined M. Mousseau might throw some light upon the subject; perhaps also, the Marquis of Ailes, the Rev. M. Belanger of the Catholic Daaf and Dumb Asylum, and the Brothers in charge of the Reformatory, might, from personal experience, be able to form a shrewd guess as to the name of the journal to which Mr. Brooks alluded.

Proceedings of the Home Rule Conference held at the Rotunda Dublin, on the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st November 1873. We have to thank the President of the Montreal Branch of the Irish Home Rule League for a copy of this important document, which in the discussions which on the question of Home Rule for Ireland that will yet occur will be found very instructive. The pamphlet contains, besides a Report of the proceedings at the Conference, the Constitution and Laws of the Irish Home Rule League and other important documents.

A letter is published in the *Gazette* of the 26th ult., over the signature of Thomas Boyes, late a clerk in the Militia Department, in which the writer confesses to having stolen the letter addressed by Sir J. Macdonald to the Hon. Mr. Pope, about which there was so much excitement last September.—Boyes has absconded in order to escape the consequences of his crime; but his letter, if authentic, quite exonerates Mr. Palmer, the Post Office clerk to whom at first suspicion attached.