

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON,
At the Office, No. 3, McGill Street.

TERMS:

To Town Subscribers. . . . \$3 per annum.
To Country do. . . . \$2½ do.

We request our subscribers to remit, without delay, the amount of subscription, addressed—Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE; who will give receipts for the same.
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THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1851.

CATHOLIC DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

In consequence of certain misunderstandings, respecting the additional sum required by the Insurance Company, to cover extra risk, the meeting of the members of the Montreal Branch of the Catholic Defence Association, which was announced for Monday last, has been postponed. We are happy to state that the Society itself is thriving rapidly; subscriptions are pouring in, and have been paid into the hands of the Treasurer of the Society. Phs. McG. is respectfully informed that his handsome remittance has come safe to hand.

In Perth, C. W., the Catholics have set a noble example, which we hope will be generally imitated. We have just received the following report of a meeting held there, on the 11th inst. From want of space we must defer the address until next week:—

Pursuant to notice, a meeting of the Catholics of the town of Perth, and the adjoining Townships, was held on the 11th of May, at 1 o'clock, p. m., for the purpose of giving an expression of opinion, on the noble stand taken by the Irish prelates, in establishing a Catholic University.

The very Rev. J. H. McDonagh, was unanimously called to the chair, and John Doran, Esq., appointed Secretary.

The Chairman then addressed the meeting at considerable length, explaining the object for which it was called; the object and purposes for which the Irish Godless Colleges were established; the necessity that existed for supporting a Catholic University, and the bearing the penal bill, now before Parliament, would have on the Catholics of the United Kingdom.

It was then moved by Mr. Michael Stanly, seconded by Mr. Arthur Donnelly, and

Resolved—That so far from having confidence in either the wisdom or integrity of her Majesty's Government, we cannot find words to express our contempt, for the venemous little abortion of humanity that rules its councils.

Moved by Richard Bennet, Esq., seconded by Mr. Phillip McGowan, and

Resolved—That we should suspect even a favor offered to Catholics, by Lord John Russell, whose hereditary hatred of the Catholic Church, is equaled only by the rapacity with which, true to the interests of his family, he hunts for future spoil.

Moved by Mr. Henry Byrne, seconded by Mr. Patrick Dowdall, and

Resolved—That our best thanks are due, and are hereby tendered, to the faithful and ever watchful Bishops of the Irish Church, who discovered, even under its specious disguise, and defeated the wily premier's godless design, of demolishing the rising generation by an infidel education.

Moved by Mr. John Mitchell, seconded by Mr. William Gill, and

Resolved—That while we deeply, in our heart of hearts, sympathize with our suffering brethren, in the green home of our youth, our hopes in the speedy advent of happier days, is increased into confidence, by the Godlike efforts of the illustrious prelates of the Irish Church.

Moved by Mr. John Manion, seconded by Mr. David Nagle, and

Resolved—That regarding the establishment of a Catholic University in Ireland, as the best antidote for Lord John's poison, we pledge ourselves with heart and purse, (as far as our means will permit,) to co-operate with our Irish brethren, in effecting so desirable an object.

Moved by Mr. Stephen McElavy, seconded by Mr. Peter Henratty, and

Resolved—That the Very Rev. Chairman and Secretary, together with Messrs. Stanly, Bennet, Dowdall, Gill, Lenihan and Sheridan, be a committee, to draw up an address to the most Rev. Dr. McHale, expressive of our entire concurrence in the views, and confidence in the wisdom, and zeal, and efficiency of the dignified committee, of which he is an illustrious member.

Moved by Mr. John Doyle, seconded by Mr. James Kelly, and

Resolved—That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the Toronto Mirror, and the Montreal True Witness, and a copy sent by the Chairman to the Archbishop of Tuam.

Moved by Patrick Dowdall, Esq., seconded by Mr. Owen Stanly, and

Resolved—That the Chairman leave the chair, and Richard Bennet, Esq., be called thereto;—when a vote of thanks was given to the Very Rev. J. H. McDonagh, for his dignified conduct in the chair.

J. H. McDONAGH, Chairman.
JOHN DORAN, Secretary.

"Art thou he that troublest Israel?" was the question asked by Ahab, of the man of God. "Nay," answered the prophet, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house." The answer of Elijah is our answer, to those who reproach us with troubling the peace of Israel. It is not Catholics who desire to disturb her peace; they are the assailed, not the assailants; they are acting on the defensive, not on the offensive; their sole demand is not to be interfered with. But, we have heard it asked, what possible reasons can the Catholics of Canada have, in following the example set them by their Irish brethren, in forming themselves into a branch of the Catholic Defence Association? Their rights have not been attacked; there is no need for them to sing out before they are hurt. Such an argument we can understand, when coming from the lips of a Protestant, from one who is ignorant, and incapable of comprehending the holy bond of union, which knits together the members of Christ's Church, in the closest intimacy: worshipping upon his own hook, he is a member of his own obscure conventicle, and of nothing else; his religious sympathies, are bounded by the limits of the little Bethel or Ebenezer chapel, whither he hebdomadally repairs, to compensate for the irreligion of the rest of the week, by sitting out, with the fortitude of an Indian at the stake, the horrors of some interminable, prosy harangue; and submitting, with the patient endurance of the youth of Sparta, to the infliction of the psalmody of the conventicle, doled forth with all that sublimity of nasal intonation, in which elect vessels delight, and which the poetic effusions of Sternhold and Hopkins do so imperatively require. But, in the mouth of a Catholic, it is utterly ridiculous: he is not, like the Protestant, an isolated unit; he is a member of that great confederacy, which reaches to the uttermost parts of the earth, from the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same; his sympathies are not bounded by country, or by that which severs all earthly ties, by death itself; but extending beyond the grave, to realms unseen, save with the eye of faith, prompt him to pour forth his prayers for the souls of his departed brethren, that they may repose in peace, and to seek the prayers of those whose souls rejoice in the presence of the Lord. United in life, even in death, Catholics are not divided.

How then can we, Catholics, be supposed to be indifferent to the wrongs of our brethren of the United Kingdom, or to behold their persecution with indifference? Have we no reason to fear, that what is inflicted upon them, may be attempted to be inflicted upon us, if we do not, by the expression of our indignation, and of our sympathy, convince the persecutors of our brethren in the faith, of the hopelessness of their introducing similar penal laws into Canada. Yes; the Catholics of Canada, are as much interested in the question of Ecclesiastical Titles, as are the Catholics of England and Ireland. For what is the question raised by this measure? It is simply this. Is the spiritual authority of the Pope supreme over all parts of the Catholic Church, or can it be limited by the civil power? "Has the Pope," asks a writer in the Times, "the right to appoint an Archbishop of Westminster?" Now, we Catholics of Canada, members of that portion of the Church which God, in His mercy, has planted on this side of the Atlantic, are as much interested, as are those on the other side, in maintaining that the Pope has that right. For, if he has not that right in England, then neither has he it here; and the creation of an Archbishop of Quebec, or of a Bishop of Montreal, is as much an act of Papal Aggression, as is the creation of an Archbishop of Westminster, or of a Bishop of Beverly. The authority of the Pope is direct from God, and is the same in one part of the British Empire, as it is in another. It is either supreme everywhere, or it is nothing anywhere. It is not derived from, or dependent for its exercise upon, the good will of the civil power, and there is, therefore, no reason why that which is made penal in England, should not be made penal in Canada; or why the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen, or rather, of the First Lord of the Treasury for the time being, should not be asserted on the shores of the St. Lawrence, as well as upon the banks of the Thames. Any attack, therefore, made upon the spiritual authority of the Pope, in one part of the world, is an attack made upon it in all.

But it is not only against the Titles of our Bishops, that it is proposed to legislate; it is not only through them, that our religious liberties are attacked. The taste for persecution, like the appetite for blood, increases the more it is indulged; and the clauses of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, but dimly shadow forth what is in store for us, if by a determined and united opposition, to the first attempts at penal laws, we do not show our firm resolution never to submit to them. The infamous Convent Visitation Bill, if it become law in England, may very likely have its provisions extended here as well—not that we believe that the bill will ever be carried into execution. The Catholics of England have spoken out plainly enough, upon that point, as to their intentions to resist by force, if necessary; and we fear not, but what the Catholics of Canada, would be nowise slack in following their example. "If these bills pass," says the Rev. Bishop of Meath, "their provisions will be as much entitled to our respect, as the demand of the highway robber." Let us hear the London Catholic Standard. Speaking of Mr. Lacy's bill, by which some filthy black-guard of a government official, will be authorised, by law, to intrude his foul presence into the abodes of Catholic devotion and female purity, it says:—"And this is to be in England, where every man's house is his castle, and where the inviolability of the household, is the foundation of all our liberties. We tell the Protestants of this country, that if they dare to fling down the gauntlet of persecution, the answer

shall be given in their own houses, and not in ours. It shall be given in the mansions and estates of ill gotten and fraudulent wealth, and not in the Catholic houses of refuge for the orphans, and for prayer; we will not allow our religious houses to be visited by Protestants, but will rather die in their defence; and if there is little chivalry now left in the English people, we will at least show them, that the sons of the Crusaders, have the blood of chivalry in their veins, and that the sanctuaries of our religious Englishwomen, shall not be violated without a struggle, and without a frightful tale to be told—of stern retribution and retaliation."

Do we wish to avoid all chance of similar struggles, of similar scenes of violence, here? Then let us be prepared to resist the introduction of all measures calculated to produce them. In this, Protestants are as deeply interested as we are; if they cannot join with us in asserting the supremacy of the Pope, many of them will agree with us, in repudiating the spiritual supremacy of the Queen. Protestant Dissenters from the Establishment, should remember, that by encouraging, or by not opposing, the imposition of penal laws upon Catholics, they are establishing a precedent, which may soon be cited against themselves, and are preparing a rod for their own backs. If, in support of the Queen's supremacy, and of the privileges of the state clergy, a Catholic Bishop is to be subjected to fine and imprisonment, for subscribing himself by his proper title, we do not see why the affixing "reverend" to his name, should not subject the Independent minister, to two years imprisonment; why the Methodist preacher, should not be compelled to exchange his religious exercises, for that which is usually taken on the treadmill, in company with gentlemen in grey jackets, and hair cut very short behind; or why the baptism of adults, by immersion, should not be made a capital felony. The cause in which we are now engaged, is one in which Protestants have often buckled on their armor. It is no question of dogmas, or of articles of faith; it is the question of religious freedom; of the independence of things spiritual, of things temporal; it is the cause for which the Church of England professed to fight, when it drove the last of the Stuarts from his throne; it is the cause for which the Pilgrim fathers fought, and for whose success despairing in the old world, they turned their backs upon their native land, and sought them other homes across the deep; it is the cause for which the Scotch Presbyterians, the stern children of the covenant, professed to contend, when they became dwellers in the wilderness, and, defying the fury of their oppressors, dyed the mountain heather with their heart's blood; it is the cause for which the great and the good, of all ages and nations, have contended; for which a Becket, a More, suffered martyrdom; for which a Gregory died in exile; and for which, in our days, a Pius IX. was driven from his throne, by the blood-stained ruffians of modern Rome; in a word, it is the cause of God, and of His Church—a cause of whose success it would be folly to doubt, because the Holy One of Israel is our Helper, and the Lord of Hosts our refuge.

"Why are you so poor?" is asked reproachfully of the French Canadian habitants, by those evangelical proselytisers, who strive to make converts, by representing Catholicity as a religion unfavorable to worldly prosperity. "Don't you know," they continue, "that if poverty is not a crime, it is, at least, no virtue; and that he who does not seek to better his condition, neither understands his duty, nor the intention of his Creator towards him." You are too religious, they insinuate; you are too constant in your attendance at Church; too earnest in your exercises of devotion—your Novenas and spiritual Retreats—you pray too much; keep too many holidays, and, in fact, give a great deal too much of your time and thoughts to heaven and to God, and not half enough to the world and the devil. Such is the substance of a long reproach against the poverty of the French Canadians, in which the writer, falsely assuming the poverty of the habitants, lays the whole blame of it upon their religion, and upon their excessive devotion. We say "falsely assuming," because it is a well known fact, that the vast majority of the French Canadian habitants are not poor, in the true sense of the word. It would be difficult to find a body of men, amongst whom there prevails a greater amount of comfort, if not affluence. They have food and raiment, and are, as St. Paul enjoins, therewith content. They have learnt from their spiritual guides, that "Piety, with sufficiency, is great gain; and to be cheerful and contented in that station of life, in which it has pleased God to place them." That they are not poor is evident, from one of the statements of the very man who accuses them of, and taunts them with, their poverty:—"The value of £100,000 in titles! is annually paid by the Catholic habitants of the Seignories," he informs us. We will, for the sake of argument, assume the truth of our informant's statement, from which it follows, that as titles are paid only on the cereal crops, the annual value of grain alone, raised by the labors of the Catholic inhabitants of the Seignories, is upwards of £2,500,000, or, in 25 years, about £63,000,000. When to this we add the value of hay and green crops, the value of sheep, cattle and horses, reared upon the pasture lands, we have a very pretty sum produced by the labors of a small, and unjustly depreciated portion of the community, in spite of their very unevangelical practice of keeping Saints and other holidays. "Besides Sundays," says the writer of the article before us, "the loss of time to the Catholics of Lower Canada, by the observance of holidays, Saints days, Retraites and Neuvaines, is at least, fifty days in the year." How exquisitely Protestant is the above remark; how characteristic of the system which

teaches man to place all his happiness in the development of material prosperity; which knows of no enjoyments, save those of sense; to which the almighty dollar is the God of its idolatry, before which all men are to fall down and worship; which is incapable of conceiving, any destiny for man, loftier than that of amassing pounds, shillings and pence, or any reward for merit more noble than a lucky hit in tallow, or a fortunate speculation in molasses; and which values Christianity, only as a useful agent, in creating a demand for the inestimable blessing of cottons and printed calicoes. How truly does it breathe the very spirit of Protestantism, or as Dr. Brownson so happily, and yet so cruelly, branded it—*Carnal Judaism*. What we give to religion, and to heaven, is a dead loss to time, and our offerings to God are a robbery of Satan. Now, it is a most ridiculous exaggeration to say, that the number of days lost! to the pursuit of gain, by the observance of days of devotion, amounts to fifty in the year, or any thing like it. There are in Canada, besides Sundays, only nine feasts of obligation, including Christmas day, several of which must occasionally fall upon a Sunday. As to the *Retraites* and *Neuvaines*, they are not of obligation, and do not interfere with the habitants daily labor.

And, yet, in one sense, the writer is right in complaining of the too great devotion of the people, and of their attachment to their religion, as the cause which prevents them from being rich, in his sense of the word. It is impossible to serve both God and mammon; it is difficult, if not impossible for a truly Catholic people to become rich, as he wishes them to become rich. For though, as we have shown, the French Canadian habitants cannot be called poor, yet neither is he, thank God, what the world esteems a rich man. The habitants are not great capitalists, or great speculators, and they are unfortunately, and in spite of the exhortations of their evangelical mentors, more addicted to investing their earnings in the erection of Churches, and other acts of piety; than in the extending of railroads, and lines of electric telegraph; and yet, in spite of all their follies, they are, in some respects, worthy of imitation, even by some of the most devout frequenters of the tabernacle. There are, amongst the French Canadian habitants, but very few fraudulent bankrupts, or betrayers of trusts; very few whose fortunes are made up of the spoils of fatherless children and widows. If their names are rarely found amongst those of the holders of railway shares, they are equally scarce upon the register of the Penitentiary; and if they contribute little to joint stock companies, they are of less expense to the community for jail accommodation. If they are not smart traders, and God forbid that they should ever become so, they are, at least, honest men. If they are not so cute hands at a bargain, as their puritanical neighbors on the other side of the lines, who may, generally, be described, as a facetious friend of ours once described a worthy deacon of some conventicle or other, as "Godwards, upright men enough; but as Manwards, rather twistle"—they have not, as yet, acquired the habit of repudiating their debts, or any of those other clever knavish tricks, for which your true evangelical Protestant, with the real Puritan blood flowing through his veins, is so pre-eminently distinguished, and to the practice of which Catholicity opposes so many obstacles.

Yes, these men cannot but hate our holy religion, and we thank them for their hatred, and their abuse, as the highest compliment they can pay to it. It was, we believe, the late Sir Ashley Cooper, who told the young medical student, that if he would rise to eminence in his profession, the first thing he had to do, was to overcome the delicacy of his stomach, and to conquer the disagreeable nausea which a dissecting room is so apt to create. So with the evangelical exhorters to wealth, of whom we are speaking, (for God forbid that it should be imagined that we intend our remarks to apply to all;) their first lesson to their disciples is, to overcome all delicacy or scruples of conscience, and to get rid of that sense of uneasiness—that moral squeamishness—which is, at first, so very apt to torment the perpetrators of mean and dishonest actions, in their struggles to be rich. Now, in the estimation of these gentry, (and they are quite right,) the crying sin of the Catholic religion is, that by its system of rigid self-examination, and accusation at the confessional, it fosters and encourages a morbid delicacy of conscience, most injurious to the acquisition of wealth; that it exhorts to charity, so fatal to thrift; and inculcates habits of self-denial, preaches a contempt for the world, and all it has to offer, until men who are so infatuated as to hearken unto it, becomes useless, as members of a commercial community, and incapable of fulfilling the designs of their Creator, in seeking to better their condition.

"Labor not to be rich," said the wise king. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth;—take no heed what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink," said our Lord. "Deny thyself, take up thy cross, daily, and follow Christ," says the Church to her children at the present day; and a hard saying it is to Protestant ears. Far pleasanter—far more acceptable to our corrupt nature is the Protestant doctrine, for through the disobedience of Adam, all men are born with a natural tendency to Protestantism, which nothing but the grace of God can overcome. Pleasant to the Protestant ears is the doctrine—"Make money—get rich—labor to better your condition, for by so doing you fulfil the designs of your Creator," which bids the covetous man, the usurer, the extortioner, the devourer of widows houses, who now, as of old, are famous for the length of their prayers, the possessor of ill-gotten wealth, be of good cheer, as servants who have done their duty; and which, above all other passages of holy writ, does, especially, hold up to our imitation the conduct of the servant,