

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE solution of the Roman Question, in so far as it depends upon the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome, would seem to be indefinitely postponed; for Louis Napoleon has again signified his determination not to accede to the proposals made to him by the Cabinet at Turin, for banding over the Pope to the King of Sardinia.

The struggle betwixt the Neapolitans and the Piedmontese still drags its slow length along, without any very decided success for either side to boast of.

The condition of Poland is extremely critical, and another general uprising against Russia seems imminent. The Cathedral of Warsaw having been desecrated by the Russian soldiery, and other churches being menaced with similar profanations, the sacred edifices here, by express injunction from the Pope, been closed until such time as the Russian authorities shall have made expiation, and given guarantees against further profanation.

Our latest dates from Europe are by the Persia from Liverpool 26th ult. She brings news of the death of Sir James Graham; the Continental news is unimportant. There are vague rumors that France has notified Italy to be ready with her military organization against the spring; and it is announced that Great Britain and Spain had arrived at a complete understanding relative to Mexico. Breadstuffs reported "firm but quiet."

From the United States there is nothing decisive. The Naval Expedition which sailed last week has not been heard of, but it is known that it encountered heavy gales a few days after its departure. Its destination is still a secret. General Scott has resigned, and is on his way to England. General McClellan is appointed his successor.

The Montreal Witness exhibits against us the following formidable Bill of Indictment:—THE TRUE WITNESS NOT SPEAKING TRUTH.—The True Witness informs its readers that believers in Spirit Rappings are a sect of Protestants, and that their religious errors are no worse than those of their other Protestant neighbors, and much less dishonouring to God than the more blasphemous tenets of Calvinism.

are abhorrent to every Protestant denomination. That journal is kept playing on one string, in affirming that Protestantism is a rejection of all belief. It is just the opposite, for Roman Catholics are constantly finding fault with the basis of evangelical Protestantism, viz.: justification by faith, or belief in the atoning sacrifice and obedience of the Son of God. The individual having this faith gives evidence of possessing it by keeping God's commandments. Romanism rejects this great doctrine of the Christian religion, though some of the Fathers unquestionably held it; and when the True Witness speaks of the "blasphemous tenets of Calvinism," it condemns some of the best men whom his church looks up to with veneration. We hope Roman Catholics will not judge of Protestantism by what the True Witness says, but examine for themselves the standard of Protestant belief—the Bible—comparing it, if they choose, with the Roman Catholic version of the Scriptures, the Douay Bible. We are not much surprised at the preference given to Spiritualism by the organ of Romanism, for both Spirit Rappings and Poperly thrive on the credulity of the unenlightened. The difference between credulity and faith is that one is assent to the greatest absurdities and the most improbable things without the support of revelation, whilst faith is the act of an intelligent and enlightened reason, resting upon the declaration of the Divine Being in His own word.

The first count charges us with falsehood in describing the "believers in Spirit Rappings" as "a sect of Protestants." But to make good his charge the Witness should show that the said "believers" are Non-Protestants; and to do this he must first do what we have often in vain called upon him to do—to wit: to give a concise exhaustive definition of the word "Protestant." Then, and then only, shall we be able to decide whether the Spirit Rappers are, or are not Protestants.

In the British Courts of Law, a Protestant is held to mean "any person who protested against Poperly." In the more limited or restricted sense in which we employ it, it means "any baptised person who protests against Poperly;" or in other words, who formally rejects, in whole or in part, the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. According to either of these definitions, a believer in "Spirit Rappings" is a Protestant; and a collection of such "believers" may therefore most appropriately be termed a "Protestant Sect." To convict us of error, the Witness must first show that our definition is defective, and, at the same time, furnish us with another and better definition of his own. If he will accept this challenge, we will do him the justice to publish, and to analyse his definition in the columns of the TRUE WITNESS; we suspect however that our cotemporary will shrink from the test proposed, or try and shuffle out of it under a cloud of words.

The second count in the indictment taxes us with representing the distinctive tenets of Spiritualism as no worse than, indeed as not so bad as, those of Calvinism. This too we are prepared to justify, for Calvinism blasphemes God, by making Him the author of evil—of the impenitence of a Judas, as well as of the repentance of St. Peter; it libels God, by representing Him, Who is Charity, as a cruel capricious tyrant, creating, for the mere sake of torturing throughout all eternity—as a Being whom to love it is impossible, and for whom every honest generous heart must entertain the most profound loathing. Calvinism represents God, in fine, as an omnipotent fiend, infinite in power and in malice; and His intelligent creatures as helpless puppets, destitute of all moral responsibility, because destitute of freedom of will—and yet as doomed by His irresistible decrees, even from their mother's wombs, to the flames that are never quenched, and to the gnawings of the worm which dieth not. Modern Calvinists we well believe shrink from the extreme logical consequences of their master's blasphemous principles; but their prominent doctrines of "predestination" and "serf-will" are incompatible with a belief in God's justice and mercy, and render futile every attempt that may be made to construct a Calvinistic theodicy.

To the third count we reply by a direct negative, and by retorting upon our accuser the charge of a deliberate falsehood, in the form of the suppressio veri. It is not true that the basis of "Evangelical Protestantism" is justification by faith; and it is not true that "Roman Catholics are constantly finding fault" with that doctrine. The Witness has deliberately suppressed the word "alone," on which the whole controversy depends, and which constitutes the essential difference betwixt the Lutheran and the Tridentine doctrines concerning justification; the former asserting that "man is justified by faith alone;" the other recognising that man is indeed justified by faith, but insisting that that faith must be vivified and working by charity.

"Nam fides, nisi ad eam spes accedat, et caritas, neque unit perfecte cum Christo, neque corporis ejus vivum membrum efficit."—Conc. Trid. Sessio 6, c. vii

The doctrine, then, with which Catholics "find fault" is not the doctrine of "justification by faith"—for that is an essential Romish doctrine—but the doctrine that man is "justified by faith alone," which Luther broached, and which still forms an integral part of the "anthropology" of those Protestant sects which arrogate to themselves the prefix of "evangelical." The Witness therefore, is doubly guilty of falsehood; guilty, in that from the Protestant formula, he erases the all-significant word "alone;" guilty, in that he charges Roman Catholics with denying a doctrine upon which their Church most strongly insists, anathematising all who say that man can be justified by his own works—quæ vel per humana nature, vel per legis doctrinam fant—and

without the grace which cometh freely by Jesus Christ.—Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. Can. 1.

Our judgment of Protestantism and its tendencies is based upon the writings of Protestants, the most eminent in every department of science and literature. We judge of the tendencies of modern Protestantism from the statements of its most illustrious champions and exponents—such as Bunsen amongst the Protestants of Continental Europe—such as Jowett, Williams, Baden Powell, Buckle, cum multis aliis, amongst the Protestants of England. Are not these men to be credited, is not their report to be believed, when they reveal to us the workings of Protestantism upon themselves and their contemporaries? Are not the Heads of the Protestant Universities, and of Protestant Ecclesiastical Seminaries—are not the dignitaries of the Protestant Church of England, and the most eminent of the Protestant scholars of Germany, trustworthy exponents of the Holy Protestant Faith? And if men such as these deceive us, to whom are we to turn for information? Are we to address ourselves to the coarse vulgar, illiterate Mawworms of the conventicle, such as the buffoon Spurgeon and his compeers—whose impudence and ignorance are only surpassed by their blasphemous, or rather ludicrous pretensions to a divine illumination? Shall we turn aside from the grave, polished, gentlemanly, highly-accomplished scholars of Oxford and Cambridge, to give ear to the ravings of the converted pugilist, the inspired cobbler, or the "renewed in spirit" dustman, who doles out the bread of life to the frequenters of the Little Bethel, and the neighboring Ebenezer?

And when the Witness hopes that "Roman Catholics will examine for themselves the standard of Protestant belief—the Bible," the latter are at once reminded that the authority of that very Bible, is a warmly discussed question amongst Protestants; and that it has been settled in a sense hostile to the claims of the so-called evangelical section of Protestantism, by all its most illustrious scholars of modern times; by all who from their historical, philological, ethnological, and philosophical researches are most competent to form a correct opinion, and are most entitled to a respectful hearing; so that there is no well educated Protestant of the day who would so much as dare to argue publicly in favor of the "plenary inspiration" of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Accepting also the distinction drawn by the Witness betwixt faith and credulity, Catholics will come to the conclusion that they must be credulous indeed, who without the slightest grounds upon which to rest their belief, who without a vestige even of argument or reason to support it, insist notwithstanding, that the collection of writings which they call the "Bible" is the "Word of God."

Had the reading of the editor of the Witness been a little more extensive than it has hitherto been; or were he as well "posted up" on the religious problems of the day, as he is on the state of the markets, on corn, flour, pork and ludes—he would at once recognise the perfect truth of what we have above advanced. As it is, he will probably be shocked at what to him will appear the calling in question of the unquestionable, and may set us down as infidels. Reciprocating therefore his good wishes, and feeling a deep interest in his mental culture, we invite him to examine narrowly, and rationally into the grounds for his belief in the "inspiration" of the Gospel attributed to St. John, and in the historical credibility of the first chapter of that which bears the name of Luke. Our cotemporary will also, we hope, favor us with a report of the result of these preliminary investigations.

THE TEMPORAL POWER.—In the actual state of society, and in the existing political order, every man must be either sovereign or subject; and if Catholics insist upon the preservation of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, it is chiefly to prevent him from becoming a subject—and the subject of a prince alien to the vast majority of the Catholic community. It is a common reproach especially urged against Papists in England, that they are the subjects of a foreign prince; and that they profess, a divided allegiance, though that allegiance is purely spiritual, and he to whom it is paid is a Sovereign Prince, removed by his position from the ordinary turmoil of politics. But with how much force might not that reproach be urged, if the Spiritual Sovereign of British Catholics were himself the subject of a foreign prince with whom Queen Victoria was at war.

In the early days of the Church, when as yet Christendom and the Roman Empire were contemporaneous, when therefore all Christians were the subjects of one temporal sovereign, and citizens of one empire, it was of little consequence that the Pope should also be a subject. But when Christendom was broken up into several independent, and often mutually hostile States, then the temporal sovereignty of the Pope became a necessity; and by the superintending care of God, this position was assured to the successor of St. Peter, in order that he might indeed be independent, and the common Spiritual Sovereign of Catholics of every country and of every race.—

It is therefore as the means "to an important end—that end being his spiritual independence—and not as an end in itself, that all sincere Catholics contend for the temporal sovereignty of their Spiritual Chief.

Protestants see this as clearly as we do; and their chief object in attacking the temporal sovereignty of the Pope is to deprive him, of his spiritual authority over the Catholic world.—They attack, as we defend, the Spiritual, on the side of the Temporal. Given the destruction of the Temporal Power, and they conclude at once to the overthrow of Poperly, and the breaking up of the Catholic Church into a number of independent national churches, of which the Headship would be vested in the several civil magistrates of the countries in which they obtained—as in England, and in the case of the Protestant Established Church. No European Sovereign, so they argue with themselves, would tolerate the spiritual supremacy over his temporal subjects, of a Bishop of Rome who was himself the subject of a foreign Prince. Thus in the present movement against the Pope, Protestants foresee a formidable attack, not upon the Sovereign of Rome merely, but upon the Catholic Church herself—upon that Church, one and indivisible, which knows nothing of geographical boundaries, which recognises no political limitations, and which is, by its very essence, or condition of being, incompatible with national, or State Churches. As its name implies, "A Catholic Church" is the contradictory of "A National Church;" and such a Church, though it should retain every peculiar dogma of Romanism would, in that it was national, or limited by geographical and political accidents, cease to be Catholic. There can in short be no Catholic Church without the Pope; and it is hoped that by depriving the latter of his temporal sovereignty, and thereby reducing him to the condition of a subject of a particular Prince—the Church will be deprived of her Pope, father, or common head.

Though such consequences as Protestants anticipate would not flow from the policy which they advocate; though deprived of his throne and the independence derived from his temporal sovereignty, the successor of St. Peter, and the Vicar of Christ, would still retain the independence of the Martyr, or that independence which flows from persecution—still are we interested in protesting, and are in duty bound to protest against the iniquity which is meditated against our Holy Father the Pope. In his person are menaced the independence of the Church, and our own religious and civil liberties. Hear what the London Times, in an editorial upon the Pope's Allocution—of which a copy will be found on our second page—says upon the subject:—

"We hope that in the arrangements, which cannot be far distant, for remodelling the condition of the Papacy, provision will be made in the interests of religion and decorum for suppressing altogether the thing called an 'Allocution.'"—London Times.

And if the Head of the Church is to be thus dealt with under the new order of things which the Liberals are laboring to bring about, how can we expect that our more immediate Pastors, that our Bishops and Clergy, shall be better treated? or that the things called "Pastorals" shall not also be repressed altogether, in the same interests as those of which the Times, and Garibaldi, and the infidels of Italy, are the advocates? This then is what they are aiming at—To suppress altogether the right of free speech amongst Catholics, and to prohibit all communication betwixt the pastors of the Church and the several flocks committed to their charge, which has not received the previous sanction of some petty Prefect, or "Jack-in-Office," especially charged with the interests of religion.

The plan has been tried however, and it has signally failed. The Jews of old tried it, when having summoned the Apostles before their tribunal, they beat them, and commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus any more.—Acts v. 40. So also would the heathen have put a stop altogether to the Allocutions of one Paul, whom they hated, and could not silence; and so may we feel confident will it fare in these latter days, with every attempt that may be made, no matter by whom, or upon what pretext, to silence those to whom the Lord has given commandment to preach His Gospel and to convert the nations.

A VERY WICKED LIBEL.—Accustomed as we are to meet in the columns of the Montreal Witness with strong denunciations of Catholics, and of everything appertaining to them and to their religion, we were hardly prepared to find our cotemporary giving his aid to the circulation of libels the most defamatory, against Victor Emmanuel, the late Count Cavour, and the Sardinian Government generally. Yet so it is; and in the Witness of the 31st ult. we were startled by finding the following incredible announcement, amongst the selected matter of that evangelical journal. It is in reference to the action of the Sardinian Government towards the King of Naples during the Garibaldi filibustering expedition, and comes from the pen of one who apparently writes with a full knowledge of the facts which he describes. Our cotemporary inserts it with-

out apparently any perception of the bitter accusation against the "Liberators" of Italy which it implies. Are we to attribute this to our cotemporary's malice against those Liberators, or to his moral apathy, to an insensibility to the difference betwixt truth and falsehood. Here is the story:—

"Nearly all the best troops of the Garibaldian host had overcoats of grey cloth, precisely similar to those in use amongst the Piedmontese infantry of the line. They had been sent by the Sardinian Government in large quantities, together with arms and ammunition, at the time Count Cavour was strenuously denying in his official correspondence all connivance with the enterprise. In the Track of the Garibaldians through Italy and Sicily. By Algernon Sydney Bickwell."

Surely there must be some mistake here! Surely the Witness—the panegyrist of Gavazzi, Garibaldi, Cavour, Victor Emmanuel, and of every one whose motto is "Down with the Pope."—has been betrayed into the giving circulation to one of the most atrocious libels upon the King and Government of Sardinia, that has been published. The most scurrilous of Neapolitan "brigands" has not said anything worse of Italian Liberators than is affirmed in the above extract.

But we reject the story with inexpressible disgust and indignation. What! are we to believe that the Sardinian Government was actually sending large quantities of clothing, arms, and ammunition to the filibustering expedition against a neighboring sovereign, whilst at the very same moment it was, through its Prime Minister, Count Cavour, "strenuously denying all connivance with the enterprise!" The thing is monstrous, incredible, an outrage upon common decency, and the Witness should be prosecuted as a malicious libeller and slanderer. Why! everybody knows—every Protestant body at all events—that Victor Emmanuel is the pattern of an upright, truth-loving man—that he is the "king honest man, re-galantuomo" par excellence. How then can it be believed that he would be a party to such treachery, and down-right lying as that which the Witness imputes to him? Such a king surely could never have been guilty of the meanness of conspiring, and furnishing munitions of war against a Sovereign with whom he professed to be on terms of peace and friendship; and even if so far guilty, surely he, the lion-hearted, would never have descended so low as to deny his own acts. Only fancy Louis Napoleon acting towards Queen Victoria as the extract from the Witness represents Victor Emmanuel as having acted towards Francis II.! Stirring up rebellion in Ireland, sending clothes, arms, and ammunition in large quantities to the rebels; and all the time, through official channels repudiating strenuously all connection with the insurgents! Should we not say under such circumstances, that Louis Napoleon was a knave and a liar? a mean fellow who deserved to have his knighthood spurs stricken off his heels with a butcher's cleaver? And how, if Victor Emmanuel be the liar, the double-faced rascal that the Witness asserts him to be—how can any reliance be placed on those guarantees which, upon his kingly word, he now offers for the spiritual independence of the Pope, should the latter consent to resign his temporal sovereignty. Oh! the Witness has cruelly and wickedly slandered that honest man, King Victor Emmanuel.

And Count Cavour—another good honest man, another Italian Liberator! See what a pretty figure he is made to cut in the columns of the Witness! He is there represented as a miserable sneak, as a rascally lying pettifogger, shrinking like a coward from the consequences of his own policy! If the leaders of the Italian national party are indeed such men as the Witness pretends, what a set of pitiful wretches must they be who follow their banners! In slandering Cavour and Victor Emmanuel, the Witness, has slandered the entire Italian Liberal party.

And not the Italian Liberals alone has he slandered, but all their friends and admirers amongst Protestants—who surely cannot be suspected of sympathising with traitors and liars! The receiver is as bad as the thief; he who encourages a traitor and a liar is himself no better; and yet if we accept the story told in the Witness, we must believe that the Great Briton, who is known throughout the world, and who is respected and loved wherever he is known, for his love of truth, fairplay and manly dealing, is the partisan and enthusiastic admirer of liars and traitors!

The Witness should be ashamed of himself for circulating libels so dishonouring to Italian Liberalism, and an admiring Protestantism. Were he a Papist, a partizan of the Bourbon, a reactionist, a "brigand," in fine, he could not have done worse, or perpetrated a more gross offence against the "king honest man," the illustrious Cavour, and their Protestant friends, than he has been guilty of. We look for a speedy retraction.

THE "GLOBE" AND THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.—Our new Governor General brings with him most excellent letters of introduction, and commences his reign under the most favorable auspices. We venture to predict for him a happy and honorable career in Canada.

The letter to which we refer reaches us through the columns of the Toronto Globe, and is from the pen of the Downshire Protestant, a prominent Orange journal of Ireland. It introduces to us Lord Monck, as a liberal Irish gentleman, whose political antecedents give promise of a liberal policy in Canada, and of an intention so to exercise the authority committed to him by his Sovereign as to conciliate her Catholic subjects. We are told also that it is not likely that he is "inclined to look favorably upon the rising power of Orangemen in Canada;" and throughout the article alluded to—which the Globe in perfect harmony with its Washington proclivities reproduces with manifest gusto—Lord Monck is assailed with the coarsest invective by the great