

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1851.

CATHOLIC DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of this Society was held yesterday, after Vespers, in front of St. Patrick's Church, when the following Resolutions and Addresses were unanimously adopted. Full particulars in our next. A collection to the amount of ONE HUNDRED AND TEN POUNDS was taken up, in aid of the Catholic University. After three cheers for the Pope, three cheers for Cardinal Wiseman and the English Hierarchy, and three cheers for the Hierarchy of Ireland, and for the Clergy of Canada, the meeting adjourned until Sunday next, after Vespers, when it is proposed to continue the collection. List of subscribers' names in our next.

The first resolution was proposed by Dr. Coffy, and seconded by Jno. Mahony, Esq.:

Resolved,—"That the following Address to Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Westminster, congratulating him upon the restoration in his person, and in that of his colleagues, of the Catholic Hierarchy of England, be adopted."

To his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, by the Grace of God, and the favor of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Westminster, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EMINENCE,

At a time when the whole world is watching with intense anxiety, to see what new forms the monster of persecution, raised in England by the intolerant fanaticism of the multitude, and the dishonest policy of its leaders, may assume; whilst from all parts of the world you receive the congratulations, and the expressions of the deep sympathies of our Catholic brethren, who, although scattered over the face of the whole globe, are yet indissolubly united by the bonds of a common faith, and of dutiful submission to One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, thus forming but one body, whose head is Christ:

We, the Catholic laity of the Diocese of Montreal, desire respectfully to approach your Eminence, and to join our voice to the majestic voice of the Catholic Church, which, in harmonious concert, is every where raised up, to bless our common father, the immortal Pius IX. for that, in virtue of the supreme spiritual authority wherewith he is invested, he has been pleased to recall to life the long extinct Catholic Hierarchy of England, thus restoring that country to the rank of a Christian and Catholic nation; and for having in your person, and in that of your fellow-laborers in Christ's vineyard, given successors to the long list of illustrious prelates, who, by their virtues during life, by their heroic resistance to the tyrannic encroachments of the temporal power, and by the martyr's death which they so often nobly won, have shed an undying glory upon their age and country.

We desire also to offer to your Eminence, and through your person, to the whole Catholic Hierarchy of England, our sincere congratulations, for that you have been found worthy to suffer persecution for the name of Christ, whilst defending the divine and inalienable rights of His spouse, the Holy Catholic Church; and though we cannot but deplore the mental blindness of your adversaries, though we cannot but feel a lively disgust at their blasphemous excesses, and a just abhorrence and detestation of those authorities which have encouraged them, we still rejoice in the Lord, because we are assured, that all attempts at persecution must ultimately rebound to the advancement of the Church, and to the honor and glory of His Holy name, Who has planted her so firmly on the rock, and laid her foundations so deep, that neither the malice of men nor devils, shall ever be able to prevail against her.

We offer up our continual prayers to heaven for the welfare of your Eminence, and the Catholic Prelates of England, earnestly beseeching the Giver of all good gifts, to strengthen you, that you may be enabled to resist and overcome the malice of your adversaries; that He will support you with His mighty arm in the coming conflict, so that you may be enabled to defy their power; and that they, and every authority which raises itself in opposition to the Church, may speedily be confounded and brought low.

We hope that your Eminence will be pleased graciously to receive this expression of our feelings, this assurance of our deep sympathies, and of our fervent prayers to heaven in your behalf. In this hope, we have the honour of subscribing ourselves, your dutiful children in Christ.

Proposed by Mr. Peter McMahon, seconded by Mr. M. O'Meara:—

"That the following Address to the Catholic Primate and Hierarchy of Ireland, assuring them of our lively sympathy with their wrongs, and our indignation at the attempt to revive against them, the exploded system of Penal Laws, be adopted."

To His Grace the Primate, the Most Reverend the Archbishop of Armagh, and to the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland.

EVER DEAR AND VENERATED LORDS,

We, the Catholics of the Diocese of Montreal, in Canada, beg to approach your Lordships with sentiments of deep respect, of lively sympathy, and profound admiration. When a hostile government would have endangered the faith, and tainted the morality of Catholic Ireland, by the introduction of the Godless Colleges, or the system of Education without Religion into the land, we admired, in silent gratitude to God, the noble and unanimous efforts made by your venerated body in the Synod of Thurles, to crush this monster of State Creation; to guard the deposit of faith committed to your charge, and to provide for its perpetuation among your flocks in all its primitive purity, by the establishment of a Catholic University, in which the young mind will not only learn the principles of worldly literature, but will also imbibe the knowledge of, and love for, religion, and be initiated into the science of the saints.

Disappointed in its schemes of corruption, by your timely precautions, that hostile government has taken occasion from the acknowledged legitimate restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in England, to call forth the bad passions of the rabble, and seriously to endanger the public peace, by the most wanton aggressions upon our holy religion; and now, that it is seriously proposed to subject you, Venerable Lords, to pains and penalties, to fines, imprisonment and banishment, for the peaceful exercise of your inalienable rights; when, in the madness of their blasphemous rage, the adversaries of our Church, the enemies of all that is pure and holy, have threatened our sanctuaries with desecration, and our convents with pollution, we feel that, in justice to you and to ourselves, we can be no longer silent.

As your faithful flocks rallied around you in the hour of danger, and in language that could not be mistaken, gave expression to sentiments worthy of Irishmen, and of Catholics, so we, who hold the same faith, who approach the same sacraments, and are linked together by the same holy bonds of union, beg leave to convey to you, how keenly we feel, and how deeply we resent, the calumnies cast upon you, and upon our faith; how ardently we desire to console you with the assurance of our sympathies, and our earnest desire, as *one man*, to co-operate with you in resisting the tyranny that is preparing for you, and in assisting to carry out your benevolent intentions in the establishment of a Catholic University.

As a proof of our sincerity, we beg to inform you, that we have already organised a branch of the Catholic Defence Association, for the express purpose of resisting any interference of the civil power, in matters connected with religion, no matter from what quarter it may proceed: as also for the purpose of raising subscriptions in aid of the projected Catholic University.

That God may continue to sustain you by His outstretched arm, and give you the victory over all your enemies; that He may continue to guide you by His holy Spirit, giving you light to discover, and strength to overcome, every attack upon that portion of His household, over which He has placed you rulers, is the fervent prayer of the Catholic Laity of Montreal.

Proposed by J. Sadlier, Esq., seconded by Councillor McCambridge:—

"That a committee be appointed, with power to add to their numbers, to procure signatures to the preceding Addresses, in order that they may be transmitted for presentation without delay."

Proposed by B. Devlin, Esq., seconded by Valois, Esq.:—

"That as the most efficacious means of thwarting the designs of the British Government, upon the faith of the people of Ireland, it is expedient to assist our Catholic brethren in their noble efforts to establish a Catholic University; and that for this purpose, the Catholics of Montreal are respectfully requested to contribute, according to the means with which God has blessed them."

Proposed by John Collins, Esq., seconded by Councillor Larkin:—

"That the thanks of all Catholics are justly due to those Members of the Legislature, who, by their votes and speeches, have resisted the re-establishment of the system of Penal Laws."

The defeats sustained by the Ministry in the House of Commons, upon the motions of Mr. Hume, and Lord Naas, have had the effect of postponing, for some days, the consideration of the Penal laws; but not of inducing the Ministers to abandon the post, for which they have proved themselves so eminently unqualified. With the tenacity with which we see reptiles, and all nasty cold-blooded animals cling to life, Lord John and his colleagues cling to place and salary, with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. Quarterday has attractions which abundantly reconcile them to the ignominy of their present position. Like dogs, they put up with any amount of degradation and insult for the sake of the pudding. Meanwhile, the Protestant press is much annoyed at the noble conduct of the Irish Catholic members, to whose exertions these defeats are chiefly owing, and who, in the language of the *British Banner*, "preposterously, outrageously, and most unpatriotically, have bound themselves together to oppose the ministry in

every thing." "It is a pity," continues this true Protestant, giving utterance to the sentiments which all his co-religionists entertain with regard to the Irish, but which the generality have not the courage to avow. IT IS, WE THINK, A PITY, THAT THE FAMINE WAS NOT STILL TO COME." A diminution of population of two millions in ten years, as evidenced by the late census; a destruction of human life, unparalleled in the annals of Modern Europe, and to find a counterpart to which, we must go back to the fifth century, when God, in His wrath, permitted an Attila to scourge the world, is not sufficient to quench the thirst for blood, which animates Evangelical Protestantism, or, as it may well be termed, the "Scourge of Hell." Gloating over the miseries it has caused, the piles of carcases which denote every foot of its progress, it licks its lips, and belches forth its devil's litany. "It is a pity that the famine was not still to come." We hope these words may sink deep into many an Irish heart, and bring forth fruit in due season; convincing them of the deep, irreconcilable hatred entertained towards them by the Protestants of the British Empire, and confirming them in their opposition to its tyrannical government.

By the *Baltic*, we learn that the House went into committee on the Penal Laws on Monday.

The Convents Visitation Bill has been rejected in the House of Commons, by a majority of 123 to 91.

In a supplement to the *Toronto Church*, we find a lengthy document, entitled a Pastoral letter, from Dr. Strachan, the Anglican Bishop of Toronto, to the clergy of his diocese. Had his lordship confined his remarks to matters relating to the doctrines and discipline of the members of his own community, we should hardly have felt ourselves justified in presuming to criticise its contents. But he has not done so; he has taken the pains to go out of his way, to impugn the motives and the integrity of gentlemen, who have been led, by the grace of God, to abandon the paths of heresy, and to seek for shelter from the wrath to come, in the bosom of the Catholic Church. We can easily conceive how galling it must be to members of the establishment, to see the daily increasing defection from their ranks; to see how, in spite of ridicule, and obloquy—in spite of the allurements of the world, the flesh and the devil—the learned and devout amongst the state clergy, are returning to that fold, from which, in an evil hour, at the bidding of a lascivious tyrant, and of his worthy daughter—the Protestant Semiramis—their forefathers strayed. But that does not justify Dr. Strachan, in speaking of them in the following terms:—

"In regard to Romish converts from our church, a word must suffice. They are, in general, weak and faithless, perhaps both; but even from them we derive great benefits, because they refuse to be silent, and will, to the infinite damage of Rome, give reasons for their defection." Now, it would have been well for the seceders to have given no reasons for their departure, and to have left the fact for speculation and mystery. They have done otherwise, and the reasons they have assigned are, in many cases, so exceedingly silly, and exhibit such a deplorable deterioration of mental vigor, that they seem to have fallen under the strong delusion mentioned in Scripture, that they should believe a lie; and on leaving the church, to have left all moral influence, and intellectual ability behind them."

We doubt not, that it would have been well pleasing to those they left behind them, if men like Newman, and others, had given no reasons for their leaving the establishment, and renouncing their share in its emoluments, its gold and silver, its rich bishoprics, and fat livings, to embrace a life of poverty and self-denial; for, through the blessing of God, upon these men's assigned reasons, many have been led to follow their example; many have been induced to think for themselves, and to ask the question—Is this Anglican establishment the *very* Church established by Christ, to teach all nations, with which He promised to be ever present, that the gates of hell might not prevail against it? Or is it merely the device of man—a creature of the State, whose doctrines are Acts of Parliament, and whose dogmas are decrees of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council?

In arguing with Anglicans, Catholics have a question to discuss, very different from that which presents itself to them, when engaged in controversy with the other members of that many headed monster—Protestantism. With them the first question to be argued is—*What* is the Church? and did Christ establish a Church? Betwixt Catholics and Anglicans, the question is—*Which* is the Church? for we have not heard of any of the latter maintaining that Christ established *two* Churches, empowered to teach two different modes of salvation. We believe, also, from the general tenor of his letter, that Bishop Strachan repudiates the doctrine of private judgment, that exquisite absurdity, which regardless of truth, as an absolute objective reality, unaffected by man's subjective views, proclaims that God's Revelation to man, is, not what it *is*, but what it *seems to be*; at least, such we presume to be the case, from the style in which his lordship speaks of Unitarians, whom he classes with infidels, simply because they indeed do, more logically than does any other Protestant sect, push the principle of private judgment to its inevitable results. We believe, therefore, that we do not misrepresent Dr. Strachan, if we consider his views of the Church, as not materially differing from those of a Catholic, upon the subject; that is to say, that his lordship admits the necessity for, and the existence of,

an authority or witness, to testify as to what God has, or has not revealed; and that authority is, if we understand him aright, the Church, as by *law* established in England and Ireland, and whose spiritual head is an amiable lady, with a very large family.—"How is it possible for men to leave such a church? and how silly are the reasons for their desertion?" exclaims Dr. Strachan. "It would have been well for such men to have remained silent," he continues, "and to have left the motives for their secession in darkness." Why, then, does not Dr. Strachan, or some of the many learned scholars, of whom the establishment may be justly proud, attempt to refute the reasons these converts have given, instead of merely calling them "exceedingly silly?" The reason why men who have been born, and educated members of the state church, leave its communion, is, not because they disbelieve this or that of its doctrines, but because they do not believe it to be the church that Christ established. Does Dr. Strachan wish for reasons for this belief? We will find them in his lordship's letter; indeed, we could not desire a more conclusive argument against Anglicanism, than this pastoral affords us.

"One condition she requires of all her children—A firm belief, not of the mind only, but of the whole man; mind, heart, soul and spirit—the whole will and inner being, in all her doctrines, as set forth in her articles, and book of common prayer." Pretty well this for a state church; certainly, Anglicans have no right to reproach Rome with the arrogance of her demands, for she requires no more from her children than "a firm belief of the whole man—mind, heart, soul and spirit—the whole will and inner being, in all her doctrines, as set forth in her liturgies and articles." The arrogance of Lambeth, is no whit less than the arrogance of the Vatican; but the latter is, at least, consistent in her arrogance, which the former is not. By what right do you claim our implicit belief, in all your teaching, we inquire of the Catholic Church? "Because Christ Himself, established me; appointing me to teach all nations, with the promise of His continual presence, thus securing me against the possibility of doctrinal error; because I am an *infallible* teacher," answers the Church. Ask the same question of the Anglican establishment, and what will be your reply? Ask it, if it is infallible? It will answer no. So far from being infallible, it will confess, that for many centuries it was defiled with all kinds of corruptions, and overrun with all manner of superstitions and error, from which, by Act of Parliament, it was at length delivered. Ask what guarantee it can offer, that it has not fallen into error again, or that its interpretation of the meaning of the Bible is correct? and it will answer that it can give you none, except such as the vigilance of a Privy Council, and the theological attainments of six lay members of its Judicial Committee can supply. Is it then to be wondered at, if the enquirer after truth should turn away, disgusted, with the arrogance of a church, which, without infallibility, without any guarantee to offer for the truth of what it teaches, has, notwithstanding, the impudence to demand "a firm belief of the whole man—mind, heart, soul and spirit—the whole will and inner being, in all its doctrines?" "Fallibility for fallibility," he would say, "my fallible opinion is as good as yours. I will not submit to any of your teaching.—Christ would never do so foolish, so useless a thing, as to appoint a fallible teacher to teach fallible men."

But perhaps, hereupon, our advocate of Anglicanism, will entirely shift his ground, and claim our belief in the doctrines of his church, not because *it teaches them*, but because, as he will assert, they are to be found in the Bible; thus, entirely, abandoning the *objective* value of Church authority, and assuming the principle of private judgment. This, at once, changes the whole controversy. We were first discussing—Is the Church of England the Church established by Christ? The question is now—Are the doctrines taught by the Church of England, the doctrines taught by Christ to His Apostles? In support of the affirmative to this proposition, the Church of England man refers us to the Bible, forgetting, that we must first have some infallible authority, to tell us what the Bible is, and that then, unless we have an equally good authority, to explain the true meaning of the obscure and disputed passages, which happen to be all the most important passages in the book, we are not a whit farther advanced, than we were before. Into this argument we cannot enter, for we do not believe that it is possible, from the Bible *alone*, to ascertain what doctrines are true, and what false; neither, until it is *proved*, will we admit, that the whole of Christ's Revelation is contained in the Bible. We, as Catholics, take our doctrines from the Church; we do not give our assent to her authority, because we first believe her doctrines, for that is the *effect*, not the *cause*, of our joining the Church; but we assent to the doctrines of the Church, because, from reason we are convinced, of the simple historical fact, that the Church, in communion with Rome, is now, as she was fifteen hundred years ago, the Church appointed to teach all nations. If we could ascertain the truth, without a Church, we should certainly have no need of a Church, *after* having obtained a certain knowledge of the truth. The Church of England man must take his choice; either he must rest the truth of his dogmas upon the authority of his Church, or derive the authority of his Church from the truth of its dogmas. If he chooses the first alternative, we reject the authority of his Church, because it is *avowedly* fallible; and firstly, we know from the promise of Christ, that the *true Church* is an infallible teacher; secondly, we will submit our reason, we will yield our firm belief of heart, soul, and spirit, to none other. If he adopt the second alternative, resting the claims of his Church, upon the truth of its doctrines, he abandons the principle of Church authority entirely, making every individual the judge,