

The True Witness

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY
At No. 210, St. James Street, by
J. GILLIES.

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TERMS YEARLY IN ADVANCE:

To all country Subscribers, Two Dollars. If the Subscription is not renewed at the expiration of the year, then, in case the paper be continued, the terms shall be Two Dollars and a half.

The True Witness can be had at the News Depots. Single copies, 5 cts.

To all Subscribers whose papers are delivered by carriers, Two Dollars and a half, in advance; and if not renewed at the end of the year, then, if we continue sending the paper, the Subscription shall be Three Dollars.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 1872.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

APRIL.—1872.

Friday, 12.—St. Vincent Ferrer, O. (April 5.)

Saturday, 13.—St. Hermenegild, M.

Sunday, 14.—Second after Easter.

Monday, 15.—Of the Feria.

Tuesday, 16.—Of the Feria.

Wednesday, 17.—St. Anicetus, P. M.

Thursday, 18.—Of the Blessed Sacrament.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The provisional government of France presided over by M. Thiers has lasted another week, but from day to day we may expect to hear that it has been overthrown. A reactionary Bonapartist agitation is reported as prevailing in Paris; and though it is hard to believe, it seems almost certain that the "man of December," who is also the "man of Sedan," has still many partisans in France. In Germany, war to the knife against the Church has been proclaimed, and all semblance even of moderation has been abandoned. Not merely is all government aid withdrawn from Catholic schools, but in the name of civil and religious liberty, Catholics are not to be allowed to keep schools at all; and non-German priests, are to be prosecuted if, without the sanction of government, that is to say of Prince Bismarck, they presume to exercise their functions in the new Empire. Only that the penalties prescribed by these modern liberal laws are not so severe as those inflicted upon refractory foreigners, who in the days of Nero, without the permission of Caesar, presumed to preach Christianity in Rome, there is really no difference betwixt the actual condition of affairs ecclesiastical in Germany, and those of the first and second centuries of our era in Rome. Bismarck is thus fairly committed to this war with the Catholic Church; he has drawn the sword, and thrown away the scabbard, whilst the plaudits of the Liberal world encourage him to persevere. We fear not for the result however, and untrifled we accept the combat, for one greater than Bismarck has predicted not only the battle, but its issue. Dr. Dollinger has thrown away the Catholic mask which he at first assumed to conceal the ugly features of Old Catholicism. He now comes out openly as an avowed Protestant, as a disciple of Luther, whom he lauds as one of Germany's greatest sons. From Rome there is no change to report; the financial condition of the intrusive government is, we rejoice to see, growing worse day by day; on our 6th page the reader will find an interesting article on this subject, from the London Times. Spain appears to be on the eve of another revolution which will send King Amadeus packing; the comic papers gravely announce the expected arrival of an Italian frigate, for conveying back to Italy a foreigner and his family, now resident in Madrid. The Carlist party are again raising their heads.

There have been long discussions in the Imperial Parliament on the hitch in the Washington Treaty. No formal arrangement of the matter in dispute has, as yet, been mutually agreed to; but, though the state of affairs is something like the famous "dead-lock" in the Critic, we doubt not but what some diplomatic Jove will appear in time to cut the knot, and to cause the dropping of all the swords and daggers which now seem to menace our peace.

Winter, hideous winter, still asserts its reign in Lower Canada, but must now soon be compelled to yield to the gentle influences of Spring. Small-pox is on the increase; but we may hope that when the mild weather shall have set in, French Canadians will again open their windows, and let a little fresh air into their dwellings, which will of course have the effect of arresting the progress of the epidemic amongst them. The scarcity of fuel, which, fearfully dear all the winter, is now at a famine price, has, we doubt not, had much to do with the fearful mortality of the winter, by compelling the crowding, and herding together, for the sake of economising fuel, of several families in one small, ill ventilated, and foul smelling apartment. Several of our City contemporaries

begin already to speak of the General Election for the Dominion Parliament, as near at hand. The Million Dollar By-Law will be submitted to the vote of the duly qualified municipal electors of Montreal on the 27th inst.; and the voting Yes, or No, will be continued throughout the ten following (legal) days. We see it reported that the notorious Gavazzi is again en route for this Continent, we suppose on a collecting tour—for money is what all these chaps are looking after. He may perhaps visit Canada; and if so, it is to be hoped that there will be found amongst its Catholic population none foolish enough, and wicked enough to interfere with, or to take any notice of him. "Let him severely alone; do not go and hear him yourselves, so that your ears may not be offended, and your angry passions aroused, by his obscene diatribes; but do not attempt to prevent others from listening to him." This is the line of conduct that all Catholics are bound to pursue; and if there be any who unfortunately shall deviate from it, they may be sure that they will meet with but scant sympathy from Catholics should they be kicked and cuffed within an inch of their lives.

PARIS, April 5.—M. Henri Rochefort, Paschal, Groussset and M. Assi sailed to-day for the penal Colony of New Caledonia.

The revenue tables of Victoria, Australia, for the last quarter, prove a most satisfactory state of affairs. The total receipts for the twelve months were £3,520,000, giving an increase, chiefly from customs of £276,000 on the year 1870.

Our readers will no doubt, be grateful to our correspondent *Sacerdos*, for his excellent letters on the question—"Was St. Peter ever at Rome?" They must feel that, historically, our learned correspondent, has exhausted the subject; that he has fairly met, and effectually disposed of all the objections of those who maintain the negative to this question; and that he has brought forward a mass of authorities in support of the affirmative, who cannot be rejected without calling in question the validity of all human testimony to a matter of fact. It is true that we have not the written evidence of eye-witnesses to the fact of the martyrdom at Rome of St. Peter; but, so short was the interval that elapsed betwixt the date assigned by tradition for that event—A.D. 67—and the appearance of writings in which, by devout and intelligent men, that event was put on record, that we may safely say that no fact related in history is better attested than is that of the martyrdom of St. Peter at Rome, under the Neronian persecution.

It is recorded by writers of the second century; by men therefore, who in their younger days must have been contemporaries of those who, in their youth, might well have seen St. Peter led out to execution. For instance: a young man, born A.D. 50, would have been 17 years of age at the time of the Apostle's martyrdom; and might easily have attained the age of 70, which would have made him the contemporary of men, born A.D. 100; to whom he might have related his experiences, and by whom those experiences might have been recorded in writing towards the close of the second century. There are numbers now living in Canada, who may have, when young, conversed with old men who were eye-witnesses of, or may have taken part in, the battle which made Canada a portion of the British Empire; and betwixt the date assigned as that of St. Peter's death by crucifixion, and its appearance as a piece of written history, the interval that elapsed was about the same as that which has elapsed since the bloody conflict on the Heights of Abraham.

But if not founded upon historical fact, how could the tradition have, in so short a time, arisen, and met with universal reception? But one reason for the origin of such a tradition, if not founded on facts, suggests itself—to wit: That already, towards the end of the first century, so firmly established, and so universally diffused and received as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity was the belief in the Primacy of St. Peter, as Prince of the Apostles, that even Rome, the Imperial City, the Queen City of the universal globe, was thought to receive additional lustre from the presence of St. Peter, and from his Episcopate. Only upon this hypothesis could the tradition, had there been no corresponding historical fact, have originated; and thus the tradition even, if false, would but prove how highly, even in the very first days of the Church, the peculiar office *i.e.* the Primacy of St. Peter was esteemed, since even Rome, already so great, deemed it necessary to claim him as her Bishop.

But would the other cities of the Empire have been content to allow this claim to pass unchallenged, if not founded on notorious facts? and if the Babylon from whence St. Peter dates his first letter to the strangers scattered throughout Asia, &c., were not the mystical Babylon of the Apocalypse, but the geographical Babylon, how came it that the latter did not assert her claims, as against the City of the Caesars? And yet of any other City having ever contested

with Rome the proud, coveted, much envied distinction of being the *cathedra Petri*, the City where the Prince of the Apostles had established his seat, there is no trace in history; as most assuredly there would be, upon the hypothesis that St. Peter had conferred the dignity of his presence and Episcopate upon any of Rome's rivals, all jealous of her secular greatness.

THE CITY OF THE PLAGUE.—The actual serious condition of Montreal, to which the name of the *Pest-City* may be well applied, is stirring up the press, and individual citizens, to the necessity of immediate action. There is no time to be lost; death is advancing at a rapid pace, and yet nothing is being done to arrest the progress of the destroyer, which is carrying off the population at the rate of 140 per week.

The unusual accumulation of dead bodies, many hundreds of them victims of the hideous small-pox, all advancing to a state of decomposition, in the vault of the Cemetery—is causing a most abominable stench on the *Cote des Neiges* road; and may be perceived at nearly the distance of a mile, as we have been informed by people coming in from the country, and who were half poisoned with the fearful stink. The authorities should at once apply without stint, the most powerful disinfectants, lest the task of transferring from the vault to the graves the mass of corruption in the former; be the cause of an outbreak of pestilence in severer form than ever. We publish below an article from the *Daily News*, and some extracts from a Memorial on the subject of the Public Health. Both documents should be carefully studied:—

SANITARY REFORM.—The majority of our City Council seem unable to comprehend the rudiments of sanitary science. They fancy that if foot-paths are kept in order, and streets prevented falling into neglect, that every thing must be smooth and serene; whereas streets and footpaths, city hall, park and railways, are not to be bewitched for a moment, against the duty of providing an efficient system of drainage. The chief, and most costly, portion of the City Council work, is underneath the streets, removed from inspection and criticism. The lives of the citizens are the counters with which the game is played. It would no doubt shock a pious church-going Councillor or Alderman, to be told that he was guilty of murder. Yet it is perfectly easy to prove, by statistics, that in certain sections of this city, defective and false systems of drainage inflict a heavy denture on those families condemned to live there. Cost is of no consequence in comparison with the lives of the inhabitants. We are living in whitened sepulchres, and almost invite the ravages of an endemic plague.—*Daily News 4th inst.*

THE PUBLIC HEALTH.—The following is from the Memorial presented to the Council, April 3rd, by the late Secretary of the Sanitary Association:—

The mortality of the city has been steadily increasing, each month, from an average weekly death-rate of 69 in November to 120 in March; the death-rate of children advancing from 42 in November to 84 in March. The interments last week were 118, including 82 children, and 43 from small-pox.

During the past quarter, we have lost nearly 38 living souls each week, as compared with the winter quarter of last year. Should the same loss continue through the year, we shall, at its close, have sacrificed the lives of 2,470 of our citizens on the altar of wilful neglect of the known laws of health.

As the Council have just past a by-law concerning privies, which will (if faithfully carried out) greatly increase the existing offensiveness of the sewers, it is even more urgent than before that the most practicable plan for ventilating these sewers be at once carried out.

As the approaching warm weather will greatly increase the existing elements of disease, the spring cleansing of the city should be superintended in a far more systematic manner than in former years. The existing staff of medical and police officers may be made far more efficient under proper management; but it cannot be expected that the members of the Board of Health can give as much time to this work as its urgency requires.

Under these circumstances I am authorised to state that a gentleman, long resident in the city, and who deservedly enjoys the respect of all classes of the inhabitants, has offered to give his whole time for three months in organizing the Health Department. The details of his plan will be communicated to the Board of Health, if the Council, at this meeting, think proper to accept his gratuitous services. Although the Chairman of the Health Committee is unfortunately absent, the issues of the work are too important to allow even of a week's unnecessary delay.

The following extracts from the "Report of the State Board of Health of Massachusetts," just published, will be found of important application to our own condition.

"Small-pox had been epidemic in Lowell and Holyoke, but in no other town. It appeared in Worcester but was driven out by the vigilance of the health authorities. It tried Springfield, but failed. Boston has been almost entirely exempt. There can be little doubt that it would not have spread in Lowell and Holyoke, had the health authorities acted with more promptness and decision. In those cities are many French Canadians, who are notoriously perverse in refusing vaccination; and when sick with small-pox, conceal, if possible the nature of their disease. Neither their ignorance, nor their fool-hardiness should be allowed to endanger the lives of those among whom they dwell."

SMALL-POX.—This horrid disease is, we regret to see, always on the increase; and week by week the number of deaths augments. It is confined almost entirely to the French Canadians inhabiting the eastern part of the City; and out of 43 victims to the disease last week only two were of English origin. The *Montreal Gazette* of the 4th inst., calls public attention to this very singular, and very serious state of affairs, in the following terms:—

"The continued increase in the death-rate from small-pox, is a subject which we fear has not sufficiently challenged the attention of those members of the City Council who are specially charged with questions affecting the public health. There is fair ground for suspicion that we are becoming so familiar with the ravages of this loathsome disease, in the eastern portion of the city, as to be comparatively callous about the adoption of remedial measures. A few weeks ago when the number of deaths was little more than one-half what it was last week, there was

some appearance of public opinion having been aroused. Some very painful deaths, which occurred in the western part of the city, had their influence in exciting public attention to the question, and there seemed some hope that steps would be taken in the direction of sanitary reform. One result was that almost every English speaking family in the western part of the city was vaccinated. For some weeks the consulting rooms of our physicians were literally crowded, and as a consequence the disease has been almost entirely banished from that section of the city, and indeed from the Protestant inhabitants generally. Among our French Canadian fellow citizens the deaths which occurred had not the same influence. The disease itself has fewer terrors for them, for, as a matter of fact, it prevails more or less among them during every season, as a consequence of the utter neglect by them of the ordinary preventives which science has discovered. And there have been those, medical men too, who, ignoring all the teachings of medical science, closing their eyes to the facts transpiring before them, have not hesitated to urge a continuance of this same systematic neglect. The result was apparent. While Dr. Coderre theorised, the victims of his persuasion were passing away to the tomb. Last week forty-two of them went to their long home, all but one, children under twelve years of age, and all but two, Roman Catholics, and we believe French Canadians. The pernicious teaching is having its effect."

The Dr. Coderre above alluded to by the *Gazette* is known as a very strenuous opponent of vaccination; and from the increase of small-pox, it is to be feared that he is only too successful. He is also publishing a series of articles on the subject in the *Minerve*, the perusal of which, however, ought, we think, to have the contrary effect to that by the writer intended; and should encourage recourse to vaccination as the only prophylactic, as yet discovered, that tends to arrest the spread of the most loathsome of all diseases with which the human race is afflicted.

The theory of Dr. Coderre, if we have rightly grasped his meaning, is this:—That small-pox, and cow-pox are substantially one and the same disease; and that in consequence the vaccine virus with which we inoculate, is but the virus of real small-pox, attenuated however, and mitigated by its passage through other animal organisms. Now if such be the case; and if persons who have once been attacked with small-pox, enjoy comparative immunity from the danger of a second attack of the same disease, it would apparently follow that persons to whom by vaccination, an attenuated, or mitigated form of real small-pox has been communicated, will enjoy the same privilege; and this without having had to pass through the severer and more dangerous form of the same disease. But this is all that is claimed for it, by the advocates of vaccination. They do not pretend that the vaccinated person is rendered absolutely small-pox proof; but they assert, and statistics in general—and those of Montreal in particular—bear out the assertion—that the person vaccinated is, to a very considerable extent, protected against small-pox, and that the disease, even should it attack him will generally assume a mild form. This is just what we should expect would be the case, or the consequence of vaccination, if the vaccine virus be only a dilute, attenuated, and mitigated variolous virus; and the fever that attends vaccination but an attenuated and mitigated attack of real small-pox. The conclusion which we draw from Dr. Coderre's labored essays against vaccination then is this:—By all means vaccinate; but be careful that the virus wherewith you vaccinate be indeed real vaccine virus.

DIVORCE IN THE STATES.—To one educated in English habits of thought, the facility afforded for divorce in the States is something unaccountable. Its prevalence loosens the bonds of society. Even in the older States like Connecticut and Vermont, the proportion of divorces to marriages is a cause of uneasiness to the moral and religious part of the community. In the newer States, like Illinois and Indiana, it is the worst symptom of the free and easy sense that is generally entertained of the obligations of all contracts.

No nullification or repudiation laws are so disastrous in their effects as these lax and immoral divorce laws. As the family relation is the foundation of all other relations, nothing would so much tend to the stability of the State as what secures its sacredness and permanence. Were all the much agitated woman's rights granted them, they would not accomplish half so much for their protection and welfare as just and beneficent marriage laws.—*Witness, 3d inst.*

We are glad that our Protestant contemporary sees and admits the evil of divorce laws, and the dangers thence accruing, to society and Christian civilization. The explanation, however, of the phenomenon which he looks upon as "something unaccountable to one educated in English habits of thought," is very easy.

That phenomenon is, "the facility afforded for divorce in the States;" the explanation of it is obvious. The United States have receded still further from the Catholic Church, and Catholic traditions than has, as yet, England; though of late years the latter has taken a long stride in the same backwards direction. The old Catholic traditions of the sanctity of marriage, of "holy matrimony," have lingered for generations in England, and have been kept alive by the imperfectly reformed Church of England, which, till within a few years, insisted upon the indissolubility of Christian marriage. In the United States these Catholic traditions never obtained a footing; their moral atmosphere is thoroughly Protestant; and in consequence we witness that total disregard for the sanctity of the marriage tie which to-day gives to the said United States a bad pre-eminence amongst the nations of the world. They are

what they are in the matter of divorce, because they are thoroughly Protestant.

There is no ground logically tenable betwixt that of the absolute indissolubility of the marriage tie, on which the Catholic Church takes her stand; and that of the unrestricted unlimited right of divorce, which in the United States has already been nearly reached. In the matter of the relations of the sexes, man, in other words, the State, can neither impose, nor relax any moral obligations. It may attach certain legal penalties to neglect of its regulations, and declare the issue of certain unions alone competent to inherit and succeed to property; but it cannot make that which God has prohibited moral; or make that immoral, which He has not prohibited.

In a word, man, or the State is incompetent to make marriage laws of moral obligation. The decree of a Court of Justice, or of a Legislature, though it may legalize, can never make moral, the act of the person once married, who in virtue thereof cohabits with another woman, or with another man. Such unions are, no matter what Courts of Law, or Parliaments may say to the contrary, adulteries; are none the less criminal because sanctioned by human law. The latter is competent to legislate for the civil accidents to which marriage gives rise, and to determine the civil status of the children; but in the matter of sexual unions it can neither impose, nor relax any moral obligations.

If God has given to us, His creatures, marriage laws, we are bound to obey those laws, and those laws only. If He has not done this, then every man, every woman, is, morally, at liberty to follow his, or her inclinations, or natural affinities; to cohabit with whomsoever he, or she, pleases, and for just so long as is mutually agreeable. This is the doctrine of the "Free-Lovers," who of all Protestants, are, on the matter of marriage, the most logical, and the most consistent with Protestant principles. Their principles, too, must ultimately triumph, and in time be everywhere adopted by all communities that reject the Catholic doctrine; for if Christian marriage be not a divine institution, and therefore one whose essential conditions have been for ever determined by God Himself, and with which therefore man has no right to tamper, every one has the right to determine for himself, or herself, the conditions of his, or her sexual relations. In a word, we defy any one to take up any ground logically tenable, betwixt the position of the Catholic, and that of the "Free-Lovers."

SOIREE FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB.—The *soiree* in aid of the funds of the Catholic Deaf and Dumb Institute at Mile End came off in the St. Patrick's Hall, on the evening of Tuesday, the 2nd inst. Though the state of the roads was execrable, the attendance was good, many of our most distinguished clergy and laity being present.

The evening's entertainments gave general satisfaction. They consisted of addresses, and exercises by the pupils of the Institute, interspersed with music. First we had an exhibition in the process of Articulation, as taught to the Deaf and Dumb; after which came a dialogue in English betwixt two of the pupils. This novel, but most effectual mode of placing the afflicted inmates of our Deaf and Dumb asylums, in easy communication not only with one another, but with the outer world, has been but recently attempted on this Continent, having been introduced about a year and a half ago, on his return from Europe, by the indefatigable Director of the Catholic Deaf and Dumb Institute, M. Belanger. The system, as we have already explained to our readers, when perfected, enables the eye, supplemented in the case of beginners by the sense of touch, to perform as it were the functions of the ear. The words articulated by the dumb man are not indeed heard by his deaf brother, but they are seen, and understood from the movements of his lips; whilst to aid the eye, the fingers of the deaf listener are placed in contact with the throat, nose, and chest of the dumb speaker, so as to assist him in the interpretation of the words articulated. This system, the most perfect yet invented for enabling the Deaf and Dumb to communicate with the outer world, has been adopted in so far as Canada is concerned only in the Catholic Institute at Mile End; but we believe that it has been attempted on a small scale in an institution near Springfield in the U. States, kept by a Mr. Whipple.

The musical part of the evening's entertainment was under the direction of Mad. Pizzotti, assisted by Mad. Ledue, by M. Maillet, and Mr. J. Fowler, to whom the thanks of M. Belanger are respectfully tendered in acknowledgment of his services. We should mention that in the course of the evening an excellent address was delivered by Mr. Curran.

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE.—On Wednesday evening of last week, the Pupils of this institution gave their annual musical and dramatic *soiree* in honor of St. Patrick. The Hall