

The True Witness

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1873.

ECOLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

Friday, 7—Ember Day. Of the Holy Lance and
Nails.
Saturday, 8—Ember Day. St. John of God, C.
Sunday, 9—Second in Lent.
Monday, 10—The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste.
Tuesday, 11—St. Thomas Aquinas, C. (March 7.)
Wednesday, 12—St. Gregory, P.
Thursday, 13—St. Francis, W. (March 9.)

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Mr. Gladstone's Education Bill for Ireland seems destined to undergo the fate of all half and half measures. It does not satisfy the Catholics of Ireland whose Bishops are determined to oppose it, and are urging strongly upon the representatives of Ireland to oppose it; at the same time it does not conciliate Mr. Gladstone's opponents in the ranks of the extreme anti-Catholic party. A really just measure, that is a measure leaving the Catholics free to educate their own sons as they please, and renouncing entirely all pretensions on the part of the State to dictate how they should be brought up, would not have made for Mr. Gladstone more enemies in England, and would have done much to assure to his Ministry the cordial good will of the Catholics of the Empire. The State prosecutions of the Catholic Clergy for the Galway election business seem to be hanging fire. The Government apparently finds itself engaged in a bad business from which it will win neither honor nor material advantage.

In France the situation is very complicated. M. Thiers is to be called upon to make a distinct enunciation of his policy, but the difficulty is that neither he nor the Assembly have any fixed policy. The present Government of France is but a Government of expedients, a mere temporary arrangement which no one believes to possess any elements of permanence, though no one can say what is to succeed it.

The reports from Spain are very conflicting. The Carlists are evidently in force in the North, and hold their own there; it is however very doubtful whether in the centre and South of the Peninsula they would find many to join them should they advance upon Madrid. A long protracted civil war, with the usual amount of massacres seems to be inevitable. From Rome there is nothing new to report.

The report of the Committee of investigation into the *Credit Mobilier* rascalities condemns Messrs. Ames and Brooks, but does not actually recommend the expulsion of any body, guilty of said rascalities. This is looked upon as a most lame and impotent conclusion. The murderer Foster, to save whom from the gallows, great efforts have been made, is to be hung on Friday. To Governor Dix much praise for this determination to vindicate the law, and to put down murder is due. Hanging is not played out; and when the roughs of New York come to realize this fact, and when an example has been made of some of their ringleaders there may again be security for life and property even in the city of New York.

Latest news from Spain is to the effect that the Carlists in force are menacing Pampeluna. The young gentleman who lately abdicated is on his way to Genoa. There is much excitement in London over the discovery of some gigantic frauds—precise amount not yet given—on the Bank of England; the guilty parties have not yet been caught; they are said to be free and enlightened citizens of the U. States, and a large sum is offered for their capture.

The Quebec election up to the time of going to press had passed over without bloodshed, though there had been some fighting with fists. The government had ordered out all the military force at its disposal to preserve the peace.

D. A. CHISHOLM, Esq., Alexandria, has kindly consented to act as Agent for the TRUE WITNESS in his neighborhood. We hope our Catholic friends there will assist Mr. Chisholm in his efforts to extend the circulation of the paper.

MY CLERICAL FRIENDS, AND THEIR RELATIONS TO MODERN THOUGHT.—New York, Catholic Publication Society. Montreal, J. & D. Sadlier. Sent free by mail by the Messrs. Sadlier on the receipt of \$1.50.

The name of the author does not indeed appear on the title page, but is well revealed by the contents; indeed it is no secret that the work is from the pen of the talented author of "Christian Missions" and of the laughable "Comedy of Convocation." Like the last named it is sparkling with wit, and full of fun, sometimes too maliciously true to be pleasing to those made fun of. Dr. Marshall has a happy knack of turning up to public view the comic side of Protestantism, especially of that phase of Protestantism that calls itself Anglo-Catholic.

The work is somewhat in the nature of an autobiography, and is divided into three parts. The first treats of the preliminary stages in the process by which, through the grace of God, the author was rescued from the slough of heresy, and brought into the Church; and throughout the history is interspersed with some amusing anecdotes, and for traits of several prominent office holders in the Establishment with whom in his early day, the writer came in contact. Amongst other portraits there is one of whom the profane speak as Soapy Samuel which is admirably drawn; we have also one of him or two laughable sketches of the gentlemen alluded to in the press as "Colonial Bishops,"—an inferior kind of Bishops—and of whom as many as fourteen are sometimes to be found in England at once. Somehow or other their dioceses manage to get on just as well or just as badly without them. What purpose they subsolve no body knows; still there they are.

The writer having gone through the usual University career of young men, went up in due time to undergo the process of ordination, as practised as quite a respectable sort of rite in the Anglican denomination. Of this part of his career he thus speaks:—

"Of the period preparatory to my own ordination I will say nothing, because the most careful investigation of my past life fails to detect such a period. My University was antecedent to my pastoral career, in point of time, but not preparatory to it."—p. 62.

His first ministerial act was to baptise a lot of thirty children in a London parish church; he naturally felt a little embarrassed in the process, but was much encouraged by the parish clerk, who gave him an initiatory lesson in the vestry, "using a folio prayer-book to represent the infant." Having got through his first stroke of work fairly enough, our author was encouraged to try his hand "in the administration of the other Anglican sacrament;" and more important still in the opinion of all sound Protestants, to undertake the preaching and reading part of the clerical business. In the latter he succeeded well for a beginner. "Some of the ladies thought that I read with expression, and some even said that I was eloquent; but the judgment of that sort is apt to err on the side of leniency." From his reticence on the subject, we fear that our young minister rather bungled the sacramental part of his work.

In spite however of these successes as a reader and preacher, there was still a drop of something bitter in our young clergyman's cup of life. He was told that it was his duty to show to others the road to heaven; meditating on which, it at last forcibly struck him, that he ought to know the road thither himself. So he commenced studying the chart in good earnest; and as a Protestant, deemed it his duty to make himself acquainted with the writings of the great Fathers of the Reformation. The result on the whole was not favorable to the latter:—

"I had a vague impression that these celebrated persons were individuals of singular merits, illuminated by a preternatural light, and highly qualified to impart the instruction which I needed. And I applied myself to the Reformers. I believe I may say that I read them all—the English contingent in the convenient edition of the Parker Society—though to this hour I am wholly unable to comprehend how I survived the nauseous task. Yet I read them with violent prejudice in their favor. The impression which they produced upon me even at that time was this: that if the brute creation could speak, they would speak like the Reformers. I have since thought this opinion was unjust; I mean to the brute creation."—pp. 67, 68.

Hereupon one of his friends recommended him to abandon the perusal of the Fathers of the Reformation, and to "search the Scriptures;" but this made matters worse. If there be one thing in which more than in another the Church as by Law Established glories, it is in the extreme diversity of opinions that it tolerates amongst its ministers, as well as its laity; whereas if there be one offense to which St. Paul, so charitable in all other respects, shows himself severe and uncompromising, it is the offense of schism or making divisions in the Church, "the pillar of truth." Our minister found it as impossible in short to reconcile the words of St. James and St. Peter with those of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, as he had found it impossible to reconcile the writings of the Fathers of the Reformation with the dictates of natural reason, charity, and common decency. In a word, he began to entertain serious doubts as to the safety of the position in which he found himself—that of an office holder in a government

ecclesiastical establishment founded by such men as Barlow, Scory, Cranmer, Latimer & Co.; men of whom many Protestants now speak as "utterly unredeemed villains," and "rascals," capable of any crime.—See *Union Review*, Nov., 1870; *Guardian*, May 20, 1868.

Under these circumstances, to cure him of any Romanising tendencies that he might have contracted, and to convince him by personal experience of the manifold perfections of Anglicanism—his friends determined that he should travel for a period on the Continent of Europe in company with a staid Anglican divine of the soundest of principles; and thus learn from the testimony of his eyes and ears the corruptions of Romanism, and the miserable condition in which it leaves its votaries. This brings us to the end of part first of the work, entitled *The Clergy at Home*.

The next part is headed *The Clergy Abroad*. In company with his clerical dry nurse, our author sails from Dover on his way "to look the great Roman Church in the face;" and from the contemplation of her features to return enamoured with the beauties of that Reformation of religion which, in the words of the Protestant Macaulay, "was begun by Henry, the murderer of his wives, continued by Somerset the murderer of his brother, and completed by Elizabeth the murderess of her guest." At the very outset a terrible shock befell the reverend dry nurse; for on board the Calais steambath the travellers came across a real priest, a being for whom of course the bogus priest of the Establishment felt an invincible repugnance. Of this worthy priest, the Rev. Father Sheridan, known personally in after years to our author, we find the following characteristic anecdote:—

"Many years after I met this priest once more. In the interval he had twice nearly died of fever, and once of cholera. He had a singular habit of volunteering his services wherever such attractions were to be found. On one critical occasion he and a robust nurse were the only survivors in a certain typhus hospital, all the rest having died or run away. He made shrouds of the infected bed-linen for the corpses, which he carried on his back into the hospital-yard, whence they were removed to the cemetery. He also received the abjuration of a good many of the patients, to whom he was the only representative of the Christian religion in that desolate scene."—p. 135.

This poaching upon his spiritual preserves, which of course he did not visit in person, roused the anger of the Protestant rector of the parish "a very gentlemanly person, with a large family and a justifiable horror of contagion." This good shepherd at once on hearing of these abjurations, sent word to Father Sheridan "that he must abstain from encroaching on his flock." To which Father Sheridan replied "let him come and tell me himself." The scene that ensued is thus described:—

"The next morning he"—(the rector)—"came though he prudently remained at the door, and holding a camphorated cambric handkerchief with one hand to his nose, beckoned with the other to Father Sheridan, who was at his usual work to come and speak to him. 'Wait a minute' replied the Father as he advanced to the window at the opposite extremity of the ward, and threw it open, admitting a current of air which carried down a thick fever-laden mist towards his interlocutor, whose rapidly retreating footsteps were greeted, I regret to add, with a burst of laughter from the priest and the Protestant nurse."—p. 135.

Hotspar again had the best of it in the contest with the dainty lord who smelt so sweet, and talked so like a waiting gentle woman, holding, not a pounce box indeed, but a scented cambric handkerchief at his nose; and who could not abide that any slovenly, typhus fever-laden corpse should be brought betwixt the wind and his reverentiality. The dapper rector of the parish ran away home to his wife and children, leaving his flock to be devoured by the Romish wolf.—See St. John, x., 12.

Our travellers—the author and his dry-nurse—continue their travels and see much to astonish them. At Paris together they visit the Seminary of the *Missions Etrangeres*, and are shown into the *Salle des Martyres*; the room which contains the memorials of the many martyrs whom the Seminary has given to the Church, in the shape of their blood-stained relics, and the instruments of torture whereby they had suffered death. In this room every evening the students of the Seminary—themselves candidates for the honors of martyrdom—meet for meditation and prayer, that some day they too may be found worthy to suffer torture and death for the sake of Christ. On their way to Rome they visit Avignon, and here it seems that the dry nurse met with a sad rebuff. He had been trying to convince his companion, whose Romish preclivities were by this time becoming very marked, that the Romish system was beset with difficulties, and that some of the Popes had taught doctrines admitted to be false. "Are you aware that John XXII. publicly taught that even the Saints cannot see God before the day of judgment?" The rest of the story is as follows:—

"I was not certainly aware of it, and knew no more about John XXII. than my friend had probably known the day before. . . . I was obliged therefore to take refuge in ignominious silence, and affect to be overcome by the heat. I am sure that to my triumphant friend this was the pleasantest day of our tour."—p. 137.

But before night the narrator turned the table on his friend; for on arriving in Avig-

non he looked into a library, and turning up a book he found that it was indeed true that John XXII. had as a private theologian given utterance to the opinion attributed to him; but that when raised to the dignity of Pope he authoritatively condemned it. After this the good dry nurse seems to have looked upon his youthful charge as a hard case.

It was at Rome that the grace of God at length triumphed, and that our author whom we have accompanied, was received into the Church. This portion of the book is very interesting, and we have some excellent stories about the habits of that very notorious, but very unpleasant animal known to naturalists as the *Viator Britannicus*. Here is one of these little anecdotes:—

"Two American ladies, well-known in Roman society, overheard not long ago the following dialogue in St. Peter's, of which I received a report from their own lips. The Holy Father was at the Altar, and an immense congregation on their knees, when an Anglican clergyman suddenly exclaimed, 'is there no one in this vast assembly who will lift up his voice with me to protest against this idolatry and superstition?' 'If you don't shut up,' responded an American Methodist minister, evidently inspired by the *genius loci*, 'there is one man in this vast assembly who will lift up his foot to kick you out of the Church.' The Anglican promptly disappeared in presence of the only argument which his state of mind enabled him to comprehend."—p. 201.

Of another of these very nasty animals we read further on, how he one morning came into the room where our author was at breakfast, and boasted as if he had done something very clever, "that he had just received Holy Communion at the Gesu!"—p. 206.

The reader will also learn with some surprise, on the authority of a Mr. Harris, who has a government situation as "*Bishop of Gibraltar*," that Rome has been annexed to his diocese: and "that St. Peter and his Sec being no longer of any use, were finally absorbed in the majestic Patriarchate of Mr. Harris."—p. 204. Assuredly Protestantism, whether High or Low has its comic side, and it is this side which, in a spirit of good natured, though rather contemptuous fun, the author of *My Clerical Friends* delights to hold up to the laughter of the world.

We might go on and fill our paper with interesting extracts from the book before us, but our limited space, warns us to stay our hand. Besides, our readers can procure it for themselves; and to induce them to do so, is one of the reasons why we have ventured on so lengthy a notice. They will find *My Clerical Friends* a most captivating work; full of fun and full of instruction, from which both Catholics and Protestants may draw many a useful lesson.

The Census of the Dominion presents us with very ample details as to the relative number of the various religious denominations of whom the population is made up. The total population of the Dominion is set down at 3,485,761, of whom 1,160,851 belong to the Province of Ontario; 1,191,516 to the Province of Quebec; 285,594 to New Brunswick; and 387,800 to the Province of Nova Scotia. We have the subjoined religious statistics:—

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|------------------------|-----------|
| Christians | 3,460,817 |
| Jews | 1,115 |
| Mahomedans | 13 |
| Pagans | 1,886 |
| No Particular Religion | 22,630 |

The Christian population is composed of 1,492,029 Catholics. Of these 274,162, are residents of Ontario; 1,019,850 of the Province of Quebec; 96,016 of New Brunswick; 102,001 of Nova Scotia. The Protestant population numbers 1,968,788—distributed amongst an immense number of different sects, arranged alphabetically—"Adventists, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Mormons," of whom it seems that the great majority are in Ontario—"Presbyterians, Quakers, Junkers, Unitarians, Universalists," besides many others which it would be tedious to enumerate. These however are the principal. Indeed what a job the Census takers must have had in their efforts to give a full religious classification of the population may be guessed from this: that of the Methodists alone no less than eight sub-sects are enumerated; of Baptists, five; of Brethren, three; and of Presbyterians, six. The Anglicans are all, whether High or Low—though betwixt these there are as great and serious differences as there are betwixt any of the several Methodist or Baptist sub-sects—lumped together, and given at a grand total of 494,094, of whom, the great majority 330,995, reside in Ontario.

In point of numbers the Methodists take the lead of all the Protestant sects; next in order come the Presbyterians, and then the Anglicans. The Mormons stand last in point of numbers of any Protestant sect, counting up only 534; but by late accounts they are making progress in Upper Canada, and by the time of the taking of the next census they may perhaps occupy a more important place in the muster roll of the Protestant Church in Canada. This enormous diversity of religions amongst the Christians of Canada is to the *Montreal Herald* wonderful:—

"The census by religious profession has its own curiosity in the wonderful vicissitudes of difference which men have been able to evolve out of the ap-

parently simple doctrines which it was found possible to deliver, together with much history, in so small a volume as the New Testament. There are not less than thirty-eight varieties of faith or discipline sufficiently distinct to prevent the Christians who hold one of them from uniting in the same society with the Christians who hold another."—*Montreal Herald*, 28th ult.

This would indeed be a "curiosity" were it true that, in the collection of brief biographical notices of the person known in history as Christ, and the fragments of the epistolary communications that passed betwixt some of the early teachers and converts to the new religion—the genuineness however of much of which correspondence has been, and still is, seriously contested by the ablest scholars and most competent critics of the Protestant world—and which make up the book called the New Testament, are to be found the entire doctrines of Christianity; or if indeed there were any rational grounds for believing that those doctrines were to be found therein. The only conclusion to be logically deduced from the "curiosity," or phenomenon of such a diversity of jarring creeds, evolved from one and the same book, would in such case be, to the incapacity and bungling stupidity of its composers, who could not express their meaning in intelligible language, or tell a plain story plainly. And thus it is that the most profound thinkers of the Protestant world at the present day scout as ridiculous, the opinion that the New Testament is the Word of One Who can neither deceive nor be deceived, and a perfect revelation of the divine will which He has been pleased to make to man, whom in spite of its obvious defects He holds responsible for knowing and doing that will.

The *St. John Freeman* of the 21st ult., publishes a searching and able analysis of the judgment lately rendered by the Superior Court in New Brunswick on the constitutionality of the School Act of 1871. That judgment, favourable to the said School Act, but against which Appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has been carried, the *St. John Freeman* shows to be based on an egregious fallacy; that fallacy being the assumption that it is possible to inculcate the distinctive tenets of Christianity—those for instance which distinguished it from natural religion or pure theism—without at the same time inculcating the peculiar tenet of some particular religious denomination or sect. Were it possible to do this, then indeed public schools might be at one and the same time distinctively Christian and non-denominational; but if impossible, then the law which enjoins the inculcating of the distinctive principles of Christianity in the schools by it alimanted, implicitly sets up a denominational system.

Now, in the case of the New Brunswick schools, the School Law of 1858 did provide for or rather make imperative the inculcating in parish schools of the distinctive tenets or essential principles of Christianity. Therefore, if it be impossible to inculcate these distinctive tenets or principles—tenets or principles which distinguish Christianity from pure Deism, or what is called natural religion—without at the same time inculcating some tenet or principle which some so-called Protestant sect or denomination repudiates or protests against—the School Law of 1858 did implicitly provide for and legalize the establishment under its provisions of Denominational Schools.

That the School Act of 1858 did provide for, or make imperative, the inculcating in the schools thereby established of the peculiar tenets, or distinctive principles of Christianity, the Supreme Court in its judgment recognises as a fact that cannot be disputed, that is not so much as called in question. But so that judgment continues, the religious or distinctively Christian teaching thus provided for, was to be of such general application, as to interfere with the peculiar religious views of none; was to consist in the inculcating of "doctrines, precepts and practices which all Christian people hold in common, and which are not the dogmatic teaching or tenets of a particular denomination or sect." Therefore, concludes the Superior Court, the law of 1858 did not explicitly or implicitly provide for, or recognize denominational Schools.

Thus, as the reader will perceive, the validity of the School Act of 1871, in that it does not "prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any class of persons had by law at the Union," rests entirely on the assumption that it is possible, or indeed conceivable to inculcate some one distinctively Christian principle, or principle which sharply distinguishes Christianity from natural religion, or pure Deism—without, at the same time, interfering with the peculiar religious views of some Protestant sect or another.

This assumption is an egregious fallacy; and it is most extraordinary that it could have been enunciated by a body of educated men.

We say it—and we defy contradiction.—There is not, there cannot be cited any one tenet, or principle, the holding of which is distinctively or exclusively Christian, whose truth is not