

# THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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## NOTICE.

All subscribers who are in arrears for more than one year are hereby notified that if the arrears are not paid up on or before the first of May next, their paper will be stopped, because the prompt payment of subscriptions is of vital importance to the financial standing of THE TRUE WITNESS, and even the stopping of the paper by no means relieves a subscriber of the legal or moral obligation of paying such a just debt.

Montreal, 28th March, 1894.

## DEVIL VS. CHURCH.

Off and on during the past few months we have given our readers articles upon this subject. We pointed out the sullen hopes of the fallen angel and the uniform frustration of them all. The first enemy that he raised up against the Church soon disappeared from the path of advancing Christianity—that was Roman paganism; the second was early brushed aside—it was the schismatic revivals of the first centuries; the third was unable to arrest the onward march of Christianity—the spirit of Mahometanism; and finally, the fourth, and greatest, we have proven to be a failure—it is Protestantism. But as long as time lasts will Satan war against God, will the Devil attack the Church. Of course the same result, the result of every other struggle between Error and Truth, must mark the close of each contest. "The gates of Hell shall not prevail," and the institution that Christ founded must go on to the end. Defeated in his every attempt the cunning enemy of mankind knew well how to play upon the weaker chords in the nature of man. He knew that this creature of earth, but participator in immortality, is prone to curiosity. He knew that man loves to have his secrets, that it is of his nature to hanker after the mysterious, that he likes to feel himself the possessor of something that others do not enjoy. Consequently did the Evil One take deep counsel and decide to raise up a fifth power against the Church, and this he found in the organization of secret societies. The result was that the most fearful enemy that Christianity has had to contend with, during this nineteenth century, has been the oath-bound secret organizations, whose aim directly was the destruction of the Church.

Deeply the plan was laid and wonderful-

ly well was it carried into execution; but again the Demon was doomed to a defeat that proclaims his weakness and the Omnipotence of the All Wise. In speaking of the secret societies we desire to draw a line between those whose aims are political and anti-religious. Both are dangerous to the State and to the Church, but the latter have no *raison d'être* whatsoever. There is not the shadow of an excuse for the organization of a secret society of the class we now wish to examine. In this century there is a liberty of action, of expression and of thought that should satisfy the most extreme radical. No man's liberty is in danger unless he violates the common laws of the country and thereby becomes a menace to society. There is no need of any secret conclaves to protect his interests. The men who find it necessary, in order to attain their aims, to band together under oath, and to fling the cloak of impenetrable secrecy over their actions, can have no good purpose and cannot be actuated by either noble or honest motives. If they shun the light it is because their deeds must be dark. Perhaps they may say that they seek to be able, by means of a solid and secret union, to better practise works of benevolence and mutual assistance. If so they are a menace to the community, for they purposely unite to deprive all who are outside their circle of the benefits of their supposed Christian action. They constitute themselves the exclusive recipients of the boons that they proclaim themselves willing to confer upon the human race.

Out of the number of these societies, take the Illuminati, or the Carbonari, or the Free Masons (not of England or America) but of Continental Europe. What do they offer to the young men of the generation as an inducement to join their ranks? The three words, written in characters of blood, upon the banners of the French Revolution, will tell us. "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Words that sound beautiful, but which, in their perverted application, are most deadly. Let us take, for this week, the first boon offered by the secret society to the man outside its ranks.

"Liberty!" We will look this matter square in the face and from a purely rational stand-point. Here is a young man who is free from the trammels of any secret organization; suddenly he is attracted by the cry of "Liberty," which rings so gloriously in his ears; he must join the oath-bound junto in order to become the possessor of some great, undefined and wonderful freedom. Before he takes that fatal step, let us ask him—or rather let him ask himself—a couple of simple questions. What liberty will he acquire that he does not already possess? What liberty will he lose that he now enjoys? It may seem easy to answer these questions; but if answered honestly the young man will turn back upon the threshold of the evil-haunted arcana.

Is it liberty of conscience he seeks? He already enjoys it to the fullest extent, and therein is he protected by the laws of the land. Is it liberty of expression he wants? In no age has such unbounded freedom of expression—either by voice or pen—been enjoyed by man as in this country. Is it liberty of action? There is nothing on earth to restrict his actions, and as long as he does not violate the laws of the country—which are there to check and punish both men of secret societies and men who belong not to them—he can roam the world over, he may enjoy an unbridled freedom. Consequently there is no liberty imaginable that the societies confer upon him that he does not already possess in its plenitude. If he therefore enters merely to acquire

liberty, he is putting himself to a very great amount of unnecessary trouble, which is absolutely fruitless in the end. But if the societies cannot augment his liberty, they can restrict it. What liberty will he lose that he now enjoys?

At present, before stepping inside the magic circle of their influence, he is entirely free. His liberty of action is at once restricted the moment he binds himself hand and foot at the profane altar of their rites. He can no longer move according to his own desires and inclinations; every step he takes must keep time with those of his companions; he must move in the direction indicated by his masters; he is a slave to men who use him as an instrument and whose real motives and secrets he is not likely to ever know. Let him attempt to perform any act that might tend to frustrate the designs of the higher officials in the order, and he will soon learn that he is no longer master of his own actions. For example let him go about performing Catholic devotions or giving evidences of his desire to assist the Church, and he will not be long in finding out that his oath binds him to crush that institution. It is only then that he will really discover that his liberty of action has been bartered for a bauble, for a few signs, a pass word, an imaginary secret, and that he has actually sold his own freedom for a mess of very unwholesome pottage.

What about his liberty of expression? Still worse. If he tries, for a moment, to speak or write anything that does not harmonize entirely with the ideas, principles and aims of the society, he will be brought to time, and in a manner sufficiently rude to make him feel that he is no longer in possession of liberty of speech or liberty of conscience. And even he is not allowed to think differently from those who have cast the spell over him. It would almost seem as if his very thoughts were written upon his brow. The poor creature finally learns that he has no longer control of his own actions, words, sentiments, ideas or even thoughts. Body and soul he belongs to another power; a power that he never thoroughly understood until its own grasp was upon him and his limbs are fettered by shackles that he dare not unlock and that he cannot break. This is no fanciful picture. Do you want the proof?

In the middle of this century, when the societies were attempting to undermine the peace of Europe and to shatter every solid column in the edifice of each country's power, when thousands of young enthusiasts were drawn into the huge spider-web that Mazzini and his associates had flung over the continent, we find terrible evidence of the ubiquity of the hydra.

Many a fiery-spirited character, who joined them in a moment of enthusiasm, discovered, all too late, that he had been deceived by the cry of "Liberty" and had handed himself over to a slavery the most cruel. Many of those betrayed men sought to withdraw, to return to the freedom they had abandoned, to drink again at the fountain of peace and to make amends for their errors. But it was too late. The eye of the society was upon them and the arms of the octopus were around them. The consequence was that a dead body was found floating down the Tiber one morning—no one could explain how the accident occurred; another day a poor fellow, with a dozen dagger wounds in his body, was found dead in the woods by the Arno—perhaps robbers had killed him; up amongst the Alps tragedies were enacted; at the banquets of festive Paris the poison was administered; in back alleys, in railway carriages, by lonely roads, in frequented

streets; it mattered not where, or how, the arm of the society reached the one who sought the liberty that he had lost, and the seal of the organization—the pallid brand of Death—was set upon him.

## CATHOLIC MARRIAGE.

The Omaha Morning World-Herald records a most peculiar case, which "The Law Students' Helper" reproduces for the benefit of the young men who are seeking diplomas in the legal profession. It is at once startling and depressing. It is surprising that in this nineteenth century of the Christian era people are found who have so low a conception of the sanctity of marriage; it is sad to think that legal minds could have any hesitation regarding the matter. Here is the case:

"Six months ago Edward M. Elkes and Lillie Mabney, of San Francisco, entered into a contract to be married for a period of six months. A few days ago they again repaired to a notary's office and caused a second contract to be drawn up for another six months. The young couple maintain that they have the advice of a good lawyer that the contract is good.

The situation is such a novel one that several reputable lawyers have persuaded the young couple to permit the question to be submitted to a court of adjudication. Just how to get this before the court is the question. It can hardly be accomplished by divorce proceedings, neither could it be accomplished by criminal process. Lawyers, however, declare that they will find a way of bringing the matter to judicial notice, in order that the ridiculous proposition may be settled at once.

Some of the best lawyers in the State have taken an interest in the matter. Many prominent citizens declare that it is against public policy for such a question to be dignified by a doubt for any length of time. On the other hand there are a few lawyers who consent to maintain the strict legality of the terms of the limited contract."

Mr. Henry J. Foster, one of the lawyers interested in the case, expressed himself as follows regarding it:

"In the first place the law in this State is never to dissolve a marriage agreement when to do such would be against public policy. Surely no one will contend that it would be good policy for the State to permit limited marriages. Once married always married is a good maxim. If the contracting parties have assumed marital relations they are man and wife, though the contract read 'for a day.' The only question is, to my mind, did the parties assume, willingly and honestly, the positions of husband and wife toward each other? The limitation clause is simply null."

Of the many legal questions that might arise out of this strange and anti-Christian situation, the World-Herald instances the following:

"In other words, is a contract of marriage stipulated to expire at the end of six months or a year a valid document? If the document be valid, is the limitation good? Does the limitation invalidate the contract? Can the relations of the contracting parties be legally laid aside at the end of the prescribed time? Would a child born after the limit has expired, and were the contract not renewed, be a legitimate child? It seems impossible that in this day such a question could be seriously raised, but as a matter of fact there has developed among the California lawyers some difference of opinion on the subject."

Such are the opinions of men who look at the question from a purely legal stand-point, and only consider whether it is in conflict with the statutory legislation of the State, or not. But we regard the matter from a very different position. Even though the limitation clause in the contract were null, there is nothing to prevent legislators from passing an Act that would legalize it. Men who can find it in their heart to vote for a divorce law can as easily introduce and carry through the Act rendering