

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

DECEMBER—1871.

- Friday, 1—Of the Feria. Saturday, 2—St. Bibiana, V. M. Sunday, 3—First Sunday of Advent. Monday, 4—St. Peter Chrysologus, B. C. D. Tuesday, 5—St. Francis Xavier, C. Wednesday, 6—Fast. St. Nicholas, B. C. Thursday, 7—St. Ambrose, B. C.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Much anxiety is still felt for the life of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales who has been suffering for some time past from a severe attack of typhoid fever. The bulletins represent him at one moment, as improving; at another, as again in a very critical condition. Winter has already set in with unusual severity in parts of England; from London reports come that several poor people have been frozen to death. The long pending dispute betwixt Great Britain and the U. States on the San Juan question are about to be submitted to the arbitration of the Emperor of Germany.

The position in Rome remains unchanged. In spite of all that has been asserted about the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff to abandon Rome, it seems probable that unless compelled to leave it by physical force, he will still remain in the Vatican. There have been serious riots in Belgium, arising out of the appointment of M. Decker to the governorship of the Province of Leoburg; up to the latest dates great excitement on the subject continued.

PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP OF TORONTO.

JOHN JOSEPH LYNN, by the Grace of God and the Appointment of the Holy See, Archbishop of Toronto, Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, &c.

To the Rev. Clergy, Religious Communities, and Laity of Our Diocese, Health and Benediction in Our Lord.

There is at present a spirit of earnest and constant enquiry concerning Catholic doctrine and discipline. Catholics are frequently asked in amazement by Protestants whether they really believe the absurd doctrines persistently attributed to them. We have ourselves been frequently obliged to answer this question, and to explain Catholic doctrine and to disabuse many of erroneous ideas concerning it. Many persons of distinction have asked us:—"Why do you not publish to the world a synopsis of your real belief founded on God's word?—Lovers of truth would rejoice at its publication." We have generally answered that we have books, and especially the Catechism, containing all the explanations required, and that these may be obtained at Catholic and other book stores; but that in order to know God's truth people must be in earnest search of it, and must give themselves the little trouble needed to find those books; yet we felt that we are less zealous in disseminating by means of books and tracts our doctrines of truth, than the children of this world are in propagating error.

In view of the many demands even of those not considered of our fold, for short works explanatory of our doctrines, and also to meet the increasing wants of our own people, we procured another edition of the Catholic Catechism compiled by the Most Reverend Dr. Butler, and approved of by the Bishops of Ireland and Canada. As however there were few texts of Scripture appended in proof of the doctrines set forth in the answers, we considered it advisable to increase the number of such references. The Venerable Archdeacon Northgraves, of Our Diocese, has, with much erudition and care, accomplished this work, and added by our direction texts of Scripture which prove the doctrines of the Catholic Church, especially such as are denied or misapprehended by Protestants. A short explanation of Papal Infallibility, also of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of free will; and Scripture references on controverted points of doctrine, form a valuable supplement to this excellent work. This cheap and valuable work, published by Mr. James A. Sadlier, of Montreal, we earnestly recommend to all who wish to study from the proper source the Catholic religion, and we exhort Catholics to distribute copies of it amongst their neighbours; for the Prophet Daniel says xiii. 3. "They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity."

This Catechism sets forth with authority the principal doctrines of the Catholic Church

which Our Lord Jesus Christ has left in his stead to teach, to govern, to bind and to loose and to perform those sacred functions which lead the people to eternal life. "As the Father sent me so also I send you." [St. John, xx. 21.]

Every soul made to the image and likeness of God is bound to seek after eternal life. "Seek first the Kingdom of God" [St. Matt. vi. 33.], and this is life everlasting that we may know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent, [St. John xvii. 3.] The knowledge of God is therefore the first and most necessary knowledge to be acquired in this world. The child who knows the Catechism is wiser than the proud Philosopher who can count and weigh the stars of the heavens, and discourse on all the sciences except that of the knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ. The first question of the Catechism is adapted to one who has considered the wonders of creation and is asked who made the world. God, is the answer; for no being with less power could make it. The world therefore proves the existence of an all wise, all powerful and Almighty God, its Creator. St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, 1st Chap. v. 20: "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: his eternal power also and divinity; so that they (i. e. infidels) are inexcusable. Because that, when they had known God they have not glorified him as God—nor gave thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened; for professing to be wise, they became fools."

As this Catechism is intended, not for infidels chiefly, but for those who believe in the truth of the Christian religion, it treats of the doctrines concerning Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the fall of our first parents, and the remedies which our Lord Jesus Christ has established on the earth to counteract and cure the evils brought on us by original and actual sins. Hence there are chapters on these points, including the sacraments, which are required from our entrance into the world till our last anointing for the tomb. The first sacrament treated of is Baptism, which was instituted for regeneration into the life of grace, through the merits of Christ applied to the soul by that Sacrament, whereby we become engrained as a wild olive branch, into the good olive tree, which is Christ. (Rom. xi.) Our Lord himself expressly says: "Except a person be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." (St. John iii. 5. 6.)

A child is born into this world under the sin of our first parents: "In sins my mother conceived me." (Ps. 50.) By our earthly birth we are children of wrath; by our heavenly birth we are made children of life; for St. Paul says: "we were by nature children of wrath." (Eph. ii. 3.) By baptism we become children of God, for Christ our Lord says, "so that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (St. Mark xvi. 16.) And St. Paul says, (1. Titus iii. 5.) "not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost." Those, therefore, who say that baptism is a mere ceremony, or that it confers no grace, but leaves the recipient in the condition in which he was before Baptism was administered, contradict the Holy Scriptures and lead souls from Christ; for Christ has not said in vain, "unless you are regenerated of water and the Holy Ghost, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Our merciful Redeemer brought to a fallen world a copious Redemption; [Ps. 129]; and having paid more than a necessary price for our salvation, [Rom. v. 20], and moreover knowing the clay of which we are formed, and the weakness of human nature and its terrible temptations; and on the other hand willing none to perish, provides another sacrament for the remission of sin after Baptism. This is called the Sacrament of Penance, or the plank after shipwreck.

This sacrament consists of contrition, confession and satisfaction, on the part of the penitent, and absolution on the part of the priest. This blessed means of reconciliation with an offended God is not new. Confession was ordered by God himself in the 5th Chap. of Numbers to the Jews, His chosen people, and was practiced by them notably when they went to be baptised by St. John in the Wilderness, as we read in the Gospel of St. Matthew xiii. 8., and again in the Acts of the Apostles xix. 18.

Christ instituted this sacrament on the day of his resurrection, when, making use of a most significant and mysterious ceremony, "he breathed on them [the Apostles] and he said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." [John xx. 22. 23.] Christ never pronounced a more merciful sentence for all time, in favor of repenting sinners; and never was there a more unmerciful deed performed, than to deny and to explain away this merciful institution. It was a cruel robbery, a sacrilegious interference with God's mercy. St. Paul calls this sacrament [2 Cor. v.] the ministry and work of reconciliation. "But all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." This ministry is exercised when the priest in the person of Christ (2 Cor. x.), and by his authority says, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." But the sinner on his part, as we said above, must have contrition for all his sins, and firm purpose of amendment, and of making satisfaction for all injuries done to his neighbor. This idea of the sacrament of Penance, so beneficial in all respects, may be new to non-Catholics, but is familiar enough to Catholic children.

In the exercise of our sacred ministry for over 28 years we have received many persons into the Catholic Church, and we have remarked that this saving ordinance of Christ, so repugnant to the proud and worldly minded, was to the newly-converted one of the most attractive features of Christ's dispensation. We are all sinners, (St. John i. 8.), and we want to go to our offended God with pure hearts washed with the blood of the Lamb, through the saving Sacrament of Penance. At the hour of death especially does the sinner try to grasp at this plank of salvation, after the shipwreck of sin.

It is often objected: who can forgive sins except God? This is a quotation also from the Sacred Scriptures; but who made the objection? The unbelieving Scribes in the crowd hearing Christ say to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee" thought within themselves "who can forgive sins but God only?" Do those persons who repeat these words reflect, that they use the objection of the scribes and Pharisees, the enemies of Christ? Our Divine Redeemer performed a miracle, healing the man sick of the palsy to prove that he, as Son of Man, could forgive sins. It is true God is ultimately the forgiver of sins committed in the Sacrament of Penance, inasmuch as the power of forgiveness which is exercised by the priest is derived from God, and is ratified in heaven; for Christ has said "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," as an earthly judge by the power derived from his Sovereign, condemns and acquits the accused according as he is found guilty or innocent.

Speaking of the Sacrament of Penance reminds us of another Sacrament of the utmost importance—Holy Order—treated of in another part of the Catechism. Holy Order is the transmission of the divine power and commission from Christ to his Apostles, and through them to other men adopted into their corporation or body, and ordained to transmit to the end of time those powers conferred on the Apostles and their successors, of offering up gifts and sacrifices for sins. (Heb. v. i.) Christ died for all men, and purchased for them abundant graces for salvation; but those graces must be applied to the souls of the people of nations and countries to the end of time. Hence the necessity of a regularly constituted ministry for this purpose, holding their power and commission from Christ through the ordination and appointment of the Apostles and their successors. Christ was appointed by his Eternal Father as High Priest (Heb. iv. 14.) "Having, therefore, a great high priest who hath penetrated the heavens, Jesus the Son of God." This divine High Priest ordained and commissioned other priests whom he called Apostles (Luke xi.), and gave them the powers received from his Eternal Father. "As the Father sent me, I send you [John xx. 21], that is for the salvation of the world. He commissioned his Apostles to communicate those powers to other faithful men. Hence they chose by lot, Matthias, to fill up the place of the fallen Judas, and enumerated him amongst themselves, so that he became a partaker of the powers that they had received from Christ, (Acts. i. 26.) So also Paul and Barnabas received ordination by the imposition of hands. "Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away. So they being sent by the Holy Ghost went to Seleucia" (Acts xiii.) St. Paul also ordained Titus, and left him in Crete to ordain priests for cities (Titus i. 5), and Timothy was also similarly associated in the ministry (1 Tim. iv. 14.)—The Apostles ordained their co-laborers and successors, and these in turn ordained other men; and thus the Bishops, priests, and deacons of the Catholic Church at the present day have been consecrated and ordained by Bishops who derive their orders in regular succession from the Apostles. Our Holy Father, the reigning Pope, succeeds St. Peter, the Chief of the Apostles. The Bishops who govern the Church with due submission to the successor of St. Peter, are the successors of the other Apostles. "He appointed the Bishops to govern the Church of God" (Acts xx. 28.) The priests are the successors of the seventy-two disciples chosen by Christ himself (St. Luke x.), and ordained in the sacrament instituted likewise by Christ. Thus the present generation in America and throughout the world, cannot reasonably envy the lot of the first Christians of Asia, who received the word and ministrations of the Apostles, as the same Gospel and powers and benefits are enjoyed by them, through the ministry of the Bishops and priests of the Catholic Church. The Holy Spirit of God is the principal operator in conferring grace, through all the sacraments, and the presence of Jesus Christ is also guaranteed to the true Church by his own promise, when he said: "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" [St. Matt. xxviii.] What a glorious privilege and grace, to belong to this true Church of Christ, and how grateful should we be to God for being called to it!

There are chapters on the other sacraments, which we shall touch but slightly. The principal amongst these, and the highest in dignity is the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. This divine sacrament of Christ's body and blood cannot be understood by man. This compendium of God's miracles, this mystery of infinite love, cannot be believed except through a direct ray of grace from the throne of God, "for with Him is the fountain of life, and in his light we shall see light." [Ps. xxxv.] We may here well quote the words of Christ; "No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me, draw him." (St. John vi. 44.) When Christ announced his intention of instituting this sacrament, there were cavillers who protested against his doctrine, just as there are at the present day some who say with the Capharnaites, this saying is hard, and who can hear it? [St. John vi.] But as Christ in clear and positive sentences frequently repeated, pronounces, that he changes bread into his body and wine into his blood, we lay aside all cavillings and objections, and with the simplicity of children say: "Lord! we believe thy word; Thou art Omni-

potent; Thou canst do all things; Thou art truth itself and canst not deceive us; Thou canst do more for us through Thy infinite love than we can understand." The world may say to us this is not the body of Christ; this is not the blood of Christ: they are only figures and signs of His body and blood, We shall answer them from our inmost soul; "Lord, though Thy words are above our comprehension, we believe them, and not the contradictions of men," and say with St. Peter who when asked by Our Lord would he also go away with the unbelieving disciples, made answer and said: "Lord to whom shall we go, Thou hast the words of eternal life." A God who can die on a cross for the salvation of sinners, can give his flesh to eat and his blood to drink, under the appearances of bread and wine.

An explanation of the Mass follows. This sacrifice was instituted by Our Lord after His Last Supper. No nation had pretended to worship God according to their notions of the Deity, without offering a sacrifice to Him, until for the sake of human modes of worship, the sectaries of more modern times abolished this first and most necessary act of religion, whereby we acknowledge God's supreme dominion over us and our total dependence on him. Christ commanded his Apostles to continue the same sacrifice which he himself offered when he said to them at His Last Supper "Do this for a commemoration of me." [St. Luke xxii. 29.] Hence modern translators of the Bible have substituted table for altar and Elder for Priest, because the terms "altar" and "priest" convey the idea of sacrifice which the Apostle, in accordance with Christ's institution, had in view when saying "We have an altar whereof they have no power to eat, who serve the tabernacle." [Heb. xiii. 10.]

(To be Continued.)

We have often expressed our anxiety to get at the real motives which prompt the agents of the F. C. M. Society, and the other swaddling organisations, in their labors. Not a spiritual motive—we argued, could it be, or the desire to secure the eternal salvation of French Canadian Catholics; for, taken to task on the matter, there is no Protestant who believes in God, and a life to come, but will admit that the Catholic who, believing all she teaches, faithfully conforms his life to the precepts of his Church may be saved. What then is it that prompts the Protestant missionaries to seek our conversion? The Witness of the 4th Sept. answers this question in an article addressed to the Journal de Quebec:—

"Mr. Cauchon ought to know that the object of the Protestants in circulating the Holy Scriptures is, to raise the people from that state of humiliation 'in the eyes of other populations,' which he recently asserted they were in, and by bringing them to a state of spiritual enlightenment and freedom, to assure their material prosperity, as has invariably been the case with other nations who have taken the Word of God for their guidance. M. Cauchon and others would then be enabled to build railways, and otherwise hasten forward the development of Lower Canada's resources, without interference from priests or programmatists."

We know that M. Cauchon is a very clever writer; but we have not followed his writings so closely as to be able to say whether he ever did use the expression respecting his Catholic fellow-countrymen attributed to him by the Witness; whether he ever did speak of their state as being one of humiliation in the eyes of other people. If he did—which we much doubt—then M. Cauchon said that which was very incorrect, very unbecoming a Canadian, and a Catholic. God forbid that Canadians should boast; but so far from their state being one of "humiliation," it is as compared with that of their neighbors, one on which they may well congratulate themselves; or rather one for which they should return hearty and humble thanks to God, by whose grace they have been preserved from sinking to the moral level of the Protestant communities by which they are surrounded. We will illustrate our meaning by some extracts from our Protestant contemporary, the Montreal Herald. In the course of an article, headed "The Season of Horrors," the Herald of the 4th Sept. thus depicts the moral state of Yankeeland; and we ask, is there aught therein which French Canadians need envy?

"In the same number of weeks as those which make up the holidays of this summer, there never has been we suppose, in one civilized state, and during a time of peace, so long and so crimson a catalogue of murders, by crime or by criminal neglect. . . . And then upon all these have been superadded a catalogue of outrages most of them of a description whose cowardice is hardly less disgusting than their cruelty. For two or three days indeed—the New York papers have been as full of intelligence about the offences of a set of male and female villains who have reduced crime to a recognized and openly practised profession, as they are at other seasons full of political intelligence from Washington."

From another column of the same paper, of the same date we learn that The Murder Crop of the U. States a pre-eminently Protestant, and "open Bible" sort of country, in which the Holy Scriptures are freely circulated, posted up, for the year ending, May 31st, 1870, to 2,052—(homicides of, or by, Indians not included); and in a short paragraph introductory to these bloody statistics the Herald says of the Murder Crop for the current year, that:—"to judge by the reports since the date to which the tables are made up, it is much worse now."—Herald, Sept. 4th.

In its issue of the 15th Sept., the Herald again returned to the same topic, and gave us another editorial sketch of the moral level of that people in whose eyes, according to the lan-

guage attributed, falsely we hope, by the Montreal Witness to M. Cauchon, the Catholics of Lower Canada are in a state of "humiliation."

"We might ask them if there is any other Government within their acquaintance, even in countries which abound in ignorance and poverty, where the public daily record of fraud and crime is equally shocking with that which the American Press lays before the public every morning and evening.—Where are the bloated aristocrats, who rob the people as meanly and shamelessly as these foreign adventurers, who a few years ago were in the lowest position of society? Where are the cities of the civilized world, where it is unsafe for man or woman to visit places of public entertainment in the open air, lest if a female, she may be exposed to insult, and if a male, to murderous assault?"

Were the loudly proclaimed Christianity of our Montreal Witness anything better than a sham, a pretext for bringing grist to his mill—and putting the dollars and cents in his pocket, he would know that it is not railroads, or canals, or improved processes in agriculture, but righteousness that exalteth a people; and that it is the lack of righteousness, that it is immorality, and corruption in high places, and systematic child murder, and lust, and disregard for the sanctities of the family, and for human life everywhere, that degrade a people—and which alone, reduce them to a state of humiliation in the eyes of all honest men. Tested by this standard, the only standard, which the Christian man recognises, what though the Witness wota not of it, we ask—is there in the relative positions of Catholic Lower Canada and the Protestant U. States aught that should cause the first named to blush—or to feel itself in a state of humiliation?

But the Witness propounds as the object of the several proselytising societies, the promotion of the material prosperity of the country, and especially the building of railroads, which is to follow the spreading of the Holy Scriptures. Well: perhaps were the people of Lower Canada to renounce their religion, to give more of their time to the things of earth, and less to those of heaven, to serve Mammon more, and God less, that sort of thing called material prosperity, which is the concomitant not of strict honesty, but the result of sharpness, cunning, and successful roguery, might be increased; but we doubt if the material happiness of the people would be thereby at all improved. Some few would be enriched; but in the actual state of society, for one who grows rich, ten become poor, and the material prosperity of a few is the sure indication of the moral and material ruin of hundreds. Great no doubt is the material prosperity, in one sense of England; but scratch through the thin scab of this so-called "material prosperity," and what a hideous mass of foul ulcerated flesh in the shape of a festering, and fast spreading Communism, presents itself to view. Unprecedented are the material progress and prosperity of the U. States; and yet no so-called civilised community on the face of the earth has so hideous a moral record to show as have those same Protestant States. May God in His mercy prevent Lower Canada from sinking to such a humiliating moral state as that which the articles we have quoted from the Montreal Herald exhibit and with which the F. C. M. Society threaten us.

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The Charlotetown Examiner of the 25th Sept., makes some revelations as to the physical and moral condition of the common schools in P. E. Island. These schools are, as is the case in the U. States, frequented by pupils of both sexes; and the filthy but inevitable consequences are hinted at rather than fully set forth in the annexed paragraph:—"For teacher and pupil the most of the public school rooms are like a pest-house. The strongest constitution in such small, over-crowded, unventilated places, must necessarily become infected with disease. Then the temptations to immorality are almost too revolting to describe. The revelations which were made some few weeks ago in the Police Court can not be named in a respectable press. Mr. McPhail in his report says that in one school he found the poor children closely packed in double rows and the out-house in a bad state; in another, the children have to go up two flights of rickety stairs, and there is no out-house for the use of the children, so they are obliged to go to those of private parties or wherever they can find access." This is certainly bad enough, but other places in which schools are kept are in a still worse condition. A school attended by males and females is thus spoken of officially, which is used in SHOCKING and DISGRACEFUL. Another school-place is thus alluded to:—"The out-house here, which serves for all the families around, is in a PESTILENTIAL STATE and utterly BEYOND DESCRIPTION."

And these beastly schools, ruinous to soul and body the Protestant majority are always trying to impose upon Catholics. As the Lord liveth should be our answer, we will have none of them should be our reply. Rather would a true Catholic see his child lying dead at his feet, than in attendance on one of these infamous Common Schools.

CARD OF THANKS.—The Ladies who conducted the St. Patrick's Orphan Bazaar are happy to announce that the nett proceeds amounted to three thousand eight hundred and sixty-two dollars, (\$3,862.00). For this most satisfactory result under most discouraging circumstances, they are indebted, after the blessing of God, to the devoted generosity of their well tried Patrons. The Ladies thought it befitting to delay their Bazaar some three