

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 14, 1851.

If it be a hard task to write accurately, "The History of events which have never occurred," it is not much easier to assign "The causes of effects which do not exist." Some such task, however, have certain Protestant lecturers undertaken to accomplish, and hence a discourse upon "The decline of Popery, and its causes," by the Rev. N. Murray, D.D., delivered January 15th, in the Broadway tabernacle, New York, by way of a reply to the celebrated lecture of his Grace the Archbishop of New York, upon the "Decline of Protestantism."

The Church of Christ was established by God Himself. The Rev. N. Murray admits this as a fixed fact. "The Church is a simple institution of God, with one simple end in view, and adapted to all times, nations, and circumstances," and had the Spirit of its Founder remained in the Church, that is, if the promise of Christ had been fulfilled, if the promised Comforter had remained with the Church for ever, great things, according to Mr. Murray, would have been accomplished, and Heaven and earth would long ago have resounded with the cry, "Hallelujah, salvation, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

"And how has the Church performed its mission?" asks Mr. Murray. In our simplicity, we did conceive that such a question was susceptible of but one reply. The mission which God gave unto His Church, she has accomplished: for, were it otherwise, then it is clear, that the mission of the Church could not have been from God, for when He gives a mission, He gives the power to perform: that is to say, either the Church has performed her mission, or else Christ was an impostor, and no more entitled to be called the Son of God, than Luther or Calvin, John Knox the Presbyterian, or Joe Smith the Mormonite, or any of the other fathers and founders of the Protestant sects. But Mr. Murray thinks differently. He admits that, at first the Church did do famously, and nobly accomplished her mission of "teaching all nations;" but, some how or other, "a change passed over the scene, the result of its very successes." The Spirit of its Founder abandoned the Church, which He had promised to be with all days, even to the end of the world; how, or why, or when, we are not informed; but, abandoned the Church surely was. Christ no longer seems to have taken any interest in what she was about. Perhaps "he was on a journey, or sleeping, and could not be awakened;" but, whatever the cause, the Rev. N. Murray assures us, that the Spirit of Christ was withdrawn, and that consequently the Church became very corrupt, and naughty indeed.

This corruption seems, in a great measure, to have been brought about by a "vast enthusiasm for the Divinity of Christ, and a profound reverence for every thing in any way associated with Him;" but, Arianism being vanquished, "the great Deceiver changed his hand, and converted the existing zeal and enthusiasm for the deity of Jesus Christ, into powerful agents for perverting, depraving, and undermining the entire system of Christianity." Sly, devilish sly old chap, as Joe Bagstock would say, is this great Deceiver, and much more than a match for the Founder of the Church. However, the triumph of Satan did not end here. The zeal and enthusiasm for the Divinity of Christ (the fountain of all evil, according to the Rev. N. Murray, D.D.) passed over into inordinate veneration for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The doctrine of transubstantiation was invented, "and the pantomime of the mass was enacted." Things grew worse and worse. "A great rage arose for any thing and every thing associated with Christ's memory; and relics were collected with incredible industry." Bad, this—very bad. And yet the evil did not stop here; for, as a climax to all these enormities, the Church at length grew so corrupt, as to encourage asceticism and corporeal austerities, enjoining fasting and chastity, which, of course, the Rev. N. Murray, like all good Protestants, most cordially detests, and "thus did the devil, starting on the high wave of zeal, and enthusiasm for the Glory of Christ, build up the doctrinal Babel of Popery, the foundation of which is laid in Hell, whose top reaches unto heaven, and whose dark shadow has stretched from shore to shore." Thus—according to that holy man who does out the bread of life to the frequenters of the Broadway tabernacle—thus did the gates of Hell at length prevail against the Church of Christ.

Nor was the corruption merely partial. The Devil did not do things by halves. "The Sun which had risen over Judea, set at Rome." It was not merely a temporary eclipse of the great luminary, an obscuration, caused by the interposition of some clouds of error, to be dispelled at the first breath of a refreshing gale of truth. The Sun—the Sun of Justice—which had risen over Judea, with healing on His wings, "set at Rome, and the nations were at the mercy of its universal bishop," and Popery was "law in the state and in the Church, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the North Cape, and from the interior of Hungary to the Western shores of Ireland." The Prince of Darkness had extinguished the Light which had risen to lighten the Gentiles, and the Devil had it all his own way. Mr. Murray does not think it necessary to inform us when, and in what part of the horizon the Sun, which set at Rome, rose again; but, from the epistle introductory to the Protestant Bible, it seems to have been in

England, in the person of a "dread Sovereign, a most high and mighty prince," and to have occurred shortly after the setting of a very bright *occidental Star*. In the meantime, the nations were left in total darkness. No invisible holy Catholic Church remained, to throw a feeble, sickly glimmer over a world, where "the power of the Pope was universally felt;" nor does Mr. Murray claim, as the spiritual progenitors of modern Protestantism, some pure *Cathari* or chaste *Bulgarians*, in which, considering the foul lusts of the Albigenses, Mr. Murray does prudently. But we are tired of these blasphemies. We only wonder what is really the opinion of such men, concerning the person and the mission of Christ. It is impossible that they can believe Him to have been the Messiah—a prophet—or barely an honest man. They cannot seriously maintain that it was worth the while of the Son of God, to descend from Heaven,—to die the death of the Cross,—to make, after all, such a bungling piece of work, as the Rev. N. Murray, D.D. represents the Church to have been; a Church which He established with the intention of teaching all nations, until the consummation of all things, and with the express promise of Divine assistance to keep her from error, which, nevertheless, in a few years, became, "in polity, a pure despotism; in doctrine, a bad caricature of Christianity; and in worship, far more Heathen than Christian."

Besides the usual amount of rant about "ecclesiastical despotism," and the *bestial* ignorance of Irish Catholics, we find in the discourse before us, some historical information, which will be new to most of our Irish readers. We are told that Ireland, the victim of a double despotism, political and religious, has lain until this day, bleeding and groaning in her misery, at the foot of the English throne, "and all through the arrogance, and perfidy, and policy of the Pope; that the Pope and his Priests have permitted the masses to remain, for nearly ten centuries, in *bestial* ignorance; that Popery has converted the people of Ireland into beggars, sown her fertile fields with salt, and keeps her swarming millions in Egyptian darkness." But, after all this gloom, a light breaks in upon us. "Protestantism, long neglectful of its mission to that people, has entered upon its work." Protestantism "entered upon its work" nigh three hundred years ago, and the result is thus given by a cotemporary writer: "The land itself, which, before those wars, was populous, well inhabited, and rich in all the good blessings of God, being plenteous of corn, full of cattle, well stored with fruit, and sundry other good commodities, is now become waste and barren, yielding no fruits, the pasture no cattle, the fields no corn, the air no birds, the seas, though full of fish, yet to them yielding nothing. Finally, every way the curse of God" (Protestantism) "was so great, and the land so barren, both of man and beast, that whosoever did travel from the one end unto the other of all Munster, even from Waterford to the head of Limerick, which is about six score miles, he should not meet any man, woman, or child, saving in towns and cities, nor yet see any beast but the very wolves, the foxes, and other like ravening beasts."—*Holing-shed*, 460. The "benign influence" of Protestantism, which, Mr. Murray tells us, "has already reached even the wilds of Connemara," has long been felt, and long will the marks of its hellish influence remain in wretched Ireland. She has felt that "benign influence" in the days of the *Virgin Bess*, of Cromwell, and the pious and immortal William,—in war, in famine, and in pestilence,—in penal laws inflicted, and in treaties violated,—in tortures, and in death,—in her sons slain, and her daughters outraged,—in her people spoiled, and in her pleasant places made desolate,—in Orange processions, and in massacres at Dolly's-brac. God, in His infinite mercy, forbid that this "benign influence" be much longer experienced. Yet the Rev. N. Murray, D.D., with an aptitude, truly marvellous, at sucking consolation from the smallest of things, even as a "weasel sucks eggs," contrives to gather solace from the reflection that "Popery is declining," before the increasing intelligence of the race (surely not the Broadway tabernacle race)—the spread of Protestant Bibles, and the advance of Protestantism—and "hoary error shakes its head with holy horror," though how "hoary error" manages to accomplish this feat, we are not definitely informed, but we have no doubt that it must be a very awful spectacle indeed.

That Protestantism is advancing with giant strides, the Rev. N. Murray, D.D. clearly proves, by appealing to its works—railways, telegraphs, and ocean steamers,—the vast enterprise, skill, and industry, of Britain, her extended commerce, her empire, upon which, we are informed for the first time, that the sun never sets,—those white spots on the moral map of the world, as numerous on the Pacific as are its islands, (the Sandwich Islands, to wit,)—the expulsion of Sardinian archbishops, and glorious assassinations at Rome. The Rev. N. Murray might have found proofs more striking still of the existence of Protestantism, in the clamors of the Socialist—in the cry of the strong man, ready to perish for lack of employment and food—in the decline of morality—in the rapid increase of vice and foul debauchery—in those sounds of cursing and blasphemy, those forms of drunkenness and prostitution, which ever meet the ear and eye in the favored abodes of Protestantism. He might have asked "what mean these?" and have answered, truly, "All and each show the powerful influence of Protestantism." However, it is hard upon the part of Catholics, to begrudge the devotees of the Broadway tabernacle, the little pleasure which they derive from the fancied overthrow of the Scarlet Woman. The perusal of the Rev. N. Murray's pamphlet has given additional zest to the pleasures of the tea table, and sent many an old woman happy to

bed. We will not break in upon her dreams, nor interrupt the rapture of her repose. His Grace Archbishop Hughes will return to New York before long, and by a practical exemplification of the decrease of Popery in the United States, will rapidly dispel the illusions of these silly dreamers.

We see by the *Montreal Witness*, that the controversy between the different Protestant denominations, as to the nature of Christ, still continues. Nor should we notice it again, were it not that a new element of discord has been evolved, and a singular admission made by one who has entered the lists, as champion of the Catholic doctrine of the Divinity of our Saviour. Notwithstanding all the cant with which our ears have been assailed, to the effect that the Protestant version of the Bible contains the pure, unadulterated Word of God,—the whole of that Word, from which nothing has been taken away,—and nothing but that Word, to which nothing has been added, we are now credibly informed, by a writer in the *Montreal Witness*, that the translators of the Protestant Bible,—well meaning, but fallible men,—have taken the liberty to interpolate a whole sentence in the twenty-third verse of the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew;—a text apparently of the highest importance in the controversy now raging, as upon it, *minus* the interpolated passage, one bases an argument in favor of the divinity of Christ, from His assumption of the privilege of according to the children of Zebedee, "to sit on His right hand, and on His left," whilst the other, assuming the genuineness of the contested words, discovers in the same verse a total disclaimer of any such privilege, and, consequently, of any title to the Divine attributes.

And yet, with an impudence which would be wonderful on the part of any except Protestants, these same men, who denounce this interpolation when it suits their convenience, presume to thrust their corrupt, and avowedly adulterated versions of the Holy Scriptures, into the hands of simple men, ignorant of the language in which the Bible was composed, telling them, "Here you have the entire, pure Word of God, free from any alloy of human additions, and human corruptions; read this, and live." Would it not be well, now that the error is acknowledged, for the office-bearers in Bible, and French Canadian Missionary Societies, to call in the copies of this corrupt Bible, which are now in circulation, and to endeavor to get an edition of the Word of God, revised and corrected by some infallible body of men, before they proceed any further with their schemes of proselytising; for it may so happen, that some "habitant" of common sense, whose faith they are trying to destroy, shall ask some such questions as these—"What confidence can I have in a book, in which, by your own showing, gross errors occur, either through the ignorance, or evil designs of the translators? Before I can accept this book which you offer me, as the *sole* rule of faith, I must be certain, not only that its contents were originally dictated by the Spirit of God, but that its whole meaning, and nothing but that meaning, has been infallibly rendered by the translators; for infallibility, or at least immunity from the possibility of error, upon their part, is as necessary as on the part of the original writers. But here, you tell me, is one error in the translation; there may be, then, a thousand others, and those occurring in the most important passages; the whole book is therefore utterly worthless as a rule of faith, for I can never be certain when the meaning of the original is correctly given, and without certainty there cannot be faith." What answer a Colporteur, busily engaged in pawning off his corrupt trash, would make to such a customer, we know not; but, at all events, we would recommend the Bible Societies to procure a version of the Bible free from all errors, whether of copyists or translators. Then, and not till then, will it be time to discuss the question, whether the Bible be the Word of God or no; for whatever it may be then, the Protestant Bible is certainly not, at present, the Word of God,—for which reason, they act wisely, who commit it to the flames.

The writer in the *Montreal Witness* sneers at the ignorance of his opponent, for not quoting from the original Greek, and citing the *ipsissima verba*. Does he mean by this to pretend that the Gospel of St. Matthew was originally written in Greek? or will he admit that all we know about the said Gospel, is, that it has been translated from some other language into Greek, nobody knows when, and by nobody knows whom, and that, consequently, we can obtain no information from it, as to what were the *ipsissima verba* used by our Saviour?

One thing strikes us as extremely curious, in these disputes between Protestants—Unitarian and Trinitarian. Never do the latter make use of the seventh verse of the fifth chapter of St. John's first epistle,—a verse which, if genuine, sets the whole question at rest for ever. Whence proceeds this silence? The verse occurs in that same Protestant Bible which, we are told, contains nothing but the pure Word of God. Are they ashamed of acknowledging God's words before men? or do they deny, or doubt that the famous verse which proclaims the Unity of the Three Heavenly Witnesses, is really part of God's Word? Why do not the Protestant advocates of the doctrine of the Trinity, speak out honestly and boldly? What are they afraid of? The passage of St. John, to which we allude, is genuine, or spurious, or else doubtful. If genuine, they should quote it as decisive. If spurious, the Bible is not the *pure* Word of God. If doubtful, they must admit that, without an infallible authoritative teacher, it is impossible for men to know, with certainty, what is, and what is not the Word of God.

The editor of the *Montreal Witness* promises to notice, at some future period, our contradiction of "Ojibwa's" calumnies against the St. Sulpicians. We hope that he will be as good as his word, and that in noticing, he will remember what manner of accusations they were, which "Ojibwa's" advanced, and which we contradicted.

We give them again, to avoid any chance of mistakes. "Ojibwa's" accuses the St. Sulpicians, of having fraudulently deprived ("spirited away") the Indians of the title deeds to the Seigniorship of the Lake of the Two Mountains, granted to the Indians by the French, and subsequently ratified by the British Government, "after the conquest;" of having obtained possession of the said Seigniorship, surreptitiously—"no one knows how;" of having retained the property of the Indians in their own hands, treating them (the Indians) with much harshness, and refusing to them permission to cultivate the soil, or to cut the timber, even "for the purpose of making axe-handles!!" Thus implying that the St. Sulpicians do, at the present time, hold the said Seigniorship merely in trust for the Indians, who, according to "Ojibwa's," are the *bona fide* proprietors; and of having compelled *Kejaisic*, the chief of the Indians, to do penance at the door of the Church, for several Sundays successively, in sack-cloth and ashes, for having complained to Lord Dalhousie of this inhuman conduct.

We are not so unreasonable as to suppose that the editor of a paper can be answerable for the truth of every statement made by a correspondent; but, in this case, the letter of "Ojibwa's" was endorsed by the editor himself, in a comment thereupon, in which we are informed that the "editor has reason to believe that his correspondent's statements are true." It remains, therefore, for the editor of the *Montreal Witness* to substantiate the charge made by "Ojibwa's," or, confessing his error, to retract, and make the *amende honorable* to the injured gentlemen.

The *Transcript* of yesterday notices the case of the widow Thomas, whose expulsion from the English hospital we mentioned last week. We agree with the editor of the *Transcript*, in hoping that the "case will be promptly and fully investigated," when it will be found that our statement of Friday last was correct, in every particular—that the poor creature was turned out in the manner described, at night-fall, in the depth of an unusually severe Canadian winter, insufficiently clothed. When admitted into the hospital of the Hotel Dieu, she was almost dead from the effects of the cold, and could barely articulate—"Oh! my heart is frozen; my heart is frozen!"

Ignorant of the motives which led to this strange conduct on the part of the officials of the English hospital, we have refrained, and will still refrain, from assigning or insinuating any. We have merely "a round, unvarnished tale delivered" of what seems to us an act of shocking cruelty, but which may be satisfactorily explained. We wait for such an explanation, before making any remarks of our own.

The editor of the *Transcript* is in error, when he states that the French Canadians "contribute next to nothing to public institutions." The English hospital is supported, if we are not mistaken, by many French Canadian subscribers, to say nothing of grants of the public money. Equally unfounded is the statement that the great *cleemosynary* revenues of the Catholic Church are supposed by the French Canadians to be intended purely for French purposes, and that the Irish Catholic is considered an intruder. This sneer against the Catholic charity of those, but for whose exertions in the seasons of sickness, the poor Irish would have been left to die like dogs, proceeds, we hope, from ignorance of the real facts of the case. It is sufficient for us to observe, that during the course of the last winter, fifteen hundred Irish—or two-thirds of those receiving relief—were supported by the Grey Nunnery. If the editor of the *Transcript* will take the trouble of looking into the Reports of the Convents, or examining personally these establishments, he will soon be convinced how unfounded, how ungenerous, was his insinuation, "that the Irish Catholic is considered an intruder," or that difference of origin has any effect upon the mode in which relief is administered.

The Mechanics' Institute held their Annual Festival on Tuesday evening last, in the spacious halls of the Bonsecours Market, which were decorated with evergreens, banners, and various appropriate devices. One end of one of the rooms, was set apart for the exhibition of works of mechanical industry and skill, among which we particularly noticed the fine stoves cast, we believe, at the Foundry of Mr. Ladd, of this city, and rivaling the best specimens of the work from the United States. Nor were the fine arts overlooked, as among many other objects, which we will not now particularize, were some portraits in crayon, by Mr. Lock, which excited universal admiration.

During the early part of the evening, the audience were favored by several speeches, from the President of the Institute, Messrs. Cartier, Bristow, Ostell, Leeming and McGinn, which were received with great satisfaction, as were also the *glees* sung by Mr. Anderson and his friends. The refreshments constituted by no means the least interesting part of the entertainment. Among them was an immense cake, superbly ornamented, of about 1000 pounds weight. We are assured that every one of the vast assembly, was prepared to unite in acknowledging the worthy individual who presided over this department, as the King of caterers. We should be unjust, if we neglected to notice the spirited band whose music contributed so much to enliven the occasion, or the unwearied solicitude of the managers of the festival, who have every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which it went off.