



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. II.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 1852.

NO. 34.

THE PANEGRIC OF ARCHBISHOP HUGHES ON ST. PATRICK.

Delivered in New York on Wednesday, March 17.

We are assembled here this morning to implore the blessing of God, and to invoke the benediction of Saint Patrick, to whom this Cathedral is consecrated. Churches and oratories are always consecrated to God, but generally under the invocation of some distinguished servant of his, who during this life, walked in the perfection of the divine law, and whose labors, aided by God's cares, not only illustrated the religion that he professed, preached, and consecrated, but also bequeathed an example worthy of all imitation to those who come after him. Among these servants, the Apostle of Ireland is peculiarly distinguished, not that, comparing him with other saints, there seems to be any great difference found in fidelity, but because circumstances resulting from his labors have distinguished his apostleship more than, perhaps, any other of those who propagated the teachings of Christianity after the days of the chosen twelve. I need not enlarge before you on the circumstances, or time, or place of his nativity. I need not dwell on the incidents of his life, with which, for the most part, you are familiar. I need not speak of his study under the guidance of Saint Martin, of Tours, his own uncle, or of his voyage to Rome in order to obtain the divine benediction from the Vicar of Christ on the work to which he had been miraculously called, by the invitation of the people through the medium of the Bishop, nor need I dwell on the subsequent portion of his long and laborious life. Enough it is to say—and this for the most part you know already—that during the period of his labors in Ireland, he changed a pagan into a Christian nation, and a Christian nation, not in the cold sense of a feeble, doubtful Christianity, but a Christian nation, so pronounced in its title, so decided, so devout, so firm, so zealous for the propagation even of those doctrines which they had just received from Heaven, that places it alone almost in all that has resulted from the preachings and teachings of the blessed Saint Patrick. Other nations shed the blood of their apostles—Ireland harkened to his teachings, weighed his evidence, and bowed themselves down at the foot of the cross which he presented as the symbol of his mission. Other nations in time gave out adversaries, who after having lit their candles at the lamp illumined by Saint Patrick turned their light against the very source from which it was derived, and became preachers of heresy; raising altar against altar, in the very land in which they had first drunk at the fountain of truth. Not so, however, among the disciples of St. Patrick in Ireland. A heresiarch, born on the soil consecrated by his labors, is unknown; history has not discovered him, because he never appeared before men. But, on the other hand, we may consider the results of this first apostolical mission with profit and advantage to ourselves. In the first place, we are sometimes led to imagine that from the time the Son of God preached the doctrines of eternal life on the earth, everything should be able to make a wide range of untainted atmosphere around them, so that sin should be banished wherever the Gospel was preached; or, at least, that the order of the world should be so much improved that wickedness should no longer be able to triumph over justice, and innocence, and truth. If to bear trials of this kind be the proving of the gold of individual virtue—if it be the test which God proves the fidelity of a soul, which He, in His Providence, leans upon with, I might almost say, a heavy and crushing hand; and if such a soul still adheres to God—Oh! that is the fine gold coming thro' and from the crucible of its trial. And if it be thus in individual life, it is the same when we extend the comparison to whatever nations or different ages and people of the world. There is no doubt that one of the greatest temptations in the way of sustaining, not infidelity precisely, but of throwing dark clouds on the brightness of God's countenance, in the government of the world, is a history like that of individual man; but that of a nation such as Ireland, furnishes the densest clouds through which the atmosphere of faith has to pass in acknowledging and adoring the divine supremacy of the power of God. Alas! even then, how little do we understand—how weak are our thoughts—how imperfect our vision—how little we comprehend that "the ways of God are not the ways of man," and that as heaven is exalted above the earth, so the wisdom and goodness of God is exalted above men, or above what men can conceive. Otherwise, how would it be possible, if St. Patrick brought the true faith—the faith—to Ireland, and if his spiritual charge has not ceased since that time, from generation to generation—if the faith which he taught is, to this day, cherished with tenacity strong as life—and if it be true that, in consequence of this devotion, this tenacity, this constancy, this firmness, all, or nearly all, the

temporal calamities which have crushed down that nation to the earth have resulted—does it not seem hard, that God should not interpose—that he should not sometimes vindicate, if not the unworthy creatures who serve him, at least the majesty, and dignity, and holiness of the truth which they profess? Does it not, I say, seem strange to the dark reason and wisdom of man that God should interpose—that even, in our own day, he should fatigue our patience so that, when famine has multiplied sepulchres over that land, we should say "this is the end." No; next year comes plague and pestilence—then "Oh, certainly this is the end." No; next year fury and fanaticism come in on the ruins of a prostrate people to prove their patience, and with honor and riches to tempt the soul of the poor man and his children, in his desolate cabin on the mountain. And we dare not say that this is yet the end. It is in this respect, I say, that the subject presents a theme for contemplation far more important than any repetition of the life and glorious deeds of that great saint under whose patronage this cathedral is consecrated.

Oh! how admirable is the providence of God in all things! Those tried spirits who are scandalized at such things as I have alluded to, wish all light—wish to see everything in absolute light; and they do not reflect that, for a just vision, a portion of darkness is just as necessary to us as a portion of light. Were it all light, men would become blind, just the same as it were all darkness.—But God, abiding in the happiness of his own eternal and infinite existence, and at the same time thinking of us, and disposing of things physical, moral, and temporal, in a way of wisdom of which we have no conception, allows the scene to shift, and we behold now the sunshine of Providence, and now what we may call its showers and shadows on the earth. But of all things that would be unreasonable, the most unreasonable would be for a believing man, a Christian man, a Catholic man, a man who reads and knows the holy scriptures; to look for human prosperity in this world, whether as regards nations or individuals, as the sign of God's approbation or God's love. Far from it. There is reason to fear that when God permits men or nations to prosper to the extent of their desires, it is a mark of His disfavor; it is not that He puts a snare in their way, but because they have set their hearts upon prosperity as their God; and He withdraws everything that can hinder them from realizing all their so-called happiness. Then, it is known that prosperity engenders pride, and that pride kills the soul of him who harbors it; that prosperity furnishes the way of gratifying our passions, and the man who places his heart on such things, is the enemy of his own spiritual existence.—Time passes on, and after the day when first St. Patrick landed on the Irish coast, to this period, how many generations have passed this life? And where have they gone? Have they gone to the condition in which the same inequality shall prevail—in which the patience of God shall be still withheld, permitting evil to triumph?—or have they gone to an inheritance of happiness or misery, according to the use made of the means accorded to them? Oh, let no man say there is no future life—let no man say there is no future state, in which the eternal justice of God shall prevail, and regulate, and repair, and correct, and judge all these horrors and iniquities which prevail in this world of strife, where innocence is crushed by guilt, weakness by strength, and where falsehood triumphs over truth. God exists for this purpose; and the very mysteries of his providence, which we have witnessed here to-day, are an evidence which renders it certain—independent of the revelations of the light of reason itself—that there is to be a future judgment, in which virtue shall have its reward and impiety its penalties. It is just as certain as that there is a God in Heaven. What consequence then, will it be, after a few years, to man, that he may have suffered a little in this world?—because even the moment of his sufferings abridge the period of his exile, and he will soon—if a virtuous man, if a pious man, and a man who adores and loves God—he will soon, I say, be at the end of his pilgrimage, and enter, as the Gospel of this day expresses it, "into the joy of his Lord." And then the seasons will come and succeed each other, and the tides repeat their ebbing and flowing, and the ocean shall be agitated by tempests, years succeed years, and centuries centuries; but in that happy state in Heaven there is no change—no more death—no more sickness—no more oppression—no more bondage—no more inflictions on truth—no more guilt crushing down innocence—but man will be with his God, and will rest with his God for all time. And perhaps the first bright truth that will be revealed to his emancipated soul, when standing in the presence of his Creator, will be the mysterious way in which, when he thought that God was forsaking him, God was bringing him round to the end of his creation. It may be in the

first bright light in which he will see how much God was his friend when he thought that his heavenly Father had forsaken him. And this we may with reason believe, and, at any rate, we are bound to believe it; because we know that God is infinite, wise, and merciful, and we may have reason to adore Him for all time, for those very afflictions which seem to double as calamities, tracking the footsteps of the great apostle of Ireland, and those who labored with him and after him, in propagating the kingdom of our Saviour. Oh, there is nothing in the world that can upraise and elevate a soul like religion; there is no good unconnected with religion; there is no real ambition that can be gratified except in religion.—In religion, those who have attained the greatest glory, were those who had the least ambition, and had no conception of attaining it in their day. The Apostle of Ireland, when he travelled with weary footsteps from hamlet to hamlet, across mountains and over rivers, toiling in his holy ministry, had no conception—unknown and undistinguished, as he then was—that fourteen hundred years after there should be such a family as now surround's God's altar on shores so distant; that his name should be there as familiar as that of their own parents; and not only that the sons and daughters of the land which was consecrated by his labors, but that the whole Catholic Church—for to-day there is not an altar in that Church in which the name of St. Patrick is not revered, and in which his intercession is not invoked—should endeavor to strengthen themselves against the strifes of the world, by following the bright example which he left behind him. What is the fame of Cæsar compared with this? As long as the church shall exist, the name of that distinguished servant of God will be recorded in her annals, and will be pronounced with reverence; and above all, perhaps there is not a name among the early apostles of nations so universally diffused, or cherished with such deep Christian affection, as the name of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. St. Augustine, in England, is spoken of by those who remain in that nation attached to the faith he taught—they cherish his memory, and the church reveres him—but still, his labors are almost obliterated, and a barren system is substituted for the holy faith which he brought from Rome, and propagated in England. In Germany, St. Boniface is cherished; but still, though the church cherishes him, the special results of his teaching are circumscribed to the nation; but the Germans venerate the apostle by whose labors their forefathers were saved from the darkness of paganism; and so with others. But the very misfortunes of a temporal kind that have fallen on Ireland have sent forth the children of that unhappy country to every clime, and to every latitude, from the north to the south pole; and wherever they are found—and they are found more or less everywhere—not only do they cherish fond memory for the apostle of their native land, but they propagate it, and make the infection as if it were contagious, so that those who would not otherwise have had any knowledge of St. Patrick, become thus desirous to enter into those feelings, and to join in celebrating the anniversary festival of the apostle of Ireland. Meantime, who knows what may be the influence of the prayer of that illustrious saint near the throne of God?—who knows what may be this prayer?—who knows what he is watching with the solicitude which belongs to the saints, their condition, and that it may be owing to his intercession with God that they are for a little time afflicted, in order that they may be made more secure to that eternal felicity and glory which he now possesses, and which he would necessarily, under the influence of divine charity, desire that they should also approach and be made partakers? Let us, therefore, dearly beloved brethren, cast from our eyes all that filmy obstacle to a clear Christian vision. Let us not judge the things of God as we would those of men. Man must reward quickly, if at all, for time is short; or if he punishes, he must punish quickly. But God has patience. He is eternal. He has no limitation of time wherein to do justice to truth, and innocence, and piety, or to vindicate his own attributes in the punishment of crime and impiety. Let us put away all human modes of vision, and with hearts elevated to God, let us see these things in the higher range of eye, in the clearer region of our holy faith; and then, even in the calamities that have befallen Ireland, we may see much for which to adore God, much for which to be pleased, even in this life. But, perhaps, in eternity alone, the whole mystery of God's providence shall break forth upon us as the deepest evidence of his greatness and his patience, when we thought him unkind and forgetful.—*Boston Pilot.*

SINGULAR ADVERTISEMENT.—"Wants a situation in a pious regular family, in a place where the Gospel is preached, a young man of serious mind, who can wait at table and milk a cow."—*Weekly News.*

LECTURE BY HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

Delivered in St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, on the evening of Sunday, Feb. 22, 1852.

SUBJECT—"SOURCES OF PROTESTANT OBJECTIONS."

(From the Tablet.)

"You err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."—Matt. xxii. 29.

When St. Paul enumerates the advantages which the Jews possessed over every other nation, he asks himself first the question, that he may answer it with more distinctness and solemnity, "What advantage hath the Jew?" "Much," he replies, "many ways. First, that to them were delivered the words of God." It was, indeed, my brethren, an honor and a glory, as well as an advantage, to that nation, to have been chosen from among all the tribes of earth as the depositories of God's great and true revelation, to be handed down by them unharmed to a new and better dispensation. And the Jews knew how to value this gift. They prized it beyond every other treasure upon earth; "for we," they wrote to the Spartans, "had no need of these things, having the consolation of the sacred books which are in our hands." And yet, my brethren, when Our Blessed Saviour came into the world and began to preach His holy doctrines, He found under this ample banner of Bible-truth a divided people. Various sects were found co-existing in the Jewish nation. Beside the Pharisee, over righteous, and, if possible, adhering too closely to the letter of the law, there was the Sadducee, who carried his interpretation of Scripture to the very verge of infidelity, and even beyond. Various were, indeed, the opinions which prevailed, but they were all united together upon one point at least. As the determined foes of the new Gospel of Christ, they were to be found ever banded together. And though they might be glad indeed when any one saw his rival refuted or silenced, still, when the time came that they were to unite together, manly did they form into one compact conspiracy against Jesus and His truth, nor cared they much by what means or by what arguments any one of these sects might have put Him to confusion and shame. Yes, my brethren, when Paul, or Peter, or James had to stand before the council—nay, when the Son of God himself was there to be questioned concerning His doctrines and His Disciples, priest or doctor of the law asked not his neighbor—"Art thou Pharisee?" or "Art thou Sadducee?"—but they gladly united their strength to crush what they considered a common foe.

That was a memorable day my brethren, on which the words of my text were spoken—a day of peculiar trial for our Blessed Redeemer by the concurrent assault made upon Him by the then different, and, among themselves, conflicting sects. For we are told that—first, the Pharisees wishing to try Him and entangle Him in His talk, sent forth the Herodians to put a captious question to Our Lord, and to see if they could bring against Him any charge founded upon disloyalty in His social principles. And when He had so beautifully answered their question respecting the giving of tribute to Cæsar, then, on the same day, as our text tells us, came the Sadducees, and put a question, the answer to which will form the subject of this evening's consideration. And when the Pharisee said that the Sadducees had been silenced, they came forward again in the person of a doctor of the law, and asked Him a question concerning the moral precept of His code. And after being answered, and put to silence, yet a fourth time came these adversaries to hold Him, if possible, still deeper on a question or dogma, and to know what Messiah was according to the prophecies of God.

It is thus that the Sadducees proposed their difficulties to the Lord. These are men who have by principle confined and limited their faith to the exercise and to the conclusions of sense. Beyond what their reason perceives they will not believe. They have never seen an angel nor beheld a demon; therefore they reject both as a mere figment of the imagination, or, perhaps, as a mere symbolical and figurative existence. They have not seen the soul—they have not brought it under the cognisance of their senses—therefore they believe not in its spiritual existence, and consequently they believe not in the consequences that flow from it. Having given no credence to the resurrection of the dead, they will not believe that the body will rise again, animated by a soul in whose existence they have no faith. And being thus, if one may call them so, the representatives of that captious and sceptical system which prevails so much among us, and may be called the characteristic of this age, they sought not, indeed, to reason, to argue, concerning the doctrines which our Saviour held, but to hold them up to ridicule before the evil and profane. They go, of course, to Scripture—for when the truth is to be assailed, unfortunately there are men who go to seek the weapons of error in the Word of God—they take the law of Moses, they make their