

THE TRUE WITNESS

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUG. 21, 1857.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE *Arabia* arrived at New York on Wednesday. It would seem as if the people of Great Britain were awakening to a sense of the mighty interests now at stake in the East; for a petition, emphatically calling upon Government to increase its forces in India, was receiving numerous signatures throughout the Kingdom. In the mean time, active steps are being taken to organise the Militia, in order to fill up the gap occasioned by the withdrawal of almost every available soldier for foreign service. The Bill for effecting this has been read a second time in the Lords; and the Duke of Cambridge stated that efforts would be made to encourage enlistment from the Militia to the regular army. A petition from the Queen and Princess of Oude expressing their loyalty to British rule, and their regret at the revolt, was presented in the House of Lords on the 6th instant. Owing to some technical informalities, the petition was withdrawn. From India, there is nothing new; only it is certain that the revolt is not suppressed, and that the insurgents still continue their atrocities against their former masters.

The cable of the Atlantic Telegraph was safely got on shore at Valencia Bay on the 5th instant; after which the expedition put to sea immediately. The weather had been stormy, but had become more settled at the date the *Arabia* sailed. True Bills have been found against Spollen the alleged murderer of Mr. Little in Dublin.

The Emperor Louis Napoleon, and Empress, accompanied by a small suite, arrived at Osborne on a strictly private visit to the Queen on the 6th inst. It was not expected that the Royal guests would extend their tour beyond the Isle of Wight, and perhaps the Naval Arsenal at Portsmouth.

The trial of the Italians, accused of the attempt to assassinate the Emperor, has terminated in a verdict of Guilty, with extenuating circumstances in favor of Bartollette and Grotte, who have been sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. The others have been condemned to transportation for life. Paris was quiet, and the trials had excited but little interest.

We are again involved in an official controversy, of the "Circumlocution" species, with the Neapolitan Government; owing to the latter having caused to be searched a British steamer on board of which it was suspected that Mazzini, or some other of the Italian cut-throats, was secreted. The Spanish Government is still making preparations for war with Mexico, and is greatly increasing the numerical force of its army. Fresh troubles seem to be in store for the Ottoman Empire; and at the latest dates, the Ministers of France, Russia, Prussia, and Sardinia had ceased to entertain diplomatic relations with the Porte, in consequence of the latter having refused to rescind the late election in Moldavia.

On this Continent, we have nothing new to report. The "Wise Men" of the American Association are still sitting assiduously in Montreal; but have not as yet set the St. Lawrence on fire, or otherwise hatched anything worthy of a lengthened notice. The members read, or listen to the reading of, scientific papers; after which they seem to be much easier in their minds.

REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY INTO CORRIGAN MURDER. July 1857.

The Commissioners appointed to investigate into, and report upon—1.—The circumstances out of which the death of the late Robert Corrigan arose—2.—The proceedings against the persons accused of the murder, the manner in which the trial was conducted, and the causes of the failure of justice thereat, if failure there was—and, generally, into the social condition of the district wherein the affray occurred—have at length published their "Report;" a careful perusal of which should suffice to satisfy any impartial mind of the falsehood of the charges brought by the Protestant press against Judge Duval, of partiality, and of misdirection to the Jury which acquitted the prisoners accused of the murder of Corrigan. We will endeavor to give our readers an analysis of this important document; and first, as to the circumstances which preceded the fatal riot at St. Sylvester cattle show.

Corrigan, the deceased, a powerful fighting man, and it would seem, somewhat of a braggart and bully, was—says the *Report*—"reputed to be the most successful combatant in his neigh-

borhood." It appears also from the *Report*, that the deceased "had boasted in a public house in presence of a number of people, that he was not afraid of, and could beat any man between two given points"—thus in fact, challenging, or defying, the whole community "between the two given points" to a personal encounter. This challenge was accepted by a man named O'Neill; who "as well as many others"—says the *Report*—"took offence at this boast or challenge of Corrigan"—and in consequence a fight took place, in which O'Neill it is said was worsted; owing—according to O'Neill's account—to the "use of a sling-shot in the combat," by Corrigan the victor. It would also seem that Corrigan was in the habit of speaking of the Catholic priest at St. Sylvester in terms "calculated to wound and irritate the religious feelings" of the Catholics of the district. And to these circumstances combined, must be attributed the rancor displayed towards the deceased in the fight at the cattle-show, wherein Corrigan lost his life.

It would also seem that a very bad state of feeling had for some time existed betwixt the Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants in St. Sylvester; though with the French Canadian population a good understanding was maintained by both. "Orange Societies"—which of course have provoked the formation of a "Ribbon Association"—are asserted by the *Report* to be in existence—"which is to be lamented, because of their being calculated to increase this unfortunate feeling; but they"—the Commissioners—"trust that the good sense of the leading men of both parties will show them that the existence of such societies is dangerous to the peace of the neighborhood, and should be discouraged."—p. 3.—All good citizens of all denominations will, upon this point, agree with the Commissioners. It is however hardly to be expected that "Secret Societies," which have been publicly encouraged by the Governor-General, and in which, to the disgrace of Upper Canada be it said, magistrates and other public functionaries, openly take part, can be "discouraged" by the action of private individuals. When our rulers shall strictly and invariably enforce the salutary rule, acted upon at home, and, in theory, recognised as sound and just in Canada, that any "public" functionary taking any part whatsoever in any "party" demonstration, shall be immediately dismissed the public service, and incapacitated for readmission thereunto—then, but not before, may we expect that "Orange Societies"—"Ribbon Associations"—and all such social pests, shall be "discouraged" by the community. This good work must however originate with the Government itself. As it is, the chief agents in encouraging "Secret Societies," and in keeping alive party "feuds and prejudices" in Canada, are the Governor-General, his Ministerial advisers, and the Protestant Magistracy of Upper Canada.

The recommendation of the Commissioners that "Secret Societies," whether Ribbon or Orange, be "discouraged," is one, however, that we fear will not be acted upon in St. Sylvester, where unfortunately the Protestant minister—a person of the name of King, who, we think, belongs to the Anglican sect—is the leading Orangeman. Of this reverend firebrand, and his constant efforts to promote strife, we find the following account given, under oath, by Ralph B. Johnson, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate of St. Sylvester. After stating that the Orange Lodge was "introduced into the parish" by "the instrumentality of the Rev. Wm. King, the Protestant minister of St. Sylvester," this witness continues:—

"Of this Lodge the Rev. Mr. King is himself the master, and its meetings have been held in the Protestant parsonage house. Without meaning to speak disrespectfully of Orangemen as a body, yet I cannot help knowing positively that the meeting of such a Lodge within the limits of their parish has given great offence to its inhabitants, and tends to keep in actively feelings which are dangerous to the public peace, and which, but for the unhappy zeal of the Rev. Mr. King, would long since have been subsided. Being upon my oath to speak generally on all the points which the Commissioners have called on me to reply to, I deliberately state my opinion, that nothing would so immediately and so effectually restore tranquillity as the removal (if such a thing be possible) of the Rev. Mr. King from the parish where he has not at all times spoken too discreetly even from the pulpit."—pp. 49, 50. The italics are our own.

When "Ministers of the Gospel of Peace" encourage "Secret Societies," we fear that their hearers will not "discourage" them. We shall however wait to see what action the ecclesiastical superiors of Mr. King take in the premises; and, in the meantime, return to our "Report."

Having shown the state of feeling prevalent at St. Sylvester about the time of the cattle show, the Commissioners pass on to "the second head of inquiry—namely, into the manner in which the trial of Richard Kelly, and others, was conducted, and the causes, if any, of failure of justice thereat." Upon these points they report as under:—

"That the prosecution was conducted with all the care and zeal that the importance of the case demanded, and the defence.... does not appear to have trespassed beyond the limits usually permitted in criminal cases."—pp. 3, 4.

"That the Commissioners have not discovered any occurrence or circumstance which could lead them to the conclusion that in the conduct of the case by

"It is somewhat funny to read in the same *Report*, and on the same page thereof, that Corrigan was not "given to the practice of seeking personal encounters."

the Judge, he was influenced by any improper bias or leaning in favor of the accused"—p. 4.

That "the Commissioners are of opinion that the charge of the Judge, as respects the position of law assumed by him in the charge, has not been correctly reported by the press"—(the mendacity of the Protestant press is indeed notorious)—"and that from this cause considerable misapprehension has arisen as to the reason for the acquittal of Kelly and his fellow prisoners. The law, as respects *participes criminis*, and the equality in guilt of all assisting in the commission of a felony, was, in the opinion of the Commissioners, accurately stated by the Judge, in the language and from the text of the acknowledged law authorities."—p. 4b.

That "the Commissioners can come to no other conclusion than that, with the Jury, the question of identity and the doubt of the Jury on the subject was the ostensible reason for the verdict" of acquittal; that, "from a careful perusal of the evidence as contained in the Judge's notes, the Commissioners have come to the conclusion that there was a failure of justice, that some of the accused were sufficiently identified;" but that "the causes of this failure have not been traced to any corrupt practice."—p. 4b.

And finally, they thus sum up the results of their investigation into the causes of that failure:—

"The Commissioners can only attribute the failure of justice in this case to the views taken by the Jury as to the identity of the accused, attaching no weight to the dying declaration of Corrigan, and it is impossible to say that they were improperly influenced by anything that transpired in Court, where, however, the Commissioners feel constrained to state, a certain levity was at times indulged in, calculated to detract from the solemnity of the occasion and to impair the respect due to a Court of Justice."—p. 5.

That there has been a "failure of justice" in the Corrigan case we think no one will deny; that a man has been killed with circumstances of much brutality, and that hitherto no one has been punished for the offence, are facts which cannot be controverted, and which all must lament. But that the Protestant press generally, has, with its usual disregard of truth, availed itself of these circumstances to cast unwarrantable aspersions upon the character of an honorable Magistrate, and to distort the facts of the case, so as to make it appear that the death of Corrigan was premeditated, and the result of religious animosity, is now evident to any one who will have the patience to wade through about 117 pages of a "Parliamentary Report." The following from the charge of Judge Duval—whose conduct has been approved of by the Commissioners as free from any taint of "an improper bias or leaning in favor of the accused"—is conclusive as to the groundlessness of the theory which attributes Corrigan's death to religious animosity; or indeed to anything but its true cause—a low blackguard row growing out of a dispute at a cattle show, but aggravated by the previous unpopularity of the deceased as a notorious bully and fighting man. Judge Duval, after a careful review of the circumstances of the case, thus delivered himself:—

"This unfortunate row did not originate in religious feeling or in national antipathy. You have seen the cause of it. McCaffray had two sheep at the agricultural show, and Durkin told McCaffray that they were only entitled to a second prize. McCaffray took offence and spoke to Corrigan, who referred him to Durkin. It was then McCaffray said 'I'm d—d if I'll have such judging!' All know how a fight is got up in a crowd, and the victim of this fight was Corrigan."

This we have no doubt was the true cause of the fight; and though it by no means justifies the brutality with which Corrigan was treated by his assailants, or diminishes our regret at the "failure of justice" in the case, it is at all events one consolation that it was not in the sacred name of religion, or under the pretence of patriotism, that a brutal and cowardly crime was perpetrated. That Corrigan was a braggart and a bully, that, trusting in his personal strength he was in the habit of challenging his neighbors, and of outraging the religious feeling of all those whom he thought that he could so treat with impunity, is quite evident from the official "Report" now published by order of the Legislative Assembly. But it is equally certain that, whatever his faults, and whatever the provocation he may have given as a judge at the agricultural exhibition, his assailants who beat him, kicked him, and trampled upon him when upon the ground, were a cowardly pack of ruffians, whose escape from the hands of Justice, all good Catholics, in common with Protestants, must heartily regret.

THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION—AUGUST 1857.—Regarded as a light and amusing work of fiction, much credit is due to the compilers of this evangelical miscellany; and we must confess ourselves their debtors to the value of a hearty laugh at the many absurdities which they have contrived to compress within the compass of about thirty pages octavo. What, for instance, can be more amusing in its way than the following criticism upon the "Romish" Church in the United States:—

"The Romish Church, at the period of the American revolution, was but small (having but about forty priests in the United States in 1790) and should have separated itself from its mother church, as did the other religious denominations—Episcopal, Reformed Dutch, Methodist, &c. Owing to the political separation which then took place, these bodies were then constrained, in order to conform to the new political institutions to which the Revolution gave rise, to separate entirely from the parent churches of England, Holland, and other European countries. Why did not the Church of Rome follow their example?..... We ask a reply from Irish Americans, and American Celts."

The first little Popish boy whom he meets with in the streets, will be able to give the writer the reply asked for. The Episcopalian, Dutch Reformed, Methodist churches—as they are called—&c., are things of mere human origin, and

are therefore liable to change; but the "Romish," or Catholic Church being of Christ Himself, is not, and cannot be, controlled or affected by any political accident. She, like her divine Author, is still the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and the independence of the "Romish" Church of all civil Government, of all political revolutions, or changes in human affairs, is, to the philosophical observer, one of the strongest proofs of her divine origin; whereas the conduct of the Protestant sects, who to meet the altered political circumstances of the U. States, consented, after the Revolution, to change and modify their ecclesiastical organisation, is a conclusive proof that they are not of God, but of man.

Passing from the Irish, to French Canadian, Romanists, we find some very amusing details of the evangelical labors of a Rev. J. L'Héroux, a converted Papist, who breaks the bread of life to French Canadian settlers in Vermont. Some extracts from this "chosen vessel's" diary will be read with interest by the friends of Canada.—The Rev. M. J. L'Héroux writes:—

"I am very glad that I have had again the privilege to labor another year in the great and noble vineyard of God; but when I look over the past year, I am very sorry to see that I have done so little."

This good man then sums up the fruits of his labors, which may be thus stated:—

1. He has distributed 224 pages of tracts where he thinks they will do good.
2. He has visited upwards of 225 Romish families.
3. He has conversed with more than 1,300 persons on the subject of personal religion.
4. He has preached 290 times.
5. He has held 180 meetings for prayer, at each of which there were from 30 to 50 persons.
6. He has a regular Sabbath school, and "importunity" (*sic*) to preach the Gospel to them every time when he goes there.
7. He has extended his missionary journeys very far—been nearly eighty miles from Brandon—visited several towns—had many public meetings—and suffered from cold, fatigue, and hunger, which "is nothing if he could bring more souls to Christ." As it is, the poor man complains:—

"Last year when I sent you my statistical report, I thought that if God will prolong my life until another year, I should have many cases of conversion to report; but now my soul is very much afflicted to see so many sinners who refuse to come to Jesus.—Month after month I am always surprised to see so many Romanists who remain under the influence of the Romish Church. It is wonderful to me indeed, after so much prayer has been offered for them to the throne of grace, from so many missionaries and faithful ministers."

From which it would appear that the prayers of the "missionaries and faithful ministers" alluded to, never reach the "throne of grace;" they are detained probably at "the other place," where, like unpaid letters in the Post Office, they will be allowed to remain till called for. The Reverend gentleman, who thinks he knows, seeing he was brought up under the rules of the (Romish) church, and "spent twenty-nine years of his life under the Romish religion," thus accounts for the hardness of heart over which he mourns so bitterly:—

"When I think of all the privileges we had when we belonged to the Church of Rome, I am persuaded why it is that the Romanists love so much their own religion: it is because we could live in all our bad habits, and for a few shillings the priests are always ready to forgive all our sins."

Another reason, more probable than this, we would find in the notorious immorality, profligacy and mendacity of the pretended converts from Romanism; who, under the name of missionaries, go from house to house, endeavoring to make their hearers tenfold more the children of the devil than they are themselves. That this is one great cause of the Rev. M. J. L'Héroux's failure amongst his countrymen, we have no doubt, and for this reason—that he is a notorious, and in the above passage stands a self-recorded, liar.

He tells us—and cites the "twenty-nine years of his life," spent under the "Romish religion," in support of his statement—that that religion does not exact from its professors as the essential indispensable condition of absolution, the total abandonment of all their bad habits; and that, "for a few shillings the priests are always ready to forgive all their sins." Now, not only is there no Romanist, but there is not a single moderately well informed Protestant, who does not know this charge against the "Romish Church" and her "priests" to be a wilful and groundless lie—as is indeed admitted in all Protestant controversial works of the present day with any pretensions to research, or acquaintance with "Romish" practices. Even "Seymour's Conversations with Romanists," does not pretend that, in the "Romish" Church, absolution from the priest can be obtained for money, or upon any other conditions than those of a sincere repentance, and a total abandonment of "all our bad habits."

When therefore we meet with a *so-called* convert from Popery, who tells us after "twenty-nine years" experience of that system, that the Romish priests absolve for money, or that the people are taught, or are such fools as to believe, that, under any circumstances, their sins can be forgiven without, on their part, a sincere and hearty detestation of all sin, because offensive to God—a firm resolution, with God's help,

to renounce immediately, and for ever, all sin, and every occasion of sin—and the intention to make, by every means in their power, a full satisfaction to all whom, by their dishonesty, slanders, or other crimes, they may have wronged in body, in property, or in reputation—we, as Catholics, acquainted with the teachings of the Church, embodied in all the decrees of her Councils—daily taught in all her pulpits—and in all her catechisms enforced in the strongest and clearest language upon all her children—well know that we have met with a wilful and deliberate liar; with one, who if ever in communion with the Church, has been expelled therefrom for his crimes, for his drunkenness, impurity, or invincible dishonesty; and from such a one we therefore naturally shrink with feelings of loathing and contempt. Yes; humanly speaking, the cause of the now universally admitted failure of Protestant missions to "Romanists" is to be looked for in the infamous characters of the agents whom these missions employ. An Achilli holds out in vain his little tracts headed, "Come to Jesus," when he or she to whom he offers them is aware of the missionary's antecedents, and the causes that led to his secession from the Church. Now, with all his faults, Achilli, it must be confessed, is a very favorable moral specimen of the "converted Romanist."

That we have truly stated the doctrine of the Catholic, or "Romish," Church upon the indispensable necessity of a thorough change of heart on the part of the sinner seeking absolution from the priest, must, to any one who takes the trouble to reflect for one moment, be evident from this—That, did the priests teach their penitents a contrary doctrine, did they encourage, or passively tolerate, the belief that the payment of money could, under any circumstances, procure a remission of sin, without contrition on the part of the sinner; or that an entire repentance, and consequent complete change of life, could, under any circumstances, be dispensed with—they would not be such fools, or so blind to their own interests, as to tolerate the circulation amongst their dupes, of a paper which, like the TRUE WITNESS, proclaims their duplicity. But if the TRUE WITNESS faithfully represents the doctrines of the "Romish" Church upon this point, then must the man who, after "twenty-nine years" experience, pretends that in that Church the people are taught to believe that their sins can be pardoned upon the payment of a sum of money, without a sincere and complete repentance, and a consequent total abandonment of "all their bad habits"—as does the Rev. M. J. L'Héroux—be a wilful and deliberate liar. In other words, either the "Romish" priests in Canada are the most stupid of fools in allowing the circulation of journals which expose and denounce their impostures; or the Rev. M. J. L'Héroux, and his brethren of the French Canadian Missionary Society, are the grossest and most reckless liars on the face of the earth.

It is indeed humiliating to have to notice such absurd, such monstrous charges as those which are invariably urged against the Catholic Church by all apostate priests, and "converts from Romanism;" yet painful and humiliating as is the task, to it sometimes the Catholic journalist must condescend. This however would we remark—That, were the "Romish" Church the indulgent mother that her enemies represent her to be—could she be induced to wink at the frailties of her children, or to modify her doctrines so as to accommodate herself to their passions—were she a little less exacting and inexorable in insisting upon a thorough repentance and amendment of life as the indispensable condition of absolution—or could she be persuaded to encourage her children in the notion that heaven can be won on easier terms than those of a pure and holy life—she would in all human probability still number an Achilli and a L'Héroux amongst the most faithful and attached of her sons; just as some three hundred years ago, if she could have been induced to tolerate amongst her formularies, and to propound as truth, the disgusting Antinomianism of Luther, Calvin, and the fathers of modern Protestantism, the great apostasy of the XVI. century would not have occurred. But it is just because she can do none of these things—because she teaches that, without repentance, without a lively hatred of all sin, and a total abandonment of "all bad habits"—no exterior acts, no payments of money, no amount of self-inflicted austerities, can avail for the remission of sins—that the confirmed drunkard, the inveterate thief, the irreclaimable libertine, and all who find these conditions too hard, turn against her; and that, instead of being still a bright and shining light of the Romish Church, the Rev. M. J. L'Héroux is now breaking the bread of life to the French Canadian Papists in Vermont, varying that interesting occupation with the manufacture of evangelical falsehoods for the delatation of the readers of the "American and Foreign Christian Union."

"THOSE CONVERSIONS."—Poor old Granny of the *Christian Guardian* of Toronto has been wickedly and cruelly "imposed upon," as Mrs. Gamp would say. The account given in her columns some four weeks ago, of the "conversion of two Romanists at the Mono Camp Meeting"—and of how they narrated the Lord's marvellous dealings with them—and how He had opened their eyes—and how He had translated them from darkness into light—and how upon reading the Bible they had become suddenly convinced of the errors of Popery—and how they were most anxious to make their poor erring Romish brethren sharers in their blessed privileges—and how cock-sure they were of their own salvation, and of the damnation of all Papists, and how happy they both felt in consequence—and all the rest of the blasphemous rignarole in use upon these occasions—turns out now to be a "fabrication"—a naughty hoax played off upon that poor dear old Mrs. Harris who does the pious dodge for the *Christian Guardian*. 'Tis really too bad to play such heartless tricks upon such a poor imbecile creature.