

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1873.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

APRIL—1873.

Friday, 4—Our Lady of Pity.
Saturday, 5—St. Vincent Ferrer, C.
Sunday, 6—Palm Sunday.
Monday, 7—Of the Feria.
Tuesday, 8—Of the Feria.
Wednesday, 9—Of the Feria.
Thursday, 10—Holy Thursday.

We would call the attention of our readers to a raffle for a very handsome gold watch, that will take place at 7 p.m., on the evening of Thursday, 3rd April, at the St. Joseph Asylum, Bonaventure Street. The proceeds of this raffle it is intended to apply to the benefit of the Missions to the North, and to defray the travelling expenses of two of our Sisters of Charity, and a companion, who in a few weeks will start for the far North West, on a charitable mission to the heathen dwellers in those remote lands. It is requested that the lists of contributions to this pious object may be handed in as quickly as possible to the Sisters of the General Hospital, Guy Street.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Mr. Gladstone seems to be again seated firmly in the saddle, and an attempt to throw him since his return to office having been defeated, he remains master of the situation.—What course he will pursue with respect to the Irish Education Question is as yet unknown.

It is now well ascertained that the chief agent in the heavy forgeries on the Bank of England was a Yankee, known sometimes as Bidwell, sometimes as Morton, and who has been arrested at Havana. Noyes the man under examination in London, appears to have acted as his clerk. The strike amongst the coal-miners still continues.

From France the news is not very interesting. It is now in contemplation to banish all the members of the Bonaparte family.

The Carlists, in spite of their last crushing defeat, are reported to be preparing for an advance in force upon Madrid, making Panpneluna their base of operations. The atrocities attributed to the priest of Santa Cruz, turn out to be lying inventions of the Liberal press. A telegram dated 28th ult, reports a hard fight betwixt the loyalists in arms for Don Carlos, and the troops of the revolutionary Government; the latter, it is said, were well beaten, and driven from the field in a very demoralized condition. The report that Don Carlos had renounced his claim to the Spanish throne is contradicted.

The news of a Carlist victory is confirmed, we are happy to see, by the reports by telegraph.

The hanging of Foster, the car-hoek murderer, at New York, seems to have given very general satisfaction; and if the policy of hanging thus inaugurated be consistently carried out, as we trust may be the case, the hideous amount of criminality that gives to the United States a sad pre-eminence over all the nations of the earth, will soon be sensibly reduced.

The Bill for the Incorporation of the Orangemen of Upper Canada has been carried through the Ontario Legislature. This we regret, but we do not see how we of the Lower Provinces can interfere therein. If the Ontario legislature have the right, according to the terms of the British North America Act, to pass such a Bill, neither the Dominion Parliament, nor the Dominion Ministry has any right to interfere; though, no doubt, the Governor General of the Dominion, as Governor also of the particular Province of Ontario—and as such, therefore representing the Queen in her legislative capacity—has the right to refuse attaching the Royal Assent, thereunto, should he see fit to do so. It is a question, however, with which the Federal or Dominion authorities have nothing to do, for the simple reason that they are not—as is the Queen, and therefore as is her representative—co-ordinate branches of the Legislature of Ontario. The several Provinces of which the Dominion is composed are not, in any sense, dependencies of the Dominion, but of the

Imperial Government, from whom they and the Dominion derive their political being, and to which both are subject.

The only constitutional course therefore that, according to this view—the States' Rights view—of the relative political positions of the Federal and Provincial Governments, is now open to the Catholics of Ontario, should they feel themselves aggrieved by the action of one branch of their legislature—that is to say their Legislative Assembly—is to petition the other and co-ordinate branch of their legislature, that is to say the Queen in her legislative capacity, and at present represented to them by that excellent nobleman Lord Dufferin, to put her veto on the obnoxious measure. We are, thank God for it, British subjects, not subjects of the Dominion; and it is to the Crown and to the Crown alone that we owe allegiance, and to which oppressed minorities must look for protection against the tyranny and injustice of majorities. There is of course to be taken into consideration the question of laws, as to whether, in virtue of the terms of the British North America Act, power has been conferred by the Imperial Government on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass such an Act as that under notice; but we believe that its legal competency to do so is not called in question. This however is a question which neither the Federal legislature, nor the Federal executive is competent to adjudicate upon or even entertain, and which can be determined only by the Imperial Government whose creatures, both the legislature sitting at Toronto, and that sitting at Ottawa are.

In the meantime the Orangemen are very jubilant over the success, so far, of their attempt to obtain legal recognition, and they celebrated the event, so we learn, with a torch light procession at Toronto.

THAT SPEECH.—From the London Tablet of the 8th ult., we clip the following paragraph: MGR. STROSSMAYER.—We have several times been asked whether a speech attributed to Mgr. Strossmayer during the Council, and published as his by certain Protestant and revolutionary papers, was genuine. We have at different times referred our readers to a denial of its authenticity by the Pall Mall Gazette, and to a disavowal of it by Mgr. Strossmayer himself, contained in a letter to the late Mgr. Fessler. The Bishop has now had an opportunity of disavowing it again. There has been a great, though futile attempt to get up an extensive Dollingerist party at Constance, and in the interests of this agitation, a report was set up that Mgr. Strossmayer was favorable to it. A telegram was accordingly sent to the Bishop to ask whether he was really the author of the speech ascribed to him, and the answer received was: "Certainly not; and the decrees of the Council are published."

We suppose that "the Speech" alluded to in the above, falsely attributed to Mgr. Strossmayer, and by the latter indignantly repudiated, is identical with the speech published in French at the Montreal Witness office, and extensively circulated amongst the French Canadians, who, it was hoped, would not be able to detect the cheat. That the speech was a forgery, and a very clumsy forgery at that, was patent; and accordingly the TRUE WITNESS, pointed out its ridiculous blunders—blunders so gross that a Bishop of the Catholic Church, addressing his brother Bishops would certainly never have been guilty of them—whilst the Witness, though challenging any one to disprove the authenticity of the speech,—never so much as attempted a rejoinder. Its editor felt that the attempted cheat had been exposed; but then he had no doubt such full evangelical confidence in him, who is the father of lies, that he felt confident that it had partially served the purpose for which it had been put forward.

Still, though as we have already said, the cheat was patent to any educated person from the beginning, it is satisfactory to find that as such it is both in word and deed repudiated by Mgr. Strossmayer himself. This Prelate has not only, for himself, formally announced his full and unqualified acceptance of the decrees and definitions of the General Council of the Vatican; but he has commanded and enforced the publication of those decrees and definitions throughout his diocese. A more conclusive repudiation of the anti-Catholic speech attributed to him it would be impossible to conceive. Will the Witness lay it before his readers?

That "mixed" schools must necessarily be Godless is a fact testified to by Protestants themselves, as reported in the Montreal Gazette of the 28th. At a meeting of a Protestant educational institution for young ladies called the Trafalgar Institute, the Resolution that we publish below was read, as having been passed unanimously by a large body of ministers and laity of the Anglican denomination. We invite the attention of our readers to the wording of this document, which we suppose is authentic, since it is published in the Gazette over the signature of a correspondent of that journal who signs himself A. Montreal—a pseudonym perhaps, but still a guarantee to the editor for the truth of his statements. According then to this correspondent of the Gazette, at a meeting of the Protestant ministers of the Anglican denomination it was unanimously—Resolved,— "That no Ladies Boarding School can be efficiently carried on under the management of a mixed

religious board, inasmuch as questions of Church organisation, and of distinctive religious instruction must be continually presenting themselves; and must either cause serious difficulties and dissensions, or lead to the eventual exclusion of religious teaching altogether."

For which, and other reasons, the ministers of the Protestant denomination aforesaid—though "fully recognising the great need at this time of providing education for the female members of the Protestant body" refused to have anything to do with the Protestant Educational Institute named above.

Now if the religious differences betwixt the Protestant sects be such as to render a "common" religious education in their case impossible, how much more then must it be impossible to devise a system of education from which the religious element is not eliminated, and which shall be accepted by Catholics and Protestants? If members of one Protestant denomination feel themselves in conscience obliged to have nothing to do with an Educational Institute under the control of brother Protestants, * but members of another sect, how much more then are not Catholics bound to refuse all co-operation with any educational system in any manner directed by Protestants?

And we would ask how it is that, whilst so "sectarian" in their educational views in so far as their own interests are concerned, Protestants are so zealous in the cause of "non-sectarian" education for Catholics?

* It seems that of the nine Protestant Trustees of the educational institution in question, eight are members of the Presbyterian, and one only of the Anglican denomination.

A NEW PHASE OF THE "MARRIED WOMAN'S RIGHTS" QUESTION.—A curious case illustrative of the legal condition of the "married woman" in England occurred recently in the Law Courts. A husband was sued for payment of costs, contracted by his wife, in an action which she had brought, unsuccessfully, against him for a divorce; and the wretched man was by the Court ordered to pay the amount demanded, and to discharge a debt to the contracting of which he was an opposing party.

Whilst husbands are thus made legally responsible for all debts run up against them by their wives, it is really absurd to talk of the injustice that the marriage laws inflict upon women. If the latter are to have the exclusive right to dispose of their own property after marriage, if the husband is to have no voice in the management thereof, well and good—but first of all he in like manner should be discharged from all legal responsibility for debts contracted by his wife on any pretext whatsoever. That there are bad drunken husbands who appropriate and squander the hard earned gains of their sober and industrious wives is no doubt true; but it is equally true that a drunken dissipated woman often squanders away the wages of the sober hard working husband, and keeps him in a state of poverty by her wicked extravagance. These are evils inseparable from the marriage state; and he or she who ventures upon matrimony must make up his or her mind to run the risks. Any legal interference can but make matters worse; for to secure effectually the woman from the extravagance of the man, or the latter from the consequences of the extravagance of his wife, the law must cease to look upon man and wife as one, but must accept them as two persons, neither being responsible for any debts or obligations of any kind, contracted by the other. But this would be to ignore Christian marriage, and to break up the family, over which, according to the present theory, the husband is head, and for the support of which, and for the discharge of whose debts, he is legally responsible. As it is, the husband has just as good grounds to complain of the oppressive nature of the existing marriage laws as has the woman; nor is it possible to conceive a grosser hardship than is mentioned above—where a vile woman wishing to get rid of her real husband, and to indulge her lusts with the sanction of law, sues for a divorce, and though unsuccessful, can by law compel her husband to pay the costs of the infamous procedure. If married women need legal protection, so do married men.

His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec will, it is expected, be back about Easter. We are sorry to learn that Mgr. Tache is laid up with disease, contracted in the discharge of his arduous duties.

The justly celebrated Bret Harie has been lecturing here to large audiences, and with much success. These lectures are no ordinary entertainments, and to listen to the talented gentleman, the first of humorists of the present day, is a treat indeed.

Bradlaugh, the English mob orator, notorious for the extreme Protestantism of his religious views, for his political Liberalism and as the typical British "workingman"—is about to visit this Continent on a lecturing tour.

Small-pox is reported as spreading in Halifax, N.S.

WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.
SHORT SERMONS FOR SINCERE SOULS.
No. XIX.

"THOU SHALT NOT KILL."

"We to that man by whom scandal cometh"—(Mat. 18.)

Having seen the different kinds of scandal, let us now consider their gravity. Is scandal always a mortal sin? 1st. Scandal is always a mortal sin to the scandalizer, whenever his bad example (be it mortal or venial) causes his neighbour to sin mortally. 2nd. Scandal is also a mortal sin to the scandaliser whenever by a grievously criminal act he provokes, if only to a venial sin. 3rd. Scandal is also a mortal sin to the scandalizer whenever, even by a venial act he leads his neighbor to commit a mortal sin; as for example, he who by a lie or by a harsh word, causes his neighbour to blaspheme or to steal. 4th. But if a venial scandal only give occasion to a venial fault on the part of the scandalized, then the sin to the scandalizer is only venial. From which, Christian soul, you will see in general, that the scandalizer is always guilty of mortal sin, except in the single case where a venial scandal on his part leads only to a venial sin on the part of him whom he scandalizes.

But what must be said if our neighbour is scandalized not only by our evil actions but even by our good ones? are we bound in that case to omit our good actions lest our neighbour be scandalized? As this is a matter of grave importance and of some difficulty, let us distinguish the different kinds of actions (other than bad actions) which may be the cause of scandal. Of these there are three kinds: 1st. those that are absolutely necessary for salvation; 2nd. those not necessary for salvation, but only of counsel; 3rd. acts which are indifferent, that is which are of their own nature neither good nor bad, as to run, to walk, to talk, &c. As to the first kind of actions—those absolutely necessary for salvation—it will be seen at a glance, that they can never be omitted even though they should lead our neighbour into sin. We are not permitted to damn our own souls in order to save our neighbour's soul. But if not allowed to be omitted, are they ever allowed to be deferred? In order to understand this it will be necessary to bear in mind, that of things necessary for salvation there are two kinds; first those imposed by a negative precept; (thou shalt not kill—thou shalt not steal) and second those which are imposed only by an affirmative precept (remember thou keep holy the sabbath day). Negative precepts of the divine law cannot be deferred in order to save our neighbour from scandal, because commanding as they do always and for ever, they cannot be omitted or even deferred without sin. Hence we may not steal—we may not do an injustice, we may not lie in order to prevent scandal. And this extends even to venial sin. We may not commit a venial sin even to save our neighbour from mortal sin; we may not indeed tell a lie even to save a whole world. And why is this? Because each individual man ought to love God infinitely above all creatures; and as venial sin is a dishonouring of God, man cannot prefer his neighbour's good to God's honour. But am I not preferring God's honour in preventing a mortal sin by the commission of a venial one? Your objection would be valid, if your neighbour's soul were in your guardianship. You are not your brother's nurse. God's honor must be sought by you, let your brother seek it as he may.

As to the affirmative precepts of God's law, as they do not bind always nor under all circumstances is it, sometimes proper to omit their occasional observance to avoid scandal. Thus we are bound by an affirmative command of Jesus Christ to correct our brother's faults; but as this is an affirmative precept it is not binding when we foresee that our fraternal correction will only lead to greater sin.

But good works not necessary for salvation but only of precept—are we bound to omit them in order to avoid scandal? If the scandal that will be taken be only Pharisaical scandal, or that which arises from the bad heartedness of the scandalized we are not always obliged to omit them. "Let them be" (scandalized) said Jesus Christ, "they are blind and leaders of the blind." Hence we are not obliged to give up doing good because bad men will take evil from it, otherwise we should have to give up all good works and practices of piety; for the devil and the devil's world is ever blaspheming God on account of good. But if the scandal that will be taken will be of the simple and innocent—if those who will be scandalized by these good works (of counsel) will be God's little ones (the weak and ignorant) then those acts should be done in secret or should be deferred to some other time. The reason is this: the act is not necessary—the avoiding scandal is necessary. The necessary duty therefore must take the place of the unnecessary. But ought these works to be omitted for ever? The Angel of the schools has decided not; (2.2. q. 45. a. 7) only until having rendered an account of your action the scandal ceases. Let us take an example. You give an alms to a person

leading a scandalous life—your ill-instructed neighbour takes occasion to impute unholy motives—you explain your motives and shew them to be holy—he accepts your explanation—the scandal has ceased, you may continue your alms. But he refuses your explanation; are you bound to desist. No; by refusing your reasonable explanation his scandal has ceased to be that of a simple and ill-instructed person and has become Pharisaical; he has ceased to be one of God's little ones, and has become a child of the devil. You may go on with your alms; the scandal is his, not yours.

But ought we to omit indifferent actions (such as are neither bad nor good) in order to avoid scandal to our neighbour? In order to avoid scandal, God's little ones you ought to omit them; for if we are bound to omit or defer those good actions which are not necessary for salvation, how much more ought we to omit actions which are only indifferent ones. Let us take an example; and, first, of a good action to be omitted. We are bound by an ecclesiastical precept to attend Mass on Sundays, but where we feared that quarrels or drunkenness, or any sin would arise from our absence from home, then we are bound to omit attendance at Mass. The reason is obvious. The command to avoid scandal is a negative precept binding always; the command to hear Mass is an affirmative precept and as such not binding always; the negative principle therefore over-rides the affirmative one. Now if this is the case in good actions, how much more must it be in indifferent ones. Let us take an example of an indifferent act. It is an indifferent act to visit a neighbour. But if we foresee, that that visit might lead to scandal, we are bound to forego it. And here Christian soul, let me speak of an objectionable practice which is common in American society. Young people of opposite sexes are accustomed to drive out together alone. Even if this were an indifferent act—neither bad nor good in itself,—they ought to avoid it, whenever they foresee that it will cause remark; because they are bound to omit indifferent acts which will give scandal to God's little ones. But is it an indifferent act? I must not treat this question to-day because it is not part of my subject. But what is to be said of pharisaical scandal, or that scandal which arises from the evil heartedness of the scandalized? I answer that although we are not always obliged to forego our actions on account of this kind of scandal, there are times, when we ought to forego them. The reason is again the same. Each one is obliged by the law of charity to prevent the spiritual ruin of his neighbour, when that can be done by but slight damage to himself. You know that a certain man, if you speak in his presence of his enemy will fall into transports of rage and will destroy his character by the most unfounded calumnies; this on his part would be pharisaical scandal; and yet you also are guilty of your part of the sin of scandal, if without necessity you mention his enemy's name in his presence.

Ah! Christian soul, if you saw a child bereft by death of its father and mother, and thrown an orphan and an outcast upon the world; if you saw a man bereft of his wife, his children and his friends, and cast amongst strangers, you would look upon both these as most unhappy and worthy of every commiseration. If a robber stripped an unfortunate traveller of all his goods and left him to pass all the rest of his life in poverty, you would deem him also worthy of the utmost pity. If an assassin left his enemy at your feet covered with wounds, from which his life's blood flowed in torrents, you could not but feel that his was a hard and lamentable lot; nor could you help but hate the monster who caused the evil—and yet all these evils so great and deplorable to those who experience them, are inflicted by those who cause scandal. They do not indeed deprive the scandalized of his parents, of his children or of his friends; they do not despoil him of his earthly goods; they do not take away his life but more and far greater still, they take from him the life of his soul, the grace of God. Where can there be an evil equal to this? The life of the body is but for a moment; as a flash of lightning coming out of the east and disappearing in the west, man's life in this world is but as a flash. But the soul is for eternity. Ten million years and ten million times ten million years and the soul will be in existence then as now, happy and radiant and exalted in the Grace of God if left to live a life of grace. But the deadly breath of scandal breathes upon it—it shrivels up as a parched scroll—it is dead to God and his happy eternity and lives only for hell and hell's eternity of torments. Oh! we indeed to the world because of scandals, but if scandals needs must come, would that the scandalizer could complete his work and that his victim's soul could be annihilated rather than drag out so miserable an eternity.

A motion by Lord E. Cecil in the House of Commons on the 8th ult., affirming the propriety of requiring the Colonies to contribute towards the cost of their military and naval defence, met with general disapproval, and was immediately withdrawn.

The following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as Agents for the TRUE WITNESS for the undermentioned places:—
Mr. PATRICK HART, Osceola, Admaston and Doraglas.
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