



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1853.

NO. 28.

IS IT SAFE TO LEAVE CHILDREN IN OTHER THAN CATHOLIC HANDS?

(From the Crusader.)

Certain statements which appeared in the Catholic press, not long since, upon the defection from the Faith of Catholics of foreign birth, and their immediate descendants, startled us not a little; though we were not inclined then, nor are we now, to admit that the defections spoken of were near so numerous as represented in some quarters. We are willing to admit to some extent the existence of this deplorable evil among the descendants of foreign Catholics; for no man who is familiar with the names of some of our citizens, can doubt for a moment that there are among us many families, Protestant, or Infidel, whose separation from the Church dates hardly one generation back. Catholic immigrant apostates may be found, but they are so rare, that for merely statistical purposes, they hardly deserve to be noticed. Though when viewed in connection with the perdition of these immortal souls, and the pernicious influence under which their offspring is thrown, we cannot but deplore bitterly the causes that lead to such disastrous consequences. We cannot undertake to point out the various sources to which apostasy in the descendants of foreign born Catholics is to be traced. The machinery by which the Devil labors to overthrow the Faith is so complicated and so versatile as to defy description; we can see, however, that he never accomplishes his purposes without the employment of human agency—and the most successful agency he makes use of is parental negligence; were it not for this not one out of every hundred of the apostacies we have to record would occur.—Had parents in every case faithfully performed their duty, our numbers, though great enough at present to excite the astonishment of our enemies, might not be far from double what they really are. This is not however to be taken to insinuate that we lost one-half, for we do not believe that any attempt to arrive at accurate statistics on the point would be successful. We have not sufficient data whereon to base our calculations, and all that can be said is, that the numerical strength of Catholics in the United States at present is far from what it would be had all the descendants of Catholic settlers in the country continued faithful to the creed of their forefathers. Many undoubtedly fell away, allowed not only to associate with heretics, but to mingle with them in their religious mutiny, to listen to their own religion ridiculed without understanding anything of its doctrines, they naturally became Methodists or Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists or Dunkards, or whatever else happened to be the fashionable heresy in their respective localities. The evil is by no means so wide spread as it was even twenty years ago, owing to the increased facilities which Catholics enjoy in practicing their religion and in educating their children; but we would be deceiving ourselves were we to suppose that the causes which, in former years, led to many defections are no longer active. Many of them are still at work, and if not so fatal in their consequences as heretofore, it is because we are better able to counteract them. There is no way in which so many are lost to the Church as by the total abandonment to which some Catholic children are consigned when they lose one or both parents, or when necessity compels them to look among strangers for subsistence which they cannot obtain from their parents,—unfortunately when placed in these circumstances, there is no care taken to provide them with situations which, while they secure them from want, will also preserve them from the danger of apostasy.

Hence we find Catholic children frequently committed to the care of Protestants, who almost in every case endeavor to engrain on the mind of the child the error of their own creed. Unfortunately, their endeavors are too often successful. The father or mother returns, after an absence of some years, to claim the child and finds it a confirmed heretic—not only ignoring the ancient faith, but ashamed to recognize its aged and afflicted parent. For such criminal neglect on the part of a parent we can have no excuse whatever. It is easy for parents who desire to secure a place for a child, whom it is either difficult or inconvenient for themselves to support, to get a Catholic family to take charge of it, where at all events its faith will be safe. It is possible every Catholic may not be willing to admit a child, under these circumstances, into his family, and engage to compensate the parent for its services. But to an intelligent and devoted parent this should be a small matter. Its soul will be safe—assured of that he should be satisfied—at all events, he has done all that God expects of him. This is a subject we would like to urge on the attention of emigrants who are engaged on the public works. The father or mother dies, the surviving parent is burdened with a number of children who must be fed and clothed; it is necessary to put out some of them among strangers to

obtain a living for themselves, and possibly to earn a little for the support of the rest. This is all well enough; but take care where you place your children. They are not very well instructed—among Protestants they will never grow up Catholics. They will be receiving lessons in heresy—the very atmosphere they breathe will be impregnated with error. If they must be put out, place them in charge of a Catholic family. When you return they will not mock or curse you because you are an old Papist, nor will your heart be afflicted with sorrow at what, to the parent must be the gloomiest of all reflections, your children lost to God and to you. This is a matter which calls for some attention from clergy and laity. Protestants encompass Heaven and earth to make perverts. The Catholic child that falls into their hands meet with a fate about as deplorable as that of the child which is carried away by Gypsies. No effort is spared to wrest it from the Church, and inspire its mind with contempt for the faith of its parents. Catholic girls who live in Protestant houses are subjected to petty annoyances of every kind, and must, in many instances, either leave or suffer their religion to become the subject of the foulest criticisms without the power of reply. No one could expect a child to resist attacks on its faith which are sometimes dangerous to persons of more mature years. A few months might effect its ruin; the only prudent course is to withhold children altogether from such evil influences until they have attained that age and intelligence when heresy can assail them no longer with any chance of success.

THE MADIAT.

(From the Catholic Standard.)

The quantity of *heroic ink* shed by Parson Mozley and Presbyter Cumming in their respective papers in denouncing the "murderers" of Francesco Madiat might, it appears, have been employed upon a less ludicrous theme. The victim of Popish persecution is not, it seems, as yet sacrificed; and Presbyter Cumming went a *leete* too fast when he induced poor old "Mrs. Harris" to publish to the small coterie of ruined farmers and ranting evangelicals, who still put faith in her insane lucubrations, that "another victim has been added to the dread account accumulating by" the Church of Christ, and that "Francesco Madiat has died in prison—i.e., has been murdered in cold blood by the Priests of Rome." The same calumny, as we observed last week, was written by a fanatic, named Taylor, who lives somewhere in the neighborhood of Barnet, and deliberately published by the unscrupulous *Times*—although, from the dates of Italian letters since published in that paper, there is reason to infer that at the very time this foul slander was launched into the world in its columns, its conductors were aware of the absolute falsehood of the report of Madiat's death, which originated with one of the infidel Piedmontese journals that are subsidised by the "Protestant Alliance." The latest accounts from Tuscany represent Madiat as not only not dead, but showing no symptoms of approaching dissolution. But the publication of the truth must have led to the suppression of the thundering declamation which, like Father Prout's

"Bell's of Shandon,"
Doth sound so grand on
The muddy waters of the River Thames;

and accordingly, the truth was suppressed and the tumid periods in denunciation of religious persecution, and the inflated panegyrics upon Anglican liberality were sent forth to feed that self-love, and to flatter that vanity, which the *Times* so well understands how to turn adroitly to the account of its own interests and the purposes of its employers. At that critical moment the reported death of Madiat was a God-send to the *Times*. The re-election of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which, for reasons known to the *Times*, and not unknown to us, that journal was anxious to secure, was menaced. Mr. Gladstone's fate rested in the votes of the parsons. His opponents pretended that the right honorable gentleman was not a faithful son of the Church of England. It was indispensable to counteract this misrepresentation; and how could this object be better achieved than by a flaming series of turgid articles in praise of Protestantism and abusive of the Catholic Church, in the *Times*, in juxtaposition with other articles urgently advocating the re-election of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? That object being now accomplished, the *reverend* calumniator of the Catholic Church will, in all probability, take no notice of the atrocious falsehoods he has given currency to,—relying on the brutal prejudices of his readers for a palliation of his crime, on the plea that it is lawful to tell any number of lies, misrepresent any number of facts, and circulate any quantity of slander, when the purposes is to defame and vilify the Catholic Church and her Ministers.

One of the ingenious devices adopted by the ultra-Protestant party in this country to excite antipathies against their Catholic fellow-subjects is the circulation of reports in all quarters and by all means, to the effect that the Madiat are cruelly used in prison. The "chalkers" are found very useful to this end; and during the week we have seen scores of "poor Madiats" as mural embellishments.

No less active are the printers; but the necessities of the press requiring a larger amount of matter, society here gains an advantage, for we have only to collate the reports of the various papers, and balance their misrepresentations by their contradictions. We last week contrasted the report favorable, though unfriendly, and therefore the more credible, of the Tuscan correspondent of the *Chronicle*, with the abominable calumnies of the *Morning Herald* and the *Barnet* correspondent of the *Times*—to-day we have to contrast the *Daily News* with itself. "The latest reports of eye-witnesses," says that journal, "show that, after all the explanations that have been made, the prisoners are treated with a severity which is rapidly shortening their days." Now, what does an "eye-witness" correspondent of the *Daily News*, whose letter the preceding extract actually introduces, really write on the subject? We entreat an attentive perusal of what follows:—

"We saw Rosa on New Year's-day, and found her in better health and very cheerful, excepting when she spoke of her own unworthiness in not bearing better the trials she had undergone, and rejoicing rather that she was honored to suffer for the cause of Christ. The inspector had allowed her to give a little treat on New Year's-day to all the female prisoners—some 'pollenta' and a glass of wine to each; and this rare opportunity for the exercise of her generous and compassionate feelings caused her great pleasure."

How many thousand Englishwomen would rejoice in being the victims of a persecution such as we have here described! We are not aware that in the most liberally managed workhouse in England the female inmates are allowed such privileges; and we know that there are workhouses in this country where Protestant bibles and prayer-books and hymns are forcibly thrust into the hands of Catholic adults and children; while, as in the Holborn Union, their own books of devotion are excluded. So that, on the whole, it is certain that the Madiats—those interesting victims of Popish persecution—who are so cruelly ill-used, corporeally and spiritually, and one of whom, according to pious Protestant authorities, has been actually "murdered in cold blood,"—assassinated by slow poison," &c.—are, after all, much more generously treated in their prison than Catholic paupers, or even Protestant paupers are in English workhouses. The eye-witness has not, however, told all her tale in the foregoing extract (a sense of decency forbids us to suppose the writer to be a man); and, as we do not desire to conceal anything that is written by the enemies of Catholicity on this subject, we shall let the lady finish her story in her own words:—

"I will describe to you her frightful costume, in which, nevertheless, she looked well and dignified.—Her chemise is of coarse material like sailcloth; then she wears a knitted worsted garment, over which is a brown duffle robe such as is worn by the Franciscans. Over all is worn the livery of the prison—i.e., a broad yellow and white striped coarse linen material, the skirt tight as a sack, and on her head she wears a close skull-cap of the same fastened by a tape under her chin, no hair being seen. She has coarse hose and great thick shoes. I am not sure that I ever told you, when describing her cell, that her seat was a round stool like a milking stool, chained to the wall in a corner of the room; and in the opposite corner is a small footstool also chained, so that poor Rosa, when at work upon her stool of repentance, cannot make use of the second small stool to keep her feet from the cold brick floor."

And this is the picture of "Popish," Italian cruelty drawn from life by a hostile painter! Lord Frankfort is clothed in the coarse garb worn by the meanest prisoner in Coldbath-fields House of Correction, and his lordship is exempted from breaking stones only upon payment of a crown a week for his prison dietary—junk beef, coarse bread, and oatmeal gruel. Yet, no one thinks of remonstrating against the subjection of a nobleman who has violated the law of his country to this degradation. But all Europe is stunned with the clamor raised by a pack of fanatics, every one of whom is a persecutor in heart and would be an exterminator if he or she had the power—because two Italian menials are made amenable to the laws of their country, and a public journal that professes to be liberal and philosophical, and that is entitled to claim this character apart from its polemical disquisitions, does not hesitate to appeal to English prejudices against a foreign Catholic poten-

tate—because the Signora Rosa Madiat, whose artificial influence over a weak-minded husband has induced him to abjure his faith for the detestable dogmas of Geneva, which she imbibed in her native canton, is clothed in a "brown duffle robe, such as is worn by the Franciscans"—including some of the noblest born in Europe—and is made to wear "coarse hose and great thick shoes." What diabolical cruelty! Only think of the Swiss *femme de chambre* not permitted to sport her Lisle-thread stockings and her most delicate French shoes? Though

"Born in a garret—in a kitchen bred,
And raised from thence to deck her mistress's head."

it is surely an unpardonable crime on the part of the Tuscan regulations of "prison discipline" to denude the interesting instrument of Exeter Hall fanaticism of her cast off finery, and require her to wear the "frightful costume in which, nevertheless, she looked well and dignified." The Grand Duke must be a monster to allow so much waiting-maid dignity to be encased in so hideous a prison livery. It is, however, gratifying to be assured upon the authority of this sympathising eye-witness that the lady looked well. That shows that her health, at all events, has not suffered from the prison discipline; and it strikes us that one paramount cause of this satisfactory state of things is to be discovered in those "coarse hose and great thick shoes" which have so much offended the taste of the letter-writer. It is not, we have heard, the custom to lay down Turkey or even rich Axminster carpets on the prison floors in Italy any more than in happy England. It is also said that in those sunny regions beyond the Alps the people find it more conducive to health and comfort for the greater part of the year to use tiles rather than boards in their flooring. Now, this being the case, it strikes us, as we have no doubt it will strike all rational and dispassionate people, that in winter "coarse hose and great thick shoes" are not a bad prescription for preserving health when one has to stand or tread much upon an Italian floor; and however much it may shock evangelical ears and eyes, we cannot help repeating that it is the climax of odious hypocrisy and disgusting cant to make the fuss that is made by the Protestants of this country—high and low, Tractarians and Swaddlers—about the treatment which the Italian courier and the Swiss fire-woman experience in prison, when we all know how English subjects, whose only crime is their poverty—although they may have once been wealthy—are treated in our work-houses, and when it is a subject of proud boast that Lord Frankfort fares no better in his prison than Bill Smith, the smasher.

EXPERIMENTS ON MARRIAGE.

(From the N. Y. Tribune.)

A petition has been started in Syracuse, and (we hear) very generally signed, asking our new Legislature to repeal so much of a recent law as denounces penalties for the crime of seduction, and in lieu thereof enact that the unmarried father of any child, (both parents being white,) shall, from the fact of such paternity, be deemed and taken in law to be the husband of the mother, and thenceforth bound to regard and support her as his wife, just as though they had been married with benefit of clergy. Of course, it is further prayed that every child, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall inherit, in common with all other children, the property of both parents, being deemed their legal heir.

The fact of wide-spread dissatisfaction with the existing legal definitions and obligations of marriage, is notorious. To our mind, they are but a natural result of the sublimated Democracy of our day, which chafes at every restraint and insists on the widest possible impunity to individual caprice and individual appetite. We esteem this tendency eminently anti-Social, and regard its more specious manifestations with suspicion; it is more characteristic with antipathy and abhorrence.

Such a law as is indicated above seems palpably calculated to degrade and discredit the marriage relation. The naked fact that its projectors seek to confine its application to *white* persons (we presume they mean to those of *like* color) betrays its unsoundness and absurdity. If the principle it evolves be a sound one, the limitation here suggested is plainly unjustifiable.

"Marriage is honorable in all," says an Apostle; but it would have choked him to say it of such marriage as is contemplated by the Syracuse project. Marriage as a penalty, a punishment, a substitute for fine and imprisonment, we could not recognize as an old acquaintance. If it were even desirable to inflict its obligations in the cases contemplated, we should insist on having a separate name for this visitation of the rigors of law.

There are very many practical evils certain to result from such an extension of the responsibilities of