

The True Witness.

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 11, 1870.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

FEBRUARY—1870.

Friday 11—Of the Feria.
Saturday 12—Of the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.
Sunday 13—Sixteenth.
Monday 14—St. Valentine, M.
Tuesday 15—Of the Prayer of Our Lord.
Wednesday 16—Of the Feria.
Thursday 17—Of the Blessed Sacrament.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

There is little of interest in the European news. Of course, the action of the Fathers of the Council of the Vatican is watched with the keenest interest; but so closely is secrecy observed that nothing has as yet been discovered by the most sharp-sighted amongst our *Own Correspondents*. Another Session was held on the 4th inst. The *Civiltà Cattolica* has an article on the menaces which certain papers in Italy, should the Holy Ghost speaking through the Council, presume to thwart the ideas of modern statesmen. The Bishops, says the *Civiltà Cattolica* despise menaces, and if governments legislate in a spirit of hostility to the Council, so much the worse for the said governments. From Spain we learn that the candidature of the Duke of Montpensier has been entirely abandoned. Prince George of Saxony, a Catholic 37 years of age, is spoken of in some quarters as likely to be proposed for the vacant throne, and others talk of Prince Charles of Prussia.

A report, probably a canard, of an attempt upon the life of Prince Arthur at New York reaches us by telegraph. The whole story is apparently a mischievous fabrication.

Mgr. Tache, Bishop of St. Boniface, Red River, has returned from Rome, and is on the way to his diocese. The small potatoe rebellion seems to be dying out, and we may hope now that everything will yet be settled amicably.

The *Tablet* publishes, as the most important document it as yet has given to the world, the text of a petition or supplication to the Pope, signed already by 500 of the Fathers, praying that it may be defined that "the authority of the Roman Pontiff is supreme, and therefore free from error when, in matters of faith and morals, he declares and defines what is to be believed and held, and what is to be rejected and condemned, by all the faithful." The *Tablet* goes on to say:—

"This only seems to us as certain, that the Fathers intend plainly to declare to us the doctrine of Revelation on the point of Peter's prerogatives, and that Mgr. Dupanloup, after having strongly put forward his own view, and that of his friends, will give an example of submission to the Divine will of the Church, which will more than console all who have grieved at his late attitude of opposition."—*Tablet*, 22nd ult.

The Imperial Parliament was to have opened on Tuesday last, 8th inst. In our next we trust that it will be in our power to lay before our readers the outlines, at least, of the Ministerial scheme for Ireland. So strong in the House of Commons at least, is Mr. Gladstone's majority that the general opinion is that the opposition to his measures will be helpless.

M. Rochefort has, as our readers know, been condemned by the tribunals, and so far the Government has the advantage. But the man is destined to give more trouble yet. He in his paper the *Marsillaise*, defies the authorities: he declares that he will not surrender himself a prisoner; and adds that if the Ministers want him they must come, well armed, and take him. This is tall talking, but it will end in smoke. Paris is not what it was in the days of the first Revolution, nor even in those of the last revolution. The streets are now open to the operations of all arms, and barricades are almost impossible; and though M. Rochefort may rely on the mass of the working classes, or *proletaires*, the citizens, i.e. the bourgeoisie, and above all the army, are with the Emperor, and on the side of order.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" saith the Lord. This is the test to which we must bring any particular practice of the Catholic Church to which her adversaries may object, and which they misrepresent as evil. What are its fruits? we should ask; a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, nor can a corrupt prac-

tice have other than evil moral effects upon all who are subject to it.

Let us apply this practical test to the Confessional—remembering that one ounce of facts is better than a ton of theories. What are the fruits of the Confessional or of auricular Confession as enjoined by the Catholic Church, as evinced by the conduct of those who resort to it? If the Confessional be evil, its fruits will of course be evil; and those who most faithfully, and most frequently resort to it, will be distinguished amongst their fellow-creatures for the immorality of their lives, for their profligacy, and open contempt of God's laws. If on the contrary, facts show that those who are most regular at confession, are, if not perfect, still as a rule, more moral, more pure in their conduct, than those who never go to confession—then from this fruit we may conclude that the tree which bears it is a good tree, and one of God's own plantings. All the theories, all the obscenities belched forth by unclean knaves such as Murphy, Acbill, and the rest of that unsavory tribe, will be of no avail against such a fact; if such a fact as the superior morality of Confessional frequenting communities, as compared with the morality of the non-frequenting communities, can be established.

Now then for a few facts. It is a fact, very notorious in France, and acknowledged even by the enemies of Catholicity in that country, that every husband, that every father, no matter how lax he may himself be—is always well pleased that his wife, and that his own daughters should go to Confession, as therein he feels that he has the best guarantee for their chastity, and the regularity of their lives. He himself, though for long years he may have renounced the practice of Confession to a priest, remembers his youth, and the moral effects of the Confessional upon himself in his earlier and purer days, when as yet he had not yielded himself a slave to his passions, nor looked upon the practice of Christianity as beneath the dignity of a man, and suited only for women and young persons. It is we say a notorious and oft commented upon fact, that the young men of Paris, weary of the lascivious smile of the beauties of the demi-monde—(whose most illustrious ornaments, in refutation of the Protestant theory, are certainly not frequenters of the Confessional)—and meditating marriage, always prefer for the partners of their sedate years, girls who are known to be faithful in the performance of their religious duties, especially that of Confession: who in short are as unlike as possible to the frail beauties amongst whom their stormy youth has been passed. So also the Catholic father, no matter what his own practice may have been, always encourages his children to go to Confession, as the antidote to the seductions of the world, the flesh, and the devil. These men know what the Confessional is, and what its fruits; though lax perhaps in their morals themselves, they are very exacting in the matter of the morality of their wives and daughters.

No quantity of theories, no amount of abuse that the filthiest renegade, who for his reiterated crimes against purity has been cast out of the Church like an unclean thing, can vomit forth, can weaken the force of this argument. Our logic is the logic of the heart and of the affections, as well as of the head and of the intelligence. To weaken its force, we must assume that Catholic husbands prefer to have their wives unfaithful, and are ambitious to see their daughters corrupted. Can human nature tolerate such an assumption? When the filthiest Hebert, at the trial of Marie Antoinette, accused the unfortunate Queen of having sought to corrupt her own son, the Dauphin, she scorned at first to answer; her attention called to this fact by a jurymen, who asked why she had not replied to this charge, the noble daughter of Maria Theresa nobly responded—"I did not answer, because such crimes are by nature impossible. I appeal to all the mothers here present!" and even the vile rabble, the scoundrel democracy around her, felt and admitted the force of this outraged mother's appeal. So we, Catholics, in vindication of the morality of the Confessional, appeal to all husbands, to all fathers, to all brothers, to all lovers, whether it be not against nature and morally impossible, that Catholics should allow, nay encourage, their wives, their daughters, their sisters, their sweethearts to frequent the Confessional—(knowing too as they well do, what the moral effects of the Confessional are)—if they did not know by experience that those effects were good, and that the practice of Confession was the best safeguard of conjugal chastity, and maiden purity.

Let us cite other facts. Of the British Islands, Ireland is the one certainly, in which, so far as the female portion of the population is concerned, the practice of Confession is most frequent. What are the fruits? How does the chastity of the Irish girl compare—No! We beg pardon of Ireland; we should not say compare, but contrast, with that of their sisters on the eastern side of the Channel, where the practice of Confession is comparatively speaking unknown? Why! the incomparable purity of the daughters of Catholic Ireland, has time after

time provoked the wonder, and compelled the admiration even of Protestant tourists.

Or without going so far as Ireland, let us only cross the frontier line between Canada, and the U. States, and another fact of the same kind meets our gaze. That fact is, that certain unmentionable vices which we need but indicate, are so rare, so universal we may almost say, amongst the non-Catholic, non-confessing portion of the population of the New England States, that, by the admission of Protestant medical men who attribute the statistical phenomenon to the immorality of the people, the Protestant population of the said States is, relatively to the Catholic or confessing portion, rapidly dying out! But on this matter we will let Protestants speak for themselves: as for instance, a Correspondent of the *New York Independent*, who writing from Connecticut deposes as under:

"You make a great mistake when you speak of the crime of suicide as being confined to the large cities. It prevails all over the country. I dare not tell you what I know—and the information has been given unhesitatingly—in reference to this horrible practice in the land. I do not believe there is a village in the New England States but this crime is practised more or less. There are men who make it their business, with medicine and instruments, to carry on this slaughter. And even M.D.s in good and regular standing in the Church have practised it. Men are making here in this highly moral State, \$3,000 and \$4,000 a year in this small town alone at this business. Their patients are from the highly religious and fashionable, to the low and vicious. Their scale of charges is according to their cupidity, and size of purse of the victims. Delicate females go in the dead of the night, dressed in masculine attire to avoid detection to obtain the means to hide their shame. The cause of the evil lies in last, which is as near to murder as fire to smoke. The demoralization of the people at large in the practice of licentiousness, furnishes a topic of the greatest anxiety to the philanthropist.

Now if the moral effects of the Confessional were unfavorable to female purity, the hideous vices above alluded to would be most rife amongst the most regular frequenters of the Confessional: least common amongst its non-frequenters. The very reverse is the case: the practice of the vices in question is almost exclusively limited to the non-Catholic, non-confessing portion of the community, as is shown by its own statistics; by its own dying out population, as has been repeatedly affirmed by Protestant medical men.

Again, amongst which class of the U. States people—the confessing or the non-confessing—does the practice of divorce—which is always a sign of conjugal infidelity, and of a relaxation of the moral code—the more obtain? Unknown to, abhorred by Catholics, Divorce *a vinculo* is purely a Protestant institution: and yet, if the Confessional exercised a deleterious moral influence upon wives, applications for divorce would be most frequent from those husbands whose wives went most frequently to confession.

Here are a few facts which the maligners of the Confessional would do well to ponder. They are facts furnished us by Protestant writers, medical men and others, and are therefore above the reach of suspicion. We should but weaken our case were we to add a word of our own to the eloquence of these facts. Only we will say in the words of Our Lord "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit."

JANUS, AND THE MONTREAL "GAZETTE."

—Not designedly did we distort the statement of our contemporary the *Gazette* in that we understood him to lay down the proposition that, that only is to be held of faith, according to the rule of St. Vincent, which never, anywhere, or by any one has been denied: the words of the *Gazette* from whence we deduced this proposition were these—

"Unless the settled rule laid down by St. Vincent, that that only can be decreed a dogma of the Church which has been held always, everywhere, and by all the Church, be set aside" &c. &c.—*Gazette*, 29th ult.

To this we replied that St. Vincent laid down no such rule: and our contemporary in his issue of the 31st ult, modifies his proposition, and produces it in the following form:—

"We never said that nothing which had been 'decreed by any one' could be brought within St. Vincent's test of dogmatic truth. But it does require the concurrence of all the Church, through its authorized Doctors—a very different matter."

We give our contemporary the benefit of the explanation; but we ask who are the "authorized Doctors" or the teachers? The Catholic would reply to such a question in such words as these. The authorized Doctors of the Church are her Bishops, united with their common head, the Pope, but then, and under this condition only. The utterances of a Bishop separated from the Apostolic See are of no dogmatic authority whatsoever.

In reply to our invitation to the *Gazette* to cite the words of the decree in which the Council of Trent condemned the *pretended* declaration of Popes Innocent 1st and Gelasius, "that unbaptized infants go straight to hell"—our contemporary replies as follows:—

"We have not now access to original authorities on the subject. We followed in this, as in almost all the other assertions of our review, the book we were reviewing.—*Janus* says p. 421:—

"Innocent 1st and Gelasius 1st, the former writing to the Council of Milevis, the latter in his epistle to the Bishops of Picenum, declared it to be so indisputable for infants to receive communion that those who die without it go straight to hell. A thousand years later, the Council of Trent anathematized this doctrine."

The *Gazette* should have known better than to have followed the lead of such a dishonest guide as *Janus*, of whose name, and social posi-

tion our contemporary is ignorant. Anonymous attacks, even upon the Catholic Church, which every one deems it his right to calumniate—should never be reproduced until verified. Now the only authority the *Gazette* can assign for his accusations against the Church are the unsupported assertions of an anonymous writer. This is how controversy is too often conducted by Protestants: but we think that upon reflection the *Gazette* will recognize that it is not a very honest mode of procedure. We would also remind our contemporary that it is always dangerous to make second hand quotations.

With regard to the epistle of Gelasius I. to the Bishops of Picenum we say nothing, for we have never seen the document: but with regard to the letter written by Pope Innocent 1st to the Bishops of the Council of Milevis in reply to certain questions by them addressed to him on the matter of the Pelagian heresy, and original sin, we speak confidently, as it is now lying before us: and we assure the *Gazette*, that nowhere in it does Pope Innocent assert that to receive communion is "so indispensable for infants, that those who die without it go straight to hell." In attributing this teaching to Pope Innocent 1st, *Janus* has lied, either through gross ignorance, or grosser malice. The *Gazette* must pardon us if we enter a little into details.

Silvanus, Valentinus, Aurelius and others. Fathers of the Council of Milevis, wrote to Pope Innocent as occupant of the Apostolic See, invoking his supreme authority against, and his condemnation of, two heresies in particular enunciated by Pelagius and Celestius, to the effect that it was a vain thing to implore God to be our helper against the evil of sin, and to do justice: and that the Sacrament of divine grace was of no profit to infants in order to procure for them eternal life.

To this letter, which implicitly recognises the Papal Supremacy in the early part of the fifth century, Pope Innocent replied to the effect, that the teaching which the Fathers of Milevis attributed to the Pelagian heretics—to wit, that infants might be endowed with the gift of eternal life, even without the grace of Baptism—was the height of foolishness—"perfactum est." In this same letter, Pope Innocent quotes indeed the words of Our Lord, as reported by St. John c. vi. v. 53: but the doctrine attributed to the Pope by *Janus* is certainly not to be found in this letter: whilst in another letter, on the very same subject, in reply to another letter written to him by the Fathers of the Council of Carthage, also invoking his supreme authority against the Pelagian heretics, Pope Innocent expressly laid down the doctrine that, by Baptism we are purged from all past sin, and are therefore rendered fit for immediate entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

"Qui—(Christus)—per novæ regenerationis purificationem, omne præteritum vitium sui baptismatis lavacro purgavit."

From this it is plain that, though the practice, common in the African church in the fourth and fifth centuries of administering communion to newly baptized babes "under the form of a drop of wine, may have been allowed by the Pope, he did not insist upon it as essential to salvation; since addressing the Fathers of the two African Councils, he expressly taught that by the sacrament of baptism *all* past sin, *omne præteritum vitium*, is washed away, and that the recipient thereof is consequently fully restored to God's grace; and made fit for heaven. For the rest, Innocent 1st taught in the 5th century as the Council of Trent taught in the sixteenth, as in the nineteenth century the Church still teaches, that without baptism—*saltem in voto*—no one can see God, or go to heaven.

For the sake of the thesis that the *Gazette*, on the authority of *Janus* strives to establish, this allusion to the transactions betwixt the Pope, and the Councils of Carthage, and of Milevis is most unfortunate: for it shows us that in the beginning of the 5th century, the Papal Supremacy, and infallibility in matters of faith were so generally recognised, that it was to the Pope, to the Holy Apostolic See, that the Bishops of a remote Province appealed for a confirmation of their condemnation of the Pelagian heresy, and its authors. And if we pursue the subject further, we shall find the great St. Augustine, whom Protestants affect to quote in support of their views, proclaiming in the strongest manner the supremacy of the Holy See, and the finality of its decisions. We refer the *Gazette* to the first book of St. Augustine against Julian the Pelagian, in which he quotes against his adversary, as conclusive, as an authority against which there is no appeal, this very letter of Pope Innocent to the Fathers of the African Church. "What can you reply," says St. Augustine to his adversary Julian—"what can you reply to Saint Innocent?"

"Sancto Innocentio vide quid responderet qui ubi aliquid de hac re sapit, quam quod isti in quorum te conventum, at tamen prodest aliquid, introduxi: cum his etiam ipse consideret etiam posterior tempore, prior loco."—*Contra Jul. Pel. Lib. I.*

* Of this custom we see a notice in St. Aug. Serm. 174. *De Verbis Apostoli*, 1 Tim. c. 15—"Infantes sunt, et Sacramento ejus accipiunt. Infans autem non est ejus participes fiant, ut habeant in se vitam."

Now how did the Council of Trent act? Did it condemn these of the ancient doctors of the Church who for reasons of discipline, as well as of piety, allowed the communicating of newly baptized infants, under the form of wine? In its 21st session, c. iv., the Council declared that whilst infants, not arrived at the age of reason are not bound to receive the Eucharist, it was most careful in the same chapter, to add that it by no means intended to condemn the ancient custom, or the holy men of old who under some circumstances sanctioned it:—

"Neque ideo tamen damanda est antiquitas, si sum morem in quibusdam locis aliquando servavit; ut enim sanctissimi illi patres sui facit, probabilem causam pro illius temporis ratione habuerunt; ita certe, eos nulla salutis necessitate id fecisse, nec controversia credendum est."—*Conc. Trid. Sess. 21, c. iv.*

Having thus carefully and expressly repudiated all intention of doing that which *Janus* falsely attributes to them, the Fathers of the Council, in their fourth canon condemned those, but those only, who should thenceforward teach that the reception of the Eucharist was necessary for infants not arrived at the age of reason.

Would our friend of the *Gazette* but give himself the trouble to verify the assertions of *Janus*, he would soon learn how untrustworthy a guide is that writer.

THINGS IN THEIR RIGHT PLACES. — The great material problem of the day may be stated "How to put things in their right places?"—Could this be done the great social problems which distract the Old World, and which for the want of a solution, menace the stability of the entire political and social fabric of Europe, would be satisfactorily disposed of.

Take the British Empire, with its vast Colonies for instance, and we shall see the truth of this. On the one hand, we see a large part of the population able to work, willing to work, and yet unable to get work; on the other hand, we see large tracts of country lying desolate and uninhabited, because none can be found to work on them. Here the problem to be solved is,—How to put the superfluous labor of England, Scotland, and Ireland in its right place—that is, where it is wanted, and in demand?

Again: in the Old Country there is a superfluity of mouths, and a scarcity of food; hence, hunger, discontent, plotting against government, and a blind hatred of the existing social system. In the Colonies, on the contrary, there is a superfluity of food, and a lack of mouths to eat it; in consequence of which the settlers of Australasia, which produces enough beef and mutton to feed the entire population of the British Empire, complain of dull times. In this case again the problem is "How to bring the food to the mouths, and the mouths to the food?" Things are in their wrong places; there is a minimum of food where there is a maximum of population crying out for something to eat; a minimum of food, crying out as it were, for some one to come and eat it.

Dirt too, with its concomitant sticks, and life destroying exhalations, is, as it has often been said, only something in its wrong place. That which poisons our large cities, and crowded houses, is but something which, if but distributed over the soil, would indefinitely increase its fertility, and thereby enable it to support thousands and tens of thousands, where today it barely furnishes a scanty nutriment for tens or hundred. Could the dirt of our great cities be removed from there where it breeds pestilence and death, to there where it is wanted, the waste places would blossom, and what is now the seed of typhus and loathsome disease of all kinds, would become an inexhaustible fund of food, wealth, and comfort. Scarce are the coal mines of Great Britain more precious than would be the mass of its city dirt—which, being left in its wrong place, breeds disease, and poverty, and death—were that dirt transferred to its right place, the soil.

We often think, therefore, that a solution of the great social problem of the day, and so far as Great Britain is concerned,—the problem "How shall we deal with the great, and ever increasing mass of pauperism?" may be looked for in the material order, and in a better application of the mechanical appliances which science has placed at our command. In emigration; in improved modes of transit, so as to bring the redundant beef and mutton of Australia to the mouths of the famishing thousands of England; and in the utilisation of sewage, and excrementitious matter, are to be found a certain cure for those disorders of the body politic and social, which are in a great measure owing to this:—That we as yet have not been able to put things in their right places. We have men in abundance; we have also food in superabundance; and we have moreover the means of increasing the food producing power of the soil indefinitely; but alas! all these are in their wrong places, and the result is pauperism, starvation, and disease; all of which, by a better distribution of the elements of material prosperity—that is to say, population, food, and manure—we might get rid of, and replace by health, plenty, and longevity.

Empty bellies are always democratic, republican, and opposed to the existing order; could we