

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 1862.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.—This paper will be, for the future, addressed to our subscribers by Spencer's Addressing Machine, and by referring to the stamp they will at once see to what date they have paid up.

In consequence of a large number of our Quebec subscribers receiving their papers through the Post-Office, we have determined to forward those addressed to Mr. O'Leary through the same channel, as the expenses attending the present mode are too great. The terms will be—Two dollars per annum, if paid in advance, but if not, Two and a-half. We therefore hope that all subscribers in arrears will at once settle them with Mr. O'Leary.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE news brought by the *Anglo-Saxon* is of but little importance. Parliament was prorogued on the 7th. The principal item of interest in Her Majesty's Speech, delivered by commission, had reference to the war now waged with such fury between the contending parties on this Continent; in which Her Majesty regrets that the evils with which it had been attended, have not been confined to America alone. The neutrality hitherto manifested by England, shall be strictly adhered to.

The *Europa* brings dates up to the 9th and 10th. Her news shows that the Emperor Napoleon was well enough inclined to acknowledge the Southern Confederacy, but the greatest barrier in the recognition of the South had been the objections of England. Lord Palmerston, in a speech delivered at Sheffield, strongly urged the policy of non-intervention; Mr. Roebuck, on the other hand, advocated the opposite views from those of the Premier, and insisted upon the claims of the Confederates to be such as to entitle them to a recognition by England. The Envoy, representing Southern interests at Paris and London, strongly urged upon both countries comply with such a reasonable request. In reply to such demands, England, it is said, declined, but that France had not given an answer.

From Italy we learn that the filibuster, Garibaldi, had refused to obey Victor Emmanuel's proclamation; and it was stated that the former held a council of war on the 4th of August, at which it was determined to march on Rome.

By the telegraphs from the United States, we are now informed that the Southerners had been defeated at Baton Rouge, and that the *Arkansas* had been destroyed. The reports are so vague and so often contradictory, that we cannot place much confidence in them. Harrison's Landing was entirely evacuated by the Federals on the 16th; and we are also informed by some of the latest despatches, that the forces under the Confederate Generals, Stevenson and Barton, compelled the Northerners to surrender, after a few hours' fruitless resistance, leaving East Tennessee completely in the hands of the Southerners.

The gross untruths, and the scurrilous comments put forth by a section of the Protestant press, respecting the conversion of the late Sir Allan MacNab to the Catholic faith, compel us to undertake a task, which respect for the memory of the deceased, and regard for the feelings of his surviving relatives, would otherwise induce us to avoid. We will endeavor, however, whilst refuting the slanders of the *Globe* and others, and vindicating the action of the Catholic clergy of Hamilton, to abstain, as far as possible, from all personal details. The deceased has appeared before a higher tribunal than that of "Protestant public opinion," however enlightened, and to him it matters not what men now say of him; but we cannot allow to pass in silence the insolent and untruthful accusations urged by the *Globe* against an amiable, zealous, but most prudent Prelate of our Church—the Right Reverend Bishop of Hamilton.

Sir Allan MacNab was received by the above named Prelate into the Catholic Church on the forenoon of Thursday the 7th instant, and expired the following day. The following furious article immediately appeared in the Toronto *Globe*:

"AN OUTRAGE.—Reports have been current that, during the last moments of the life of Sir Allan MacNab, one of his relatives took advantage of his insensibility to what was transpiring around him, to

perform upon his almost lifeless form what is called the rites of the Romish Church. Sir Allan MacNab having been a constant attendant upon the Church of England, and a member of that communion, the tale was believed by but few persons.—It was not thought that either his relatives, or the clergy of the Church of Rome, would have ventured, in so conspicuous a case, to practice what can only be described as a farce, so far as the dead was concerned, and as a trick in reference to the Protestant relatives. Rumor, however, had done no injustice to the parties chiefly interested in the matter. Mrs. David MacNab, the wife of Sir Allan's deceased brother, and also if we mistake not, a sister of his late wife, has for many years been a member of Sir Allan's family, and has taken the principal charge of his household. This lady is a strict Catholic, and in her zeal for her church, seems to have overstepped the bounds of prudence and good feeling. From the statement made by the Rev. Mr. Geddes, Anglican clergyman of Christ's Church, to his congregation last Sunday, we learn that Sir Allan had been a member of his congregation for about 27 years, that he took the communion in his church a few weeks ago, that he was present in his place the Sunday before his illness, and that on Thursday last he received consolation in spiritual matters from Mr. Geddes. After that time the Anglican clergyman was denied access to his bedside, and was informed on calling at Dundurn, that "Sir Allan had become a good Catholic, and been received into the bosom of the Romish Church." We believe that there is ample evidence in the hands of the friends of the deceased, to show that time at the when the rites of the Romish Church, baptism, confirmation, and extreme unction, were administered to him, he was insensible to what was passing around him. Mr. Burton, the well known counsel of Hamilton, called on the Thursday afternoon for the purpose of making some alterations in the will of the dying man; but was compelled to forego the effort by his incapacity to understand what was going on around him. Under such circumstances, the administration of any religious rite requiring to make it complete, the active volition of the person receiving it, must be considered a mere mockery. In so far as the surviving relatives of Sir Allan MacNab were concerned, with the exception of the lady whom we have mentioned and of her brother, and also in regard to the numerous friends and companions of the deceased, the conversion of the dying Protestant while in an insensible state, into an adherent of the Church of Rome, can only be regarded as an outrage of the grossest kind. They had worshipped with the deceased in a Protestant Church, they had every reason to believe that he died a Protestant, and they naturally expected and desired that they should pay the last tribute to his remains in a Protestant church, and hear repeated over his tomb the solemn words which he had reverenced in his lifetime. By the trick of a single relative, aided by the clergy of the Catholic church, those expectations were frustrated. The deceased, having been made a Catholic while in a state of insensibility, Mrs. MacNab resolved that he should be buried by Catholic priests, and have Catholic rites performed over his grave. Surely the fanatical zeal of the Catholic clergy never produced in this country, at least, more distressing or more disgraceful results. They will very soon discover that proselytizing the dead will do much to injure their cause among Protestants, and will lead even their most servile followers to consider whether a church which sanctions such acts is worthy of the respect of intelligent men.—The Italics are our own.

Our readers will observe from the passages which we have marked in Italics how beautifully the *Globe* argues. At first it accepts only as a report that the deceased was "insensible" when the sacraments of the Catholic Church were administered to him; gradually increasing in violence, by the middle of his article, he assumes that "insensibility" as a fact established on the clearest evidence; whilst towards the end, not only was Sir Allan "insensible" but actually "dead," when the Romish priest made a proselyte of him. This is a beautiful specimen of what in music is styled the "crescendo."

Unfortunately however for its effect, the Rev. Mr. Geddes, the Minister of the Anglican sect at Hamilton, effectually disposes of it, and of the argument which the *Globe* pretends to base on the statement of Mr. Burton, to the effect, that on Thursday afternoon, Sir Allan MacNab was unable to understand "what was going on around him." For Mr. Geddes on Sunday, 10th instant, in his own meeting house, thus delivered himself to his congregation:—

"I now solemnly declare to you from this sacred place, that on Friday morning about half past seven o'clock, in his clear and lucid moments in the presence of credible witnesses, our dear departed friend solemnly expressed to me on his dying bed, his desire to die in the pure and reformed faith of the Church of England."—*Globe*.

Now if on the Friday the deceased had "clear and lucid moments," during which he was capable of giving intelligent expression to his religious views, a fortiori may it not be assumed that, on the Thursday forenoon, he had also his "clear and lucid moments," during which he was a fitting subject of the rites of the Romish Bishop. Besides Mr. Geddes tells us that he also administered spiritually to Sir Allan on the Thursday.

Having given the *Globe's* version of the transaction, we will now give that of the Hamilton *Times*, also a Protestant journal:—

"In consequence of the late hour of the funeral yesterday, and hour of issue, it was impossible to refer at length to the exciting circumstances attending the ceremony. We had but time to state that he who all his life had professed himself a Protestant and adhered to the Anglican faith, had just before death renounced, and apparently by his own desire, been interred according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. We see by a number of our morning contemporaries, that this is treated as an error, and a generous attempt is made to redeem Sir Allan's memory from the reproach which must attach to it, if it be true that during life he professed a faith in which he did not believe, and believed in heart what he had not the courage to confess, by charging a near relative, and a Catholic Bishop, with the commission of a gross outrage. They would have the public believe that while in that state of unconsciousness which precedes death, while unable to act or think intelligently, a dark conspiracy was entered into by a lady and a priest to make him appear to the world a convert, and while he died a Protestant, represent him as having joined the Church of Rome. We respect the feelings which dictate this defence, but cannot receive it as truth. Respect to the dead, but justice to the living. The blame, if blame there be, must attach to the memory of Sir Allan MacNab himself. Our contemporaries to the contrary notwithstanding, we now deliberately state that Sir Allan MacNab, while in the possession of all his mental faculties, consciously, and of his own free will, entered the Roman Catholic Church, and that the charge of fraud against Mrs. MacNab and Bishop Farrell is false and unfounded.

Upon them no responsibility rests, but that of having faithfully carried out the dying Baronet's freely expressed wishes. What those wishes were, the facts which we now state will explain. We commence with the statement that, some months ago, while in the possession of perfect health, Sir Allan promised the Bishop of the Catholic Church, that he would join that Church, and that in its fold he intended to die. On the first or second day of the illness which terminated in his death—before, however, he or any of his friends anticipated any serious results—he said to one of his most intimate friends, "I am about to take an important step." Last Monday or Tuesday, he reminded Bishop Farrell, who had called on him, as a friend, of the promise he (Sir Allan) had made, and expressed his intention of redeeming it. On Thursday, at his own special request, Bishop Farrell was called in, and received him into the Roman Catholic Church with the usual ceremonies, and administered to him the sacraments which that church provides for those at the point of death. When he sent for Bishop Farrell, while being made a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and while he was receiving the sacraments of that Church, Sir Allan was in the full possession of his mental faculties, and clearly conscious of what he was doing. We are justified in looking upon this as the "important step" he had said a few days before he was about to take. Next day, when the Rev. Mr. Geddes called, and during the whole time that Mr. Geddes remained with him on that Friday, Sir Allan was unconscious. After his admission into the Roman Catholic Church, he on no occasion, while in a state of consciousness, expressed himself as dying in the Protestant faith. This explanation clears Mrs. MacNab and Bishop Farrell of the charges made against them, and fully justifies their proceedings with regard to the funeral."—*Hamilton Times*.

Some particulars, not given in the above, we can supply. Very early on the morning of Thursday the 7th instant, His Lordship the Bishop of Hamilton, was summoned by letter in all haste to the bedside of the sick man. A sick call, whether from Prince or from peasant, is always attended to with equal alacrity by the pastors of the true Church; and the Bishop of Hamilton, as in duty bound, lost no time in obeying the summons. He heard the confession of the penitent, and administered to him—as is the custom—conditional baptism, and the Sacraments of confirmation and extreme unction—but not of the Eucharist—on the Thursday forenoon. It was during this time, we suppose, that the Rev. Mr. Geddes was thrice repulsed from Sir Allan's door; for that reverend Protestant Minister, in his solemn declaration already alluded to, affirmed that—"I was denied access to him, although I made ineffectual attempts at one, five, and half-past nine, A.M."—We are, we must admit, at a loss how to reconcile this, with another solemn declaration made on the same occasion by the Rev. Mr. Geddes—to the effect that, on the same day—that is to say Thursday the 7th inst.—the sick man received his spiritual administrations:—"He received my spiritual administrations on Thursday."

At what time, we should like know. Not in the early part of the day—for "at one, five, and half-past nine, A.M.," Mr. Geddes tells us that he "made three ineffectual attempts" to see the sick man. Not in the latter part of the day, surely—for "Mr. Burton, the well-known counsel of Hamilton, called on the Thursday afternoon for the purpose of making some alterations in the will of the dying man; but was compelled to forego the effort by his incapacity to understand what was going on around him."—*Globe*. We are at a loss how to reconcile Mr. Geddes' very conflicting "solemn declarations" with one another; and the only solution of the problem which suggests itself is this—That Mr. Geddes is endowed with a very lively imagination, but is afflicted, at the same time, with a very bad memory. But to proceed.

On Friday morning the Bishop of Hamilton was again called in all haste to the bedside of Sir Allan MacNab, then evidently near his last gasp. On his arrival the Bishop found that his penitent was not sufficiently "clear and lucid" to receive the Viaticum, which the Church, when feasible, always administers to her departing children. During the entire day Sir Allan remained unconscious, and therefore he, though a Catholic, never on earth had the happiness of receiving the Body of his Redeemer. This fact shows how very circumspect was the conduct of the Romish Bishop, and is at the same time irreconcilable with Mr. Geddes' "solemn declaration" concerning the "clear and lucid moments" on Friday forenoon, during which the sick man on his dying bed declared his desire to die in the Anglican heresy. Again we say, the Rev. Mr. Geddes has been led into error by his too lively imagination, and his too torpid memory; for were the one less fertile, and the other a trifle better, he would not have fallen into so many self-contradictions in his "solemn declaration."

Our object is not however either to impugn the veracity of Mr. Geddes, or to vindicate the conduct of the deceased; but solely to repel the charge against the Bishop of Hamilton of having administered the Sacraments of the Church to the deceased whilst in a "state of insensibility," and again of "proselytizing the dead." Were this charge true, in whole or in part, a gross "Outrage" would have been indeed perpetrated. Not upon the Holy Protestant Faith however, not upon the deceased, but an outrage upon the Catholic Church; and Catholics, not Protestants, would have the right to complain of the sacrilege, and the profanation of their most sacred things.

By the express desire of the deceased's friends, and nearest relatives, he was buried with the last rites of the Catholic Church. Numbers of

his Protestant friends were in attendance, but on hearing it announced that the funeral would be conducted by Romish ecclesiastics, and Romish ceremonies, they with that good taste and liberality for which Protestants are proverbial, took up their hats, and declining to render the last homage to the mortal remains "of our dear departed friend," walked away in high indignation. As a practical commentary upon this outburst of Protestant good taste, gentlemanly feeling, and liberality, we may be permitted to allude to the account given by the Dublin correspondent of the London *Times* of the proceedings at the funeral of the lately deceased Protestant Primate of Ireland; at which, so we are told, the Catholic Primate attended, walking with the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. Mr. Geddes is, we are told, preparing a pamphlet upon the occasion. Should it contain anything of interest to our readers, we will notice it when it appears.

Since writing the above, we have seen a long statement drawn up by Mr. Geddes, and published in the *Globe* of the 15th instant, with the view of confirming the statement that the deceased died a sound Protestant, but which throws no additional light upon the circumstances preceding Sir Allan's death. If it proves anything, it proves that the writer, without leave or invitation, forced himself into the house of the deceased—then in a state of semi-delirium—and by a string of leading questions artfully arranged, so as to lead to an answer in the affirmative, extracted from the dying and almost unconscious man on the bed before him, such answers as would make it appear that Sir Allan died a Protestant. The subjoined is Mr. Geddes' own version:—

Having forced his way to Sir Allan's bedside, Mr. Geddes began to Catechise him. "Make it short," exclaimed the former—a strange form of address from a penitent to his ghostly adviser; though very intelligible from the lips of one who feeling himself bored by the impertinent questions of an intruder, bids him "cut it short."

Thus admonished, to "make it short," Mr. Geddes proceeded with his catechism, commencing with a series of questions to all of which the Papist must of course reply in the affirmative, if addressed to him.

Mr. Geddes asked:—"Is Christ the only foundation of your faith and hope? He replied 'Yes.' Is Jesus the alone name through which you expect to be saved? He said 'Yes.' Then, Sir Allan, I continued, you adhere to what I have always preached to you in public and in private, that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins.' Is that your belief, Sir Allan? 'Yes, that's my belief.' No other name under Heaven by which you can be saved but only the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? He signified assent. One Mediator alone between God and man, the man Jesus Christ? He signified assent."

In so far there was nothing in these questions to which the Papist would not signify assent.—Through Christ alone do we hope for salvation, and by Him, and through His name alone can any man be saved; neither is there salvation in any other, nor is there any mediator betwixt God and man save the man Christ Jesus. This is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and, if a Catholic, Sir Allan MacNab could of course only answer them in the affirmative.

Having thus cleared the way, by a series of skillfully contrived leading questions, for the great question which troubled Mr. Geddes—the question whether Sir Allan still adhered to the Anglican sect, "As by Law Established"—the reverend gentleman continued his catechism:—"Then Sir Allan MacNab, let me ask you, and let me understand you distinctly—Do you desire to die in the faith of your fathers, in that church in which you were born and baptised, the church in which you were brought up, and in which you have communicated?"

Not to say it profanely, this last question, introduced by the "then Sir Allan," is as little relevant to those preceding it, as the well known question—"Partez vous Français, Monsieur?" is relevant to the "Then lend me the loan of your gyrdiron." But we will let Mr. Geddes tell his own cock-and-bull story.

"Mrs. Boulton here interposed, and asked in a soft and not very audible voice—'you die a Catholic?' (meaning a Romanist.) There was no response." (Probably because the question was not very audible.) "I resumed, Do you desire to die in the pure and reformed faith of the Church of England for which our martyred forefathers perished at the stake? He replied earnestly and distinctly, 'That's what I do.'"

This is the pith of Mr. Geddes' statement, and appended is a letter from the sisters of Sir Allan, who depose to having heard all that had passed between Mr. Geddes and his penitent, and that Mr. Geddes' account of what then transpired, which had been read to them, was true. Whether however Mr. Geddes' statement, as read to the ladies was identical with that printed in the *Globe*, we may be permitted to doubt, for two reasons. First, Mr. Geddes makes strange errors sometimes, and contradicts himself, as we have shown. In the *Globe* of the 15th he reiterates his solemn declaration that on Thursday, Sir Allan MacNab "received his spiritual administrations"—though in the same journal, he assures us that on Thursday he could not obtain access to Sir Allan at all. And in the second place

if Sir Allan's relatives had heard the deceased earnestly and distinctly declare himself a member of the Protestant Church of England, it is more than probable that, during the long altercation which preceded the funeral, they would have made such an important feature in the case public; in which case it is certain that the Bishop of Hamilton would not have performed any one of the customary rites of the Catholic Church over the dead body. For these reasons, our belief is that Mr. Geddes has two different statements in his possession—just as he has two contradictory accounts of his proceedings on Thursday before Sir Allan's death; and that of these two statements, one was read in the presence of, and attested to by, Sir Allan MacNab's sisters, whilst the other was sent to the *Globe* for publication.

The most important fact however brought to light is this—That Mr. Andrew Stewart, brother-in-law to the deceased, made to Mr. Geddes the avowal that he wrote, at Sir Allan's own request, to the Bishop of Hamilton, begging that Prelate to visit the dying man who desired to be received into the Catholic Church. This completely disposes of the slanders of the *Globe*.—It shows that it was Sir Allan MacNab who sought the interview; and that there was no tampering, no jugglery, as the *Globe* calls it, on the part either of the Catholic clergy, or of Sir Allan's Catholic relatives. We may add too, that Mr. Geddes having applied by letter to Mr. Burton for confirmation of the rumor, that on the Thursday afternoon (the day when Mr. Geddes solemnly declares that Sir Allan received his "spiritual administrations") the sick man was not in his right mind, Mr. Burton replies, that he cannot consistently with the obligations of his profession give any information upon the subject.

Writing again upon the same subject, the Hamilton *Evening Times* of the 16th instant, says:

"In a former issue we stated that Sir Allan MacNab had some time before his death declared his intention of dying in the Catholic faith. We give the following extract from a letter written by Vicar General Gordon as corroborative evidence of our statement and of that of the Bishop in this evening's paper. The circumstances under which the letter was written were as follows: Before Sir Allan's death a letter was written from this city to the Vicar General, who is on a visit to Rockaway (Long Island), announcing Sir Allan's illness. In return, and before he could have heard any of the circumstances connected with Sir Allan's death, the Rev. Mr. Gordon wrote the letter, from which we give the following extract:—

"I was sorry to hear of the death of poor Sir Allan. We learned it here the day after he died. The *N. Y. Herald* announced it in the issue of that morning.—I suppose the Bishop did not see him previously, nor do any thing for him! Poor man, I fear he (Sir Allan) delayed too long the resolution he expressed in my hearing about a year ago to die a Catholic." "Is not this quite sufficient to prove that Sir Allan had long made up his mind to die a Roman Catholic, and to remove any surprise that may have been felt on the first announcement of his having taken that step?"

A CHAPTER IN PROTESTANT MISSIONARY EXPERIENCES.—Protestant Missions to the heathen have become, amongst Protestants themselves, a jest and a "bye-word," and it would be well for the interests of revealed religion and natural morality if they were nothing worse. Alas! the fearful evils which they have engendered, moral and physical, are but too apparent in the fast increasing impurity and consequent mortality of the unhappy heathen races in the South Sea Islands—the chief seat of Protestant Foreign Missions; and whilst treating of these it is impossible, almost, to refrain from tears over the untimely fate of the simple and naturally kind-hearted children of the soil, whose pleasant places are now occupied by the white-chokered strangers, and who are rapidly undergoing the Protestant process of being "improved off the face of the earth."

But if Protestant Foreign Missions for the most part are in their details too hideous, too sickening, too tragic to be made the subject of mirth, it is not so with the "Home Missions" of Protestantism, such as the Missions to the Papists of Ireland and of Canada. In these the ludicrous predominates; and though of course, so long as there are to be found amongst any section of a Catholic population, "idle loafers," as the Yankees call them, fellows who are too lazy to work, and yet fond of good living and those luxuries which money alone can procure.—Protestant Home Missions to Papists will have their converts to boast of—the amount of evil done is so infinitesimally small in so far as conversions to Protestantism are concerned, that we can afford to treat them as an excellent practical joke.

These Home Missions have been in operation in Lower Canada for a good many years; and with a perfect knowledge of all their doings, we can assert that the *Suisses*—the Canadian term for *Suavellers*—have not as yet succeeded in making the slightest impression upon the people amongst whom they labor. There are of course in almost every parish some two or three bad characters; who for their notorious evil courses, their drunkenness, their impurity, or their refusal to make restitution of goods, dishonestly acquired, find themselves debarred from the Sacraments of the Church, and who find themselves looked upon with aversion by their honest neighbors. To this class, we may add that of those who have had a personal quarrel with their parish priests about the payment of tithes, or other legal dues; and when we shall have added these two classes

* See Council of Trent, Sess. 23.