

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

NOVEMBER—1871.

Friday, 17—St. Gregory, P. C.

Saturday, 18—Dedication of Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul.

Sunday, 19—Twenty-fifth after Pentecost.

Monday, 20—St. Felix Valois, C.

Tuesday, 21—Presentation B. V. M.

Wednesday, 22—St. Cecilia, V. M.

Thursday, 23—St. Clements, P. M.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

On Saturday last, Prince Chigi Albani, Papal Nuncio, had a long interview with Count de Remusat. The *Constitutional* says they discussed a forthcoming protest of the Pope, in which the latter will declare himself sole King of Rome, and announce his determination to hold no official intercourse with any foreign representatives at the Court or near the person of Victor Emmanuel. It is stated that Duc de Harcourt, on his arrival at Rome, will protest against the publication of important French Ministers' confidential correspondence with the Pontifical Secretary. The French press very generally discuss the recent speech of Mr. Gladstone, and deduce therefrom a necessity for France to seek henceforth a Russian alliance. The *France* says distinctly that the Pope intimated to President Thiers his intention to establish a residence in France, and that Thiers made strong efforts to dissuade him from his purpose without success, and has finally placed at his disposal a suitable residence. Duc de Harcourt, the French ambassador was received by the Pope and Cardinal Antonelli on the 11th inst. President Thiers has announced that on the meeting of the Legislative Assembly next month, Government will propose to end the present provisional regime and establish a definite Republic. The French Ambassador at Constantinople has protested against the firman according the hereditary sovereignty to the Bey of Tunis. The appointments of French Ministers to Foreign Courts have been made.—Guizot goes to England, Duc de Brogli to Austria, Picard to Belgium, Fleury to United States, and Goulard undertakes the mission to Italy. Much anxiety prevails in Europe respecting the safety of the Grand Duke Alexis and the Russian fleet. In view of the disturbed condition of some of the country districts in Spain, a vote of confidence in the Government was proposed in the Cortes and carried by an overwhelming majority. Deaths from cholera are increasing in Constantinople, and fatal cases occur daily. The Queen's health has improved so rapidly as to upset all schemes for a regency. Kelly, accused of the murder of High Constable Talbot has been acquitted, after a long and exciting trial. Great demonstrations were made by the friends of Kelly in Dublin and Cork, but no disturbance occurred. Mr. Pigot, proprietor of the *Dublin Irishman*, has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment for publishing articles of an inflammatory nature during the trial of Kelly for the alleged murder of Talbot. A fearful explosion of gas occurred on the 13th at Leeds, by which one or two persons were killed and several badly injured. A special to the *World* from London says, a formidable plot of Bonapartist Generals, headed by General Fleury, to arrest Thiers and proclaim the Empire, has been discovered. The papers of the conspirators are in the possession of Thiers, who is confident of the failure of the conspiracy. The Legislature of Ontario has been summoned to meet, for the dispatch of business, on the 7th of December next.

Our attention has lately been called to a letter that has hitherto escaped our notice, but which appeared some months ago in the *Montreal Witness*, over the signature of T. Fenwick, a Protestant minister of the Anglican denomination, who some time previously had got himself into trouble by pretending to marry in his ministerial capacity two Catholics who came

to him for assistance because they could not, for disciplinary reasons, get married in a Catholic Church, and in the presence of the proper priest. We apologise to Mr. Fenwick for the long delay that has occurred, which he will charitably attribute to inadvertence, and not to any intentional disrespect.

In his letter Mr. Fenwick addresses himself particularly to the *True Witness*, and puts to us some questions to which after the above apology we hasten to reply. Mr. Fenwick says:—

"I fear that the *True Witness* uses a little jesuitry in order to throw dust into the eyes of Protestants when he says that Roman Catholics regard marriages solemnized by Protestant ministers as perfectly valid. The Church of Rome says that marriage is a sacrament. But, of course, heretical ministers, as they are not successors of the Apostles, cannot dispense the sacraments. It is true that, according to her standards, baptism dispensed in a case of great necessity, by even an infidel, is perfectly valid. Yet, almost invariably, Protestants who become Roman Catholics, are baptised before they are received into the Church, notwithstanding their former baptism. The very same arguments used in favor of re-baptism, apply equally well to re-marriage. The *True Witness* must therefore, I think, mean only that Roman Catholics regard marriages solemnized by Protestant ministers as valid according to the law of the land. I suppose he can do a little at equivocation and mental reservation. If he really believes that the marriages referred to are perfectly valid, in the sense in which he plainly desires Protestants to understand that expression, he is, I fear, somewhat tainted with heresy. I remain, &c., T. Fenwick, Min. C. Presb. Church, Metis.

We have said, and we repeat it, that the Catholic Church recognises as valid Christian marriages, as chaste, honorable, Christian, Sacramental, and therefore indissoluble, the matrimonial unions of Protestants; provided only, that they be contracted betwixt baptised persons—for unbaptised persons as non-Christians, cannot contract Christian marriage; that betwixt the parties so contracting no natural impediments to marriage intervene: and that they be contracted with the requisite intention, that is to say the intention of entering into the state of Christian matrimony, as appointed by Christ; and with the full consent, intelligibly expressed of, there and then, not at some future epoch, entering into that holy state. A matrimonial union, so contracted in good faith by Protestants competent to contract is to all intents a valid marriage according to the law of God, indissoluble because sacramental.

But we never have pretended that "marriages solemnized by Protestant ministers" are, on account of that solemnisation, "perfectly valid." The presence, the words, the acts of the Protestant minister neither add to, nor detract from, the validity of the marriage. It matters not one straw in so far as the validity or sacramental character of the marriage be concerned whether it be solemnized by a Protestant minister, or by a Protestant magistrate; by a Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, or by a Protestant Licensed Victualler. Nor let not the Rev. Mr. Fenwick be surprised at this assertion. It is true that no Protestant minister, whether he be styled Archbishop of Canterbury, or whether he run the smallest conventicle in the land, is competent to administer any sacrament whatsoever with the exception of the sacrament of baptism, which every man is competent to administer "validly;" but it is not the doctrine of the Catholic Church that either the priest, in the case of the marriages of Catholics; or the Protestant minister, or the magistrate, or the Licensed Victualler in the case of Protestant marriages—is the minister of the sacrament. He is the witness before whom the contract is entered into, and the sacrament is received; but the contracting parties whether Catholic or Protestant are themselves, to themselves—where no obstacles or impediments intervene the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. As a matter of salutary discipline the Catholic Church which hates clandestine marriages, insists that in the case of all her children, the marriage contract be entered into publicly, in the face of God and His Church; and in the presence of three witnesses, of whom the parish priest of the contracting parties, or some one by him authorized to act in his place, shall be one. Thus the priest witnesses the marriage contract; blesses it in the name of Him Whose minister he is; but the contracting parties—if competent to intermarry, are themselves, to themselves, the ministers of the Sacrament. This will explain to Mr. Fenwick how it is quite consistent for the Catholic Church, whilst utterly denying the competence of any Protestant minister, magistrate, blacksmith, or Licensed Victualler, to administer a Sacrament, or to perform any religious act or ceremony which every other layman is not equally competent to perform—to recognise as valid, chaste, honorable, sacramental, and, therefore indissoluble the matrimonial union of baptised persons unhappily cut off from her communion.

Of course the Catholic Church does not look upon the unions—no matter by whom, or with what ceremonies, solemnized—of "divorced" persons as marriages at all; or as anything but impure, infamous and adulterous connections, no matter what the law of man may say to the contrary. To such unions the presence and sanction of all the Protestant Bishops of England could not give the slightest validity,

nor from them could that presence and sanction eliminate the foul ingredient of mortal sin. They would be still what they are, adulteries licensed by the law of man, indeed, but abominable and filthy in the eyes of God.

With regard to what Mr. Fenwick says about re-baptism he errs grossly, we hope through inadvertence. Baptism, according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, is a sacrament that cannot under any circumstances be twice administered; and according to the same doctrine the baptisms of Protestants are valid. On both of these points the language of the Council of Trent is strong and plain.

But it so happens that in many Protestant sects, even in that of our Anglican fellow-citizens, great laxity both in practice and in doctrine, obtains, as to this essential sacrament; there is therefore always reason to doubt whether a person who, from being a Protestant seeks admission into the Catholic Church, has indeed received the sacrament; therefore in such cases, the Church gives as a measure of precaution "conditional baptism," administered as thus:—"If thou art not baptised, I baptise thee in the name &c., &c., &c." For further details upon this point we refer Mr. Fenwick to the 4th and 11th canons of the seventh session of the Council of Trent.

HOLIDAYS.—We think that our Protestant friends do well in observing an occasional holiday; we think that their setting apart—even as by instructions from their Pastors Catholics have done—a day or season for especially thanking the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for the bountiful harvest with which He has been pleased to bless us, is a graceful and pious act which we may well admire. Perhaps our separated brethren may in time see good to qualify the somewhat harsh opinions on the subject of holidays which they have sometimes expressed.

It was but the other day, that in an article on the "Labor Question," the *Montreal Witness* entered a very powerful plea for giving to the working classes occasional holidays, or seasons of respite from toil, besides those afforded by institution of Sunday, or hebdomadal festival of the resurrection. Our contemporary thus argued:—

"A prominent feature in the present strikes is the demand for shorter hours of labor. It is found that the work accomplished and wages earned do not depend on long hours. Workmen should not be treated as mere machines or drudges. The Sabbath rest is theirs peculiarly, and they should prize it. Then there should be holidays, and leisure to attend to their social, intellectual and spiritual matters. It would seem as if the invention of labor-saving machinery would give abundant leisure. But men's wants grow with the means of meeting them.—And we must leave this effect to some simpler age of the future, when wealth is more evenly distributed."

We were not a little surprised on reading the above in the *Witness* to find in such an unexpected quarter such emphatic recognition of the wisdom of the Catholic Church, and of her tender care of the interests of her poorest children. Yes. Even the *Witness* must acknowledge that the Catholic Church has ever sought to abridge the hours of labor for the working classes; to give them a leisure to attend to their social, intellectual, and spiritual natures, by appointing, and rendering obligatory on all the observance of certain days whereon some of the great events of Christianity are commemorated—as holidays, as days of abstinence from all servile work; as appropriate seasons for social and intellectual enjoyment, as well as for the culture and development of man's spiritual nature. Protestantism has for the most part abolished these holidays; it has many a time and oft, through the columns of the *Witness* and kindred sheets denounced these holidays—as injurious to trade, as interfering with commercial business, as hostile to the material interests of the country, and as fatal to Thrift—that great Protestant virtue which by itself outweighs all the other virtues combined—Faith, Hope, and Charity. Ah! how ignorant poor Paul was when he ignored this great modern Protestant virtue "Thrift." Had he lived in our days he no doubt would have assigned to it a place higher even than that which he assigns to Charity, or the love of God, and of man for God's sake.

And yet to-day when the agitation of the working classes, that is of those who live by manual labor, is compelling attention to the subject, we find the same journals which on ordinary occasions denounce emphatically the observance of the seven or eight holidays peculiar to the Catholic Church in the course of the year insisting upon their necessity. Thus unconsciously does "Political Economy" give its testimony in favor of the wisdom of that marvellous Catholic Church, which knows how to provide for every want of man. Study the "Labor Question," say we to the *Witness*, and the great social problems thence arising, and you will see that it is Protestantism that has brutalized the laboring classes, and made their lot on earth so cruel, so hopeless; that it is only in the Catholic Church that can be found the solution to the fearful problem, urgently insisting upon a quick solution, which the actual relations betwixt Labor and Capital have called

into notice. Yes! A very prominent feature in the Labor Question is the "demand for shorter hours of labor," in other words for more holidays. But to accede to this would be to do sin against the great Protestant virtue of Thrift; how then in such circumstances shall a Protestant society comport itself?

"PROTESTANT HISTORY."—For a barefaced "falsification of historical facts" in the interest of "Protestant History" we commend the following:

In a pamphlet issued by the English "Church Institution" and published by the eminent publishers, the Rivingtons of London, Dr. A. Lee quotes from Peter Lombard what he is pleased to call "a characteristic description of those Irish Priests who in the days of Elizabeth and James flocked to Rome to obtain mitres and benefices in Ireland." This "characteristic description is very characteristic—of Protestantism—and is hardly complimentary to "those Irish Priests;" but then Dr. A. Lee is a Protestant, writing "Protestant History" and does not consequently trouble himself much about compliments or truth when they affect Catholic Priests or Catholicity.

In pages 15 and 16 of Dr. Lee's pamphlet the worthy Doctor, protégé of the English "Church Institution," and patronised by the Messrs. Rivingtons—pretending to quote Peter Lombard, does no such thing. In other words Dr. Lee FIBS,—a disgraceful course of conduct, which the Protestant world in general and the English Church Institution in particular will doubtless condone out of consideration for the fact that Dr. A. Lee is only fibbing in the cause of the "great Protestant tradition."

Dr. Lee discourses thus—"They are, says Peter Lombard, of the very vilest classes of our people; men who obtain preferment by every species of low cunning, drivelling sycophancy and hypocrisy. They come carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands, over Alps and Appennines illotis pedibus, on pretence of persecution (!) or of pilgrimage to Rome, from the most barbarous parts of Ireland—ignorant clownish vile fellows whose manners are utterly disgusting to all who see them, from their base servility and uncouthness of garb and address. When they arrive at Rome, they do not employ themselves in learning, but pass their days in scheming amongst each other how they may obtain bulls! of presentation to livings and preferments at home; and as soon as they succeed in obtaining a title to a benefice, they run back to Ireland, commence a law suit for possession in virtue of the bulls (why not keep to the bulls! dear Doctor) obtained at Rome, and having finally succeeded after a scandalous litigation, instead of attending their Dioceses, they travel into Spain, France and Germany on pretence of persecution at home; and their whole study consists in soliciting pensions from the foreign Courts, to enable them forsooth to live abroad on a footing of grandeur suitable to the episcopal dignity which they have obtained by sycophancy intriguing and adulation. This is extremely prejudicial to our country and disgraceful to our own Catholic nobility at home; because those bishops are appointed without regard to the elections or recommendations of our gentry or clergy, but against the express desire of both." (Peter Lombard Commentarius de Regno Hibernie, p. 296, Lovan 1632 quoted in King's Irish History, p. 908.)

So far Dr. Lee's Peter Lombard. Let us now see what Peter Lombard's Peter Lombard says of the matter. For between Dr. Lee's Peter and Peter's Peter there will be found a certain difference. Thus then Peter's Peter—"Some faults chiefly of defective education and of incivility of manner have been noticed by foreigners to belong to some Irishmen and even to some Priests. (Not then to all Doctor?) To explain how this has happened it must be remembered that the English governors continue to oppress and oppose the Catholic religion in the ways before mentioned, and that in consequence, many of the inhabitants of their own accord, or at the solicitation of their parents and friends, leave their native land, and seek in the Catholic Universities of Belgium, France, and even Spain, instruction in religion and literature. This has in most cases been attended with happy results, for many of those persons so educated, who have been ordained priests, and some who have been consecrated bishops at Rome, on returning to their country have there produced glorious fruits by teaching the people by word and example the things which pertain to the Catholic faith and to Christian life. But from the less civilized parts of Ireland went forth also other persons some of whom (oh! Dr. Lee! Dr. Lee!) were even priests, but who had no learning or manners, and whose ignorant conduct was not such as to recommend them to those of superior education, with whom they might chance to have dealings. These persons unhappily for their country went straight to Rome but not to acquire knowledge or manners; and as they arrived there with feet and it is to be feared with hands and

even head unwashed, betook themselves to seeking titles! (not bulls! nor even briefs!) "to benefices; and afterwards having gained provisional appointments commenced law suits at home for immediate possession. And not content with benefices, they spread their nets to catch the chief dignities in Ireland even the very bishoprics. When success in some instances (not in many Doctor) gratified their desires, they either neglected after consecration to fulfill their promise of returning to Ireland or perhaps they merely paid it a visit and then left it through fear or pretence of persecution (but not illotis pedibus this time Doctor). Afterwards wandering through various countries, or lingering idly in Spain they turned all their attention to soliciting pensions to enable them to live suitably to the dignity of their order. When the character and conduct of these priests and bishops albeit they were few" (and consequently could not Doctor Lee, be taken as characteristic of those Irish Priests &c.) became widely known, and unfortunately they became well known in those places chiefly where spiritual or temporal aid towards the liberation of Ireland was to be expected, there was undoubtedly produced a low estimate of the Irish nation and a less cordial disposition towards it in the minds of the very persons who had the power and who perhaps otherwise would have had the will to afford it help. But the Irish nation may plainly say that this misfortune happened through no fault of Ireland which did not seek, but rather protested against the promotion of persons of that kind before they were appointed and afterwards when the appointments became known grieved and sorrowed. And Ireland had the more cause to grieve because she had so many other and worthier sons educated in the above named Universities, and of whom all who were promoted were guiltless of any lapse or scandal and proved themselves to be as here, before noted, the most, constant Confessors, or else the bravest martyrs whom this age produced. And as their merits are of far greater weight than the vices of some few individuals of a description easy to find in any country" (and notably so amongst the Protestant Bishops of Ireland) "so should the former rather than the latter be chosen as a guide for forming and confirming a favorable estimate of the Irish nation."

With these two extracts before us—Was there ever we ask a more barefaced perversion of historical testimony? When we first read Dr. Lee's quotation we saw on the very face of it, that it was "bogus." It bears intrinsic evidence of its falsity. No Catholic Archbishop—much less the celebrated Peter Lombard—would ever talk about "Bulls of presentation." Such mistakes are left only for Anglican Doctors when talking about things of which they are profoundly ignorant, and are left for English Church Institutions to publish and the Messrs. Rivingtons to patronize. Catholic Archbishops are wont to be better acquainted with "Bulls and Briefs" than to make so glaring a mistake.

Another intrinsic evidence of the falsity of Dr. Lee's Peter Lombard is found towards the conclusion of the pretended quotation? Catholic clergymen are not appointed on the recommendation of the laity, be they noble gentle or simple. None but an Anglican totally ignorant of Catholic usage or patronised by English Church Institutions would have been guilty of such a blunder.

But if our surprise at the stupidity of the quotation was great before we saw the real passage, our pity for the bad faith and effrontery of the quoter was unbounded when we turned to the original latin. Dr. Lee's passage is false—we fear maliciously false—in general and in detail. He proposes to give us two things—first "a characteristic description of those Irish Priests" &c., and secondly he proposes to give it on the authority of Peter Lombard. Now Peter Lombard never uttered the words as quoted by Dr. Lee—and the words which Peter Lombard did utter are not "a characteristic description of those Irish Priests" &c., but are a description of priests who were a double exception to the general rule. The whole passage as truthfully quoted goes to prove that vulgarity instead of being a characteristic of those Irish Priests who under Elizabeth and James flocked to Rome," was a decided double exception. From the less civilized parts of Ireland? (1st exception) "went forth other persons some of whom (2nd exception) were priests." Oh Dr. A. Lee! Dr. A. Lee!

Catholics beware of "Protestant History" especially if published by an English Church Institution.

SACERDOS.

ST. PETER'S, DARTMOUTH, N.S., Nov. 8, 1871.

To the Editor of the *True Witness*.

DEAR SIR,—Our dear Mother, the Spouse of Christ who, if men were only true to God—eschewed pride and sensuality—and understood their in-coming and out-going, would be always clothed in royal robes, is alas! now clothed in