

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, NEWS OF THE WEEK

Though the opinion still obtains that Europe is slowly but surely drifting into war, nothing since our last has occurred to disturb the political atmosphere. The Polish question remains unchanged; such is the stereotyped form in which the progress of the insurrection of the Poles, and the action of the Western Powers is weekly chronicled.

The Confederates, if able to win victories, do not seem to be in a position to improve them, or to follow them up. So it was after the first great victory at Bull's Run's; so also it seems to be now after the late Confederate victory over Rosecrans.

PRESENTATION OF AN ADDRESS TO THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL

One of the most magnificent and inspiring spectacles that we have ever beheld in this city, took place at the Crystal Palace on the evening of Thursday the 29th ultimo. On that day, His Lordship the Right Rev. Ignatius Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, having completed his sixty-fourth year, the Catholics of this Diocese thought proper to manifest, in a public manner, their love and affection for their Venerable Bishop; and we are happy to state that they did so, in a manner which must have been highly gratifying to His Lordship, and one reflecting at the same time the greatest credit on themselves.

At the appointed hour, His Lordship arrived, escorted by the Chasseurs Canadiens, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Courcel, a number of the Volunteer Cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel David, and the President and Officers of the St. Jean Baptiste, St. Patrick's, and the various Catholic Benevolent and Temperance Societies of the City of Montreal. The

procession entered the Palace, headed by the Brass Band of the students of Montreal College, playing the lively air "Vive la Canadienne." We cannot convey an idea of the beauty of the scene that was presented to the beholders, when His Lordship, accompanied by a large number of the Reverend Clergy and his escort, ascended the platform. There were the St. Jean Baptiste Society, the St. Patrick's Society, St. Patrick's Temperance Association, Union St. Joseph, St. Patrick's Benevolent Association, and a host of others, all bearing the rich insignia of their various offices; all of which combined produced an eclat that we have never seen equalled in this City on any former occasion.

Order having been restored, Mon. Berthelot, President of the St. Jean Baptiste Society, read an Address in French, a translation of which was afterwards read by T. McKenna, Esq., President of the St. Patrick's Society, on behalf of the English speaking Catholics. The Address was as follows:—

To His Lordship the Most Rev. Ignatius Bourget, Bishop of Montreal, Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, Count of the Holy Roman Empire, &c., &c.

My Lord,—Permit us, the Catholics of the Diocese of Montreal, on this occasion, the sixty-fifth anniversary of your birth, to give public expression to our sentiments and our wishes.

My Lord, it is not custom that causes us to approach you to-day. This manifestation rendered more necessary by recent circumstances is dictated by all our hearts. It is not ever the duty of children of a venerated father to surround him when he has escaped the hand of death—when he is again restored to their dutiful obedience? Do they not feel the desire of giving expression to their past anxieties and their present happiness?

My Lord, you have not forgotten the great joy that was everywhere manifested on your return from Rome. Your children were happy because they again beheld their father. But alas, in this valley of tears there is no unmitigated pleasure; and soon your declining health excited in every breast the most serious alarm.

My Lord, we do not know all the great and useful works which God has accomplished through your agency, but there are some which cannot be concealed. Under your creative influence numerous parishes have been formed. We behold in the heart of cities and throughout the country, temples constructed to the glory of the Most High; hospitals for the infirm, colleges and schools where our children acquire learning and are taught piety.

My Lord, we find your zeal like fire increasing by action, and continually inspiring to the accomplishment of new works, the difficulties of which would fill us with apprehension had you not accustomed us to see the miracles which you have wrought by the aid of Divine Providence.

Rev. Mr. Pare, His Lordship's Secretary, then read the following reply, Rev. Mr. Lamarche reading the English translation:—

Dearly Beloved Children,—In the address you offer me I hear myself called Father. This title is very soothing to my ears, and I cannot resist the feeling which urges me to reply as unto "Children well beloved." So we really form a family circle; and this joyful demonstration is but the artless expression of paternal affection, of filial piety.

I well understand, gentlemen, that our meeting to-day, which held us here assembled for the first time, is not a matter of mere politeness; wherefore, I must ingeniously acknowledge that if there is need a necessity for you to feel of your anxiety about me whilst an all disposing Providence made me gaze at the portals of death, and to tell of your happiness because Providence has once more given back my health, it is also a necessity for me to tell you over again, that now, more than ever, must I live for you! I never can, gentlemen, forget the delightful outpourings of filial and paternal joy which took place on the evening of my last visit to the tomb of my Apostles, when we in a so pleasantly upon our majestic St. Lawrence, and upon our country's hallowed shores, which on that day were displayed to all eyes under a gay and more exuberant aspect than ever.

Allow me to tell you, gentlemen, that you are mistaken, or, at least, you give me what belongs to yourselves in ascribing to me the glory of the suc-

cess of certain works which have been performed here within the last few years. I could easily show you, if time allowed that these works of which you make so touching a mention in all their details, belong after God the Giver of every perfect gift, to yourselves, to the city, and to the diocese, since they are the fruit of your generous sacrifices. And indeed it is plain that the Bishop of Montreal has none of those inexhaustible resources which had to be employed for performing so many works; and everybody knows beyond doubt, that Divine Providence has been pleased to display the riches of His infinite goodness in behalf of this large city and its immense territory for carrying out such great undertakings.

I am right, therefore, in turning aside these these insinuations of your kindness and charity, and in stating that if there be in Montreal an asylum for every one suffering—from the child in the cradle to the decrepit old man, who, while descending into the tomb, bleases with ardor and respectfully kisses the beneficent hands which dry his tears and soothe his miseries—it must be attributed, not to my creative influence, but to the exhaustless charity of this city, and of those rural districts. Hence it is upon you, gentlemen, as well as upon your forefathers, and it must be hoped on your descendants, that travellers will heap benedictions, when they contemplate the splendor of our churches, when they admire the number and regularity of our religious institutions, when they see that the orphan has found father and mother, that the blind see, that the deaf and dumb hear and speak, when they shall be in presence of tiny little children who learn so much good before they have reached the age of reason; when, finally, they will be convinced by their own sight that the outcasts of society are sedulously and tenderly sought after in order that they may be remade to the image of God, which vice had disfigured, you will be revered and heralded for your works of faith and zeal throughout the wild territory of Red River, through the boundless tracts of Oregon and over the large and beautiful Vancouver's Island.

My Lord, I end my sixty-fourth year, and to-morrow begins my sixty-fifth. To tell you the truth—these years, which recede like a fleeting shadow, are but as a dream. And God knows how the last of these days which is to close those I am to spend on earth, will present itself to me; but will I can say that I ardently wish the days which are coming to be fuller than the ones which have gone by. In all cases I must thank you, gentlemen, for all you kindly wish to do for me during this season of hearty protestations. On seeing you testify your so lively interest because of my sixty-fourth anniversary, I cannot help revisiting in spirit my home so distant in the vale of tears, and looking again upon my father and mother as if they were on this side of the tomb, offering to God, along with the faith they had inherited from their ancestors, their eleventh child—a father cheerfully sacrificing a portion of his humble inheritance for the sake of educating a brother who died in the holy administration of the priesthood; a mother who lavished upon me so many cares that I never, alas, acknowledge or requite them! Who watched so carefully over my boyhood so as to make me escape more than once from dangers which threatened my life; who gave me so many wise lessons in order to form me in the practice of virtue; who shed so many tears of pitying tenderness when she had to take in hand the chastising rod; whose lamp was never extinguished; who spent so many sleepless nights amidst the multiplied cares of her numerous family, in order that might might be wanting to any of her dear children, for whom alone she seemed to breathe. Today when I feel myself not far off my grave, all these remembrances of my cradle and of my youth, spring up livelier than ever; because I see here so many fathers and mothers, who do for their children, who are also mine, what the authors of my life did for me. In taking my leave of you, gentlemen, and in thanking you afresh for all you have just done for the father of your souls, I must once again affirm that I feel myself more than ever bound to employ all my strength for the spiritual advantage of this large and interesting flock.

Immediately after reading of the Address, and the answers thereto, the Choir of the Montagnards Canadiens discoursed some very fine pieces of vocal music, with instrumental accompaniment. The solo, by Mademoiselle Regnaud, and a gentleman amateur were certainly delightful, and the choruses were very pleasing and effective.

At the close of the regular ceremonies of the evening, His Honor Mr. Justice Mondelet addressed a few words to His Lordship, which were however inaudible to us. His Lordship briefly returned thanks; after which the Bishop was again escorted to the Episcopal Residence, and the immense crowd slowly and quietly dispersed, and returned to their respective homes, highly delighted with the ceremonies of the evening.

"THE GOSPEL," AND THE GRANDE LIGNE MISSION.—To bother the Protestant controversialist there is no better way than to call upon him to state his thesis, and to insist upon a sharp definition of all terms employed. The evangelical Protestant has always ready a stock of conventional phrases, or cant, which constitute his stronghold; but to insist upon definitions, is to drive him from this, and to compel him to meet his adversary on the fair field of common sense. Forced to abandon the rampart of vague generalities, and invited to state and maintain his thesis, in plain grammatical English, the Swaddler is at once discomfited, and put to flight.

For what is the positive thesis that, as against the Catholic, a Protestant of any denomination can undertake to maintain? There is, there can be, none; for whatever may be the point in discussion, it is impossible for the Protestant to state the differences betwixt himself and the Catholic in positive terms—that is to say, in terms of affirmation, or otherwise than as a bare negation. What is vulgarly, or by the uneducated spoken of as distinctively "Protestant doctrine," or "Protestant Faith," is simply a negation of some Catholic doctrine, or some article of the "Catholic Faith;" and it is only in virtue of that wherein they agree with the Papist, that it is to say wherein they are non-Protestant, that Protestants can arrogate to themselves the title of Christians, or believers in Christian doctrine. All Christian doctrine lies in the positive order; but Protestant doctrine, so-called,

can only be expressed in terms of Catholic doctrine with the prefix of the alpha privative. No matter in what form of words couched, every Protestant proposition, or thesis, may by analysis be reduced to a bare denial of some positive Catholic doctrine; so that, considered simply in itself, Protestantism is a phase not of Christianity, but of infidelity.

And though Protestants may be averse to admit this, yet in practice, and by their invariable mode of speaking of Catholics, they are forced to admit it. Never by any chance do they attempt to oppose to the Catholic doctrine against which they protest, a positive counter-doctrine; but they content themselves with insinuating, that the Catholic Church denies some positive and distinctively Christian truth, of which they pretend to be in possession. We say "insinuate," because as a general rule, Protestants are too prudent to make the accusation explicitly, or in set form of words; for, unless very ignorant indeed, they know that the Symbols of the Church, such as the "Apostles" and the "Nicene Creeds" must give them the lie at once.

So what they dare not assert openly, and in plain language, they insinuate through certain conventionalisms of the conventicle, with which from their very vagueness, it is impossible to deal. Thus persons abandoning the Catholic Church are in Missionary Reports spoken of as "embracing the Gospel," as "coming to Jesus," or as "giving themselves wholly to Christ"—which is an indirect way of conveying to the uninformed upon points of Catholic doctrine, the impression that the Catholic Church rejects the Gospel, repudiates Jesus, and denies Christ.—With the ignorant—that is to say ignorant of the actual doctrines of the Catholic Church—who of course constitute the vast bulk of our separated brethren, these insinuations, or vague invendoes have a great effect in inspiring them with a salutary horror of Popery; but if compelled to define his conventionalisms, and to make his charge against Popery in good set terms, the power of impudence even of the Swaddler would fail him, and leave him exposed to the jeers of both friends and foes. This is why we insist so strongly that in all controversies with Protestants, the latter should, as a preliminary or condition sine qua non, be compelled to state their thesis; and to give clear, sharp, and exhaustive definitions of the cant terms in which they so freely indulge themselves, and with which they so often confound and perplex their hearers.

We have before us the Report of the last Annual Meeting of the Grande Ligne Mission, an association which has for its object the conversion of Canadian Papists. A few extracts from this document will illustrate our meaning, and show the importance of definitions in all controversy with Protestants upon religious subjects. The term which the Report continually makes use of, and of which we should exact a definition, is "the Gospel." It occurs repeatedly, and under the following forms:—

"After devotional exercises the chairman said, the Heathen, however distant, had strong claims upon us; but our neighbors and fellow-citizens who were still destitute of the Gospel had much stronger claims."

Again, a Rev. Mr. Lafleur told the meeting that in the early days of the Mission,—

"He had gone with a Missionary eighty miles on purpose to visit a single individual, and that not a convert, but only inclined to follow the Gospel."

So also of a man who "had been a drunkard and a profane swearer, and paid nobody," but who joined the Swaddlers, we are told that he "embraced the Gospel."

A woman is in like manner represented on her death bed as lamenting her having turned a deaf ear to the Grande Ligne Missionaries, in the following terms:—

"To one of the Missionaries she exclaimed 'I am lost, I am lost, these things, pointing to a crucifix, &c., have ruined me. I have known for two years that the Gospel was true, and yet I have continued to deny it. I am lost, I am lost.'"

We might multiply our quotations, but the above will suffice; and we think that it is not a forced construction that we put upon them, when we say that they imply, or "insinuate" that in the opinion of the Swaddlers, Catholics do not "follow the Gospel;" that either they are "destitute of the Gospel," or that knowing it, they wilfully "deny it." To meet such an awful accusation the first thing evidently to be done is to exact from the accuser a clear and exhaustive definition of the term "the Gospel" which he employs. What then is "the Gospel" according to the "Swaddlers?" We cannot indeed pretend to say what it is; but as it is something which Catholics are "destitute of," which they do not "follow," and which indeed they "deny" we can determine by examination of the Catholic Faith what it is not.

For instance, no one can be a Catholic who does not fully, intelligently and firmly believe, hold and follow all that is contained in the Apostles' Creed, and in the Nicene Creed; who does not hold with the assurance of faith, that there is One God; that in the Godhead there are Three distinct Persons; that God the second Person of this Trinity, begotten of the Father, not made, so loved the world that "for us

men, and for our salvation He came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;" who was crucified for us also, suffered and was buried, and the third day rose again and ascended into heaven, where He sitteth on the right hand of the Father; whence also He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead. He who denies or doubts any one of the above propositions is not a Catholic; and as according to our opponents, the Catholic is destitute of the Gospel, denies or does not follow the Gospel, it logically follows that, according to the same authority, the above propositions form no part of, and indeed are repugnant to, and contradictory of, that "Gospel," that *evangelium*, good spell, or good message, which it is their avowed object to propagate. Naturally therefore do we again call upon our opponents for a definition of the term "the Gospel."

Again, no one can be a Catholic who does not, with entire consent of mind and will, hold and believe all that the Catholic Church holds and teaches through her Ecumenical Councils, and particularly the Council of Trent. Now the latter expressly declares that, men unless they are born again in Christ can never be justified—"nisi in Christo renascantur nunquam justificentur"—Sess. vi., c. iii. The same Council likewise expressly teaches that Jesus Christ is our sole redeemer and saviour—"quis solus noster redemptor et salvator est"—Sess. xxv.; that He is the fountain of all justice—"omnis justitie fons"—Sess. vi. c. 6; in Whom we have redemption and remission of our sins, "in quo habemus redemptionem et remissionem peccatorum"—ib. c. iii; and from Whom, as from a fountain, flows or proceeds all Grace, "Christum, omnium gratiarum fontem et auctorem"—Sess. xxi. can. iii. All these things, with all their consequences, Catholics, in that they are Catholics, must firmly hold and believe; for by denying or rejecting any one of them, or holding anything repugnant thereto, they would cease to be Catholics. But if the latter are destitute of "the Gospel," if they do not "follow," but rather "deny" the Gospel," it follows logically that none of the propositions above enumerated constitute any portion of "the Gospel" which the Missionaries of the Grande Ligne Mission preach, but rather are repugnant to, and contradictory of it. What then, again we ask, is that Gospel, or good message, of which the agents of the Grande Ligne Mission are the bearers, and in whose benefits they desire to make us poor Papists participants? We respectfully invite the Montreal *Witness*, who inserts the Report of this Mission's proceedings, to reply to this question; to define "the Gospel" of which we Catholics are "destitute," and which we "deny" whilst holding firmly all that is contained in the Apostles' Creed, in the Nicene Creed, and the above given extracts from the dogmatic decrees of the Council of Trent.

On the subject of its conversions, or triumphs, the Mission is brief. One of the Missionaries, a Rev. Mr. Pasche told how:—

"When travelling once between Laprairie and St. Lambert, he saw in that short distance seven villages which he knew to be those of French Canadian Protestant farmers."

And he also boasted that the number of those who had denied or Protested against the Catholic Faith in the country where he resided,—

"Was just about the same as Mr. Huntingdon's majority, and without their votes he could not have been elected. Thus was this reformation beginning to make its influence felt."

Not in greater purity of morals indeed, or in increased holiness of living; but in a political triumph, and in the return of Mr. Huntingdon to the Provincial Parliament. So much for the triumphs of "the Gospel according to the Swaddlers."

A good deal of insight into the quality of the converts, and the motives which operate on the latter, is given in the annexed report of the state of the School connected with the Mission:—

"This School had reopened on the 8th, and already scholars to the number of 31 have arrived, and several more are known to be coming. It had been decided not to take English pupils this season, and many of these French Catholics were very poor, and unable to do much, if anything, towards their own support. Indeed some were destitute of suitable winter clothing, and had to be supplied by the Mission." (The Italics are our own.)

This is what is vulgarly called, "letting the cat out of the bag." For elsewhere we are told that "it is almost impossible to make any impression on the richer classes;" and so putting these items together, we find that it is only amongst the "very poor," amongst those who are "unable to do much, if anything, for themselves," and who are "destitute," not so much of Gospel, as of that "suitable winter clothing" which the Mission supplies, that the Swaddlers have any marked success. Of the quality of their "winter clothing" we have no suspicion; it is no doubt first rate; but the *other commodity* in which they deal, "the Gospel," we suspect, a very inferior article indeed; mere shoddy, and in its own line in no respect superior to the stuff which patriotic Yankee contractors furnish to the gallant defenders of the Union.

For the rest there is little note-worthy in the Report, unless it be the chivalrous devotion of a certain Rev. M. Lafleur; who, moved to com-