

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

DECEMBER—1871.

Friday, 22—Ember Day. Of the Feria.

Saturday, 23—Ember Day. Of the Feria.

Sunday, 24—Fourth of Advent.

Monday, 25—CHRISTMAS, Old.

Tuesday, 26—St. Stephen, M.

Wednesday, 27—St. John, A.P.

Thursday, 28—SS. Innocents, M.M.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The Prince of Wales is convalescent. This is the good news from England; and throughout the British Empire it will be hailed with joy, as much for his royal mother's sake, as for his own. "What have I done to be so beloved?" was the exclamation of Louis XV. when recovering from an attack of fever at Metz, which had threatened to cut short his days, and during the course of which his subjects manifested the most devoted attachment to their suffering king. "What have I done to be so beloved?" our own Prince may perhaps ask himself when he rises from his bed of sickness; and it is to be hoped that he will then form the resolution to deserve by his future, that love and loyalty which his recent illness has elicited, and which the people undoubtedly entertain for him; in spite of the youthful errors—grossly exaggerated in many instances no doubt by popular report—of which he may have been guilty. Let him but take his mother as the model for his future life, and that love and loyalty will not have been cast away.

The intense anxiety of the people during the Prince's very dangerous illness, the ardent prayers for his recovery offered up to heaven by his mother's subjects of all denominations, the general joy at the tidings of the favorable turn in his disease, are strong and gratifying proofs that the feeling of loyalty has still a strong hold on the public mind; that the people of the British Empire are on the whole warmly and reasonably attached to the principle of royalty; and that the republican cancer has, as yet, not extended its ravages very deeply into the body politic. There is of course a portion of that body infected, or tainted by democratic and even communistic ideas; but that much of it is still sound has been clearly established by the events of last week.

We do not pretend that it is certain that all danger is over. After such a severe attack as that which the sick man has just undergone, there is of course much prostration, and his restoration to his state of normal health, may be a long and tedious process; but the fact that Her Majesty deems it no longer necessary to be in constant attendance at Sandringham, and that other members of the Royal family have returned to Windsor, plainly indicates that in the opinion of those most nearly interested, the immediate danger is over.

There is some talk of taking action against several of the leading Communists who have sought refuge in England, and who it is said, are abusing the asylum. The Secretary of State, we are told, will on the meeting of Parliament ask for authority to expel Carl Marx from the United Kingdom.

Affairs in France present a troubled aspect. The Orleans Princes are, it is said, about to enforce their right to sit in the Assembly, a proceeding to which M. Thiers is very adverse. Betwixt their respective adherents we may expect a sharp contest; but that during the lifetime of the Comte de Chambord, the legitimate King of France, the monarchy will be restored either in the person of the Duc d'Aumale, or any of his family, is, we should imagine from the state of parties very doubtful. A majority of the Assembly are, it is said, in favor of remaining at Versailles. This will be very distasteful to the Parisian *canaille* who, since the sad days of October 5th—6th 1789, have claimed a vested right to rule France. From Italy we have nothing new to report. Switzerland fur-

nishes us with another instance of what liberals understand by civil and religious liberty; the Federal Assembly have made a law interdicting the establishment of Jesuit communities in Switzerland, and forbidding the employment of Jesuits as doctrinal teachers. In Spain the new reformation does not seem to be prospering, if we may judge from the somewhat desponding account given in a letter by a Prof. Knapps who writes from Madrid, to the following effect—as reported in the Montreal *Witness* of the 16th inst.:

"We shall never do anything as it is but sow, and in a few years have to leave it to those who are wealthier or more energetic. I do what I can, but the work is now largely a question of money."

Money! That is where the trouble lies. Protestant missionaries, — unlike the first pioneers of Christianity who went forth without purse or scrip, with neither gold nor silver in their pockets; unlike later Catholic missionaries whose worldly possessions consist in the clothes on their backs; who drag with them neither wives nor children, neither mothers-in-law, nor daughters-in-law, neither pianos for the drawing-room, nor babies' cradles for the olive branches—Protestant missionaries, we say, who are burthened with all these things, and have upon them the constant care of the nursery, must needs find their work "largely a question of money." They may sow—but the only crop they can ever expect to reap, whether in Spain or Italy, Madrid or Rome, is a plentiful crop of infidelity, and immorality.

Justice, though slow at first, seems to be at last overtaking the swindling rascals who for a long course of years have been enriching themselves and their families by plundering the citizens of New York. One of the leaders of the gang, a man named Tweed, called also Boss, has been arrested as a common thief, and bound over to take his trial on several charges of wholesale robbery. It is to be hoped that he, and all his colleagues may get their deserts.

What has become of Dr. Dollinger and of the new sect, styling itself faintly enough, "*Old Catholic*," which that crochety old gentleman proposed to run in opposition to the real Catholic Church? From the silence of the papers on the subject it would seem as if the concern had already collapsed; and from the language which Protestant newspaper reporters put in the mouth of Dr. Dollinger, one is inclined to suspect that the man must be in his dotage.

He has been "interviewed" by the Hon. J. M. Francis, who sends an account of the affair to the *Troy Times*, reproduced in the columns of the Montreal *Witness*; from this report we make a few extracts, which if containing a correct version of what transpired betwixt Dr. Dollinger and Mr. Francis, go far to support this dotage hypothesis. For instance, he told his interviewer that, though excommunicated, he and his clique "will not be read out of the Church because we cannot accept its errors," thus assuming that the Church is in error.—But if the Church be in error, how can Dr. Dollinger, or any rational person believing it to be so, wish to remain in communion therewith, or call himself a member thereof? The fact of error established, it follows that the community so erring in matters of faith, no matter what it may call itself, is not the Church of Christ, but the synagogue of Satan. An honest man, an intelligent man would not wait to be "read out" of a body which he believed to be in error; he would, the moment he entertained that belief, hasten to break off all connection with it, and to proclaim the fact to the world; just as he would not seek to take as his wife a woman whom he believed to be an habitual and notorious wanton. The thing is impossible; no man, not morally or intellectually depraved, would call himself, or allow others to deem him, a member of a church which taught as God's truth, that which he believed to be a lie.

Neither does the latter part of the interview, as reported by the Protestant papers, tend to raise our estimate of Dr. Dollinger's moral and intellectual calibre. If correctly reported, he must be either an atheist, or in his dotage.

"Do you comprehend," he is represented as saying to his interviewer, "what that doctrine"—(the infallibility of the Pope when pronouncing *ex cathedra* upon some question of revealed truth, or of morals)—"involves?" It involves, so he is made to answer his question, the doctrine of a "higher law," or law higher and of more authority than the law of man. This to Dr. Dollinger is intolerable.—We give at full, as reported in the *Witness*, this portion of the interview:—

"Do you in the United States comprehend what that doctrine involves?" earnestly inquired Dr. Dollinger. "It imposes upon those who accept it the solemn obligation to violate civil law, to set themselves up in opposition to the ordinances of your Government whenever the Pope shall pronounce his infallible judgement against any one of those ordinances upon moral or religious grounds. In a word, it is the assumption of power on the part of the Pope to proclaim a higher law, which according to the dogma, his children must obey, though such obedience involves treason to the State and the overthrow of your Government. This doctrine is not only shocking to the moral sense, it takes us back

to the dark ages of the world, and over a stretch beyond, and it not only insults the common sense of the world, but strikes at the common civilization of our times. It cannot and must not prevail."

In the first place the doctrine, whether true or false, does not insult the "common" sense of the world," for there are, and ever have been, millions who hold, and held it; it does not therefore, and did not insult any sense, which these possess, or possessed, however it may affect some sense possessed by Dr. Dollinger, and his adherents. But a sense which all do not possess in "common," is not a "common," but a "peculiar" sense. Were Dr. Dollinger bound by the laws of logic, he would have simply said, that the doctrine in question was repugnant to his private judgment, or his peculiar sense of right and wrong.

We admit however, that the obnoxious doctrine does imply—and it is for that very reason that it is so obnoxious to men like Dr. Dollinger, and the humble servants of Caesar throughout the world—that there is a "higher law," than that of Caesar—higher because God's law; and we admit also, that were it possible for man to attain to a knowledge of God's law, and if, perchance, the latter should turn out to be in contradiction in any particular to Caesar's law, it would be better to obey God than man. If any man deny this, he is either an atheist, or a fool; the former, if he deny the existence of a "higher law," or law of God prescribing and defining man's moral obligations; the latter a fool, if admitting the existence of such a law, he deny the prior claims of that law on his obedience.

Does not every Protestant who believes his bible to be the Word of God, and to contain His law, believe also, or at all events profess to believe, that he is bound "to violate civil law, to set himself in opposition to the ordinances of his Government, whenever"—in his private judgment—"the bible shall pronounce its infallible judgement against any one of those ordinances upon moral or religious grounds?"

In a word—to use the very expressions of Dr. Dollinger, substituting only the word bible for that of Pope—is not the assumption that the bible is the Word of God, equivalent to the assumption that it proclaims a "higher law" than the law of man? which higher law, man "must obey though such obedience should involve treason to the State, and the overthrow of his Government." If "this doctrine of infallibility be shocking to the moral sense" and strike at the common civilization of our times "if applied to the utterances of a living man, no less shocking to the moral sense is it, no less destructive of our common civilisation, when applied to the utterances, or fancied utterances, of a dead book. Infallibility is no more incompatible with the claims of Caesar, when predicated of a Pope, than when predicated of the Bible; for in one case as in the other, it implies that there is a law higher than Caesar's law; and that when the two clash, as clash they may, it is better, no matter what the cost, to obey God than man. In short, this doctrine which so shocks Dr. Dollinger's moral sense, and so threatens the common civilisation of our times, cannot be even impugned without denying either that there is a God—the rightful moral governor of the world, Who has made known, through revelation, His will to man; or by asserting that, though there be such a God Who has so revealed Himself, still it is better to disobey God than to disobey man. Dr. Dollinger and his adherents may take which horn of the dilemma they please; only we would observe that, if the atheist, or he who says there is no God, and therefore no "higher law" be a fool; he is a still greater fool, who admitting that there is a God, and that God through Christ has made known His law to man, nevertheless asserts that man is greater than God, and therefore to be obeyed before God.

THE DEBATABLE LAND BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT. With Illustrative Narrations. By Robert Dale Owen, Author of *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*. New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., Publishers.

This is a very extraordinary work, the more extraordinary in that it is evidently the work of a highly educated and courteous gentleman, who has deeply studied the religious phenomena of the present age, who writes in perfect good faith, and is firmly convinced of the truth of the marvels which he relates. We may dissent from the conclusions of such a writer; we may be very sceptical as to the occurrence of the phenomena which he records, or rather as to the causes to which he assigns them; but we cannot for these reasons impugn his veracity, or call in question the sincerity of his expressed opinions. Indeed with many of them the Catholic will cordially agree.

In the first part of his work Mr. Owen calls the attention of the Protestant Clergy—to whom it is more particularly addressed—to the fact noticed long ago by Mearns, and more lately by a Protestant clergyman of New York, that Protestantism, considered as a religious system, or phase of Christianity; was never able

after the first outburst of the revolutionary fever of the sixteenth century had expended its force—which it did within the first fifty years after the commencement of the so-called Reformation—to hold its ground against Romanism; and that to-day, everywhere the Catholic religion is making rapid strides towards universal dominion; that everywhere Protestantism, is giving way before it, or lapsing into blank infidelity. The facts cannot be denied; they are evident to the most careless observer; how asks Mr. Owen are they to be accounted for?

"Neither fortune of arms, nor suffering by persecution; neither the serpent wisdom of an Order of which the members were all things to all men, nor the cleansing of those shameless corruptions which had so scandalized the Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, when in 1510 he visited degenerate Rome—not any one of these incidents, nor all of them combined, can be accepted as even plausible explanation why Protestantism, after virtually conquering three-fourths of Europe in one half century, lost, in the next eighty years, full one half of all she had gained. "Lost, and never recovered it; not after ten generations had passed; not down to the present day." —p. 37.

And again:— "Even in countries the most thoroughly Protestant, and in our own times, the inroads of Catholicism on the prevailing faith have been such as must arouse, in thoughtful minds grave reflections. In a third of a century, to wit from 1833 to 1867, the number of Catholic churches in Great Britain had more than doubled, while the number of Catholic seminaries had increased upwards of five-fold. Up to the year 1833—the year when the great Tractarian movement had birth in Oxford—there was not in the British isles a single convent, or one Catholic school; but within thirty-four years thereafter, there were founded in Great Britain nearly three hundred of the former, and nearly four hundred and fifty of the latter. Surely a very noteworthy progress made in the present age, and in the most Protestant country of the world, by the Church of Rome.

"But it is in our own country, above every other, that the recent gains of Romanism upon Protestantism are the most remarkable. At the close of the two centuries and a half that elapsed from the first settlement of Virginia, to the year 1859, the number of Catholics in the United States had run up to two millions and a half only; but at the end of nine years that succeeded, (namely in 1868), that number had doubled. Twelve years ago they were but a twelfth part of our population; to-day they constitute, probably more than a seventh.

"If we suppose the two great divisions of the Christian Church, respectively, to go on increasing among us at the same rate for four terms of nine years each from 1868, the Catholics of the United States would, at the end of that time, exceed the Protestants by several millions.

"How wonderful, if one admits that Reason and Scripture were on the side of the Reformers is all this!" —p. 32, 33.

The remainder of Mr. Owen's book is devoted to his explanation of these facts and their causes. Faith in immortality is dying out, is nearly extinct in the Protestant world. Here comes in what is termed Spiritualism, to supplement the Christian revelation; to give assurance to man that there is an existence beyond the grave; that what we call death is but the transition from one life-form to another and higher form of life, in which progress is still the law, as it is even in the terrestrial phase of existence.

This in the main is the argument of the book; of which the concluding chapters are occupied with an immense number of strange anecdotes which we dare not, which we know not how to qualify—in attestation of the truth of the so-called spiritual phenomena, of which under the names of "*rapping, tipping, table-turning*," we have all heard something of late years. The objective reality of these phenomena we care not to discuss—but this opinion we hesitate not to express; that they are not of God; that they savor more of hell than of heaven; that as there is nothing new in them, so from their past effects we may judge what will be their effects in the future: and that so judging, we may predict from the spread of Spiritualism, the spread of Free Love, and kindred abominations now so rife in the U. States amongst the most noted of the female spiritualists: to say nothing of the insanity, and other intellectual penalties with which, even in this world God visits those who set at defiance His holy laws against necromancy, or the seeking communion with the dead. Not that for a moment we believe that the dead do answer the appeals to them—or communicate with the living through rappings, or by means of pranks played amongst our articles of household furniture. But that the spirits of darkness, that the Gods of the Gentiles, the demons who of old spoke through the heathen oracles, and by the mouths of the idols, may again be permitted to lure to their destruction those who seek after forbidden intercourse with the denizens of another world, may be possible, and is certainly not contrary either to the teachings of the Old Testament, or the doctrines of the Catholic Church. We speak with diffidence, desiring to avoid the extremes of credulity on the one hand, or of scepticism on the other; but this we say with confidence, that no true Catholic can ever permit himself on any pretext to take part in any of the *seances*, or other rites of Spiritualism.

The London *Times* gives it as its opinion that the Prince of Wales caught typhus fever at the house of Lord Londesborough near Scarborough, where, in company with the late Earl of Chesterfield, H. R. H. had been on a visit. The sewage of this house the *Times* insinuates is defective.

COMMUNISM IN ENGLAND.—We would call the attention of the *Witness* to an article on this subject from the London *Times*, which he will find in another place. Not only does the *Times* confirm what we have said on the subject of the spread of this latest phase of Protestantism in England, but it gives us the further information that, "in England are the head quarters of the socialist army,"—and that it is from the same country that "the campaign against civilization is directed." The *Times* hopes, however, that much of the Address is merely "rhetorical," or buncombe.

We call "*Communism*" a phase, the latest phase of Protestantism, because it is essentially anti-Catholic, and as such the legitimate child of the Reformation; because it is Protestantism raised to its very highest power, and the direct result of a logical application of Protestant principles. It manifested itself at an early stage of the Reformation, even in the days of Luther; who, terrified at his own work, and agast at the filthy devil which he had evoked, but knew not how to lay, called loudly upon the secular arm to suppress it. For a time it was suppressed; it was never killed, however, for again in 1792 it reared its head, as also in 1849, and 1871. The secular arm then is not able to deal with it; and the only hopes for society and for that civilisation which Christianity planted, are in the Church, and in the reconversion of Europe, Protestantized down to the infidel point, to the Catholic faith, discarded in the great apostasy of the sixteenth century.

A census of the several Protestant missions in India has been determined upon; many curious facts will no doubt thereby be brought to light. The census is to be taken as follows: A committee of four gentlemen selected from four of the Protestant sects has been named; this committee will address questions to all the leading Protestant missions in India, as to their cost, the numbers of converts made during the last ten years, and other particulars. This census will be valuable says the *Times* correspondent "if the returns are accurate; but," he pertinently, or as some would say, impertinently asks, "will they be accurate. Will the missionaries as a body (some will) in the face of the Societies, dare to tell the exact truth as to their work? Will they as a body, mark their baptisms, real and unreal? Will they say 'this man stipulated, in advance, for employment if he became a Christian?' Such cases of stipulation are not uncommon. I can vouch for some, but will they appear in the reports." Evidently the critical writer in the London *Times* has no great confidence in the truthfulness of Protestant missionary reports; and we suppose that as a Protestant he has good grounds whereon to base his opinions.

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS.—We learn with much pleasure that these devoted men, and most excellent teachers are about to give fresh extension to their admirable system of education. The *Messenger* informs us that for this purpose they have purchased a large piece of ground in St. James' Ward, whereon they will erect a magnificent building fitted for the reception of boarders, as well as of day scholars. All friends of education must heartily wish the Brothers success in this undertaking.

The *Belleisle Intelligencer* after noticing the fact that, from the Judicial Statistics of England for the year 1870, it appears that there had been 4,367 inquests on infants not above a year old, of whom 28 per cent were illegitimate, has the following remarks:—

"This method of disposing of infants is shocking. It is not to be assumed, however, that the 4,367 deaths under one year of age, above referred to, were all the result of violence. In many cases, no doubt, starvation and exposure were the dreadful agents engaged in the work. It is difficult, nay impossible, to see how the prevailing immorality, ignorance and intolerance are to be speedily checked, to any considerable degree, yet it requires no special gift of foresight to reach the conviction that the dire results of these evils might be immeasurably modified by a properly established, and well supported system of foundling asylums."

PLAIN SPEAKING.—The Reverend Father Stafford is determined to wage uncompromising war with drunkenness, and to put down all that promotes it. In his sermon on Sunday, the 10th inst. this zealous priest hesitated not to give it as his opinion that the whiskey vendor was in some respects a greater curse to society than the highway robber. The latter assails his victim with the demand, "Your money or your life; the former says "Your money and your life."

At a large assembly lately held in London for the laudable purpose of reclaiming fallen women, held under the auspices of the Protestant clergy, the singular fact was brought out that the immense majority of the women present had been Sunday school scholars. "Not two per cent of the girls who attend our meetings"—so it was alleged at the meeting as reported in the London *Daily News*—"but have been to a Sunday school."

Remittances in our next.