

The True Witness.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1857.

TO OUR CITY SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscribers, changing their residence are respectfully requested to give notice to that effect at this office, in order that our "Carrier Boys" may know where to leave their papers.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

With the exception of another addition to the Royal Family in the shape of a little Princess, and that the "Supreme Head of the Church of England" is, thanks to chloroform and the monthly nurse, doing as well as can be expected, the news from the old country is entirely devoid of interest. On the Continent, all is quiet. The Neufchatel Conferences had been resumed at Paris, and the dispute between Prussia and Switzerland was considered in a fair way for being amicably adjusted. From the seat of hostilities in the East, there was nothing new reported. Lord Elgin had sailed upon his Chinese mission.

TO OUR DELINQUENT SUBSCRIBERS.

Mr. Monagan, Collector for the TRUE WITNESS, and who is authorised to receive, and give receipts for, all monies due to this Office, is now on a tour throughout the Ottawa district, where we trust that he will be favorably received.—From the Ottawa, Mr. Monagan will proceed to visit our friends in Kingston.

We would "improve the occasion" thus afforded us, by reminding our subscribers of a trifling formality closely connected with the object of Mr. Monagan's visit; but of which, we regret to say, the greater part of them seem to be either entirely ignorant, or very forgetful.

This formality consists in occasionally paying the printer and publisher of the paper to which they subscribe, for the trouble and expense to which he is put. And though to the subscribers this may appear a very trifling and unimportant matter indeed, and one scarce worth the pains of talking about, we would venture to insinuate to them, in the most delicate manner imaginable, that it is of the highest consequence to us that they should pay some little attention to it.

Of our subscribers, many have been so long in the habit of taking our paper, without troubling themselves about paying for it, that perhaps they will look upon this effort to induce them to discharge their indebtedness to this Office, as an attempt upon our part to revive an antiquated, if not altogether exploded superstition. With "mine ancient Pistol," numbers of them seem to hold as a fundamental article of faith, that "base is the slave that pays;" and that the proprietor of a paper, who requests payment from his subscribers, has "devised a vain thing"—as the Psalmist hath it.

This however is a gross error; and we hope that the preaching of our Collector may have the effect of convincing those who hold it of its pernicious character. Should his labors be attended with this most desirable result, we have no doubt that our Delinquent Subscribers will manifest the sincerity and depth of their conversion, by remitting to us, without delay, the large sums in which they stand indebted to us; but for the payment of which we have hitherto appealed to them in vain.

RECEPTION OF NUNS IN THE CONGREGATION NUNNERY.—On Thursday last we had the pleasure of witnessing this most interesting ceremony in the Chapel of the above institution. On that occasion, four young ladies entered as novices, viz: Miss Isabella McCulloch, Miss Teresa McCormick, Mademoiselle Cordelia Baby of Montreal, and Miss Kate Donovan of Boston. Miss Sarah Murphy of Montreal (in religion Sister Ste. Aldegonde) received her cross at the same time, and made her final vows. Nothing could have furnished a more conclusive answer to the senseless objections of Protestants, than the cheerful, happy countenances of these young ladies, literally radiant with joy. Novices take no vows for the first year; they merely assume the purple dress, and enter upon a course of training under the care of an experienced sister who is called Mistress of the Novices. During the first year they are, therefore, not only at perfect liberty to leave the convent, but every means is taken to test the reality of their vocation. Long continued appearance of sadness or dejection is taken as a proof that the novice has no vocation for that Order—whatever it may be—and she is at once sent back to her relations.

The reception took place at the seven o'clock Mass, which was celebrated by the Rev. Superior of the Seminary. A number of the friends and relations of the young ladies received, were present on the occasion in the gallery of the Chapel, the lower part being occupied by the Community and their numerous pupils. When Mass was ended, the young sister who had sat alone before the altar during the service, advanced with a lighted taper in her hand, and kneeling on the steps of the altar, made her vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, in a voice so clear and distinct, that every word was heard by all present. She then received her cross from the hands of the Superior, two of her sisters in religion ex-

changing at the same time, the novice's silk veil, which she had hitherto worn, for the black stuff veil of the professed nuns. It was a beautiful and a touching sight to see the youthful nun, and still more youthful novices, according to the custom of all religious communities, go round at the conclusion of the ceremony to salute the entire sisterhood, one by one, receiving their sisterly embrace in return. Who of all the spectators did not feel convinced at that moment that the fair young creature thus solemnly admitted into the community, was choosing like Mary "the better part," and securing even her earthly happiness?

A very beautiful exhortation was delivered in French by the Reverend Superior of the Seminary; reminding the young aspirants of the paramount claims of God to the undivided love and service of His creatures; the perfect happiness to be found in a life of obedience and self-denial, where the passions are controlled, or rather destroyed, by prayer and mortification, and the soul lives, as it were, in unbroken communion with God its Creator. The address was full of spiritual sweetness, and admirably suited to the occasion.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the young novices were kindly permitted to receive the visits of their friends; and we could not help noticing the contrast between their joyous excitement, and the tearful, wordless sorrow of their parents—sorrow, however, mixed with gratitude, as they themselves said, for that God was pleased to call their children to so holy and so happy a state.

CANT AND HYPOCRISY.—We meet in the *Montreal Witness* of the 6th inst., with an amusing instance of the illiberality, not to say, sectarian bigotry of the "Mercantile Library Association" of Montreal.

It would appear, that, a short time ago, the Directors of this Institution adopted a resolution recommending that the Reverend Mr. Theodore Parker of Boston—one of the most distinguished, and certainly the most eloquent of the Protestant clergy of the United States—be invited to deliver a course of lectures in this city. This resolution, however, gave great offence to some of the evangelical members of the "Mercantile Library Association;" and at their instigation, an outcry was raised against the "orthodoxy" of the reverend gentleman; who, we believe carries the principle of protesting a step beyond what some of his brother Protestants approve of as the limits of Protestantism; and who has the intolerable presumption to assert his "right of private judgment" in religion, in opposition to the "private judgment" of those shining lights of the conventicle—the Rev. Messrs. Snawley and Stiggins. The consequence of this outcry has been, as the *Montreal Witness* "learns with very great satisfaction," that the previous resolution of the Directors to invite the Rev. Theodore Parker to Montreal, has been rescinded; and that thus the "Mercantile Library Association" will be deprived of the honor and pleasure of listening to one of the most brilliant orators of whom the Protestant Church in America can boast.

This paltry insult, offered by a few fanatical snobs in Montreal, to a Protestant clergyman so distinguished as is the Rev. Mr. Theodore Parker, will we are sure excite the disgust of every liberal and intelligent man of every denomination. For the reverend gentleman's theology, or peculiar religious opinions, we as Catholics, have no more respect or sympathy than we have for the theology or religious opinions of any other pastor of a Protestant sect. To the Catholic, Protestantism, in whatsoever guise it may present itself, must always appear in the same odious light; nor can he consistently recognise any important distinction betwixt one form of heresy and another. At their worst however, the doctrines preached by the Rev. Theodore Parker are not more anti-Christian than are those of many other Protestant preachers; neither are they so derogatory to the goodness and justice of God, or so degrading to human nature, as are the blasphemous heresies of a Luther or a Calvin, which find ready acceptance in the conventicle. If the God of the Rev. Mr. Parker is a mere abstraction, that of Calvin is a cruel, blood-thirsty and loathsome fiend; and, after all, it is less offensive to the Divine Majesty to ignore its existence altogether, than to invest it, as do the Calvinists, with the attributes of an omnipotent devil.

The Reverend gentleman will however, no doubt, very easily console himself for the slight put upon him by a handful of uneducated Montreal "counter-skippers," when he reflects that the same contemptible little *digue* attempted, upon a similar occasion, to offer a similar insult to another distinguished Protestant divine, of whom the Protestant church in America may well feel proud. We allude to the Rev. Mr. Emerson; a gentleman whose talents are acknowledged with respect wherever the English language is spoken: but to whose orthodoxy exceptions were taken by our sanctified Montreal "*Mauveworms*," when, some years ago, it was announced that he was about to deliver a series of lectures before the members, and at the invitation, of one of our city Societies. To be associated, even in insult,

with such a man as the Rev. Mr. Emerson, will not be very painful to the feelings of the Rev. Theodore Parker.

Perhaps after mature deliberation that gentleman may come to the conclusion, that the grossest insult that could be offered to a gentleman or person of honorable feelings—that the greatest indignity that could be put upon a scholar and a man of refined intellect—would be a flattering invitation, and a cordial reception from the evangelical portion of the Protestant public of Montreal. Should such be the result of the Rev. Mr. Parker's reflections upon the subject, he will most assuredly have formed a very correct estimate of the moral and intellectual worth of the aforesaid gentry.

When some obscure wretch, for instance, like an Achilli, a Gavazzi, or a Leahy—when some degraded priest, expelled for his utter filthiness, from the bosom of the Catholic Church—is advertised as about to hold forth upon the "Errors of Romanism," it is amusing and instructive to watch the eagerness with which his lectures are attended, by all classes of the community; and to notice the enthusiasm of the fair daughters of the Conventicle, for the lewd wretch, from whom every man, but above all, every woman, possessed of a particle of self-respect, or a grain of modesty, would shrink with disgust! Pretty dears!—they do so love a nasty story—anything that at once appeals to their impure imaginations, and excites in them a holy horror of Popery, mortification, fasting and chastity, has such irresistible charms for them—that, in the case of an apostate priest, they can cheerfully excuse any amount of blasphemy and infidelity; and without a blush will listen to, and applaud language and sentiments, that would disgrace a brothel, and to which the most abandoned outcasts of their sex would be ashamed to give utterance. Thus when Gavazzi was to lecture in Montreal, Protestant "meeting-houses" and Protestant pulpits were at once placed at his disposal; whilst the males and females of the congregation—(God forbid that we should say ladies)—came by hundreds to devour the turpitudes that fell from his lips; and swine like to wallow, and revel, as it were, in the moral filth which, with a profuse hand, he scattered over the sacred enclosure of "Our Zion."

A Gavazzi, and an evangelical Montreal audience are well adapted to one another, intellectually and morally: but betwixt either of them, and a man of education like the Rev. Mr. Emerson, or the Rev. Theodore Parker, it is impossible that there should be any sympathy.—In fact, in our opinion—and we think that upon mature reflection both these gentlemen will here-in agree with us—the greatest compliment a Montreal evangelical Protestant audience could pay to a gentleman and a scholar—the only compliment indeed that a man with the feelings of a gentleman would accept from them—would be contained in their refusal to listen to him; or, as in the case before us, in their withdrawal of an invitation to lecture before them. Men like the Rev. Mr. Parker and the Rev. Mr. Emerson would not, if they were prudent, cast the pearls of their eloquence before the swine that took delight in, and gorged over, the putrid garbage thrown to them by a Gavazzi.

AN IMPORTANT ADMISSION.—The *Montreal Witness*, in noticing an article in the *Courrier du Canada* from the pen of M. Tache, on the subject of "Tract-Distributing," remarks that "there are two kinds of religious tracts—the controversial, and non-controversial. The first aim generally at discussing with Romanists some of their peculiar tenets: the others merely proclaim the great saving truths of Christianity without discussing errors. . . . the latter has been thought peculiarly acceptable to Romanists, as containing nothing offensive, or in direct opposition to their doctrines." The Italics are our own.

The *Montreal Witness* has certainly got a glimpse of the truth here, upon which we congratulate him; and we trust that for the future he and his colleagues will withdraw their charges against Romanism, as idolatrous, as opposed to the great saving truths of Christianity, and as, consequently, destructive of souls. For, if tracts "proclaiming the great saving truths of Christianity—contain nothing offensive, or in direct opposition to the doctrines" of Romanism, it is evident—upon the principle that things which are equal to the same, are equal to one another—that the "doctrines of Romanism contain nothing offensive, or in direct opposition to the great saving truths of Christianity." But every thing which savors, however slightly, of idolatry, or in the least detracts from the infinite merits of the Blood of Christ, which alone can wash away our sins, is "offensive and in direct opposition to the great saving truths of Christianity." Therefore, as in the doctrines of Romanism there is—by the *Montreal Witness*'s own showing—nothing "offensive or in direct opposition to the great saving truths of Christianity"—so also in those doctrines there can be nothing which savors in the slightest of idolatry, or in the least degree detracts from the infinite merits of the Blood of Christ, by adding thereto, or substituting something in lieu thereof.—*Q.E.D.*

It is therefore a strictly logical deduction from the premises with which our evangelical cotemporary supplies us, that Romanism teaches as doc-

trine all the great saving truths of Christianity—and that it teaches nothing offensive, or in direct opposition thereto. Its errors—even if in error—cannot touch those "great saving truths"; and therefore in Romanism there can be nothing dangerous to salvation; nothing therefore, to warrant the anxiety which zealous Protestants profess to feel for our souls. If therefore the *Montreal Witness* really believes that;—the "great saving truths of Christianity," there is nothing "offensive, or in direct opposition to the doctrines" of Romanists—he must be either a very great simpleton, or a very great hypocrite, in that he pretends to feel such alarm for our salvation, and so imperatively bound to seek our conversion.

And this is the more apparent from his indifference to the errors of his own Protestant brethren. Amongst these in Montreal, there are hundreds and thousands who deny that Christ's death was in any sense a Sacrifice, and who scout altogether the doctrine of a vicarious atonement. The tracts which he and his friends take such pains to circulate amongst Romanists, contain much that is "offensive, and in direct opposition to the doctrines" of these his Protestant brethren. If then, he were not a hypocrite, if he really felt the zeal for the spread of the "great saving truths of Christianity" which he professes, the *Montreal Witness* would address his tracts, not to Romanists, but to Unitarians, Universalists, and Liberal Protestants generally; and the Unitarian clergymen, who preach doctrines "offensive, and in direct opposition to the great saving truths of Christianity," as embodied in his tracts—and not the Romish priests, in whose doctrines there is nothing offensive, or in direct opposition to those great saving truths—would be the especial objects of his eloquent denunciations.

Another point to which we would call the attention of the *Witness*, and which is a direct corollary from the proposition by him enunciated, that, in the "great saving truths of Christianity, there is nothing offensive, or in direct opposition to Romanism"—is this—That Protestantism is Christian in so far only as it agrees with Romanism—and that, in every particular wherein it differs from the latter, or is distinctively Protestant, it is heathen. There is, as the *Montreal Witness* admits, no great saving Christian truth which Romanism does not teach as doctrine; for if there were, tracts containing such great saving truths would be "offensive, and in direct opposition to" Romanist doctrines. All therefore that any Protestant holds of positive Christian doctrine, is held by the Romanist; and if they differ, it must be because the former denies something which the latter asserts. Now, it will be invariably found that everything which, in opposition to the Romanist, the Protestant denies, is denied also by the heathen and infidel. We have often insisted on this as conclusive against the pretensions of Protestantism as a phase of Christianity: for in so far as it is Protestant, or as it differs from Romanism, it agrees in every particular with heathenism, and is therefore Non-Christian; and wherein it agrees with Romanism, or is Christian, it is Non-Protestant.

Hence the danger of the non-controversial tracts, against which M. Tache so powerfully and justly warns his credulous and over-confiding fellow-countrymen. These tracts, containing nothing strongly anti-Romish, or anti-Christian, gain admittance into Catholic households, which would refuse to tolerate for one moment the entrance of the old abusive "*Maria-Monk*" style of tract. The simple *habitant*, seeing nothing therein but what from his childhood he has heard from the priest, and learnt in his catechism—and who does not see that much which he has learnt of the great saving truths of Christianity, is therein denied or ignored—is easily induced to swallow the poison which they contain; which poison however is not the less dangerous because taken in small and imperceptible doses. It is thus the infidel missionary—for infidelity, as well as Protestantism, has its missionaries and *colporteurs*—sets about his task. He is careful not to season at first with too strong a dash of infidelity the harmless little "non-controversial" tracts which he slips into the hands of his hearers. These tracts, like Protestant tracts, generally contain some harmless story of some excellent amiable old gentleman, with a broad intelligent forehead, a benevolent countenance, and very lax religious principles. The beauties of "natural" religion, without any direct allusions to Christianity or supernatural religion, are dwelt upon, and praised in eloquent terms; and the simple reader, not being upon his guard against the devices of the enemy, rises from its perusal with an undefined perhaps, but still a strong and growing impression, that atheism, deism, and infidelity are not such bad things after all. A book openly denying the existence of God, and reviling the Lord Who bought him, he would at once have rejected with disgust; but the tract wherein the poison of infidelity is quietly insinuated, is greedily devoured. Thus is it that small and oft-repeated doses of certain noxious substances are, both in the moral and physical orders, far more dangerous than are large doses, which generally excite vomiting, whereby the patient is delivered of the peccant matter.

The *Montreal Witness* is also quite correct

in his remark, that even the "*Romish version of the New Testament is deadly to Popery, even when taken in small doses.*" It is so; but only when taken in "small doses." A slight and superficial acquaintance with holy writ, such as that which the editor of the *Montreal Witness* possesses, and which is common to most evangelical Protestants, is deadly to Popery, and very dangerous to Christianity. A little learning is a dangerous thing; but of all learning this is most true of biblical learning. A "small dose" of the Bible contains only the text, that there—"is no God," whilst a larger draught gives us what the "*fool hath said in his heart.*"

STATE-SCHOOLISM IN THE LOWER PROVINCE.—We read in the *Western Recorder* as follows:—

"Prince Edward's Island is now convulsed from centre to circumference with a general election, and a religious excitement connected therewith. The question at the Polls is—'The Bible, or no Bible for our Common Schools.'"

In these few lines we have the dishonest tactics of the friends of "State-Schoolism," clearly displayed; and are furnished with an unanswerable reply to those who would persuade us that a Catholic minority would have nothing to fear from the proselytising tendencies of the Protestant majority in Upper Canada: even were the denominational schools of the former entirely done away with, and the "Common" system fully established throughout the Province.

In its origin, the "Common School" always professes to be purely secular; and to be instituted with the sole object of giving to members of all religious denominations, such an education as all may accept, because entirely free from everything connected with religion.—To such a system—the friends of "State-Schoolism" urge—no man, Catholic or Protestant, can object; for being entirely unconnected with religion, there can be with regard to it, no place for religious scruples from members of either denomination.

But when once the "Common School" system is firmly and irrevocably imposed upon the people, and by a Protestant majority, the latter adopt a very different tone towards the Catholic minority, now hopelessly and helplessly crouching beneath the yoke. We hear no more of the beauties and excellencies of purely secular education; no longer are the religious and conscientious objections of Catholics to allow their children to join, even for one moment, in any act of worship, or religious instruction, with their Protestant fellow-citizens, spoken of tenderly, and as entitled to the respectful consideration of the State; but we are met instead with the cry of "The Bible in our Common Schools;" and if we remonstrate, we are branded as contemners of the "Word of God," and as the advocates of "Godless Education." If, in Upper Canada, the Protestant majority had the power to do so—and it is only the existence of legal provision for the establishment of Catholic denominational schools which robs them of the power—the "Common Schools," as they are called, of that section of the Province would be mere hot beds of proselytism; wherein the Catholic child would be compelled to join in religious exercises, of which his parents disapproved, and which they believed to be, not only not acceptable to God, but, heretical, and an insult to His Divine Majesty. The "Separate School Bill" is the safety valve of our educational system; which alone saves us from that explosion of Protestant intolerance of which we shall inevitably be the victims, if ever we are weak enough, or wicked enough, to desist from our struggles for "Freedom of Education."

It is of no use for our opponents to tell us, that in the "Common Schools" there is no tampering allowed with the pupils' faith; and that the religious opinions of all are equally respected. Even were this true—which it is not—of the "Common Schools" as at present existing, it would not be true twenty-four hours after the repeal of the "Separate School Bill." The cry would then be in Upper Canada, as it is in Prince Edward's Island—"The Bible in our Common Schools;" and the children of Catholic parents would be forced, either to accept of religious instruction from the opponents of their faith, or to keep away from those schools, towards the support of which their parents were heavily taxed.

A good separate, or denominational School, would therefore be valuable to the Catholic minority, even were they never, or but rarely, to avail themselves of its provisions; because the power that it confers upon the said minority to withdraw themselves, if they think fit, from the operation of the "Common School" system, tends to restrain, if not entirely to suppress, the abuses which would otherwise prevail in the so-called "Common Schools." It follows therefore, that the number of separate schools actually existing is no measure whatever of the advantages which the Catholic minority derive from the existing provisions of the "Separate School Law."

We would endeavor to impress this important fact upon our cotemporary the *Quebec Gazette*; who, in a late issue, commenting upon the "School Question," leaps to the strange conclusion, that "the facts connected with the working