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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The *America* has arrived, but brings no important news from the seat of war. Having thrown a few shot into Odessa, the Allied Fleet has relapsed into its former inactivity; from the Danube we have no reliable information; and all that we know positively of Sir C. Napier, is, that his fleet is much undermanned, and that, in the opinion of some of the first naval and military authorities, if he attempt an attack upon Cronstadt, he will, in all probability, catch a Tartar. Some 15,000 British troops had arrived at Constantinople by the end of April. The adhesion of Austria to the policy of the Western Powers may now be looked upon as almost certain. It is said that Sweden, Spain, Portugal, and Piedmont are prepared to join the Coalition.

The proceedings in Parliament have been uninteresting. Another weary debate on Mr. Chambers' motion against Conventual institutions, was followed by another adjournment to the 18th inst. All parties seem to be sick of Mr. Chambers, and his low-minded associates; and would gladly, if they could, pitch him, them, and their motions, to the hottest place, on record. Sir James Graham has signified the intention of Government not to accede to the request that Catholic sailors, serving on board Her Majesty's ships, might be excused from compulsory attendance on Protestant worship, according to Act of Parliament.

Lord Elgin arrived from Europe last week, and was received at New York with every demonstration of respect. His Excellency is at present on a visit to Washington with the view, it is hinted, of expediting the settlement of the "fishery question," and the commercial relations betwixt Canada and the United States.

There is a report, hitherto unconfirmed, that the long missing steamer *City of Glasgow* has been spoken with at sea.

It is strange that the *Minerve*, *Canadien*, *Kingsion Herald*, and other of our cotemporaries, who, whilst professing sympathy with Catholic interests, condemn the course pursued by the TRUE WITNESS on the "Reserves" question, cannot, or will not, understand that the policy which we advocate is dictated solely by the probable effects of "secularization" upon Catholic interests: utterly irrespective of its possible results upon the fortunes, either of the present ministry, or of existing political combinations. Such paltry considerations are far beneath our notice. To us, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether the present ministry retain office during the life time of the present generation, or be kicked out to-morrow; what becomes of the political combinations now existing—except in so far as the interests of the Catholic Church are therein concerned—is also a matter in which we take no interest.

We have no wish to embark on the shallow muddy sea of Canadian secular politics—we have no fondness for stirring up the nasty seculent matter which lies at the bottom. We can imagine, indeed, nothing more dreary, or more uninviting than the aspect which its shores present; and, save when the interests of Catholicity demand it, it is our pleasure, as it is our interest, to keep aloof. To meddle with the paltry squabbles, and trivial disgusting personalities, which make up the sum total of Canadian politics, supplying the place, if they cannot atone for the want, of high and honorable principles, is, as contrary to our tastes, as it would be unbecoming in a professedly religious journal. But, as a Catholic journal, the TRUE WITNESS cannot altogether keep silent, when measures, seriously affecting the nearest and dearest interests of Catholics, are at stake;—when, in fact, they are called upon by the secular press, to prefer the interests of the ministry to those of their Church, and to sacrifice a principle for the sake of a party.

The *Herald* too, and other Ministerial organs, speak as if Catholics were bound to support the present ministry, and to make its policy their's; as if they were under some strong obligations to oppose its opponents, and to resist the formation of hostile political combinations. Whence this notion proceeds it is hard to say; to us it seems a most monstrous and impertinent assumption. To use all parties, and all men, but to be made use of by none; to drive, but never to allow themselves to be driven, or dragged, in triumph through the mire, behind the chariot of any ministry; of any party, is true sound Catholic policy; a policy which is warmly advocated by the wisest statesmen, and best Catholics, of Ireland at the present day, under the name of "Independent Opposition"—opposition to every ministry which will not

grant the just demands of the Church; and support to any government—no matter by what party watched—word designated—that accepts, as a part of its ministerial programme "Justice to Catholics." This also is the true policy for Catholics in Canada.

The *Kingsion Herald* reiterates the charge of Toryism brought against the TRUE WITNESS by the *Minerve* and the *Canadien*. Of this we complain not. It is a common artifice with the worsted disputant, to substitute invective for good argument, and in default of reasons, to seek to crush his adversary with hard names. We treat the accusation of Toryism with indifference, relying upon the good sense of our readers, who will, we trust, form their opinions of the TRUE WITNESS, from something more substantial than the frothy declamations of its opponents. In its evil sense—we deny the justice of applying the term Tory, to the TRUE WITNESS. If by the appellation is meant one who would seek to establish, or perpetuate, a system of class-legislation, and the domination of one section of the community over another, nothing can be more unmerited than such a reproach; nor can those who delight to cast it in our teeth, instance, from the writings of the TRUE WITNESS, one passage, which, by the most malignant ingenuity can be tortured into affording a pretext for the charge. But, if by Toryism be meant, respect for authority, and the rights of property—the constant assertion of the obligations of the one, and the sanctity of the other—if by Tory be meant one who prefers truth to popularity, and who scorns to sacrifice principle, for the sake of applause, or from fear of censure—then, indeed, we willingly accept the title as the highest compliment that could be paid us. In this latter sense, all true Catholics are Tories, or Conservatives, for the Catholic Church is eminently Conservative; and it is in her communion only that we can learn how to reconcile the liberty of the individual, with the requirements of authority—and how to comport ourselves as loyal and dutiful subjects, without prejudice to our rights as citizens.

Finally, we presume not to thrust our opinions upon others, as the dogmas of infallibility. Err, we may—nay, must,—if in "taught we deviate from the teachings of the Catholic Church; and to her correction we are ever amenable. But in those matters upon which, as belonging to the domain of opinion and not of faith, she allows full scope for discussion, we claim the right of respectfully, but firmly, offering our opinion. Not as arrogantly assuming to be the organ or mouth-piece of our Irish Catholic fellow-citizens: but as one who would submit to them his views upon a question in the settlement of which, both as Irishmen and Catholics, they are deeply interested; and which it behooves them therefore to examine closely, coolly and dispassionately, and with the aid of those lights which the Church—and the Catholic Church only—can bring to bear upon it.—In so doing, we were well aware that we must expect to encounter opposition, to have our arguments misstated, and our motives misrepresented; such must ever be the lot of those who refuse to swim with the stream, and we are neither surprised, nor hurt that it has been our's; we may regret indeed, for the moment, having to differ with men for whom we have the highest respect; but far more lasting, far more poignant, would have been our regrets, had we, from fear of giving offence, belied our convictions, or refrained from giving expression to our sincere, even if erroneous, opinion—that the "Secularisation" of the "Reserves" is unjust, inexpedient, anti-Catholic in principle, and in its results fraught with danger to the best interests of the Church.

The *Christian Guardian* in its issue of the 10th—asserts "that neither the *Christian Guardian*, nor the *Wesleyan Conference*—neither the Chief Superintendent of Education, nor any other minister of the Wesleyan body, or member of the church—is committed to the sentiments contained in those letters"—from which we laid a few extracts before our readers, in the TRUE WITNESS of the 5th inst. This repudiation of the severity, and brutality of the writer signing himself "Protestant" in the *Christian Guardian*, though so far acceptable, as it shows that our Methodist friends are ashamed of their advocate, comes too late; for we have it in the words of the *Christian Guardian* himself, that he is responsible, and that his colleagues of the *Wesleyan Conference*—under whose "Direction" the *Christian Guardian* is "Published"—are responsible, for the sentiments contained in the letters which appeared in the *Christian Guardian* over the signature "Protestant." When remonstrated with by *Clericus* for inserting such vile trash in a professedly religious journal, the Rev. Editors of the *Christian Guardian* replied by the assurance that they were quite prepared to take the entire share of responsibility that belonged to them; and, therefore, as Editors of that paper, as the persons under whose "Direction it is Published," the members of the Wesleyan Conference are, collectively and individually, morally responsible for every line, for every word, that appears in the journal "Published under their Direction," and sanctioned by their authority. The editor or director of a paper is morally responsible for all that appears therein, unless he expressly disclaims it; but having, in fact, admitted that responsibility, it is too late to attempt to shuffle it off now.

The *Christian Guardian* further suggests that, if offended with the letters of a "Protestant" our proper work would be to deal with the statements they contain. We do so, by qualifying those statements as "lies," and their writer as either a gross ignoramus, or a deliberate liar; this is the only way that such statements deserve to be dealt with. Surely the *Christian Guardian* would not expect a gentleman to condescend to notice seriously the malign

ant falsehoods of the "Protestant" correspondent. Titus Oates was whipt at the cart's tail—Maria Monk, rotted away in a New York jail—but no one thinks seriously of refuting Titus Oates, or Maria Monk—who, to do them justice however, were fully as respectable, well-informed, and truth loving, as the majority of Protestant controversialists, to whom "Protestant" is indebted for his wondrous stock of information concerning Popery. It is for the *Christian Guardian* to prove, and not for us to disprove, those statements; and till proved—proved too by something better than the testimony of Protestant historians—we have the right to treat them as contemptible falsehoods, which dirty knaves circulate, and silly fools believe.

As a proof of the unblushing mendacity of this "Protestant," we appeal to a letter which appeared in a late issue of the *Christian Guardian*. Therein the writer states plainly that, last summer, Protestants were murdered by Catholics during the Gavazzi riots. Now, we need not go beyond this. If the *Christian Guardian*, if the "Protestant," can mention the name of one Protestant, murdered by Catholics, either at Quebec or Montreal, during the said riots, we will acknowledge ourselves in error, and admit the credibility of "Protestant." We know of Catholics murdered in cold blood by Protestants; but we defy the *Christian Guardian* to name one single Protestant who came by his death from a Catholic's hands. The list of the slain at that sad period are published: and if "Protestant" be not what we assert him to be—a liar and slanderer—he will have no difficulty in stating which of the Protestants who lost their lives on that melancholy occasion were killed by Catholics—acting under the instructions of the Church, and the Bishops of Canada; for this is what the mean fellow insinuates. We call upon him then for proof of his assertions, or else to submit to put up with the lie that we have given him.

Does the *Christian Guardian* require additional proof of the mendacity or ignorance of his correspondent? Here it is. "Protestant" says:—

"Cardinal Bellarmine in the 4th book de Pontiff Changes, says—'If the Pope should err in commanding vice, and forbidding virtue, the Church were bound to believe that vice be good and virtue bad, unless she would sin against her own conscience; and again, in Chap 31 he says—'Christ has given to St. Peter (and consequently to the Pope) the power of making that to be sin which is no sin, and that which is no sin to be sin.'"

The *Christian Guardian* will see that the point at issue betwixt us is very simple. Did Cardinal Bellarmine, in any of his works, publish such sentiments—or sentiments in any way analogous to them? If he did not, then is "Protestant," who says that he did, a liar and slanderer; and the men who through their columns circulate his slanders are not much better: unless indeed their ignorance of the writings of the great Cardinal whom they seek to traduce may be pleaded as an excuse for their calumnies. If he did, if in any of Cardinal Bellarmine's works, such sentiments can be found, we will acknowledge ourselves in error, and renounce the religion which Cardinal Bellarmine professed.

We trust that the *Christian Guardian* will not shrink from the challenge we throw out to him; and that he will admit that "we have dealt with the statements" in "Protestant's" letter. It is for him to make good his statements against Cardinal Bellarmine; and this he can do by giving the words of the Cardinal, together with references to the place in his voluminous works, where they may be found. If he has any friends at Montreal to whom he would like to refer the question, we will undertake to produce any of Cardinal Bellarmine's works that may be required for the sake of verification. If the *Christian Guardian* declines this simple test, this speedy and satisfactory method of bringing the question of "Protestant's" voracity and credibility to a trial, he cannot complain that we "deal with his statements" as lies and slanders.—We pause for a reply.

Our cotemporary, the *Canadien*, of Quebec, says—that, in the writings of his anonymous correspondent, who of late has been pretending to enlighten his fellow-countrymen and coreligionists, on the nature and obligations of the marriage tie—he is at a loss to see "anything of a nature to draw down upon him the anathemas of the Church." We will endeavour to enlighten him.

In the articles contributed by the correspondent of the *Canadien*—and for which, if they contain any propositions repugnant to faith or morals, the Editor is morally responsible, since he is not compelled to insert such communications, and is indeed bound to reject them, if offensive to religion and decency—doubts, and more than doubts, were expressed as to the "indissolubility" of marriage, and the "immorality" of divorce; whilst the Editor of the *Journal de Quebec* was referred to the *Repertoire de Jurisprudence* in order to correct or modify his "too exclusive ideas" upon these points. From this, if there be meaning in words, we deduce the following conclusions:—

1. That, according to the writer in the *Canadien*—who, to make matters worse, presents himself to the public in the disguise of a Catholic—the "indissolubility" of marriage, and the "immorality" of divorce, are matters upon which it is permitted to doubt.
2. That an appeal to another tribunal, than that of the Church, viz.—the *Repertoire de Jurisprudence*—is permissible to Catholics.
3. That the ideas of the *Journal de Quebec*, that marriage between baptized persons is always and everywhere "indissoluble," and that divorce is always, and under all circumstances, "immoral," are too "exclusive," and should be modified.

The TRUE WITNESS thereupon asserts that, in permitting his journal to be made the medium for giving publicity to these irreligious, immoral, and anti-Catholic sentiments, the editor of the *Canadien* has rendered himself obnoxious to the anathemas contained in the following Canons of the 24th Session of the Council of Trent:—

CANON VII.—"If any one saith, that the Church has erred, in that she hath taught, and doth teach, in accordance with the evangelical and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of matrimony cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the married parties; and that both, or even the innocent one who gave not occasion to the adultery, cannot contract another marriage, during the life-time of the other; and, that he is guilty of adultery, who, having put away the adulteress, shall take another wife, as also she, who, having put away the adulterer, shall take another husband; let him be anathema."

CANON XII.—"If any one saith that matrimonial causes do not belong to the ecclesiastical judges—let him be anathema."

By the seventh Canon, the "indissolubility of marriage" is explicitly asserted, and, implicitly, the "immorality" of divorce; even adultery cannot afford a plea for the one or diminish the guilt of the other, which is as the guilt of adultery. It is not permitted, therefore, to any Catholic to doubt, or to insinuate the possibility of a doubt, as to the "indissolubility" of marriage, and the "immorality" of divorce; he who does so, is unworthy of the name of Catholic, and deservedly "draws down upon himself the anathemas of the Church," as pronounced by the Council of Trent.

By the twelfth Canon, the right of the ecclesiastical judges to decide upon all matrimonial causes, *quoad vinculum* at least, is also clearly asserted; and he who pretends that the *Repertoire de Jurisprudence* can throw any new light upon the subject, or that any civil tribunal, or any earthly potentate whatever, has any co-ordinate jurisdiction therein, sets this Canon at defiance, and thereby does again "draw down upon himself the anathemas of the Church."

Thus the immorality of divorce is as certain as is the immorality of polygamy, or of concubinage, or fornication; and he justly deserves to be branded as the enemy of society, and a corrupter of morals, who presumes to insinuate even, that, under any circumstances, either polygamy or concubinage, divorce or fornication, are permissible to the baptised Christian; or that the essential, and inherent turpitude of any of these acts can be diminished by the decrees of any earthly tribunal whatsoever. But this is what the writer in the *Canadien* has done; whilst its editor is equally culpable, for allowing his columns to be made the medium for propagating the pernicious, immoral and eminently anti-Catholic doctrines of his anonymous correspondent. If, in condemning these doctrines, the language of the TRUE WITNESS has been strong, we feel no regrets, and have no apology to offer.

The question as raised between the *Journal de Quebec* and the *Canadien*, was not whether Catholic legislators should impose their views upon the Protestants of Upper Canada; but whether the former should aid and abet the latter, in setting at defiance the laws of God, and trampling upon the obligations of morality; whether they should, in fact, legalise adultery. The "immorality" of divorce being a matter of fact, and not of opinion upon which it is permitted to differ—divorce being positively "immoral," a public scandal, and the immediate occasion of adultery—no honest conscientious Catholic legislator can, under any circumstances, assent thereto, or give any encouragement to its promoters. He may perhaps refrain from giving any opinion at all thereupon, if not applied to; but when called upon to pronounce judgment, when compelled to register his vote, he has no option left him; he must say—marriage is always "indissoluble," and divorce always, and under all circumstances, "immoral."—Thus only can he avoid participation in the sin of others; thus only can he escape the anathemas of the Church, pronounced by the Council of Trent.

Does the *Canadien* object to our doctrine? How, then, would he act, if called upon to sanction by his vote, polygamy, the practice of a large Protestant community, and of whose "immorality," as of that of divorce, there can be no doubt? Would the editor of the *Canadien*, if a member of Congress, give his legislative sanction to the practice of polygamy? Yet polygamy is as much a Protestant institution, as is divorce.

"If the editor of the *True Witness* will point out wherein the *Freeman* condemned his erroneous judgment, because of his Catholicity, we shall be prepared at once to admit the force of his reasoning, and also its consequences."—*Freeman*, May 20th.

"He, the editor of the *True Witness*, does not deny that the Legislature may lawfully deal with the question, but argues, as he says, 'from a Catholic point of view.' This, you will perceive, is shirking the merits of the question."—*Freeman*, May 6th.

In justice to our cotemporary, we should however add, that the moment he looks at the question ("Clergy Reserves") with his Catholic eyes, he sees it in the same light as does the TRUE WITNESS:—

"It is true that, as Catholics, we may not exactly like such action"—(secularisation)—"and ought not perhaps to encourage it."—*Id.*

Well then—"Don't encourage it," or encourage others to "encourage it."

The *Montreal Freeman* expresses surprise at our allusions to the *Ottawa Tribune*, the paper about to be started in Bytown, by Mr. Burke, a gentleman, universally, and deservedly respected by his fellow-countrymen on the Ottawa, but of whom the *Freeman* thinks fit to speak in the most ungenerous and insulting terms. Mr. Burke is no doubt able to answer for himself, and needs not our assistance; we