

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1872.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

MARCH—1872.

Friday, 8.—Of the Five Wounds of Our Lord. Saturday, 9.—St. Francis, W. Sunday, 10.—Fourth in Lent. Monday, 11.—St. John of God, C. Tuesday, 12.—St. Gregory, P. C. D. Wednesday, 13.—Forty Martyrs. (March 10.) Thursday, 14.—Of the Cross.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

On Tuesday, 27th ult., the Queen went in state to return thanks for the restoration to health of her son the Prince of Wales. Her reception by the people was enthusiastic; the crowd was immense, and several accidents, some fatal, in consequence occurred. On Thursday 29th, as Her Majesty was returning from a drive, and had arrived at Buckingham Palace, a lad about 20 years of age, whose name is given as Alfred O'Connor, and who is called a Fenian, rushed up to the carriage, and holding a pistol to the Queen's head, demanded her signature to some papers he held in his left hand. He was at once knocked down by Prince Arthur, and secured by the attendants. Her Majesty manifested no emotion, but with the courage which is hereditary in her family, took the whole affair very quietly. There seems to be no reason to believe that the pistol was loaded; and there is every reason to believe that the fellow was crazy, and that his is a case rather for a lunatic asylum, than for a High Treason trial. In Ireland there has been something of the nature of a riot on the arrival of the The O'Donoghue at Kerry. Stones were thrown at the Police, who however charged with bayonets on the mob, which was dispersed without any loss of life. The London Times scents the idea of any composition on the Alabama claims. England, so it declares, will pay nothing but what she may be required to pay by the decision of the Geneva tribunal. It is reported that the Queen is about to pay a visit to Germany to her daughter the Princess Imperial.

The preliminary examination of the young man O'Connor, charged with the assault on the Queen, took place before the magistrates on Friday, and confirms our first impression that the prisoner is more fool than knave, a crack brained, half witted fellow with a hankering after notoriety. He meditated evidently no attempt on the life of the Queen, for his pistol was unloaded, and what he could have expected to accomplish by his exploit no one can tell. It is said that he is of Irish Protestant origin, and a grandson of Fergus O'Connor a noted Chartist in his day.

The famous Tichborne case seems to be approaching its close, the jury having on the 4th inst., informed the Court that they had heard sufficient evidence whereon to base their verdict. This would imply that they have come to the conclusion that the claimant is an arrant impostor.

The Dominion Parliament is expected to meet for business on the 11th of next month.

THE REV. MR. RYERSON'S CATECHISM.—We have shown that even from a Protestant stand point this compilation is "sectarian," and therefore not suited for use in the Common Schools. From a Catholic point of view it is still more objectionable, as we propose to show by one or two examples.

"The Bible furnishes the only infallible rule and authoritative standard of right and wrong."—p. 66.

This is false. The Church, or body commissioned by Christ Himself to teach all nations, and with which He promised to be present all days even to the end of the world, is the only infallible rule, and authoritative standard of right and wrong—that Catholics acknowledge. It is only through its teachings that they learn that the Bible is in any sense inspired, or the Word of God, as well as a credible narrative of events that preceded and accompanied the establishment of their religion.

The Rev. Mr. Ryerson next proceeds to give ten reasons in proof that the Bible is the Word

of God; but unless it was his design to show how utterly incapable of proof is his theory of the inspiration of the Bible, he had better have left it alone. His advocacy does but weaken a good cause.

His first reason is, that he has an intuitive apprehension that the Bible is the Word of God. I know, he says, it is so, "just as I know that you, and not another person, have asked me this question—how do you know that the Bible is the Word of God? just as I know that thunder is the voice of God in nature, * and not that of man." He knows it is the Word of God—because he "seems to hear the voice of God in it"!!!—p. 67. The Italics are our own.

His next reason is, because uninspired men could not write such a book of themselves. This is the staple argument of Mahomedans in proof of the inspiration and divine origin of their Koran; and it is just as good in one case as in the other. Dr. Ryerson also knows that the writers of the works comprised in the Bible were inspired by God, because we cannot know the mind and will of God unless He communicate it to us: *id.*; and,

because He who made man, can communicate with man in whatever manner he please!

Because the writers of the Bible professed to have been taught to do so by the Holy Spirit of God. False in fact; this, as a rule, they do not profess. The writer of the biography of Christ, under the name of St. Luke, professes to assign his reasons for writing; but therein he makes no allusion to having been moved thereunto by the Holy Ghost.

Because the morals and doctrines taught in the Bible are superior to any taught by any teachers in any time or country. Leaving out of sight, that the question—what are the doctrines and morals of the Bible?—is one over which Protestants have disputed for centuries, without as yet having arrived at any conclusion—we do not see how the fact that those teachings are superior to the teachings of other men, avowedly uninspired and fallible, can prove their inspiration. Gas light is far superior to that of a tallow candle; but gas need not therefore be looked upon as a divine revelation.

Because the writers of the Bible did not write for any "private interpretation," or for selfish purposes, but for public warnings. But so also do many good men who have no pretensions to inspiration.

Because many of the predictions in the Bible have been verified by subsequent events. This would prove only the inspiration of him who prophesied; not that of those who have merely recorded those prophecies; neither can the fulfilment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies (whose authenticity is questioned by a very large, and learned school in the Protestant world) prove the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament who record that fulfilment.

Because there are hundreds of thousands of living, as well as millions of departed, Christians—men of rank, science, scholarship and statesmanship—who have testified, and do testify, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is invested with more than human power. This may be so, but it is only an amplification of the first reason assigned:—that "I,"—Dr. Ryerson—"seem to hear the voice of God in it—the Bible." The Rev. Mr. Ryerson's subjective impressions, those of millions of other men however learned, can be no evidence to any except those who feel as they do. Besides, the question is not as to the inspiration of the "gospel of Jesus Christ," but as to the inspiration of the men who after his disappearance from earth, professed to give not only a report of that gospel or good message, but their comments upon it, and their interpretation thereof.

And lastly, the Rev. Mr. Ryerson knows the Bible is the Word of God, because those who pretend to reject it have no certain standard of faith and morals. We may say with as much truth the same of those who reject the authority of the Church. They have no certain standard of faith and morals; they cannot after centuries of wrangling agree amongst themselves whether Christ be God, or only a creature; whether His death on the cross, were an atonement for sin, or merely a beautiful example of philanthropic self-devotion; whether marriage be indissoluble; whether a man is restricted to one wife at a time—see *Life of Luther*; whether divorce be allowable, and if so under what circumstances, &c., &c., &c. The Bible alone, interpreted by private judgment, has failed to determine any of these rather important questions in faith and morals—and may therefore be fairly looked upon as incompetent to determine them, and as never having been compiled as a rule of faith, or "only infallible rule, and authoritative standard of right and wrong."

"God defend us from our friends; we can protect ourselves against our enemies," may the

* This favors more of poetry than of theology, of a dissolute Horace, than of a respectable Methodist minister—"Cicero tonantem credidimus Jovem repare." In what sense we should like to know, is thunder more the "voice of God in nature," than is any other noise, great or small, produced by natural causes?

believers in the inspiration of the Bible exclaim when they have finished the perusal of the "ten reasons" above given for believing therein. These reasons we have given fully and fairly—though we have of course abridged the worthy Doctor's platitudes; and if in these be all that can be said in proof of the inspiration of the Bible, the sooner we renounce belief therein, the more creditable will it be to our intelligence. Dr. Ryerson may make sceptics, with his ten reasons, but never will he make a convert or confirm a believer. There is not a Catholic child of ten years old, who would not laugh at such "reasons" as the Reverend Superintendent of Education in Ontario puts forth in defence of the Bible; and no Catholic parent should allow his child to be taught that belief in the inspiration of the Holy Scripture rests at all upon the grounds assigned in the Catechism recommended by the Council of Public Instruction.

One thing therein is good; as where speaking of the duties of parents, Dr. Ryerson says—"The second duty of parents is the education of their children." Now the "duties," as before God, of parents towards their children, is but another mode of expression for their "rights" as against the State. It is the duty of the parent to educate his child; it is his right therefore to resist State interference with the discharge of that duty; it is therefore the duty of the State to abstain from doing anything which may restrict the rights of the parent; from so legislating as to compel the Catholic parent to send his child to a school against which he, in the discharge of his duties, entertains conscientious scruples; from taxing the Catholic parent for the support of such schools—since by so doing the State encroaches upon a fund which the parent would otherwise have appropriated to the giving what he deemed a suitable education to his child; and therefore to that extent imposes obstacles in the way of his discharge of his duties towards God. If "the duty of parents is the education of their children," then the School Laws of U. Canada, of the U. States, of New Brunswick, and of almost every country in the world, are a monstrous outrage upon the rights of the parent, and a sin against God. In short, when he comes to morals, even Dr. Ryerson is virtually compelled to admit our thesis—that the child, in what pertains to its education, belongs not to the State, but to the Family; not to the civil magistrate but the parent. In this, as in a nutshell is contained the entire Education Question—Whose duty is it to educate the child? Dr. Ryerson says it is the parent's duty; pity 'tis that he does not reduce his theory to practice.

We have said enough to show how unsuited is Dr. Ryerson's Catechism for use in the Common Schools. Because it is "sectarian" even from a Protestant stand point; and because its teachings are the direct contradictory of those of the Catholic Church on the all important question of the "rule of faith." Dr. Ryerson has failed, however, only where others have failed before him; and his failure is but another proof, that a Common School system of Education must totally ignore God, religion, and morals if it would avoid the rock sectarianism.

THAT AGED AND VENERABLE PRIEST.—The Rev. Richard Nelson Newell, M.A., (University of Paris), LL.D., (University of Nashville, Tenn.), whose conversion, at the age of 75 years, to the episcopal branch of the Protestant Church was pompously announced in a recent issue of the *Montreal Witness*, and on the authority of a United States paper, the *Baltimore American*, as having occurred in St. Mary's Cathedral, Memphis, on Sunday the first of the Epiphany—seems to be a very mysterious sort of person indeed; closely resembling in this respect, the Mrs. Harris, to whose sayings and doings Mrs. Gamp was in the habit of constantly appealing, and whose name was the cause of the ever memorable quarrel betwixt that exemplary old lady, and Mrs. Betsy Prigg. In the very words of the latter, and much as they may astound the editor of the *Witness*, we say it deliberately, "we don't believe there's no such a person"—A. & Co., &c., &c.

We have carefully consulted the complete lists of the Catholic clergy on this Continent, annually published in the *Catholic Directory*, *Almanac*, and *Ordo*, by the Messrs. Sadlier of New York. From 1861 to 1872 no such a name as that of Newell is to be found amongst the Catholic clergy in America; and most reluctantly we have been forced to the conclusion that either our evangelical contemporary has been egregiously hoaxed; or that he has evoked the entire story about the conversion of the aged and venerable Mr. Newell out of the depths of his own moral consciousness.

Be that as it may, the fact is that no Catholic in the United States seems to know, or to have ever heard of the man, and his conversion, until the story appeared in the *Witness*. We have applied for information on the subject, and

here is what we got from that most excellent and well informed paper, the *New York Freeman's Journal*:—

"Will some friend in Memphis tell us about this venerable old priest? Memphis seems a funny, and out-of-the-way place for a priest seventy-five years old to turn up, that nobody ever heard of before.

But we reckon the good people of the Protestant Episcopal body in Memphis have been hoaxed. Not but what there are priests vagabond from their office in the Catholic Church, and ready to fill their bellies with the husks the swine are eating. But there is a fishy smell about that M. A. of the University of Paris. That is not a title used by the French University—and graduates of the French University rarely become priests. The Episcopal Bishop of Tennessee would be loth to tell in what Diocese, and when, this old Mr. Newell was ordained a Catholic priest. If he tries it, we will have the second looked up.

However, Rev. Geo. C. Harris' presentation is a good enough ordination for a Protestant Episcopal minister. Old Mr. Newell is as much a "priest" as Mr. Harris, or Mr. Harris' Bishop. But we will be obliged to any friend in Memphis for telling us what is known, there, of this Mr. Newell, who has never been known as a priest on the clergy list in America, nor heard of anywhere else."

Laws for the protection of property, are unpopular with both thieves, and with the receivers of stolen goods; and we can therefore well understand why the gentlemen of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, by enforcing their proprietary rights over their seigniorly of the Lake of Two Mountains, to the extent of prohibiting the Indians whom they maintain thereon, from selling wood off the said property, do give offence to those who are thereby debarred from the chance of getting cheap fuel. We can understand the annoyance to which these gentry are subjected; but we cannot find therein any excuse for the language of the *Montreal Witness*. He says in his issue of 26th ult.:—

"The dealings of the priests with the Indians at Lake of Two Mountains is a most scandalous instance of Rome's greed and tyranny, exercised at the expense of these poor people." And he adds:—

"When we read of a Chief being cast into prison for cutting sticks on what he considers—with considerable foundation in justice—to be his own land, and utilizing his time in jail to translate the New Testament into his native tongue, the feeling of indignation excited by such an outrageous system becomes intolerable."—*Id.*

"Intolerable," that is to say, to those who thereby find themselves disappointed in their expectations of getting fire wood cheap, because stolen from the lands belonging to the gentlemen of the seigniorly; but perfectly tolerable to honest men, and to all who desire to see the rights of property, whether vested in Catholic or Protestant, in priest or layman, protected by law, and respected by all.

The legal question of ownership of the Seigniorly of the Lake of Two Mountains has been repeatedly adjudicated upon by the highest tribunals, and always in favor of the actual possessors, the gentlemen of the Seminary. Protestants of undoubted ability, well acquainted with the facts, and far above all suspicion of being amenable to priestly or ministerial influences—as for instance the editor of the *Montreal Herald*—have after a careful and impartial review of the entire circumstances of the case, thus frankly expressed their conviction—

"we have no doubt at all that the gentlemen of the Seminary are as absolutely proprietors of the Seigniorly of Two Mountains, as Major Campbell, or any other Seignior is proprietor of his Seigniorly."—*Montreal Herald*, February 26th, 1870.

Now such being the case, it is a gratuitous and unwarranted assumption on the part of the *Witness* to allege that the Indians who cut and try to sell fire wood—(for their own use the Indians are at liberty to take what wood they want)—off the property of the Seminary, have good reasons for believing the land to be their own. And even were there, which there is not, room for any reasonable doubts on the matter, the Indians would not be thereby justified in taking the law into their own hands; and appropriating to themselves that which the law decides to be vested in another party. Because I claim my neighbor's property; because I think that if justice were done, it would be adjudicated mine, I have not, so long as the law decides in favor of the actual possessor, any right to exercise proprietary rights thereon; and should I, in defiance of law, attempt to exercise such imagined rights, law would most justly visit me with punishment; and the public opinion of the civilized world would approve, even though I should seek, like another Bunyan, to beguile the hours of my imprisonment by translating the New Testament, or any other religious work.

All this is so obvious that we should marvel at the restriction placed by the Seminary on the cutting for sale, of wood on its property, did we not remember the close connection that necessarily subsists betwixt thieves, and the receivers of stolen goods; so that if the trade of one be interfered with, the profits of the others are greatly curtailed. For be it remembered that, with their usual liberality, the gentlemen of the Seminary allow the Indians whom they have located, and harbor on their lands, to take therefrom what wood is necessary to them, for building, fencing, or fuel; but the Seminary does not allow the said Indians to cut wood for sale on land which is undoubtedly as absolutely its own property, as is the landed

property of any other holder to whom the law awards it. This is the very head front of the offending of the Seminary.

A French priest, the Rev. M. Michaud, and who officiated as vicar, or, as we would say in England, as curate or assistant, to the Parish priest of the Madeleine in Paris, has broken away from the Catholic Church, and proposes to set up on his own hook, at No. 74 Boulevard de Neuilly. Here, if he can raise necessary funds, he intends to run a church of his own; to dispense religious instruction, the sacraments, and means of grace generally, to all who will honor him with their custom. Attendance regular, and all orders promptly attended to.

The cause for this opposition to the Catholic Church with Pius IX at its head, that M. Michaud assigns, is the late action of the General Council of the Vatican, in defining the Pope's infallibility. This M. Michaud does not approve of; and so, being infallible, we suppose, himself, though the Pope is not, he intends to start this opposition concern, whereby he hopes, with the assistance of his many friends and patrons, to drive his rival off the field entirely. Though it is not yet announced, we expect that he will try to enter into partnership with Messrs Dollinger & Co. in Germany; and so joined together the firm may be able to do a good stroke of business in the religious line. In the mean time, he has fitted up an altar with all requisite fixings in his own bed-room; and has hung out his shingle, informing the public that he is ready to baptize, marry, and administer the sacraments on the most reasonable terms, to all who may please to patronize him, and forsake the rival establishment of Mgr. the Archbishop of Paris over the way.

This is the news which is filling the hearts of many sound Protestants with extreme joy.—Their songs of triumph are premature, however, as soon the result will show. The Catholic Church has had greater defections to record than that of the members of the new firm, dealers in heresy, MM. Dollinger, Michaud & Co.; and she has somehow or other—perhaps the presence of Our Lord has had something to do with it—contrived to get along without them.

THANKSGIVING.—To return thanks to the Lord for having spared the life, and restored to health the heir apparent to the throne, was an appropriate recognition of the divine sovereignty, which every one, whether Catholic or Protestant, must approve of. It must be looked upon as an outward profession of a national belief in Christianity.

But apart from its religious aspect,—and considered solely from a political point of view,—there was in the events of Tuesday, 27th of last month, much to rejoice the hearts of all loyal subjects, and lovers of their country. The crowds wherewith the streets of London were encumbered as the Procession wended its way from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's; the deafening shouts of the assembled thousands; the roar of the people as their Queen came in sight—were proofs whose force no frothy declamations of rabid demagogues can weaken, of the loyalty of the mass of the people of England; of their attachment to those principles of Government which happily still prevail amongst them, and to which, under God, they are indebted for the liberties that they enjoy, and their immunity from the corruption of democratic rule. Men like Sir Charles Dilke may spout what fustian they please; they were all fully answered, and abundantly refuted by the loud spontaneous cries of "God Save the Queen," which, on the day of thanksgiving, burst out irrepressible from millions of English lips, and free English hearts. Thank God! the country is yet loyal at core.

Throughout the country the day was observed as a holiday; and everywhere the demonstrations were such as to assure us that the loathsome cancer of democracy has as yet made but little serious inroads on the body politic; and that the unsightly blotches which appear in some places, may yet by a course of judicious treatment, be entirely removed. The Prince of Wales with his wife, assisted at the ceremony; and we hope that he noted well the symptoms, and has learned the secret of his royal mother's well deserved popularity. If he would preserve his people's love, he must, like his mother, deserve it.

The evangelical sects appeal to the number of bibles and tracts by them sold, distributed, or otherwise disposed of, in proof of the progress their opinions are making in Catholic communities. With more of logical force do the members of an advanced Protestant sect, whose headquarters are in Belgium, and whose members style themselves the Society of Free-Thinkers, point to the increasing number of civil or irreligious funerals, and of civil marriages, in proof of the progress that their opinions are making. The Society has just held its anniversary meeting, and published its annual report—after the fashion of its sister evangelical Societies; and from these we learn that for the year just ended,