

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT No. 761, Craig Street, Montreal, Canada.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Country, \$1.00 City, \$1.50 If not paid in advance: \$1.50 (Country) and \$2 (City) will be charged.

Subscribers, Newfoundland, \$1.50 a year in advance.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1892

To Our Readers

About this time a good many subscriptions fall due. We wish to ask of our Old Subscribers to look upon this notice in the light of a personal letter, asking them to send us promptly their own renewals, and also the names of some amongst their friends as New Subscribers.

DIFFERENT MESSENGERS.

There are today several little publications, especially of a religious nature, that bear the title "Messenger." We have the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," and many other similar magazines that have for object the printing and circulating of good tidings and consoling news.

These little Messengers come to us like angels in disguise, shedding loving and holy dew-drops from their winglets. We are always pleased to see announced the advent of some fresh mercury of religious truth, and we naturally are on the qui vive whenever we hear of an addition to the number.

We opened a copy of this "Messenger of Peace," actually prejudicial in its favor; but to our surprise we discovered a veritable "War Cry," or "Battle-axe," spirit running through it. One would naturally expect that such an innocent face could hide so much wickedness of disposition.

The publishers of such a Peace Messenger, the ladies who distribute it, the persons who contribute such mis-spirited and false articles to it, are no worse than the Canada Review whose director sees fit to attack the privileges accorded to benevolent institutions, and who cannot do so with-

out firing a shaft at the persons whose lives are consecrated to the noble work of lifting the fallen, curing the sick, succoring the afflicted and bringing balm to the wounded in every sense of the phrase. There are men—and women—who preach Charity and Christianity from the house-tops, but whose practice is the very reverse of their precept.

DICKENS.

A correspondent, an old subscriber to THE TRUE WITNESS, writes us asking whether we think Dickens' works should be read by young Catholics or not. The question is too vast to be treated properly in the short space at our disposal.

Dickens was a master, and such a master that he never had and never can have any imitators; consequently if you read and study his works for the purpose of forming your style, the time is lost. Not only would you never be able to base your style upon that of Dickens, but even were you sufficiently gifted, in that line, to approach him, it would be merely an aping of what is too original for genuine imitation.

Now to look at the works of Dickens from a Catholic—not to say a Christian—standpoint, we must conclude that, if there is nothing positively, there is most certainly very much negatively dangerous to moral, social, and spiritual perfection in each and all of his novels. In no place would the young be shocked by meeting a bad or even suggestively bad expression; nor is there an anti-Christian line in any of his productions.

mentalism; it will reject religious principles, and supernatural teachings, because it has taken in the full draught of naturalistic poison. In many cases a negative influence is greater than a positive one; so with Dickens' novels. Were they down-rightly anti-Christian, one would be upon his guard against them; but being simply the perfection of materialism, in romance, they are masked enemies of Faith, and for the young and untrained they are an absolute danger and should be avoided.

ROMAN CATHOLIC BIBLES.

Although we were unable to reproduce Mr. J. L. Costille's lengthy letter of ten days ago, we are sure it will serve his purpose just as well if through our editorial columns this week we give the most important portion of it to our readers. The following is the accusation brought against the Catholic Church, and the crushing evidence in support thereof:

"When Louis XIV., by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, had expelled from France many thousands of Bible readers, Rome could see too plainly that this same Bible it hated so much was too well implanted in the country, and that it could yet do mischief many souls, as the priests piously say. To counteract this great evil, they caused to be printed in 1686 at Bordeaux and with the approbation of the Archbishop of that city a book entitled: 'The New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ—translated from the Latin into French, by the theologians of Louvain.' In this Catholic version of the Gospel the Romish doctrines which the Huguenots rejected are plainly expressed at the expense of the evangelical truth.

After several other quotations, sufficient of which we give to explain the case, the letter thus ends: 'Are not these corrupt translations, with the avowed purpose of perverting simple people? In another letter I purpose to show how faulty and incorrect is the Vulgate, the authorized version in the Church of Rome.'

The accusation is that the Church of Rome sanctions, or has sanctioned, false translations of the Scriptures, into which she caused to be inserted words and phrases that might sustain her doctrines. As evidence of this the foregoing is brought to light. To begin with, we deny the accusation in toto; in the next place the person attempting to use such evidence must be either laughing at his readers or else he is in very bad faith—three propositions which we shall develop in as short and concise a manner as the subject will permit.

In the first place the Catholic Church has been the natural and faithful custodian of the Holy Scriptures, and she watches over them with a jealous care. No where, and at no time, and under no circumstances, did the Church of Rome ever sanction any translation of the Scriptures without that it had been examined by the Sacred College at Rome and then submitted for approval to the Pope—an approval to be obtained only after a thorough investigation by the College of the Index. No translation of the Scriptures into any language on earth, that has one word either added to or taken from the original, ever received the sanction and approval of Rome. We make this assertion—we are responsible for it. We defy any man—layman or otherwise—to produce a copy of the Scriptures, purporting to be a translation, in which a word of the original has been changed, and that has been approved of by Rome.

You at once fly to the edition above mentioned; printed in 1686 at Bordeaux with the approbation of the Archbishop of that city and translated from the Latin into French by the theologians of Louvain. Very well! If the person adducing such evidence does not know what we are going to tell him, then he is speaking of what he should let alone and leave to persons better informed; if he does know what follows, then he is in bad faith; or else he is simply trying to have a joke at the expense of his evolution readers. Whether that edition exists or does not we cannot say, because we never saw it; but we take it for granted that it does exist and is exactly in the form above given; and then it is no evidence. Why?

Firstly, the words found in that edition and printed in italics are merely terms

added to express the Catholic interpretation of the words of Scripture. If they are not exact, then the Louvain theologians are wrong, as thousands of theologians, before and since, have been in error; if these terms do not convey a proper idea of the text, then the Archbishop of Bordeaux was mistaken when he gave his approbation, as many another dignity of the Church has been. But the errors of the Louvain theologians and the mistake of the Archbishop are only individual acts, for which the individuals alone are responsible, but which by no means affect the Church of Rome—for the Church of Rome never pronounced upon them. That edition never was examined by the Sacred College at Rome, nor submitted to the Sovereign Pontiff for his sanction, nor did it ever receive his approbation, nor is it amongst the approved translations of the Scriptures on the list of sanctioned works in the College of the Index. It may be looked upon as a translation accompanied by explanations, annotations or comments; but not as an approved translation. This may surprise some readers, and may be the author of the letter in question, but it is no news to any well informed Catholic. Do you want a case, in our day, of what would have happened to that edition were it presented at Rome for sanction as a translation of the Scriptures?

In 1886, after twenty years of a life consecrated to the work, Henri Lasserre, of Paris, completed his now famous translation of the Gospels. Lasserre is one of the most eminent Catholic writers of our day; his "Notre-Dame de Lourdes" made him famous and has brought him Papal benedictions; he is most orthodox in everything he writes, or at least he so desires to be, and never does a line of his appear without that it has been approved of, in some way, by those whom he considers his superiors in matters theological. In 1885, this great Catholic writer published his "Traduction Nouvelle des Saints Evangiles." On the 11th November, 1886, his work received the formal approval of the Archbishop of Paris, and was issued under his imprimatur. That is not all; a copy of the work was sent to Rome, and Cardinal Jacobini, in the name of Leo XIII., thanked the author and conveyed to him the Pope's blessing as a recompense for his long years of labor in this good work. That letter was sent on the 8th December, 1886. Mark! The Archbishop had approved of the work; the author was an eminent Catholic; the Pope thanked and blessed him and his work; but the Catholic Church had not approved of it, because it had not as yet been examined by the Sacred College at Rome. As individuals the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Jacobini and Leo XIII. had spoken, written, or acted. Two years rolled past. The book, in its turn, is taken up by the Sacred College, whose special business it is to advise the Pope in all matters pertaining to literature and in particular the publication of the Scriptures, and it is condemned because it is not a true translation—several flaws were found in it. One of these we find in the Lord's Prayer—the "lead us not into temptation" is translated "save us from all trials." There were only three or four other errors of translation, and despite all the labor it cost, despite the author's reputation, despite the Archbishop's approval, despite Leo XIII's blessing—the Pope at Rome, speaking with the advice of his sacred council, condemned the work and as a translation, it is now *habeat*.

We have many editions and translations of the Scriptures with words, in italics, added in for the purpose of making the phrase read clearly and be intelligible to the ordinary mind. No one pretends that these are exact translations, much less are they given to a people as such. In this very translation by Lasserre, after the preface comes a page of explanations; amongst these we read: "All words between parenthesis ( ) are part of the text, and those between brackets [ ] are added as explanations." If such an edition as that of Bordeaux exists, the explanatory words are probably marked by italics or in brackets. They are only explanations—from a Catholic standpoint—of the text. At worst, if they are not so marked, most decidedly Rome never sanctioned the edition as a translation—not if it had the imprimaturs of forty Bishops. Remember, a theologian, a priest, a bishop, or an archbishop is not infallible, except when carrying out the decrees of the infallible Pontiff; and the Pope himself is not infallible, except when pronouncing upon questions of faith, and when speaking *ex cathedra*.

So, then, we repeat: Rome never sanctioned a translation of the Scriptures in which a word was added to or taken from the original, and we defy any one to produce evidence to the contrary. If the author of the letter in question did not know the procedure in Rome, before a work receives approbation, he was in ignorance; if he did know it, he was either making fun of his readers or else trying to deceive them—in a word, paying the very part that he accuses the Church of Rome of having attempted. He may ransack the dusty pigeon holes of two or three centuries for evidence; he may turn up tomes heavy with the

dust of ages; he may search the libraries of the world and we again defy him to produce a false translation of the Scriptures that has received the sanction of the Church of Rome.

THE VICAR OF CHRIST.

We have great objection to that species of guerilla war-fare called news-paper controversy. In the first place we never yet knew any persons whose opinions or ideas were changed by means of press polemics, and in the second place it serves more to separate and estrange than to draw together and unite; it is a wedge and not a magnet. Moreover, it is much easier to make an accusation than to substantiate it, and still more so than to disprove it. The public is ever prone to ask for the proof of the innocence of the accused before demanding the evidence in support of the accusation. Any one who can wield a pen is able to accuse a honest and virtuous man of being a thief and a murderer, and it may be just as difficult for that man to establish his innocence as it would be for his accumbator to prove his statements. Some persons, with a certain show of frankness and a superficial display of erudition, have a knack of parading authorities drawn from the dusty pages of medieval lore, and firing these bombs at the heads of those whom they wish to annihilate. To use the words of Sir William Draper, "they have assertion without proof, declamation without argument, and violent censure without dignity or moderation."

Already this week have we referred to a letter that appeared recently in the Daily Witness from the pen of Mr. J. L. Costille; that gentleman has added, on last Saturday, in the same organ, another contribution to this unprofitable system of controversial correspondence. In that letter (and we doubt not his honesty of intention) he sees fit to accuse the Pope of Rome, the Vicar of Christ of every imaginable crime; and he could even visit the sins of one individual upon the head of another. He quotes from Genebrard, who was bishop of Aix in 1597, to prove that several Popes were human and had committed certain sins; he quotes from Baronius, a Cardinal, to prove that when Popes were imposed upon Rome by the temporal or secular powers, there were crimes committed by these impostors, and that discord reigned supreme in the region of the Holy See; and these things occurred in the 9th and 10th centuries. He then comes down to particulars and quotes from Mosheim to prove that a certain Pope was guilty of a great sin the consequences of which brought disgrace upon the Church. Let us suppose, for a moment, that his authorities are all authentic; that these writers were not actuated by a spleen, similar to that of the arch-renege Luther, when he became the deadly enemy of the mother that nursed him; that every line quoted was the exact expression of the Catholic sentiment of that age; even then we ask such a man, one who seemingly revels in the most offensive pages he can unloose, to examine well the two-edged weapon he is wielding; it is more dangerous for the one who handles it than for the one against whom it is used. To paraphrase a now classic writer, it would seem as if "infamy, filthiness, pollution, tragedies, lawless amours, bastards and hardi-ship—these gloomy companions of a disturbed imagination—the melancholy madness of poetry without any inspiration."

Did we choose to walk in the same pathway, might we not ask who is he that cries out in this strain of virtuous indignation? Is it the advocate of a creed springing from and inspired by a *sublimis, humilis et pater* Luther? or a *generosus, humilis et pater* Calvin? or a *virtuosus, sublimis et pater* Henry VIII? or an *immaculatus* Hyacinth? or a *conscriptus* Chimney? But there is nothing to be gained in retorting in that manner. Read the following from that exceptionally misleading letter:

"Now, if one exactly be shown that Popes have taught that the present one is teaching doctrines contrary to the word of God, as the sacrifice of the mass, purgatory, worship of images, infirmary of the saints, baptism of regeneration, auricular confession, celibacy of priests, etc." This is an assertion that it would be very difficult to prove—in fact impossible. To disprove it, in all its parts, would be very easy, and has been done already times out of mind. But to attempt the proof or to array the evidence to the contrary would require volumes. It would take a whole year, at six columns per week, in a paper like THE TRUE WITNESS, to do justice to the subject; and even then we would be no farther advanced, because our friend would have long since darted off into some other field. Therefore, we object to this style of controversy. There are not ten in every hundred who having read these gratuitous assertions ever read the replies. It is merely a fruitless source of ill-feeling from which no benefit can possibly be derived. As to the accusations of crimes and divisions, wrongs and struggles, existing in Rome on account of certain Popes being thrust into the chair of St. Peter by the secular arm, it would be a most wonderful thing if any other results

could arise from such infringements upon the prerogatives of the Church. There were Popes and anti-Popes, and they wrestled for power; the one sustained by the hand of God, the other by the power of earthly princes. If for a time God deemed it proper to try His servants and to punish His own chosen ones—as of old He had done to Israel on many occasions—and if He permitted the power of the evil to augment and seemingly triumph, it was merely to afterwards crush His enemies and to prove that "the gates of Hell shall never prevail against" His Church. The impostors were hurled from power; crimes and criminals were punished; usurpers were unmasked and the Church of Christ and its infallible Head came forth from the conflict victorious. The proof is that the Church stands immutable to-day, and the Vicar of Christ rules the world more potently and more effectively for the good of mankind than did any of his predecessors.

But we are told that a Pope committed a sin and yet retained his seat as the infallible doctor of the Church. He did; and many a Pope committed a sin—more or less great—and yet retained his infallibility. We claim, and the claim cannot be denied, that the Vicar of Christ is infallible; but never did the Church nor any of its doctors claim that the Pope was infallible. The Pope can sin; he is peccable; and the sacrament of confession—of penance—is instituted for him as for all men. The Pope is human and "it is human to err." As a man, as an individual Leo XIII. may commit a sin; it is the best evidence that he is human; in matters of Faith, when speaking *ex cathedra*, he cannot make a mistake; it is the best proof that his mission is divine. Abraham committed a fearful sin, and added to that of lust the sin of cruelty, yet God placed him at the head of the patriarchs and promised him a wonderful progeny; Solomon was a sinner of the deepest dye, yet God gave him wisdom to reign over His people; David committed a deadly sin and added to it murder, yet God raised him up and made him the law-giving Psalmist of Israel; St. Peter sinned and was forgiven, and remained the "corner stone" of Christ's Church; Christ submitted to temptations in the wilderness and it was the power of the Divine element that overcame the weakness of the human and He put the tempter to flight; His humanity trembled in Gethsemane, but His Divinity sustained it. To pretend that the Pope was incapable of sin would be to place him on a level with Christ; he is only Christ's earthly and human representative.

No, the Pope is not infallible, but he is infallible; and a sin committed by a Pope—even were it clearly proven to be true—in no way militates against his infallibility as the Vicar of Christ. This is the last reference we shall make to these misleading and illogical communications; we simply touched the subjects to point out the utter futility of such controversial writing. Despite all the insinuations and false accusations of the world, the Vicar of Christ towers aloft "like the last mountain of the deluge, immutable amidst change, magnificent amidst ruin, the last remnant of earth's beauty and the last resting place of heaven's light."

RELIGIOUS FREE LANCES.

No wonder that a Canadian minister of the Gospel would proclaim his creed to be one devoid of all dogma, when we find the deliberations of a Church Association in England, conclude that "there is no such thing as a priest-hood, a sacrifice, sacraments, or liturgy." The members of this Church Association would wish to be a "body of Free Lances."

Amongst the speakers at the Conference in question was a Rev. Mr. Blake, who had found a remedy against Ritualism. Of course, it should be properly applied. To quote his own language, as given in the Record, he thus explains his meaning:

"There was a good deal of misapprehension, which could easily be removed if people would only read the Books of the Old Testament. If the clergy would only proclaim from their pulpits that the proper worship of God is not in the ritual, but in the heart."

The Universe, commenting upon this gentleman's sermon, asks: "If Mr. Blake is in such a dense condition that he imagines any sane man, reading the Old Testament, would come to the conclusion that the priestly office was not that of a separate class, distinctly set apart for the service of the altar?" It is generally beyond an enlightened Catholic's understanding that a man could stand up for an hour and har on "impossible nonsense, quite unconcerned by the fact that he is insulting the traditions, the institutions, and the learning of every age since the Day of Pentecost."

Now, at this same convention there was a Rev. Mr. Carson. He listened to the Rev. Mr. Blake and then arose and settled the debate this way:

"Do not pull down at one end what the ritualists will pull down at the other. If we are a Church Association, let us be a Church Association. If an ordained ministry be inconsistent with the Word of God, away with it, and let us be free women. Kings and priests are not to be feared. We are working in our own way for what we each believe."

We humbly submit that the Rev. Mr. Carson was right, and that he is honest