

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE. PUBLISHED BY FRIDAY, BY J. GILLIES FOR GEORGE S. CLERK, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, At the Office, No. 4, Place d'Armes. TERMS: Town Subscribers, \$3 per annum. Country do 24 " Payable Half-Yearly in Advance. Single Copies, 3d.

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TO THE READERS OF THE TRUE WITNESS.

As the respected editor of this paper is at present in the country, enjoying a brief relaxation from his arduous duties, we take this opportunity of saying a few words to his friends and subscribers, which we know he would not willingly say himself. Mr. Clerk has been laboring for eight years at the Catholic press; he has made his mark on the times as few Catholic editors do, or have done; he has devoted himself heart and soul to the advocacy of Catholic interests, and the promulgation of Catholic principles. This he has done with an earnestness and a singleness of purpose not very often found in contemporary journalists. Who can deny that the TRUE WITNESS has done good service to religion, or that, from its very commencement, it has been conducted with surpassing ability, as well as honesty? Do we, as a people, feel the value of such an organ?—do we support it ourselves, and try to make others support it as we ought? These are questions which, as Catholics, we should ask ourselves; and we much fear that, as a body, our conscience will not acquit us of ingratitude and culpable neglect. We ourselves have many times heard both clergymen and laymen from various parts of the province say—"We cannot afford to lose the TRUE WITNESS—it must be supported!" Do the people generally act on this just appreciation of Mr. Clerk's services? They know best themselves whether they do or do not; but this we know, that there ought to be a great deal more done for the TRUE WITNESS than there is; and that it is a matter of surprise to Mr. Clerk's friends that he continues to devote his time and talents to a people who, collectively, will not stir a finger to serve him, or increase the circulation of his most valuable paper. We have been told by a respected clergyman that one of the highest ecclesiastical authorities in America told him some years ago, that the TRUE WITNESS is the best conducted Catholic paper in America; yet this first-class Catholic journal has but a very limited circulation; and those who esteem themselves good Catholics will subscribe to trashy political organs—many of them not worth the reading—in preference to the TRUE WITNESS. What hope is there of seeing any great mental improvement in people who are infatuated. One thing is certain, that if they ever allow the TRUE WITNESS to disappear from the ranks of the provincial press, they may never happen to have such another organ, and were it once gone, they would soon be sensible of its value.

We are aware that Mr. Clerk thought it necessary some months ago to make a sort of appeal to the people, or rather to his own subscribers; and that a partial effort was made on that occasion to sustain the paper. The effort was, however, only partial; and the sums sent in from various quarters were chiefly arrears due. Few, or no new subscribers were sent, and little was consequently done to place the TRUE WITNESS on a more secure footing as regards the future. This, then, is the great point; and we trust that it will be attended to. If the paper had any thing like the circulation which it ought to have, and if the subscribers would only please to remember that newspapers cannot be printed or published without a heavy weekly expense—then there would be no need of any such articles as the present. We know that Mr. Clerk has the confidence of the great body of the Catholic people; but that is not sufficient. Their confidence is not worth a groat if they do not prove it by supporting his paper. We are in a position to state that, at present, the receipts are not sufficient even to pay expenses—a state of things which cannot possibly last long. We would, therefore, respectfully invite all who are in arrears to pay up promptly, and all who are interested in the TRUE WITNESS to endeavor to extend its circulation. If each one would endeavor to send in a new subscriber; and if the new and old would make it a rule to pay their subscriptions, that would be doing something to place the TRUE WITNESS on a firm foundation.

EVANGELICAL FALSEHOODS.

In our last we undertook to establish, and from their own acts, which belie their words, to prove—that Protestants, when they urge against us as a "dogma" of our Church that "no faith is to be kept with heretics," place no credit in their

own assertions; knowing that that which they lay to our charge is false, destitute of foundation, and abundantly refuted by the records of the dealings of Catholic States with Protestant States, and of Catholic subjects with their Protestant rulers. We might also have cited in support of our thesis, the practice of the Christian Guardian himself.

Our cotemporary provoked the controversy in which we now find ourselves engaged, by the statement that "one of the dogmas of Romanism is, that no faith is to be kept with heretics." We at once denied this assertion, and challenged our cotemporary to the proof; whereupon he drops the original charge against us—so conscious is he of its falsehood—and substitutes in lieu thereof, another, totally and essentially distinct. For instance, in replying to our challenge, in his issue of the 2nd ult., calling upon him to prove that it is a "dogma" of the Roman Catholic Church that "no faith is to be kept with heretics," he abandons the original charge, and gives us the following in lieu thereof:—

"The Church of Rome then has adopted as a leading principle of her policy that faith is not to be kept with heretics, when its violation is necessary for the interests of the Church."

We pray the reader to notice the dishonest change of terms to which the Christian Guardian has recourse, to evade the consequences of his original lie—that it is a "dogma" of the Romish Church that "no faith is to be kept with heretics." For the word "dogma," which has a clear and definite meaning, he substitutes the vague expression "has adopted as the leading principle of her policy;" and to the simple unqualified statement that "no faith is to be kept with heretics"—he adds the all important qualification—"when its violation is necessary for the interests of the Church." When a witness upon his second appearance in Court thus quibbles, and endeavors to evade the consequences of his original affidavit, we may feel well assured that he is about to perjure himself. For mark well the essential difference betwixt his first, and his second or amended depositions.

According to his original deposition, the Roman Catholic Church inculcates the "dogma"—that is, teaches in the same explicit manner as that in which she teaches the consubstantiality of the Son to the Father—that "no faith is to be kept with heretics;" or in other words, that no engagements entered into by Catholics with heretics, are to be kept; and that because of the character, or nature, of the person with whom such engagements are contracted.

But in his second deposition the Christian Guardian drops the "dogma," and contents himself with asserting that the Roman Catholic Church "has adopted as a leading principle of her policy"—what?—that "faith is not to be kept with heretics, when its violation is necessary for the interests of the church;" or in other words, that the policy of the Roman Catholic Church is to countenance, and indeed encourage, the violation of a certain class of engagements entered into by Catholics with heretics; but that, not because of the character of the person with whom such engagements are contracted, but because of the nature of the contract itself.

Now as it must be evident that these two depositions are not identical—and that to break an engagement with a heretic, simply because he is a heretic, and to break an engagement, because of the vicious nature of the engagement itself, are two things essentially distinct—it must, we say, be evident that the Christian Guardian feels himself unable to accept the challenge given to him by the TRUE WITNESS; and hopes to evade, by a miserable shuffle, and by changing the terms of his original deposition, the well merited castigation that is yet in store for him.

Seeing then that our cotemporary has abandoned his original charge against the Roman Catholic Church, to the effect that it is one of her "dogmas" that "no faith is to be kept with heretics," we will address ourselves to the task of examining how far it is true that the Church countenances, or "has adopted as a leading principle of her policy," the maxim that "faith is not to be kept with heretics, when its violation is necessary for the interests of the Church." And first, to avoid all appearance even of any desire to gloss over any portion of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, we will endeavor to explain what she does inculcate upon all her children with respect to the nature of engagements, and the obligation of fulfilling them.

We admit then that the Church teaches, and has always taught, that no one can engage himself to do that which is wrong, or not to do that which is right; that such engagements, even though ratified by the most solemn of oaths, are not binding in conscience upon the persons contracting them; and that it is, therefore, not only lawful to, but obligatory upon, the Catholic to set at naught all engagements, no matter with whom contracted, or by what oaths ratified, whereby he has pledged himself, either to do that which is not lawful for him to do, or to abstain from doing that which it is his duty to do.—E.G.:

An engagement to commit murder, blaspheme the name of God, to renounce Christ, to worship

idols, or to oppose the spread of the Gospel, are not, and by reason of the engagement itself, cannot be binding in conscience upon the person contracting it. He is, therefore, not only at liberty, but is in conscience bound, to disregard such an engagement, even though he have confirmed it with an oath.

In like manner an engagement not to forgive an enemy, not to relieve the necessities of the poor, not to make restitution of property wrongfully acquired, or not to worship God, would be of no force upon the person contracting it; whose duty would still be, in spite of any such engagement, to forgive injuries, to love his neighbor as himself, and the Lord his God, with his whole heart, and soul and strength. In this sense, but in no other, does the Church teach, or has she ever taught, that it is lawful to abandon engagements, or to break a promise made; and we think that if the Christian Guardian will consult the writings of Paley, or any other Protestant treatise upon Ethics, he will find the same principles laid down respecting the nature and binding force of oaths, as that which the Roman Catholic Church "has adopted as the leading principle of her policy" in her dealings, both with the members of her own Communion, and with those outside of her fold.

And here perhaps, and because our cotemporary deals largely in garbled quotations at second or third hand from St. Thomas Aquinas, whom with an amount of good taste remarkable in a Methodist, he styles "a blessed chap,"—it may be as well to quote the words of that Doctor, as illustrative of the opinions of the most illustrious divines of the Catholic Church in the "Dark Ages," as to the obligation of keeping faith, and the unlawfulness of falsehood or deceit for any purpose whatsoever:—

"Has an oath an obligatory force?" asks the Doctor. 2. 2. qu. 89 de juramento. An juramentum habet vim obligandi? He answers as follows:—"Qui jurat facere rem ex se malam peccat jurando et adiurando: si est impeditiva majoris boni peccat jurando, sed non peccat adiurando, licet esset melius non implere. Item jurans dolose servet juramentum, secundum sanam intellectum illius cui juravit: si jurat non dolose, obligatur secundum intentionis jurentis."—Theologia Summa Comp.

And again to the question, "Is falsehood a sin?" anmendacium sit peccatum? he replies 2. 2. qu. 110:—"Sic, et est malum ex genere suo, et nullo modo"—mark well the words—"et nullo modo potest esse licitum."—ib.

Thus while laying down the rule that, whilst an oath to do that which is evil—"ex se malam"—is not binding, he expressly declares that an oath even if taken with an intention to deceive, "dolose," is to be kept according to the intention of him to whom it is plighted: though if taken in good faith—"non dolose"—it is obligatory according to the intent of him who takes the oath. And with regard to falsehood that he says is, of its very nature evil, and can therefore under no circumstances—"nullo modo"—be lawful.

That these are the teachings of St. Thomas upon the duty of keeping faith, and the unlawfulness of falsehood under any circumstances, any one may convince himself by referring to the passages from that Doctor cited above; we therefore are not bound to address any other proof that he did not teach—as the Christian Guardian asserts—"that good Catholics were not bound to keep faith or oath to stubborn heretics." The writings of St. Thomas are rather voluminous, and our cotemporary prudently abstains from citing the passage wherein the above doctrine is to be found. We therefore content ourselves with the counter assertion that St. Thomas teaches no such doctrine, and with calling upon the Christian Guardian to cite the passage in the Doctor's works wherein those words, or words of a similar import, are to be found.

In the same way we give an unqualified denial to the assertion that the Church teaches, or sanctions the doctrine, that "should heretics, previous to their fall into error, have deposited money or any other thing with a Catholic, he (the Papist) is not bound to restore it; he has no right to do so." This is not even a translation of the garbled quotation which our cotemporary cites—without naming the author however—from whom he takes it:—

"Is apud quem hereticus aliquid (sic) depositum non tenetur post manifestam ejus heresim rem heretico restituere.—He with whom a heretic has deposited anything is not bound, after the heresy of the latter is made manifest, to restore it to the heretic."

Now we must bear in mind that, according to the law of a great part of Feudal Europe, certain kinds of heresy, in virtue of the enactments of the secular power, entailed many of the penalties entailed by high treason in England at the present day, and amongst others, the loss of civil rights. Nor is this to be wondered at, seeing that most of the heresies of the middle Ages were as much political as doctrinal, and as hostile to the claims of the Civil Magistrate, as to those of the Church. The heretics of those days were, in most cases—as for instance the Paulicians, Bulgars, or Albigenes, particularly alluded to by the Fourth Council of Lateran,—a class of men who practised and taught, as a direct consequence of their Manichean principles, the lawfulness of certain revolting and unnumberable crimes, which at the present day are punished with death by the laws of most civilised

nations; whilst the proposition destructive of all civil government, that no obedience was due from the subject to the magistrate whom the heretic deemed to be in a state of mortal sin, was almost universally propounded by them as a fundamental article of faith. These crimes, these treasonable doctrines, fully account for the horror in which the crime of heresy was held in the Middle Ages, and the enactments of the civil magistrate against it. The holder of a fief falling into heresy, was deemed to have forfeited his authority over his vassals, who, in like manner, were released from their obligations towards him; just as in Protestant England, at the present day, Queen Victoria would forfeit her title to the allegiance of her subjects, were she to be reconciled to the Catholic Church. In this sense Catholic theologians have taught that the vassals of an heretical lord, were released from their feudal allegiance by the heresy of their Prince a Seigneur.

But it is false that these writers taught that private obligations betwixt man and man were cancelled by an act of heresy, even if followed by excommunication; as the writer of the Christian Guardian must have known, had he ever opened the work of Cardinal Toletus, from which he pretends to quote. For in the very self-same paragraph as that to which he refers us, in proof that that learned Jesuit taught that the subjects of heretical and excommunicated Princes were released from their allegiance, we find the following explicit declaration:—

"Non tamen per hoc intelligendum est absolvi debitorem ab obligatione solvendi debitum creditor, etiam excommunicato. It is not however to be understood from this, that the debtor is released from the obligation of discharging his indebtedness to an excommunicated creditor."—De Instr. Sacerd. Sum. Tolet. b. 1. c. 13, sec. 9.

And yet with these words of the Cardinal staring him in the face, the Christian Guardian has the cool impudence to assert that it is taught in the Romish Church that, "should heretics, previous to their fall into error, have deposited money or any other thing with a Catholic, he (the Papist) is not to restore it; he has no right to do so."

But we have encroached too much on our limited space, and we fear on the patience of our readers. In our next we will return to the subject, and examine by the light of history the particular instances adduced by the Christian Guardian in support of his attack upon the dogmas of the Romish Church.

It would be absurd for us to enter into a lengthened controversy with the Montreal Witness as to whether the church teaches or sanctions "idolatry," until such time as our cotemporary shall have given a clear and concise description of the word which he uses as a term of reproach against us. We call upon him, therefore, for a definition of the word "idolatry;"—this given, we shall proceed to plead to the charge. In the meantime we will reply to one or two other misrepresentations of the Witness.

(1.) It is not true, as by him asserted in his issue of June 23d, that "Protestant commentators and divines have always held that the strictness of the Bible against the use of carved images in worship, applied with full force to the usages of Romanism." So far is this from being the case, that, with the exception of the canting fanatics of Exeter Hall, and a few illiterate Stigginses, whose names are scarce known beyond the precincts of their respective conventicles, there is not a man with any pretension to critical acumen, who would dream of applying the injunctions given to the children of Israel by Moses, against the making to themselves of carved images of God, on Elohim, as conclusive against the propriety of making paintings or images of the Crucifixion, of the Blessed Virgin, or other Saints, and of treating these sensible signs with outward tokens of respect.

Thus Leibnitz, the first of all "Protestant Commentators," and whom it would be to insult to name on the same day with the generality of Protestant "divines," after a careful survey of the whole field of battle betwixt Protestants and Catholics, lays down as the conclusion of his researches, that "it must be clear beyond all doubt, that if the law of God, and certain holy men, chose to prohibit at certain times and in certain places, a thing—(the use of images in worship)—which in itself is harmless, and, indeed, which, if religiously practised, is eminently useful, it was solely because it might give occasion to grievous abuses, against which it was difficult to guard in those times." Leibnitz Syst. Theol.

And again, having quoted the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to the use, and against the abuse, of images—he sums up:—

"There will no more be idolatry in this practice—the use of images—than in the veneration which is shown to God and to Christ when His most sacred name is pronounced. For names too are signs, and indeed far inferior to images in significance; for they are much less perfect representations of the object."—ib.

This, to all who recognise Leibnitz as a "Protestant commentator and divine," of the greatest erudition and of unblemished integrity, will be a sufficient refutation of the Montreal

Witness whom we must again set right upon another point.

(2.) It is not true that the "Roman Catholic Clergy have actually cut off from the decalogue the sacred command which forbids to bow down before graven images." The man who can make such an assertion must be either a great fool, or a great knave. Probably both; a knave for making the assertion; a fool for thinking that he will find any to credit it.

The only difference betwixt the Protestant and Catholic arrangement of the decalogue is this—that the former breaks the first command according to the Catholic arrangement, into two; and lump the ninth and tenth together into one. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, includes in the first command, all from the third verse of the 20th Exodus to the end of the sixth verse—because relating to one subject; whilst she makes two distinct commands of the Protestant tenth. This arrangement is certainly more consistent with the spirit of the decalogue, than that of our separated brethren; for since to "Steal," and to "covet one's neighbors goods," are certainly treated as two distinct offences, it is to be presumed that there is precisely the same difference betwixt the act of adultery, and the coveting one's neighbors wife. We suppose we need hardly inform so learned a "Protestant commentator" as the Montreal Witness that the division of the Bible into verses is a very modern arrangement; and that, though we are told that there were ten commandments given to Moses, we are no where told how these commandments were divided. This we must learn from tradition; and the only tradition worth a straw, is that of the Catholic Church, the legitimate successor of Moses and the Prophets.

(3.) And we would also remind the Witness that, if the Israelites were commanded to make no images of God, it was expressly because God had not revealed himself to them under any sensible sign; because they "saw not any similitude in the day that the Lord God spoke to them in Horeb."—Deut. iv., 15. This, and this only, was the reason assigned by Moses, why the children of Israel should not make unto themselves any image of the invisible God.

But to us Christians, God has been made manifest in the flesh. We have seen him in the form of a man, and as a man; therefore, we can represent Him, without doing any violence to the laws of Moses. Had God manifested Himself in Horeb, under the figure of a man, or of a dove, or of a golden calf, we may be sure that the Israelites would not be forbidden to produce that figure, either in gorgeous painting, or elaborate carved work. It is, therefore, clear that, as the solitary reason assigned by Moses why his people should not represent God by any sensible sign, does not exist for Christians, seeing that God—if Christ were very God—has revealed himself under a sensible sign, we have the right to assume, as a logical consequence, that, so neither can the prohibition against making carved images of God, be applied to the representations in canvass, in wood, and stone, which Catholics make to themselves of their Crucified Redeemer.

Lastly, we would remark that, ere the Witness can conclude to the idolatry of Catholics, from their worship of that which Christ said was His body, he must prove that it is not His body; and that, therefore, Our Lord was guilty of uttering a falsehood. For, if the "consecrated wafer" be the very body of Christ, there can be no idolatry in worshipping it; and if it be not that body, then were the words "This is my body," a solemn and deliberate falsehood. If we be idolaters in our worship of the host, Christ alone is to blame; and our only fault is a misplaced confidence in His veracity.

FRENCH CANADIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY RECORD, JUNE 1858.—Our readers are by this time so well acquainted with the nature and style of these "Records" that it is not worth our while to devote much of our time and space to a review of their contents. The Record for June, is like all its predecessors, a silly compound of twaddle and falsehood, unworthy of more than a kick of contempt in passing.

The chief object of its publication seems to be to bring under the notice of a sympathising public the "Hardships of the Colporteurs;" a set of loafing gentry, who, too lazy to work, go about the country, sponging—to use a vulgar phrase—upon the simple habitants. The latter however, sometimes lose patience with these impertinent intruders upon their privacy; and disgusted with their cant, snivel and hypocrisy, occasionally kick the unwelcome visitors out of doors. Thus at page 14, one of these gentry thus relates his pitiful story:—

"I went into the House of a French Canadian, and asked him if he could give me lodgings for the night, and I would pay him. He said he did not know, whether he could, and referred me to his wife who assented. I therefore took a chair, and not being admitted to my table, sat down while they were eating this supper."

However, the Colporteur could not restrain himself, and commenced a religious controversy with his hosts; who not relishing the felons insolence, told him to clear out, and look for quarters elsewhere—with the resignation of a martyr,