

# THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 1894.

## MAY.

"Ah, I'm weary, weary waiting,  
Waiting for the May."

Yes, all during the dreary autumn, with its slush, its rain, its bleak skies, and dismantled trees; all through the long, cold winter, with its howling storms, its ice-bound streams, its snow-clad valleys and those lengthy twilights followed by dreary nights; all the while that summer's heralds coquet with the white-haired, hoary season, and March's blasts, and April's showers keep us oscillating between the chills of the past and the warm to come; all this time, the soul is "weary waiting", the heart is "weary sighing," "weary throbbing," "weary longing" for the May. And May is here; May, the youthful bride of summer; garlands of flowers are twined around her brow, and beams of light shoot from her eyes; she trips down the mountain side, she unchains the streamlets, sending them rejoicing and singing merrily upon their way; she lifts the heavy barrier from the great river's bosom, allowing it to heave and swell in grand relief from months of ice-laden coercion; she calls the birds and bids them build new nests and chant sweet anthems in aisles of nature's temple, she plies her fan and the zephyrs undulate softly on the air and touch the cold yet fevered cheek of departing winter, imparting a youthful glow, such as the famed *Elixir of Life* gave to the mystic Rosicrucians. We have been anxiously looking to the coming of the May; and now that the fair goddess is with us, what are we to do?

Ah! to the Catholic heart there is a something sweeter than the song of birds, more delicious than the zephyr's breath, more charming than the flowers of the valleys, more wonderful than the magic transformation of all nature, in the coming of May. It is the month of Mary; the month consecrated especially to the Blessed Mother of Christ; the month in which she meets and greets all the children of faith who love her and confide in her. The canticles in honor of Mary are more glorious than the birds' songs in honor of May; the soothing breath of consoling promise that Mary brings to cool the burning forehead of the erring and the throbbing temples of the weary, is far more delicious than the mild winds that May sends abroad before and around her; the lilies of purity, the roses of love, the garlands of devotion and prayer that her children place at Mary's shrine are more lasting, more precious, more beautiful than the myriad flowers strewn along the path of May; and the power with which Mary

breaks the icy clasp of sin upon the soul of the one who loves her, and the ease with which she loosens the great streams of grace from the barriers with which our worldliness and forgetfulness have frozen them, are far more extraordinary than the touch of May upon the crystal mountain-brook, or her impress upon the emancipated rivers.

There is not a season of the year in which the Church does not celebrate some great festival of the Blessed Virgin; in the spring the Annunciation, in the summer the Assumption, in the autumn or early winter the Immaculate Conception; but the Month of May is particularly her month. From time immemorial the children of our race have exhibited one grand characteristic, love for their mothers. And in the spiritual order we, the children of our Holy Faith, are likewise the children of Mary, and all true and faithful Catholics have ever recognized her as the Refuge of Sinners, the Comforter of the Afflicted, the Help of Christians, and the Queen of Angels. When Christ was suspended between earth and sky, and while yet in the throes of that most terrible of all agonies, He looked down upon His Mother and the Beloved Disciple, St. John—both standing at the foot of the Cross—and seeing in the latter the representative of all the human family for whose salvation He was dying, Christ said to him "Son, behold thy Mother," and to Mary, "Mother, behold thy Son." There and then did the Divine One constitute Mary the mother of all the human race, and with that last breath He called upon each of us—and all who have ever or will ever believe in Him—to accept the one who gave birth to our Redeemer as the spiritual Mother who should nurture us with the food of salvation and shelter us from the tempests of life.

Unhappily there are many Catholics who seem to feel ashamed of honoring the Blessed Virgin, or who do so in private, but would not like to have the world see that they considered her as their spiritual mother. In fact they think it childish, and are fearful that some might laugh at them. Poor, foolish beings! How little they must know about the history of the different devotions instituted in honor of the "Mother Most Pure!" Monarchs in the first ages, and throughout the different centuries down to our own time, have not been ashamed to place themselves under the protection of Mary and to appeal to her in the hours of peril or temptation. Some of the grandest minds that, star-like, illumine the sky of history were proud to be recognized as children of Mary. The sturdy warriors of the crusades, the knightly princes in the days of chivalry, the leaders of great armies, the conquerors of nations, were not ashamed to kneel at the shrine of Mary and ask her to bless their arms and to intercede with her Son in their behalf. Whether it be a Conde, invoking the name of Mary on the eve of battle, or an O'Connell, hearing Mass at Mary's altar, before one of his giant efforts in the cause of Liberty, in every case where you find a great soul you must meet a true humility, and in the Catholic heart that is really humble there is ever a niche for the image of the Blessed Mother of God.

During all this month, in every Catholic church or chapel, there will be held special exercises of devotion in honor of the Blessed Virgin; her altar will be decorated and resplendent with lights; litanies will be recited and rosaries will be said; and no good Catholic family should allow an evening to pass without sending, at least, one of its members to the "Month of Mary." Let the infidel

scoff, the impious sneer, the non-Catholic ridicule; Mary is away beyond the reach of the poisoned shaft of the scoffer, the venomous sting of the sneering individual, and the thoughtless folly of the ridiculing creature. The more her name is insulted the more should her children defend it; the greater the opposition to her fame the greater should be the Catholic's determination to proclaim it; for has it not been said by herself, in answer to God's angel, "Henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed?"

## DEVIL VS. CHURCH.

We have reached the last of our long series of articles on this subject. For one reason or another they have been scattered over a space of almost a year. It is probable that many of our readers have forgotten the chain of arguments that we attempted to forge, and, in order that the whole subject may be brought back to their minds, we will recapitulate in a few lines the whole story of the struggle between the Devil and the Church.

We began by showing that ever since the fall of Lucifer there has been war between him and God, that God ever and always conquered while the Infernal Spirit has constantly been confounded. When Lucifer rebelled, in his pride, he was cast out of heaven into unending misery. Down in those gloomy caverns of his new abode he planned and sought vengeance against the Omnipotent. Yet, not being in God's councils, he was every moment more and more astonished at the wonders that were taking place. The drawing of this world out of chaos, the creation of animate nature, and finally the combining of the mortal and the immortal in the creature *man*, were more than the demon could understand. But once man was created the Evil One determined to destroy him, and thereby frustrate the plans of God and mar His great work. In this Lucifer succeeded to a certain degree; he tempted man to his fall, and then he cast defiance at God. But meanwhile greater wonders were in preparation by the Almighty, and even less than the creation did the fallen angel comprehend them.

After four thousand years the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity came on earth, and the Enemy beheld, at last, that he had under-estimated the powers of God. He found that the masterpiece was not *man made to the image of God*, but *God assuming the form of man*. If it were wonderful that the Creator combined the perishable and the imperishable—the body and the soul—in man, a million times more astounding was it to behold the finite and the infinite, the mortal and the eternal, the human and the Divine united in one individuality—Christ.

Christ redeemed man, broke the chains that Satan had twined about him, and having performed that stupendous work, He gave man His Church, in which He was to dwell unto the end of time. And to that Church He gave the Sacraments as sources of grace, whereby man might conquer the Evil One, and gain heaven for all eternity. Once more was Satan defeated. He had attempted to destroy God's creature but he failed, and his head was crushed by the Son of God. Now he has only one resource left, and that is to destroy the Church which Christ built and with which He promised to remain for all time.

We studied the first attempts made by the Devil to kill the Church in its very cradle. The power of Pagan-Rome was his instrument. We saw how the Almighty again defeated him and how

the structure of the Church's immutability was built upon the ruins of the Caesar's palace. The next instrument the Enemy brought forth from his arsenal consisted of the Schismatics; we dedicated an article to this subject and pointed out how easily the vessel that Peter guided rode majestically through the petty crafts that have long since been engulfed in the waves of time. The third attempt made by the Devil against the Church was through the medium of the Mahometans; in this also was he destined to failure. His fourth and most frantic assault was the so-called Reformation. On this point we gave ample evidence, historical and otherwise, of the failure of Protestantism. Owing to its novelty and to a craving on the part of man for freedom and license, it was very successful at the outset; but after the first half century it has only gone on dividing more, growing weaker and receding. In this, his great card, the church's enemy had staked his most sanguine hopes for vengeance; but it failed him. Finally the fifth and last powerful instrument that he made use of might be styled the secret societies. Through them he strove to undermine, since he could not overthrow, the edifice built by Christ on the Rock. We have seen how miserably he and his auxiliaries have failed to detach one stone from another in the Divinely established institution of salvation. We have examined the Liberty, Equality and Fraternity that these societies offer and have found instead that they actually bequeath to the world Bondage, Tyranny and Hatred. Even with such powerful allies the Devil has again failed to injure—much less overthrow—the Church. God has in every instance conquered; and so shall it be until the consummation of ages.

It would almost seem as if the Devil had exhausted all his resources and was unable to conjure up any more powerful enemy against the Church than those we have mentioned—all of which have failed. It seems to us, looking upon the situation through the glass of history, that the demon is almost now in despair. He has thundered with his heavy cannon at the gates of heaven; he is now reduced to small-arms, and very poor ones at that. So puny and miserable are the instruments of the evil one during the last four years that, compared with the battering-rams of the past centuries, they appear like mere pop-guns. Shakey and bad must be the cause in which no better or truer weapons are used than those raised at present against the Church. Having been defeated in his master efforts the vexed and baffled creature has recourse to small means—not in the hope of ever destroying the Church, but for the satisfaction of bothering, tormenting and injuring to some degree the faithful followers of the Great Master. It has been, of late, a kind of guerrilla warfare, and of course nothing serious can be expected to come of it.

The last instruments of the enemy are the "ex-nuns" and "ex-priests," the A. P. Aists and P. P. Aists, and a few other little archers of poison-tipped arrows. But it is no longer a bold advance on the part of the Devil; he has been frustrated so often by the Almighty, that he seems to have gone distracted, to have lost his accustomed cunning, and to be groping in a gloom more dense than any that has yet encompassed him. On through the centuries has the perpetual struggle between Error and Truth been carried on; and in every encounter Truth has come out victorious. Considering the respective positions, powers and resources of the two leaders, it stand to reason that the Devil must necessarily meet defeat at the hands of God. Time