

# THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 7, 1851.

## PROTESTANT MISSIONS.

We were highly amused, a few evenings ago, by hearing a speaker, at the Anniversary Missionary Meeting, boast of the glorious triumphs of Protestant Missions, when compared with the abortive attempts of Popery to Christianize and civilise the nations of the earth. Certainly, the worthy speaker must have forgotten the conversion of his savage Saxon ancestors, and, indeed, of the whole of Europe, or he would never have given utterance to such silly trash. But it is not our purpose to speak of what Catholicity, but of what Protestantism, has accomplished. To be sure, all sensible men admit that the great majority of Protestant Missions have turned out to be miserable failures—mischievous in India (*vide* Sydney Smith), and absurd in North America, China, and Australasia. But, then, we are constantly referred to the Polynesian group, and, above all, to the Sandwich Islands, as trophies of what Protestantism has done, and is able again to do. Well, we are content to accept the case of the Sandwich Islands, as a fair, nay, certainly the most favorable, sample of the result of Missionary labors which Protestantism can adduce. We are content, also, to accept the history of the conversion of the Sandwich Islands, as given by Protestant Ministers, and if, from such testimony, we find that Protestantism has succeeded in establishing the reign of morality, and all the Christian virtues, upon the ruins of Paganism and Heathen superstition; if we find in the Sandwich Islands, a thriving community, to the purity of whose moral character, health and longevity bear witness, we will be prepared to admit that the vaunts of Protestantism are not entirely without foundation. But if, on the contrary, we find unmistakable marks of wide-spread and beastly immorality, evidenced by the disease and death of a population, decreasing in a rapidly accelerating ratio; if, in fine, we can see in the history of these Islands, since the days when first Protestant Missionaries landed upon their shores, but one sad "bill of mortality," one dreary scroll, like that which was spread before the prophet, written within and without with lamentations, and mournings, and woe,—woe such as has not been, from the beginning unto this time; then, surely, we cannot be expected to retract our assertion that "Catholicity alone can civilise, Protestantism can but exterminate, the nations."

We have before us a work recently published by the Rev. H. T. Cheever,—"The Island World of the Pacific," to whose testimony Protestants surely cannot object. It is written by one who, as he himself informs us, "was, if not a Missionary, yet a Missionary's friend," and with the intent of "alluring the interest of the Protestant world, to a country connected with the noblest triumphs of Christianity, in modern times,—of definitely informing the English and American public respecting a people, and a country, where the outlay of Protestant benevolence has been so signally rewarded," and to give a faithful account of the improvement of a nation "which, compared with all other progressive improvements, is, as a nation born in a day." Were the Rev. Mr. Cheever not a Protestant Minister, we should suspect him of cruel irony, in applying the term "nation born in a day" to the Sandwich Islanders. It would have been a more correct expression, had he said, "slain in a day." Of course all the *new-born* are, by courtesy, supposed to be remarkably fine children; but we fear that this spiritual Protestant baby will, upon inspection, turn out to be a very nasty abortion.

The Sandwich Islands were discovered by Captain Cook, in 1778. Situated near the northern edge of the tropic of Cancer, and in the heart of the Pacific, they enjoy an equable temperature, and a salubrious climate. "For the year round, there is always the purest air, and a variety of climate can be commanded by change of situation, that is not to be had elsewhere in the world, within the same area . . . . In every view, the Sandwich Islands may be deemed one of the most healthful countries in the world. Families are reared in great safety, as the remarkable increase of the Missionaries shows. Children there do not yet have to run the gauntlet of those formidable diseases, that invade families in climes less favored with genial skies, and perpetual summer." From this, it is evident that any great amount of sickness or mortality must be attributed, not to climatic, but to moral causes. "Not a noxious beast, reptile, or insect existed in these islands, when first made known to Europeans. Now they have mosquitoes, fleas, centipedes, and scorpions." The Rev. Mr. Cheever might have added—and lots of Evangelical Missionaries.

"The human constitution, it is evident, had arrived to great perfection at the Sandwich Islands;" which, at the time of their discovery, by Capt. Cook, were estimated to contain a population of 400,000. Perhaps, in this there was some exaggeration; but, at the lowest computation, the population must have exceeded 300,000. The natives, at that time, were sunk in the deepest superstition and idolatry,—and the Rev. Mr. Cheever informs us, "that strange as it seems to parents within the pale of Christian civilisation, this dreadful crime" (infanticide) "was notoriously common. Perhaps it had a parallel in no other country. Mothers destroyed their own offspring, both before and after they were born." Infanticide is a crime by no means peculiar to the South Sea Islanders. Nothing is more common in Protestant countries. Had the Rev. Mr. Cheever consulted the Statute Book of Scotland, he would have learned to what a fearful extent child-murder prevailed in that

Evangelical land, and a slight inspection of the advertising columns of some of the New York papers, would have convinced him, that the destruction of the child by the mother, before it is born, is practised as a very lucrative profession in his own country, and to an extent certainly not surpassed in *Hawaii* or *Oahu*. But whatever may have been the vices of the native population, it is not to the efforts of the Missionaries, that is owing the abolition of idolatry, and the destruction of the *heiau*, or idol temple. The Rev. Mr. Cheever admits this. "It is a notable and well-known fact," he says, "that while the first American Missionaries were upon the high seas, on their way to the Islands, in 1819, . . . the idol-gods were disowned, their temples burned, the great wall of *tabus* broken down, and the way prepared, so far as that went, for the reception of the true God." Under these favorable circumstances, did the American Missionaries enter upon their labors, upwards of thirty years ago. The chiefs and people, convinced of the vast superiority of European civilisation, gladly welcomed them, hoping that, by embracing the Christian religion, they might be able to obtain from the Christian's God, a knowledge of those arts and sciences, to which, they clearly saw, the white man was indebted for his advantages over them. This worldly view of the benefits to be derived from religion, is strikingly displayed in a little tirade against Popery, which American Missionaries very naturally dread, and, therefore, do their best to teach the simple natives to hate. "At a meeting of native-assistant Missionaries, at one of the stations, one of them read an essay on Popery, of which the following is an abstract:—*Popery. What has it proved to be? Has it proved to be food, or flesh, or water, or tappa, or cloth, or wisdom? No.*" *Ergo*: Because Catholicity offers to her converts, nor fish, nor *tappa*, nor yet *cloth*, it is a religion which hath no beauty, that men should desire it. Soon after their arrival, the Missionaries contrived, by the hopes which they held out of food, fish, water, *tappa*, and cloth, to possess themselves of all power and authority in the Islands. The high priests of this new theocracy, they ruled the nation with a rod of iron; their will was law; and, if we may judge of their conduct in things temporal, by the liberties in which they indulge themselves in things spiritual, we must conclude that a more arbitrary despotism never existed. For instance, we find recorded the impious manner in which these men have presumed to travesty the last pledge of a Saviour's love—the Sacrament of the Supper of our Lord. "The elements of the supper, were little pieces of *kalo*, about the size of the elemental bread at home, and *water*." We have heard how, in some of the more ignorant districts of England, the religious ceremonies of the people are confined to sprinkling a pinch of salt upon a gridiron, and saying the Lord's prayer backwards; but this profane parody of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is still more disgusting. The "*kalo*" is the *arum esculentum*, or wild Indian turnip, and though excellently adapted for the winter food of cattle, we do most decidedly object to "turnips and cold water," as the spiritual food of Christians. From what follows, it will be seen that the religious and moral state of the Hawaiians, is just what might have been expected from men who are nourished upon "turnips and water," instead of the life-giving Sacraments of the Church. We will copy from our author a few specimens of the "noblest triumph of Christianity in modern times."

"You can only hope with trembling, for the best of them, so liable are they to yield to temptation, and fall into the Hawaiian sin. Almost all the suspensions have been on account of adultery, and the illicit intercourse of the unmarried, some of them under circumstances painfully polluting. The people are yet but half reclaimed savages . . . , and if a man comes here, thinking to find in the recently converted simple Islanders, the brightest trophies of the cross, he will be disappointed. Embracing the Gospel does not at once make barbarians spiritual, conscientious, or intelligent; nor does it at once release them from the vicious habits of body and mind, to which they have been addicted for generations." We should like to know what kind of Gospel that must be, which, when embraced, does not make men spiritual or conscientious, and which does not release from the bondage of sin. It is, evidently, not the Gospel revealed by Christ, and taught by the Apostles and the Catholic Church. Again, the Rev. Mr. Cheever informs us, "that living as they generally do, on a highly nutritious, gross food, without habits of self-restraint; knowing no limit to the indulgence of any appetite, but satiety," it is not to be wondered at, "that adultery and illicit intercourse are frequent," and concludes, that "a people that live like Hawaiians cannot be virtuous and pure, how far soever they may be Christianized." Had the Rev. Mr. Cheever written *Protestantized*, instead of *Christianized*, we should have understood his meaning, and would have perfectly coincided in opinion with him. We would have added, that the more a people is Protestantized, the less possibility is there of its being pure and virtuous; but we do not understand a Christianity which leaves its votaries vicious and impure. "And yet, through the rigor of the laws, the vigilance of magistrates and constables, the discipline and restraints of the Church, it is probable that there is no more licentiousness than among the same number of inhabitants in cities of England, France, or America." And this is all that can be said in favor of the "noblest triumph of Christianity in modern times"! Had a Catholic, returning from the Sandwich Islands, ventured to say that the natives of that country were as corrupt and degraded, as the inhabitants of the large cities of Europe, the dwellers in St. Giles, or in the back-slums of Westminster, his statement would have been rejected as monstrous, and he himself stigmatized as a Papist slanderer.

But here we have a friend of Missionaries, one writing with the avowed object of exalting their triumphs, and his testimony amounts to this; that what with "rigor of laws," "vigilance of magistrates, and espionage of constables," it is *probable* that the converts to Protestantism, are not worse than the most vicious communities of the old world; and this exemplary state of moral perfection is to be attributed to *laws*, magistrates, and constables,—the Grace of God not being an essential element in Protestant conversions.

We regret that want of space prevents us from showing how the system of marriage, introduced by the Missionaries, together with the power of obtaining a divorce from the Magistrate, which is also tolerated, has tended to greatly increase the previously existing immorality. The result of the Rev. Mr. Cheever's observations, is thus given: "Facts enough have come to my knowledge, while at these Islands, to prove that the foreseen probability of being able to be married again, has operated as a *premium* to crime." We obtain an insight into another very curious effect "of the outlay of Protestant benevolence" upon the moral and social condition of the Hawaiians. Like most rude nations, before corrupted with the vices of the white man, they were remarkable for their hospitality to one another. But this system was found "to be very injurious to thrift and enterprise; the Missionaries perhaps do all they can to break it up," and have so far succeeded, that on the next page we are told,—"while hospitable and generous enough to their friends, Hawaiians are by no means so distinguished for the exercise of these virtues towards those whom they do not recognize as acquaintances. A poor and strange Hawaiian, who is so luckless as to have no *maka-makas* (friends) in a place, may whistle in vain for lodging and food, unless he carry a certificate of being a Church-member." An excellent commentary the Missionaries must have read to their converts, upon the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, forty-second and following verses.

But we must turn from the moral to the physical condition of the Hawaiians, and see if there is any improvement there. We find the following description of a "nation born in a day":—"Disease here is rife, and some forms of it, consequent upon the taint from licentiousness, are truly dreadful. Cases of secondary syphilis are frequent, and horrid syphilitic ulcers, such as are seen in those wards of hospitals devoted to this class of diseases . . . . The very national blood is so corrupted, the Hawaiian constitution so deeply, venomously diseased, and the habits of the people such, in their living and intercourse one with another, and with lewd foreigners, that there is little chance of their preservation and perpetuity, as a race. Unless there speedily ensue a great change in the habits of the people, unless the youth be kept from early vice, and untimely marriages, and the married learn chastity, the race will run out, and cease to be." That during the thirty years which have elapsed since the Missionaries landed, the youth have not ceased to be impure, nor the married learnt to be chaste, is evident from the statistics, with which this volume furnishes us, and from which we learn that the result of all this "outlay of Protestant benevolence," is, "that the natives are dying off fast, *rotten* with disease. Like sheep, they are laid in the grave."

In 1823, the population amounted to 142,050. In 1832, nine years later, it had fallen down to 130,313, shewing an annual decrease of 1,304, or at the rate of about 1 per cent. By 1849, the population had dwindled away to 80,641, with an annual decrease of 6,465, or upwards of 8 per cent.; whilst the quantity of spirits entered at the Custom House, for home consumption, was in 1849, nearly double of that admitted in 1847. But, if the Sandwich Islands, when we consider only the state of the aboriginal population, present to our eyes the appearance of one great Lazar-house, one vast mass of moral and physical bestiality; when we turn to the Missionaries and their families, they present a very different picture. These good, self-denying men do thrive wonderfully. They have gone up into the land to possess it, and such a possession as they have got, to be sure. Nothing can equal their fruitfulness. Malthus would be driven to despair, and Miss Martineau would stand aghast, at the amount of *pledges* with which the Mrs. Missionaries are continually rejoicing the eyes of their lords and masters. "Nine families numbered fifty-nine children, an average of six and five-ninths" of a baby "to a family. The Mission families, within less than one generation, had increased one hundred and seventy-five per cent." At this rate, the whole country will soon be peopled with Calibans—Missionaries, we mean,—and what a pleasant residence the Sandwich Islands will be then. Not that we suppose, that the Missionaries are better or worse than the majority of speculators in fire-arms, rum, and religion, who swarm in the Pacific. The Rev. Mr. Cheever, their friend, thus describes them: "Becoming Missionaries, has not made them saints, nor procured them immunity from the ordinary infirmities and peccability of men. Nor has it placed them on the high vantage ground which some imagine, for the cultivation of piety. Nor do we find that odor of sanctity, nor that imaginary halo of holiness, with which certain memoirs, and some other things that have been written, have surrounded the Missionary's person and office." We do not pretend to insinuate that licentiousness and disease were introduced by the Missionaries, or that they have not done their best to check it; but, we do assert that their "*best*" amounts to nothing at all, and that it is to Protestantism, whose Missionaries they are, and not to their own shortcomings, that we attribute the inefficacy of their attempts to make the "young men pure, and the married chaste."

Here we will take our leave, for the present, of the "*Island World of the Pacific*," a work in

which we have found much amusement, and a full confirmation of the literal fulfilment of the old sad island prophecy, delivered long ago, ere Protestantism, Syphilis, and Missionaries, had combined to avenge the death of Captain Cook—

"The palm tree shall grow, the coral shall spread  
But man shall cease."

It may seem to be almost a work of supererogation upon our part, after the exposure we have made, in the case of the Rev. Mons. Faucher, to take any notice of the columns which, from time to time, appear in the columns of the *Montreal Witness*. That man must be indeed an ass who can place any reliance upon the statements of such a very Evangelical journal. However, we are not disposed to let an article, written by a fellow signing himself "*Ojibwais*," who is ashamed to give his real name, pass by in silence; not that we recognise any right upon the part of anonymous slanderers to expect a reply to their cowardly attacks.

The charge which "*Ojibwais*" insinuates against the St. Sulpicians, amounts to this: That the French Government, from motives of humanity towards the Indians, granted to each tribe a Seignior, or free estate; that the British Government subsequently ratified these grants; that amongst the grants made to the Indians by the French, and ratified by the British Government, was the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains, now in the possession of the St. Sulpicians; that the St. Sulpicians spirited away the deeds by which the Indians held their property, and thus, "in course of time, the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains fell into the possession of the Priests, no one can tell how"; that they, the St. Sulpicians, treat the Indians with much harshness, putting restrictions on the cultivation of the land, and the cutting of timber, which "*Ojibwais*" insinuates is the property of the Indians, the St. Sulpicians holding the land only in trust; and, lastly, that Keyaisic, the chief of the Indians, was compelled to do penance, in sack-cloth and ashes, for several Sundays successively, at the door of the Church, for having presumed to complain of this iniquitous conduct of the Priests, to Lord Dalhousie, the Governor of the colony.

In this accusation, there are almost as many falsehoods, as there are lines. We will point out a few. And first, with regard to the manner in which the St. Sulpicians acquired possession of the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains—"no one knows how." An honest man, before writing upon such a subject, would have given himself the trouble to examine the Records of the Seigniorial titles, preserved at the Provincial Secretary's Office, Quebec; and would thus have ascertained, that the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains, was granted 17th October, 1717, by Philippe de Rigaud, Governor, and Michel Begon, intendant, *not to the Indians*, but to the ecclesiastics of the Seminary of St. Sulpice of Montreal; that the said St. Sulpicians undertook, at their proper cost, to build a fortress for the protection of the colony, and to remove the Indians from the neighborhood of Montreal to the Lake of the Two Mountains; that the expenses incurred by the Seminary of St. Sulpice, in carrying out this agreement, so far exceeded the value of the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains, that the French Government felt itself bound to indemnify the St. Sulpicians, by two additional grants of land adjoining the original Seignior, the first dated 26th September, 1733, by Charles, Marquis de Beauharnois, Governor, and the second 1st March, 1735. An honest man would, therefore, never have asserted that the deeds of the Indians were spirited away, and the property of the St. Sulpicians acquired, "no one knows how." Again, had "*Ojibwais*" read the Ordinance of 1840, we do not think that he would have had the impudence to insinuate that the St. Sulpicians hold the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains in trust only, for the use of the Indians, for there he would have seen it expressly declared, that the said Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains "be had, held, possessed, and enjoyed by the said ecclesiastics of the Seminary of St. Sulpice of Montreal, and their successors, as the true and lawful owners, and proprietors of the same, and of every part and parcel thereof, to the only use, benefit, and behoof of the said Seminary or corporation, and their successors, for ever," subject to certain conditions, one of which is the "instruction and spiritual care of the Algonquin and Iroquois Indians;" nor has the Seminary of St. Sulpicians incurred any other obligation towards the Indians, than this, their "instruction and spiritual care."—*Vide* Ord., II. and III. c. So far from the Priests treating the Indians badly, they expend much money upon them, and do their utmost to induce them to cultivate the land. To encourage habits of industry, the St. Sulpicians buy their fire-wood from the Indians, thus purchasing their own property, and giving the Indians a high price for the trouble of cutting it. True, the Indians are not permitted to cut the timber belonging to the Seignior, for the purpose of selling it to strangers; nor do we think that the St. Sulpicians should be blamed for endeavoring to prevent the wanton destruction of their property; but full permission is accorded to the Indians to take, free of all charge, as much timber as they require for their own use, whether for building, fire-wood, or any other purpose whatsoever. Joseph Bouchette, Surveyor-General of Lower Canada, an author as well worthy of credit as "*Ojibwais*," writes thus of the state of the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains, in 1815: "The influence of these venerable proprietors upon industry, and their skill in directing it to works of utility, is clearly evinced by the flourishing condition of their property, of which at least three-fourths is divided into 661 lots, or concessions, of which the greater portion are settled and well-cultivated, producing all kinds of grain, vegeta-