

# The True Witness

## CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 8.

## ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

JUNE—1866.

Friday, 8—Sacred Heart of Jesus.  
Saturday, 9—St. Paschal, C.  
Sunday, 10—Third after Pentecost.  
Monday, 11—St. Barnabas, Ap.  
Tuesday, 12—St. Jean de Fae, C.  
Wednesday, 13—St. Anthony of Padua, O.  
Thursday, 14—St. Basil, B.D.

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The news of all engrossing interest to Canadians is the Fenian raid, which long announced, came off on Friday morning last. Amongst the many wild rumors, some improbable, others evidently false, it is no easy matter to glean out the one grain of truth. But the facts as they have hitherto been confirmed are these:

On Friday morning, about daylight, a large body of Fenians, numbers variously estimated, crossed over and took possession of Fort Erie, a long deserted post: from whence they sent out pillagers, burnt a railroad bridge, and advanced towards the village of Chippewa. As soon as the news arrived at Toronto, the Volunteers sprang to arms; and the regular troops quartered in that City, at Hamilton, and elsewhere, were ordered for immediate service. Some delay, not yet satisfactorily explained, occurred in the advance of the regular troops; and in consequence on Saturday morning, the gallant "Queen's Own" a Toronto corps, found themselves unsupported near Ridgway, in presence of the enemy who were entrenched. They however assumed the offensive, but were, after a smart brush in which at first the advantage was on their side, driven back a short distance with a loss of several killed and wounded. The 16th however and the 47th coming up the Fenians soon broke and fled in all directions. A few were killed; about 200, according to some accounts, were captured; but the great body, by means of tug boats, effected their escape to the U. States steamer *Michigan*, where they were detained as prisoners. Thus by Sunday morning Western Canada was cleared.

In the meantime rumor gave out that a force was menacing the lower parts of the Province; and that whilst an attack on Montreal via Reuss' Point and St. John's was meditated, against Cornwall and other places further West, demonstrations were to be simultaneously made. Up to the time of writing, Monday forenoon, nothing has however been done: but wild rumors, many evidently sensational, are flying about.—To these it is not worth while paying any very serious attention.

All the Volunteers are ordered for service. Amongst the people of Canada the best spirit prevails, and all are determined to protect themselves and happy homes against the gang of plunderers from the U. States. More troops are on their way from Halifax in H.M.S. *Duncan*. The *Pylades* has sent some of her crew to man gun boats for the protection of the Lakes, and another man-of-war the *Rosario* was sent up to Montreal from Quebec. There is no doubt expressed in short, that we are, as it is, fully competent, to deal with the Fenians—if we have but the Fenians to deal with.

But this leads to the question what are our neighbors doing? What has the Washington Government done to enforce its own municipal laws, and its international obligations? As yet it has done almost nothing. We will not apply to it the proverb "much cry and little wool," for as yet it has scarcely uttered a word, or raised its voice to put a stop to atrocities unheard of in civilized communities, and which are an indelible disgrace to the nation that tolerates them. We will not however prejudice the case: we will still try to persuade ourselves to believe that the U. States government is acting in good faith: but we require acts to convince us that such is the case, and not words. If it has the will, but not the power, to enforce its laws, violated, ostentatiously as these laws have been, then indeed may we say with truth that it has morally abdicated, and that the republican form of government is a disgraceful failure. What! a government that boasts of its power, unable to enforce its own laws! A government that could make such a

humiliating avowal would indeed be worthy of all contempt, of all execration from honest men; and the sooner it is swept away from the face of the earth, the better. But no. If it has the will to do so, the U. States government is able to enforce its laws; and if it does not do so, it is because, in the troubled aspect of European politics, it sees, or fancies that it can see, a chance of provoking Great Britain to war with impunity. We will however wait and see; prepared to do ample justice to the honesty of our neighbors, if they will but put it in our power to do so. It has but to give necessary powers to Generals Grant and Meade, brave and able officers, and they will well know how to carry the laws of the U. States into execution, and to rescue their country from the ignominy of encouraging thieves and plunderers.

We abstain of purpose from repeating all the rumors afloat as to the movements of the Fenians, in order to economise space, and content ourselves with such facts as we can glean. On Monday afternoon the *Royal* gunboat, fitted up on purpose, armed with Armstrong guns, and manned with a force of marines and blue jackets from the men-of-war in the river, passed up the St. Lawrence canal towards Beauharnois, where an attack on the canal is probable. The *Hercules*, tug boat from Quebec, was also fitted up as a gun boat, and the naval authorities are making every exertion for the protection of the river and lakes. There was no fighting on Monday.

A large public meeting called by the Mayor has been held for the purpose of organising a Home Guard. The *Nova Scotia* brings 500 troops, and news from Europe to the 25th ult. The position remained unchanged: war was looked upon as almost inevitable, and was expected to break out immediately. There was still talk of a Congress, but little good was expected from it, even should it meet. A good many failures had occurred in England amongst the commercial community. The cattle disease had made its appearance at Waterford in Ireland.

Up to the time of writing, Wednesday forenoon, no fresh attack had been made in any quarter. It was reported that the Fenians in the direction of St. Armand's who had been menacing Montreal, were becoming disgusted and were disbanding, selling their arms; and though we have no authentic intelligence as to the real designs, numbers, or position of the filibusters, we may feel assured that, beyond plundering a few out-lying farms, they can make no impression on Canada. We are prepared for them at all points: and one spirit of loyalty, and of indignation against the ruffian hordes who menace us, inspires the entire population. Some large seizures of arms have been made by the United States authorities under General Meade; and we will still hope that, in spite of their apparent apathy hitherto, they are really acting in good faith.

Parliament meets on Friday. We trust that its first act will be to suspend the *Habeas Corpus*, to declare martial law, and to take prompt measures for dealing with the Fenian prisoners in the hands of our Government. There can be no two opinions as to how armed thieves and murderers should be dealt with; and it is the duty of every man to give to the authorities his hearty support, so as the better to enable them to stamp out, at once and for ever, the plague of Fenianism in Canada.

## PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS LORDSHIP THE BISHOP OF MONTREAL CONCERNING THE SUBDIVISION OF THE PARISH OF NOTRE DAME OF MONTREAL.

Ignatius Bourget, by the Grace of God and of the Apostolic See, Bishop of Montreal, assisting at the Pontifical Throne.

To all the Faithful of the City and Parish of Notre-Dame de Ville-Marie, Health and Benediction in Our Lord.

It is with sincere sorrow, Dearly Beloved Brethren, that We have seen that a pitiful discussion on the subject of the subdivision of this Parish, of which We made mention in Our Pastoral Letter of the 23rd of April, has been begun in the public journals.

We hasten therefore again to raise Our voice on this subject, in order to give to you such explanations as, We trust, shall suffice to satisfy those who have not as yet seen it in its true light; and shall make you all more clearly understand that Our sole design—which is moreover that of the Sovereign Pontiff—is to erect canonical parishes.

You will the better understand what We have have to say to you on this head, Dearly Beloved Brethren, if you will but pay attention to the nature of a Parish; which above all, and before all, is an ecclesiastical district, erected by an authority, which, as spiritual, is in its own province independent, and has for its object the good of souls; and which district is entrusted to the direction of a Pastor legitimately instituted by the Bishop.

When the faithful included within this ecclesiastical district obtain a recognition of their Parish from the Government, so as to assure to it certain civil consequences, then the Canonical Parish acquires certain prerogatives in the Civil order. Then a mutual understanding, on prescribed conditions, betwixt the two Powers is arrived at, for the greater good, spiritual and temporal, of the children of one Church, and the subjects of one and the same Empire.

But this "mutual" understanding is not always necessary, and it may well so happen that cases shall arise in which it would be neither useful nor convenient. In such cases the Canonical Parish quietly enjoys all the spiritual advantages assured to it by the Church, which alone has erected and created it, without having aught to fear from the side of the Civil Power.

For it has been ruled "That the Canonical Decree erecting a Parish is not a Civil procedure subject to revision by the Superior Court by means of a *Writ Certiorari*; that it is exclusively an ecclesiastical procedure, beyond the jurisdiction of that Court, so long as no steps shall have been taken to procure the Civil ratification of such Decree."—*Superior Court of Quebec*, No. 322, of 1852.

A memorable fact, accomplished but a few years ago under our eyes is sufficient, Dearly Beloved Brethren, to bring more clearly and strikingly before you the purely spiritual action of the Church in the bosom of human Societies, without any intervention of the Civil Power. That fact is the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy in England.

Scarcely was the Apostolic Decree, dividing all England into twelve Dioceses under a Metropolitan, made known than the legislative strength of that mighty empire was combined to impede its execution. Great was the struggle, and unheard of efforts were made to make of none effect the act of the Pontiff. But the Temporal Power dashed vainly against the immortal rock, on which is based the Spiritual Power exercised by our immortal Pontiff in this act of supreme authority, which started the whole world, and has rendered so illustrious his glorious Pontificate. During this great battle of the Temporal against the Spiritual Power, the Catholics of England prayed fervently, but maintained a religious silence. To-day this sacred Hierarchy established by the Altar, lives in peace beneath the shadow of the Throne; whilst to the whole world are known the unprecedented honors which followed to his tomb the great Cardinal who had been placed at the head of the new Hierarchy. In the presence of such a triumph it may be concluded that England was proud of having given to the Holy See so powerful a defender of its rights, and a man so worthy of the Roman purple.

But however that may be, this memorable fact shows plainly that Our Holy Father the Pope in the exercise of his supreme power acts, not against the Civil rights of the people, but in a plane above, and outside of, all human legislation—and for this simple reason: that in his hands he holds the divine power of governing all Christian nations. Thus, Dearly Beloved Brethren, you see that he quailed not before the tremendous opposition which our Mother-country offered to his Decree; can it be then, that he will recoil before the obstacles he may meet with in this remote Colony? or is it likely that this Pontiff, so wise, should have so ruled as that his Decree for the subdivision of the Parish of Montreal should have effect only in so far as might seem good to the Civil Power, after his having divided Great Britain into as many Dioceses as he saw fit there to establish?

You can now, Dearly Beloved Brethren, easily seize the true meaning of Our Pastoral Letter, in the presence of those principles which no true Catholic can call in question, and of those brilliant facts which shed a bright light upon the grave question with which we are occupied.—Read it over again by the light of this bright torch, and you will see that, as before the Civil Power, the Parish of Notre Dame de Ville-Marie will remain what it has always been since the *Reglement* of 1722, which recognised for Civil consequences, the Decree of 1678 which erected it into a Parish, Canonically. For in that Letter there is not a word to raise the suspicion that there exists any intention of altering its territorial limits, to deprive it of its customary Parish priest or *Cure Habituel*, to circumscribe the action of its *Fabrique*, or to strip it of any of those Civil privileges which the aforesaid *Reglement* of 1722 assured to it.

Read that Letter over again, written as it was with truly paternal effusion, and you will see that the only question therein raised is that of forming within the bosom of this immense and populous Parish, new Parishes, which will not aspire after *Fabriques* of their own like the Mother Church, but whose ambition it will be to extend fresh succors to a population which advances with giant strides, and which threatens to sweep all before it; so that it is no longer possible for a single Pastor to know his sheep each by their names, or to defend them at advantage against the fury of the wolves, ever wandering around the fold, and seeking to devour them.

Read over again this Letter, written in all simplicity of heart, and you will be convinced that, from the customary Pastor of this ancient Parish no portion of his flock is to be withdrawn; but that for the good of the sheep, the means of safety are multiplied, in that the action of the Pastoral charge is also multiplied. For after all, it is plain that ten Parish priests who should be charged with the task of tending to rich pastures a flock so numerous, and scattered over such an

extent of territory, would be in a better condition for assuring to it its subsistence, and an abundant nourishment, after the pattern of the Divine Pastor, than one Parish Priest, no matter how zealous, could possibly be.

Read again that letter, written with the sole object of the greatest good of all, and you will discover the advantages that from the new order of things cannot but flow. For it is a thing well understood, or rather well felt, that there is a special grace, and quite a divine virtue attached to the ministry of the parish priest. And in fact, the person of the Pastor impresses on the sheep committed to him, sentiments of love, docility, trust, and openness of heart which they cannot feel for any other Priest. From the hands of their Pastor they will accept in humble submission, corrections which, from the hands of any other, they would scarcely bear.

Read over again that Letter, written without after thought, and you will be convinced that the proposed changes will be most advantageous to the Mother Church; which without any loss of her civil privileges, will acquire fresh spiritual importance, in that she will give birth to new parishes about to be created in her bosom; to the customary Parish Priest who will see the multiplication of the means of action for the sanctification of his vast parish; and for the parishioners themselves, who will become the objects of a pastoral solicitude better proportioned to their wants, without at the same time ceasing to participate in those temporal advantages which they with right look for at the hands of the Seminary.

For—and of this no one can doubt—the Seminary to which will still be entrusted the entire Parish, will still continue to make, and to your profit, an honorable use of its immense revenues. To this it is strictly held before God and man, and there is no reason to fear that, it will ever recoil, as some have endeavored to insinuate that it will do, from the discharge of so rigorous a duty.

Such, Dearly Beloved Brethren, are the new explanations which We have deemed it Our duty to give you, in the sure conviction that you will accept them with a true filial docility. To this We think that We are entitled; for Our conscience bears Us witness that, in all these matters, We labor for the greater good of your souls. In the same way it is for the love that We bear to you all, that for thirteen months we denied Ourselves the pleasure of Our native land, and that happiness of being amongst his own sheep, which every pastor feels. Now the long protracted absence which the good of the Diocese in general, and your good in particular, have imposed on Us, has been more irksome to Us than you can well believe; and so also it is solely in the interest of your souls that We expose Ourselves to the ill-will of which We are to-day the object. May God grant to Us the grace to submit to it with humility; but We owe it to truth to admit that We are not insensible thereunto, and this you can readily understand.

At the same time We should the more easily console Ourselves if, as might easily have been done, its manifestations had been kept within the bosom of the family. But alas! the noise of these troubles is heard abroad, and amidst our brethren of different religious beliefs. What must they think of a Pastor who is publicly challenged by some of his own flock as it has happened to Us? On the other hand what must they think of those Catholics who cite their Bishops before the bar of public opinion, when it would have been so easy for them to have obtained from him in private the fullest and most cordial explanations? Of these proceedings the shame and the disgrace must fall, not upon the shepherd only, but upon the sheep.

Far from Us, however, be the thought that the number of those in this condition, is large.—So little is this Our opinion that We have not hesitated to make a fresh appeal to public charity, reckoning upon the confidence which at all times has been extended to Us, for the accomplishment of certain works, that in time might exercise a happy influence for the honor of our religion which knows how to inspire her children with such generous devotion. We are happy to have it in our power to inform you here, that already this new appeal has met with the most favorable sympathies, though as yet it may not have become known to all charitable souls.

But there is an easy method, Dearly beloved Brethren, for re-establishing ourselves in public opinion, and that consists in the observance of a religious silence, whilst treating of our affairs in the bosom of the family. We all owe a common Chief, a great and wise Pontiff, to whom we all owe a filial obedience. He—and of this We can certify you—he has given long and serious attention to the question of the subdivision of this Parish: and he has spoken, pronouncing a solemn judgment, embodying in it an Apostolic Decree of which We have given you a detailed and conscientious explanation. Let us then fall down before his sacred feet, and bow before the might of Jesus Christ which dwells in him. From his judgment there is no appeal; and if we submit Ourselves thereunto with good will, God will help us. "Rome has spoken; the case is finished. *Roma locuta est: causa finita est.*"

As a testimony of Our profound veneration for the sacred Person of so great a Pontiff, We will make it Our duty on Sunday next to take up with Our own hands the collection of the *Peter's Pence* to be made in Our Cathedral. It will be with great pleasure that on this solemn occasion We will descend from the Episcopal Throne to solicit that aid which we know is needed for the Supreme Chief of the Church; for the Pontiff-King, who in these sad days is reduced to the painful necessity of falling back upon the charity of the universal Church. Your Catholic hearts will grasp the meaning of this, and from on high will speak to you in the tones of filial piety.—May the Lord bless you from the heavenly Son, so that in this world you may lead holy and happy lives, and in the world to come may attain to eternal bliss.

The present Letter shall be read at the public office of all the churches of the City and Parish of Notre Dame of Montreal on Trinity Sunday.

Given at Montreal this Twenty-third day of May of the year Eighteen hundred and Sixty-six, under Our hand and Seal, and the countersign of Our Secretary.

† Ig. Bishop of Montreal  
By command of His Lordship,  
J. O. PARR, Canon Secretary.

The usual Procession of the Blessed Sacrament took place with the accustomed pomp on Sunday last. The streets were handsomely decorated, the weather was propitious, and everything passed off most happily. The route this year was from the Parish, to the St. Patrick's Church, and back by Bleury, Craig and St. Joseph Streets. As usual we have to acknowledge and felicitate ourselves upon the good feeling displayed by our separated brethren.

The health of His Lordship the Bishop has caused much uneasiness to his friends of late, but at present there is a decided improvement. His Lordship is in the *Hotel Dieu*.

His Lordship the Bishop of St. Hyacinthe has issued a Pastoral to his dioceses announcing his approaching resignation of his Episcopal charge, but declaring at the same time his intention to live and end his days, amongst them. Of the importance and flourishing condition of the Diocese some estimate may be formed from the fact that whilst in 1832 it contained, only 39 parishes and missions served by 49 priests, it numbers to-day 69 parishes, and 106 priests.

FIRST COMMUNIONS.—A writer in the Montreal *Herald* criticises the *celat* with which it is customary in Catholic countries to celebrate the first communions of children. In his eyes—as in those of all Protestants—the importance attached by Catholics to this "rite," as he calls it, is incomprehensible; and consequently he falls into the most absurd contradictions when treating of the subject. For instance he says:—

"The matter-of-fact light in which the ceremonies of their Church are regarded by Catholic populations is fully evident in their manner of referring in after life to the period of their individual experiences.—They constantly say, 'About the time when I was to take my first communion,' or 'soon after I took my first communion,' to designate the epoch at which something or other occurred in their regular life."

Now it seems to us that this would indicate the direct contrary of what the writer in the *Herald* seeks to insinuate; it would show that with the Catholic, the "first communion" is always, no matter how much his faith may have been weakened, and his morals corrupted by intercourse with the world, the one great epoch of his life; the one event of all transcending importance, to which all the other events of his entire life are referred, and around which, as the centre, they are grouped. In the history of the individual, the "First Communion" is the great epoch, as, in the history of the human race the coming of Christ is the epoch; so that, as we say of an event it occurred, *After Christ*, or *Before Christ*, so many years—in like manner the individual Catholic divides his life into two epochs—that before, and that subsequent to, his "First Communion." We do not think that the Christian form of Chronology as applied to history; that the A.D. which denotes the epoch at which something or another occurred in the course of time, can be appropriately cited as a proof of the indifference with which Christians regard the Incarnation, and the Redemption of fallen man.

But according to our friend of the *Herald*, who is so rash as to treat of Catholic subjects of which He is as profoundly ignorant as all Protestants necessarily are, "First Communions" are with the majority of Catholics of little or no importance, except for the "display of their little persons in the eyes of the congregation, decked out in the pretty book muslin dresses" &c. But if so, how comes it that the "First Communion" makes on all Catholics such a deep and indelible impression; that it is always referred to by them, in after life, as the epoch *par excellence* to which all the events of their lives are referred? There is in the *Herald's* criticism a manifest contradiction on this point which, we trust, he will pardon us for pointing out to him, giving him at the same time the friendly advice not again to write upon the subject of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church, until he knows