

The True Witness.

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We beg to remind our Correspondents that no letters will be taken out of the Post-Office, unless prepaid.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 21.

TO OUR DELINQUENT SUBSCRIBERS.—We are compelled to address ourselves to this very numerous class of the subscribers to the TRUE WITNESS, with the object of inducing them to pay up, a portion at least, of the arrears in which they stand indebted to this office. That the "times are hard," and money unusually scarce, are the excuses with which our demands are constantly met; but we do think that a little, a very little exertion on the part of those to whom we address ourselves, would enable them to discharge our claims upon them, and spare us the disagreeable necessity of asking, but asking in vain, for the payment of a just debt.

We would respectfully invite all who are interested in the TRUE WITNESS to endeavor to extend its circulation. If each one would 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 substantial for the paper.

To our paying subscribers, our best thanks are tendered.

ECCLIESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

APRIL—1865.

Friday, 21—Of the Octave.
Saturday, 22—Of the Octave.
Sunday, 23—Low Sunday.
Monday, 24—St. Fidelis, B.M.
Tuesday, 25—St. MARK, B.
Wednesday, 26—SS. Oletus and Marcellus, MM.
Thursday, 27—St. Leon, P.D.
The "Forty Hours" Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will commence as follows:—
Friday, 21—Hospice Youville, St. Benoit.
Sunday, 23—St. Agatha.
Tuesday, 25—St. Glet.
Thursday, 27—St. Adela.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

On the evening of Friday, the 14th instant, President Lincoln was shot in the theatre at Washington. He lingered for a few hours, and died about half-past seven o'clock on Saturday morning. The following are the particulars of this horrid tragedy, in so far as they have yet reached us.

The late President and his wife assisted, on Friday evening, at the performances at Ford's Theatre. Towards the close of the third act, the audience were startled by the report of a shot; and immediately a man was seen to leap from the box where the President was seated, on to the stage, brandishing a knife or dagger, and exclaiming "sic semper tyrannis." The cries of Mrs. Lincoln soon made known the nature of the crime that had been committed; and rushing to the spot, the people found the President bleeding from a wound in the head, through which the brains were slowly oozing out. The utmost confusion prevailed, owing to which the assassin was enabled to make good his escape by the back door of the stage, with all the intricacies of which he seemed to be perfectly acquainted. At the door a horse was waiting for him; he mounted, and rode off.

In the meantime the President was carried to a neighboring house, and the best medical aid was of course at hand. It was however evident from the first that the wound was mortal; and after lingering for some hours in a state of coma without pain, without any return of consciousness, the wounded man passed quietly away.

Nor was this the only tragedy of the eventful night. About the time that the President was wounded in the theatre, an unknown person obtained entrance to the sick room of Mr. Seward, who was confined to his bed from the effects of severe injuries sustained in a fall from his carriage. The ruffian, who by passing himself off as the bearer of a prescription, had thus obtained entrance to the sick man's chamber, then stabbed Mr. Seward in the face and throat; and Mr. F. A. Seward, hearing the disturbance, and rushing to his father's assistance, was also stabbed, and had his skull broken by a blow from a pistol; an attendant in the sick room shared the same fate.

Steps were instantly taken to secure the arrest of the murderers. The villain who shot the President left behind him a spur and his hat. These were recognised as belonging to a man of the name of Booth, himself an actor, and the son of Booth the tragedian. The greatest excitement of course prevailed, and it is reported that

wild but summary justice was inflicted on some one or two persons, wicked enough and silly enough to testify their satisfaction at the death of President Lincoln.

According to the provisions of the Constitution, the Vice President assumes the reins of Government, upon the death of the President during the latter's term of office; so that Andy Johnson, the fellow who so distinguished himself the other day in the Senate, is President Lincoln's successor. The man was originally a tailor, a hard working, self-educated man, who acquired notoriety and a quasi popularity by his zeal as a politician. A native of a Southern State, he warmly espoused the Southern side in politics; so long as the latter seemed to be the winning side; the fortunes of the North being in the ascendant, he turned round, and became the most fanatic of republicans and of anti-States' Rights men. For this he was rewarded by being elected to the situation of Vice President; and his inaugural Address in the Senate whilst in a state of beastly intoxication, will be fresh in the memories of our readers, and of his countrymen over whose destinies he is unfortunately for them called upon to preside. It is not because he is of humble origin, that his accession to supreme power is an indelible disgrace to the Northern States who elected him; for the man who by his talents, by his industry, and by his virtues raises himself from the bench of the journeyman tailor, to a seat in the Senate House is in the eyes of all men whose approbation is worth having, nobler and greater than mere Duke or Prince, or inheritor of ancestral honors. But it is because this Andy Johnson is a low, coarse, drunken blackguard, filthy in his manners and conversation as well as depraved in his morals, that his advent to supreme power must be looked upon as a disgrace to his country, and a misfortune to the civilised world. A man when drunk is said to be "disguised in liquor," but the expression is a bad one. Liquor strips the disguise from off a man, betrays him in his true colors; and by throwing him off his guard, enables us to see down into the very depths of his nature. Thus it is that we know Andy Johnson and what manner of stuff the fellow is made of, from his drunken speech in the Senate, when from the very fullness of his heart he spoke, and gave utterance to what was within him. His vice of drunkenness may be corrected; but sober he will be still at heart, the same low, coarse ruffian as the Andy Johnson who under the influence of whiskey, or other drinks, gave forth merely what is in him at all times—when sober, as well as when in a state of beastly drunkenness. This man is Lincoln's successor; and in comparison with such a man, the late President, with all his defects, stands forth almost as an angel of light.

Who were the agents in the infamous crimes which we have above related? We know not as yet; but naturally suspicion points to some infuriated Southerners, desperate at the ruin of their country, and madly bent upon revenge on those whom they looked upon as the chief agents in that ruin. We hope that those suspicions may turn out to be ill-founded, for it is impossible for any honest man to entertain sympathy, or feelings of any kind but those of scorn and abhorrence, for those who avail themselves of the services of the assassin, or who in any manner countenance him. The shooting of President Lincoln was a cowardly act of murder; and as events will show, his death is a great calamity not only to the North, but to the South. From the death of Caesar in the Senate to that of the late Lincoln in the play-house, all political assassinations have been profitable to the party only which furnished the victim; and the late President by his bloody death has done more to assure the triumph of the Northern cause than ever he did, or could have done during, or by his life. His murder was therefore not only the meanest, but the most stupid of crimes, if perpetrated with a political object and from motives of party vengeance—of which however there are as yet no proofs before the world. The assassins of Caesar may be pardoned their intellectual sin; for in striking the man they had some grounds for believing that they were striking also the system of which he was the founder, and the sole apparent support;—they may be excused, from an intellectual point of view, in that they did not detect in the livid and trembling Octavius the heir of Caesar, and the organiser of Caesarism. But Abe Lincoln! of what system was he the founder or mainstay? What possible end could his cowardly murderers propose to themselves from the death of a man remarkable chiefly for his great mediocrity, and perhaps, as compared with those who surrounded him, for his great moderation?

In the British Provinces the news of the President's death elicited one general sentiment of horror and disgust. The Federal flag was hoisted half-mast high on the buildings belonging to the Canadian Government, and similar marks of respect were paid at Halifax by order of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor. Should any of the rascally assassins effect their escape to these quarters, they need not flatter themselves that they will meet here with sympathy, or a shelter from the gallows which is their due!

and on which we hope that they will soon swing. From Europe our latest dates are by the Germania. The news is of little general interest, with the exception that Mr. Cobden is dead.

What will our Ministerial Delegates do in England? what is the object of their voyage or mission? Not, assuredly, to induce the Imperial Government to coerce the Lower Provinces into an acceptance of the Quebec scheme of Union; for already has Mr. Cardwell given us plainly to understand that, though the Imperial authorities approve of that scheme, they propose to leave the Colonies free to accept, or to reject it. Besides, if the people of the Lower Provinces—as the result of the late elections in New Brunswick assures us is the case—are averse to the proposed scheme of Union, any action on the part of the British Government, to coerce them into accepting it, would but have the effect of coercing them into the arms of the United States; with whom their political and social affinities are as great as, and their geographical and material affinities are much greater than, are their affinities political, social or material with Upper Canada. Any attempt to coerce the Lower Provinces would simply result in the loss of those Provinces to Great Britain; and we may therefore be confident that the Ministerial delegation to England has not coercion for its object.

Besides, Mr. George Brown, speaking through the Globe, and detaching himself from his Ministerial colleagues whom he evidently looks upon as his servitors, has told us that the Quebec scheme is dead, and that we must fall back upon some other plan for settling the sectional difficulties between the two Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. In this matter we believe, though of course we are not behind the scenes, that the French Canadian section of our Ministry are not disposed to yield to the dictation of Mr. George Brown. Our Provincial Legislature has, whether for good or evil, accepted the Quebec scheme; adopted an Address to the Imperial Government praying the latter to legislate for the British North American Provinces, in accordance therewith; and therefore our Legislature could not, without stultifying itself, without eating its own words, condescend to listen to any other project than that which it has already formally sanctioned, and to which it has committed itself. The actual order of relations betwixt the two Canadas must therefore be maintained, until it be exchanged for, or superseded by, that embodied in the scheme of Union adopted by the Provincial Legislature in its last session.

If this be the policy of the Ministry it is one which so far should be supported, even by those who, like ourselves, strongly object to the details of their plan of Union; because, so long as that plan is not voluntarily adopted by the Lower Provinces, the actual order would thereby be maintained, and the extreme democratic and anti-French Canadian party of which Mr. Geo. Brown is the leader, would be incapacitated from bringing forward any other, and perhaps still more objectionable scheme for settling the "constitutional difficulties" of the day, by the simple process of "swamping the French" as the Montreal Herald of the 10th ult, so tersely expresses it. We must wait now, until in process of time the Lower Provinces see fit to accept that, which for the present at least, they have rejected; and thus the very adoption of the Quebec scheme by our Legislature may be made the means of indefinitely prolonging the existing order, which all French Canadians will admit is, if it could but be maintained, more favorable to the preservation of Lower Canadian autonomy than would be that other Union which the delegates to the Quebec Conference proposed as its substitute.

Had "State Rights" been better protected by that proposed scheme of Union; had it been less centralising in its details, and more truly Federal in its scope, we believe that the people of the Lower Provinces, who are naturally and laudably jealous of their autonomy, would have been less averse to it. We believe that the only means by which it can ever be rendered acceptable to the people of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, will consist in a considerable modification of some of its details, so as to impart to it less of the character of a legislative or incorporating Union, and more of the character of a real Federal Union; and which modifications will at the same time give greater prominence to the monarchical element in the Constitution. No one pretends that the details of the measure laid before our Legislature are perfect, or not susceptible of any improvement; or that the hastily adopted, and in many instances crude ideas of the Quebec delegates can not be altered or modified for the better. If then the Union scheme in its actual form is distasteful to the Lower Provinces, it would certainly be better for us of Lower Canada to call upon their people to indicate what changes of detail would make that measure acceptable to them, and then to wait patiently for an answer, than to abandon it entirely, and thereby give Mr. George Brown and his Clear-Grit friends an opportunity to introduce, and insist

upon the adoption of, another and perhaps, in so far as the autonomy of Lower Canada is concerned, a still more dangerous measure.

As an instance of what we may term the "crudity" of the ideas of the gentlemen who met at Quebec to make, God help the mark! a spick and span new Constitution for half a Continent, inhabited by races alien to one another in blood, language, and religion, we may cite, (though it may seem at first but a slight matter,) the name which they propose to give to the more popular or directly elected Chamber of the Central Legislature—to wit, "HOUSE OF COMMONS." What more absurd than such a name! as if there could be in such a state of society as that which obtains in North America, any thing but a "House of Commons;" as if, with the occasional exception of Her Majesty's Representatives who may be a Noble, all the rest of the Queen's subjects in North America were not equally "Commoners!" To call one Chamber of a Legislature a House of Commons, *par excellence*, implies, of course, that the other Chamber is not a House of Commons; and implies therefore a social distinction which has, which can have, no footing amongst a people of whom all are Commoners alike, and none Nobles. We do not suspect the Quebec delegates of any occult design of forming in British North America a bogus patrician order, or of founding a pork and potash aristocracy; but we cannot but recognise in the absurd system of nomenclature which they adopted for their Federal Legislature, traces of haste and crudity, and a profound ignorance of the reasons why, in England, one branch of the Legislature is styled most appropriately a "House of Commons."

There is therefore no reason to believe that the work of the Quebec delegates is in any other respect more free from imperfections and crudities, than it is in this of nomenclature; and though we do not pretend to insist now upon any modifications, though it is now too late for us of Lower Canada to commence any such agitation—yet if the people of the Lower Provinces themselves were to adopt that mode of action; were they to express their readiness to accept a less centralised form of Union than that which has been proposed to them, we do not see why we of this Province should regret what has occurred, or refuse to listen to terms. In the meantime, we must make the best of a bad bargain, and avail ourselves of the Resolutions adopted at the last session of our Legislature as a barrier against the meditated aggressions of Mr. George Brown and his friends. Those Resolutions unrescinded, the latter cannot bring forward their pet measure of "Rép by Pop," or suggest, even, any other "Constitutional Changes;" and if the Ministry propose to make this use of the Resolutions, to shelter themselves behind them, should Mr. George Brown attempt some fresh attack upon our existing institutions, and to insist upon adhering to the terms agreed upon by the Quebec delegates, so far from opposing them, we should support them in this their intent, and seek to strengthen their hands against Mr. George Brown, and his party.

The news by the Moravian shows that there is still one nation that knows how, when the necessity presents itself, to vindicate its national honor, and to maintain the dignity of its flag; and this nation is Portugal, one of the weakest in the world.

The Confederate man-of-war *Stonewall* put to sea from a Portuguese port; and contrary to the laws of civilized nations, which enjoin that a delay of 24 hours must occur betwixt the sailing of one belligerent from a neutral port, and the sailing of the cruisers of the other belligerent Power from the same port, the Federal frigates *Niagara* and *Sacramento* immediately put to sea in pursuit of the *Stonewall*. The latter consequently took refuge in the Tagus.

On the 29th ult., the same thing happened again, but with a different result. The *Stonewall* again put to sea; and at once disregarding the warnings of the Portuguese government, the two Federal cruisers above named, gave chase. This outrage was more than the Portuguese felt inclined to endure: so they opened fire on the Federal men-of-war from Belem Castle, which commands the mouth of the Tagus, and one shot striking the *Niagara*, killed one of her crew. Hereupon the two frigates anchored, and gave up chase of the *Stonewall*.

It is to be regretted that the Brazilian Government, when their flag was insulted by the piratical seizure of the Confederate man-of-war steamer *Florida* in the port of Bahia, did not make a display of equal vigor. As it is, the Federals have been taught that they will not be allowed to violate, on every occasion, the rights of neutrals, and the laws of civilized nations with impunity. For once we can say all honor to the brave Portuguese!

General Johnston has surrendered with the troops under his command, on the same conditions as those accorded in the case of General Lee and his army. The Confederate States have now no forces in the field.

YANKEE PROTESTANTISM AND FRENCH SANS-CULOTTISM.—They are very much alike indeed, are these two; twin-brothers, a sort of political Siamese twins, so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to discriminate betwixt them.—Camille Desmoulins went to the scaffold with the remark that his age was that of the "bon sans-culotte Jesus;" and the Protestant ministers of the Northern States, in like manner have held solemn Synod in New York under the Presidency of Governor Andrews of the State of Massachusetts, wherein it was Resolved that Our Lord was a "good democrat, and scorned such a prefix to His name as Lord." Of this Protestant Synod we had ample details in the New York papers—of which as singularly illustrative of the spirit and tendencies of extreme Northern Protestant democracy, we will give some extracts to our readers—begging of them to pardon us the apparent blasphemy. Yankee Protestantism is so close akin to blasphemy, or in other words, to French *sans culottism*, that it is difficult to treat of one, without approaching the other.

The Synod or Convention was held in New York, was composed of representatives from all the Liberal Protestant churches of all the Northern States, and was held under the auspices of the Governor of the Protestant State of Massachusetts. The proceedings were inaugurated by an Address or spoken Pastoral from Governor Andrews; and were continued by the Protestant ministers during several days. By some accident the phrase "the Lord Jesus Christ" was introduced in one of the Resolutions; whereupon the Rev. Mr. Watson, of Connecticut, rose to order. He objected to the title of Lord being applied to Jesus Christ "who was a good democrat, and scorned such aristocratic prefixes." The reverend speaker argued that as all temporal titles of honor had been abolished in his country, therefore—(we copy *verbatim* from the report before us)—"the Saviour ought to be called Mr. Jesus Christ, or at best, Jesus Christ, Esq." It is added:—

"These observations were received with some approbation."—New York Herald.

We owe an apology to our readers for laying such abominations before them; but our excuse is that we do so with the object of showing what manner of spirit Yankee Protestant democracy is of, and what Christianity may expect from the ascendancy of that democratic spirit.

STRONG TESTIMONY AS TO THE VALUE OF THE CONFESSIONAL.—An article (selected) in a late number of the Montreal Witness expresses surprise that the "majority of men in France," though themselves practically infidels, "take girls for being Catholics, the more bigoted the better, though it is difficult to see how any union can be intellectually complete between persons who differ so widely on such an important subject as religion."

The phenomenon is easily explained. All men, however loose themselves in their morals, require their women to be pure chaste and virtuous. The "men of France" know that their wives and female relatives, if bigoted Catholics are constant in their attendance at the Confessional, of which and whose effects they also in their younger, or College days, had ample practical experience. They know therefore, that in their wives' and daughters' frequentation of the Sacraments, and in their punctuality at the Confessional, they, the husbands and fathers, have ample guarantee for the chastity and purity of their women. This is the whole secret.

Of course, if the infidels of France doubted of the good effects of the Confessional; if they believed that those effects were demoralising, or tended to make their women what no men however abandoned wish their women to be—they would not select as their partners, girls open to the suspicion of a "bigoted Catholicity," and therefore constant in their attendance at the Confessional. No men know better than do the French infidels, what are the moral effects of the Confessional; and though they will have none of it for themselves, they, guided by the experience of their own younger days, wisely conclude that they cannot have too much of it for their wives, sisters, sweethearts, and daughters.

It is stated in English papers that Lieutenant-Col. Galloway of the Royal Engineers is about to proceed to Montreal to superintend the works about to be commenced for the defence of this City. These works are designed to cover the city from an attack from the right bank of the river: and will extend from a distance of about two miles below Longueuil, in a curvilinear form to the Lachine rapids, and with a radius of about two miles from the river. What number of guns the works will mount, or, more important still, what number of men it will require to man them, we are not told.

We see by our Quebec exchanges that an attempt was made a few nights ago to burn the church of St. Rochs: the crime of incendiarism is fearfully prevalent throughout Canada.

By the latest telegrams, the Seward, father and son, were doing well, and were expected to recover from their wounds. The supposed murderer of Mr. Lincoln has not been arrested.