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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOV. 16, 1855.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The *Pacific* from Liverpool 2nd inst., brings no news of importance from the Crimea, where both armies were about to take up their winter quarters. The articles in the *Times* on the probability of war with the United States, had created quite a panic.

If we may judge by the violence of their language, and by their intemperate vituperation of all who do not believe that men can be made sober, chaste, or honest by Act of Parliament, it would appear that the advocates of a "Prohibitory Liquor Law" for Canada, feel that their cause is all but desperate; and that their only chance is to blackguard their opponents as lustily as possible. They don't deal much in argument—that's a fact—but they have the gift of calling hard names wonderfully developed; and this gift they exercise with right good will against the press of Montreal; which with scarce an exception, has condemned the introduction of "Sumptuary Laws" into Canada. The last number of the *Montreal Witness*, for instance, gives us the following specimens of the eloquence of the Pump—flowers of oratory, culled from the garden of Billinsgate:—

"With the exception of the *Transcript* the English press of Montreal is a stench in the nostrils of all temperance people within a hundred and fifty miles round the city."—*Montreal Witness.*

Here is another, in which the Temperance Man, after another desperate suck at the hose, become perfectly furious, and in the spirit of prophecy lashes out as hard against Popery, as against the poor man's pot of beer:—

"Ages to come will look back to the time when men dealt out 'distilled damnation' under the authority of a government license, with as much amazement as we now look back to the time when the agents of Rome were licensed to retail indulgences to sin."—*Ib.*

That fools—even in "the ages to come"—will altogether cease from the face of the earth, we do not expect; there is therefore no saying what some men may, or may not do, some three hundred years hence. And as, in the intelligent XIX century, we find liars impudent enough to assert, and fools silly enough to believe, that the "agents of Rome were once licensed to retail indulgences to sin"—so it is not impossible that, in the XXII, by some few simpletons the idea may be entertained that the sale of intoxicating liquors in the XIX was owing to the "licence of the Government." We the more readily admit this, because, even now, it is not uncommon to meet with "Temperance Men"—as they call themselves *par excellence*, as if all the rest of the world were drunkards—who in all their arguments against the sale of spirits, quietly assume that, *but* for the Government "license system," there would be no such trade at all; that in fact it owes its being to the permission of the Government to retail beer and spirits. It may perhaps be as well, from time to time, to remind these half crazed creatures—that, *but* for the "license laws" every man in the country would have the right as before the law of the land—to sell spirits and to keep a tavern; and *that* the "license system," so far from affording facilities to sell, is a positive restriction upon the liquor traffic. That the State has the right to raise a revenue from the sale of spirituous liquors, no one we think will venture to deny; and it is only as a fiscal measure that any restriction upon the natural inherent right of every man to buy and sell what he pleases can be logically concluded from Protestant premises.—Yet, as we are by no means interested in the mere fiscal question, we have not a word to say against a revision or modification of our revenue laws. The result, however, of the abolition of the "license system" would not be the total cessation of the liquor traffic—as the wiseacre of the *Montreal Witness* would seem to anticipate, and as indubitably would be the case *if* that traffic were caused by, dependant upon, or existed only in virtue of, "the authority of a government license"—but on the contrary, the throwing of the liquor traffic open to every member of the community; who would then be as free to sell beer, wine, or spirits, as he is now to deal in groceries, or to retail hardware and dry goods. The *Montreal Witness* should remember this before he permits himself to decry the present "license system;" which in so far as it has any effect at all—and though it is purely a financial measure—tends indirectly to restrict the natural right of the subject, to sell and therefore, to a certain extent, to check the consumption of, intoxicating liquors.

M. H., Kemptville—The papers you complain of have been regularly forwarded. Your instructions shall be attended to.

D. M'GEE'S LECTURES.

The Second lecture on, "*Irish History as the Key to Irish Destiny in the XIX century,*" was delivered on Wednesday evening the 7th inst. Having been introduced by the President of the "Young Men's St. Patrick's Association," the lecturer commenced by observing that the result they had arrived at last night was, that a gradual developement in the social life, and in the political consequences of Christianity in Ireland, had reached an advanced stage in the eighth century. They had also seen that at that time the rest of Christendom was in danger—that while the Christianity of the continent was in danger, and threatened by the sword of the infidel, Ireland, so to speak, was without the Gothic world, and enabled to come in and adjust the balance of Christendom, and bring it again under the religion of the Cross. She had escaped Gothic invasion up to this period; but was soon to find it directed against her. She was attacked on her own soil, and was in arms, year after year, combating Paganism for nearly three centuries, and with that dauntless resolution for which her sons, in the cause of religion, have ever been celebrated. From the period in which he left off in last evening's lecture, up to the commencement of the twelfth century, Ireland was constantly in arms against Pagan invaders. Denmark sent forth the greater part of them, and hence the wars of that period went under the generic title of the Danish Invasion; though Norway, Sweden, and Finland contributed their hordes to swell the host of assailants. The Irish called them "Gentiles"—and this appellation appeared to show conclusively that the Irish people believed that they were fighting the battles of conscience, while engaged with these barbarians.—In that spirit they went out to battle; so consecrating the sword, and giving to war the only glory it could have on earth—fighting either for a principle that had been assailed, or against a false one sought to be established. The coming of the Danes was said to be preceded by strange omens—by signs in the heaven, and signs on the earth. Banners were seen borne in the mist; and strange prodigies of dumb beasts being heard to speak, prepared the people for some unknown calamity at hand. And it was well that their approach was thus heralded, and that the people had some time to prepare for them; for Ireland, not having been engaged in foreign war for three hundred years up to that time, was in anything but a fit state to resist the encroachments of such vigorous and determined invaders. The peoples who composed these invaders, were a strange combination of the soldier and sailor. They were a hardy and primitive race, who could handle the lance as well as they could the fishing spear, and were equally ready to do either. They believed in a Paganism very different to the Druidical system. Under it, the sun, moon, and stars—a form of pantheism—were worshipped. The Danes, on the contrary, had a religion of slaughter, over which Odin, their chief Hero presided. They believed that to die fighting was the greatest bliss allotted to them, and that according to the number of lives they sacrificed in battle would be their reward in the after life. Their art of navigation had improved by experience, and in course of time; and having begun to traverse the Northern Sea, the Island of Ireland was directly on their way, to whatever quarter of the world they sought to turn their prows. About the end of the eighth century they landed at Armagh—attacked and burned it. It was somewhat remarkable, but illustrative of the theory he had already put forward that the war was looked upon as a religious one, that their points of attack and defence were invariably the seats of learning and ecclesiastical authority. Armagh was burned four times within twenty-five years; and as in obedience to the precept he had mentioned last night, wherever there was a church there was a school, those ancient seats of learning all shared the same fate. The Danes, in fact, had a vow that they would extirpate Christianity out of Ireland, and they very nearly succeeded. During their fiercest assault, Malachy 1st was King of Ireland—a man of self-indulgent habits—who cared more for the pleasure of the table than the interests of his country, and loved his own ease before his subjects' welfare. For a long time he was in the power of the Danes—his subjects their slaves. He was aroused to a sense of his duty by an accidental conversation with Turgesius the Gentile Chief. He was annoyed by the cawing of the rooks who had grouped on some trees close by the Royal walls of Tara, and complaining to the Danish Chief of the nuisance, was asked how it could be remedied. The Dane was said to have replied "to get rid of the ravens he had to cut down the trees." And Malachy thinking there were other ravens in the land which it was far more desirable to get rid of, succeeded, by a stratagem, similar to Solon's at Megara, in killing the Prince of the invaders, and twelve of his most warlike captains; then followed a sort of Sicilian vespers, setting Ireland free. The whole of the struggle, however, was as distinctly a crusade in its character and consequences, as if it had been to free the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the Saracens..... St. Olaf was the most interesting convert of that time. He was banished from the home of his youth, and took refuge in Russia. He remained for some time at Constantinople, and afterwards visited many of the Courts of Europe. He was finally recalled to Norway to assume the throne of his father. He came to Ireland to avenge the death of one of his relatives, and there became a Christian. And so earnestly and zealously did the new convert embrace this creed that even in his lifetime he won the title of Saint....his fame for piety spread far and near.....and in London, Dublin, and Continental cities, they found churches dedicated to him even at the present day. He smoked paganism, as it were, out of the land—he waged a desperate war against it—and, with a zeal which would not probably be approved now-a-days, obliged those whom he vanquished, by force to embrace the faith. It was Baptism, or no quarter, with St. Olaf, as it was in Ireland and England, and, indeed, all over Europe, in those ages of zeal. The close of the Danish period was placed at the Battle of Clontarf, and the person who was said to have closed it was Brian of "the Tributes." He was born one of a numerous family—the youngest, or Benjamin of his household. They were not by any means a leading family in their Province, and in the course of nature, he could scarcely expect to rise to great power. But Providence had evidently chosen him for great purposes, and prepared the way for his ultimate attainment of grandeur and power. His brothers died, or were cut off in Danish warfare one by one; and when he had reached middle age, he was the head of his household. He first punished some enemies of his father, who had slain one of his brethren, and then he set to work to strengthen his political position. Having united the two Munsters, he established them as one Kingdom, and appointed the capital in the old Episcopal city of Cashel. He then set up an obsolete claim as the descendant of Eugene, or Owen Moore, to the half of Ireland, and when he had got the half, insisted upon having the whole. Malachy II. was no match for his astute and active rival; and when Brian brought his claim to a climax, was confined to his couch by a broken leg which he had received in his favorite employment of taming unbroken horses. When Brian insisted upon an answer to his new claims, the sporting King thought he must do something. So he built a bridge across the Shannon at Athlone to draw Connaught closer to his aid, and when it was quite completed, Brian marched over it, attended by a bodyguard of some thousands of soldiers. On the keystone of that very bridge he forced Malachy to sign his abdication. By this *coup d'etat*, Ireland was won, and, as was afterwards proved, lost nothing by his becoming its sole monarch. So great was his policy that he prevailed on Malachy to serve under him as his Lieutenant, and so carry out those projects he ought himself to have long before set about. He brought all his forces to bear against the Pagans; defeated them in many an important engagement; and at last at the Battle of Clontarf almost completely extirpated them. He was then eighty-five years of age, and died on a Good Friday in April 1014, before the Crucifix, with harness on his back, praying for the victory of the hosts, which, like Moses, he was not allowed to lead in person. This was the last day of Odinism as a separate Pagan power—the last day ever it could menace Europe—the last day of a system we can trace for 1000 years, holding a vast sway over the lives of men—wide-spread, formidable and pernicious. On the same field, Brian's eldest son, and his son's eldest son, lost their lives. Two generations were cut off, and the crown was thrown back for a scramble to whoever could claim the greatest provincial popularity. There were few kings after Brian worthy of the name. The chief authority was sometimes in the east, sometimes in the west—now in one corner, then in another; it was a travelling government something like the present one in Canada; but however the system might work here, it worked only mischief for Ireland. The lecturer concluded an eloquent discourse with a high eulogium upon the life and policy of Brian—his sagacious attempts at centralisation, and raising the standard of morals and manners among the people. It would be impossible to estimate the good he might have done, had his life been spared, or his first-born preserved to sit on his throne. But "man proposes, and God disposes." Had Brian succeeded in giving unity and a vigorous new dynasty to his country in the XI. century, the Anglo-Norman invasion of the XII. would hardly have succeeded to any extent; but of this event he would treat in the third lecture

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On Friday evening Mr. M'Gee continued the subject before a crowded audience. We are indebted to the *Herald*, for the following report of his discourse. The lecturer began by stating that he had arrived at that period of Irish History when Brian the most illustrious of Ireland's civilians, had succeeded in subverting the ancient dynasty, though he had failed in founding a new one. He had left Ireland freed from the Danish yoke, but, like a shipwrecked mariner thrown up high and dry out of danger from the stormy element, thoroughly exhausted from the fierce struggles he had gone through. After his time the old distinctions were revived. The executive had no efficiency, and the different powers neutralized one another. In the meantime a government had been organized in Great Britain, under that feudal form which, of all others was the best adapted for the purposes of oppression. In Ireland, every man of the blood of the chief sat at the same table with him, though the chief himself was always chosen by the crown. In England, in Saxon times, the institutions were very similar, until Alfred gave centralization to the government. But the Normans had now come and had given to England her faculty of conquering, and had from that day to this been the governing class. Before that time, too, there had been in England, British, Saxon and Danish blood; but the Norman blood was the element which fused the whole, and made her institutions more dangerous to her neighbors than beneficent for herself. To this day, the House of Lords was opened in Norman French—the Lords dated their titles from the roll of Battle Abbey—and, till the passage of the Reform bill, they retained all the power of the country. The feudal power had the same theory for its organization as the ecclesiastical power, which descends from on high downwards, whereas the democratic theory makes all power spring from the masses; and this ecclesiastical system was naturally adopted by the Normans after their conversion, and when they had no form of government of their own. Under it, all the soil of the country rested in the Crown, who distributed it to vassals, and they again, down through different classes, to the tenants employed in husbandry. This system of ramification gave unity to the government in England and elsewhere, and, made the authority of the executive so direct and energetic, that when they had an able man at their head, the Normans could carry anything against mere clans. William after the conquest of England vainly contemplated that of Ireland; but Henry 2nd succeeded in carrying out the design. Chatham confessed that he learned history through Shakespeare, and Irishmen might confess that their knowledge of the transaction which led to this event was derived from Moore's song—

"The valley lay smiling before me."

The song did not, however, describe the event with perfect accuracy, since he believed there was no seduction, but only an abduction; for as the gentleman who carried off was a grandfather, and the lady forty-five years of age, she was in all probability carried off merely as a hostage. However, the man who exercised royal power in Ireland was banished for the offence, and sought the help of Henry the 2nd, who gave him letters patent to his nobility, authorizing any of them to undertake to re-seat Dermott McMurroch. The invasion therefore took place. The first victories were in Leinster; afterwards Munster was subdued, and Wexford opened its gates to Dermott when he appeared in arms before it. Two bishops mediated between the people and the King, and the latter re-granted the charter to the city; but he committed a neighboring pass to Fitzgerald, who had thus the means of cutting off the supplies from the town. Dublin was then an Hiberno-Danish city, which was only taken under the following circumstances. St. Lawrence, the Bishop, came out to negotiate, and thought he had made a treaty. But Dermott was particularly enraged against the citizens, because when his father had been killed in battle he had been buried by them with a dog by his side,—an insult repeated in the 18th century in the case (as we understood) of a Lord Chancellor of Ireland. However, the Bishop on his return found the city in the hands of the invaders. At length Henry came over with an army of twenty or thirty thousand men—an immense armament in those days—and proceeded, in the name of the Roman Pontiff, to call a Synod at Cashel. The bull of Pope Adrian 4th, on which he acted, though thought by some to be a forgery, he (Mr. McG.) thought was authentic, as well on account of the deference paid to it by the prelates, as on account of the internal evidence. The bull stated this—that as it had been represented to the Pope by Henry that he designed to make an expedition into Ireland, for the reformation of morals and ecclesiastical establishments, that he the Pontiff knowing this intention, and the Chair of St. Peter exercising a control over all Kings—and further, that Peter's Pence not being paid in Ireland, though they were paid every where else—he (the Pope) thought the expedition lawful, and gave it his moral sanction. This was a decision in equity in the high court of Europe, and not a pretence to instal a suffragan King. Many reasons had been given to justify such interference; but the most plausible seemed to be the common consent of all Christian nations that the Pope should judge between them. Since the division of Europe into two camps that of course was impossible. National conventions had been talked of, and the law of nations might be read; but a law was nothing without an authoritative expounder. There were doubtless many errors and some wrong in the decisions of this tribunal; but many wise men held that there was a general wail coming down through many ages, complaining that Christendom is headless. This bull, he had said, affected to confer no sovereignty of Ireland, and the proof was to be found in the fact that the Irish arms were not quartered with those of England till four hundred years after under Henry 8th, who called himself the Sovereign of Ireland. Under these circumstances, St. Leger, the English Governor of the Pale in Ireland, called a meeeting of all the classes except the clergy. These classes held a great court, and determined that the crown of Ireland was vacant, and that it should be offered to Henry on certain conditions—as, that the Brehon laws should be maintained, and that each chief should retain his influence, only changing his old title for those which the English nobility possessed. The Irish Church, too, was to remain as it was under Henry 7th. This agreement was accepted by Henry, at Greenwich. Of course this negotiation would not have been thought necessary if the Pope had already given the kingdom to Henry's predecessor. The holding of the Kings of England, too, up to that time, had been very small. It was confined to a tract known as the Pale, for, for four hundred years after the first invasion, this Anglo-Norman or Anglo-Saxon race, which was now so much boasted as the great race, which was everywhere to take the lead in civilization, had scarcely been able to show themselves outside of its fortifications.

Catholic as England then was, she wished, nevertheless, to possess the fields of Ireland, though the war was not so savage as that carried on during the Danish period; but Edward Clarence, of vinous memory, passed a celebrated statute forbidding the English to sell—especially arms—to the "mere" Irish, or to intermarry with them. This strong barrier, however, was thrown down by certain of the nobles, who confessed the sovereignty of Irish beauty, and were therefore declared rebels against their Sovereign King. The war of races even extended to the religious communities. There were certain of them to which no Irish were admitted. Others were exclusively Norman—no doubt partly on account of the difference of language, and partly perhaps to avoid disputes arising from difference of race. Up to the time of Henry 8th, there were only four counties out of the thirty-two in Ireland, which had been subjected by the English. Up to that time, however, the struggle had been simply for mastery; but when the vast change took place which separated England from Catholicism, then Ireland began to suffer from other evils, the effects of which her people suffered to this day, and from which her children would suffer unless they remedied them while they had the power. The old contests between the Catholics were at least manly. The Norman used to blow his trumpet and to attack a clan of Celts driving their cattle, or conveying their merchandize; and the fight was face to face with a kind of chivalry like that which distinguished the combats of the Spaniards and the Moors.—The only thing that could be complained of was the arrogant pretension to rule on the part of the foreigners. But now a new theory was set up. The holding of property in Ireland was made conditional on the taking of the oaths of abjuration and supremacy, and the refusal of which implied the penalty of being declared a traitor, with that attaint of the blood, which not only confiscated the lands of the person himself, but prevented his descendants from holding them. This was a religious war, for if the fathers of the Irish of the present day could have taken these two oaths, their descendants would not now be receiving the wages of foreign employers at the ends of the earth. They preferred, however, the gibbet, the jail and the prison-ship, with the approval of their consciences, rather than property and welfare without it. They kept their faith, that one great inheritance, while fields and castles and all else were lost. At the end of the XVI century the soil of Ireland, the cultivated part of which, then 11 millions, was now 16 millions of arable acres, was almost all in the hands of the natives of the country; and at the end of the seventeenth there was not a fourth part of their descendants who owned land there. There were instances of grandchildren, brought up in affluence, of homes belonging to the possessors of whole counties, like those which belonged to the Desmonds, who, as shipwrecked mariners, were thrown upon the lands, where their grandfathers held such vast possessions.—In three generations the soil was taken from one whole class who held to the old religion, and given to another who had no hesitation in swearing that they held James or Charles to be the head of the Church; or who might be the soldiers of Cromwell, holding it a crowning mercy when they put thousands to death. Now by rendering man incapable of holding property was not all ambition taken away from him?—Was not every reason held out to him to hate the state of things by which he was surrounded?—Would not the love of justice which made men Conservative in Canada, where the government was good, make them rebels, where injustice was practised on the great body of the people? Must not such a state of things strike down any people from whatever stage of civilization it had reached to the lowest stage of barbarism? Was there a better test indeed of barbarism and civilization than the possession of, or destitution of property? It was in barbarous countries where there was no distinction between mine and thine; but from the moment men began to speak of my horse, my home, my wife, my children—from that moment there was a basis for society. In Ireland, it was said, the people were reckless and improvident, and ignorant. They were so; but from what cause?—from any native defect in their character?—from deficiency of gifts of body or mind?—from want of muscle, or of ingenuity, or of courage? Was there anything that marked them out for a position of inferiority? No. All these philosophical—rather philosophistical arguments about Celts and Saxons were unworthy of consideration, when the document could be produced by which the people were deprived of the right of keeping what they earned, of calling the land theirs, or the water theirs, or even of drawing a fish out of the sea without paying for the privilege—a document that gave everything to the class of the middle man, or the gentleman. If there were a defect of native conservatism and foresight in Ireland, whose fault was it? Why should an Irish peasant have foresight? Only to anticipate his affliction. Conservatism! Of what? When every year of his life was but a new year of degradation and sorrow, whose sleep was without rest and whose dreams had in them no pleasant imaginations. The selfish policy of England deprived Ireland of property, dispersed her teachers, prohibited instruction in the Irish language, and, lastly, forbid even instruction in religion.

Irish history since it began, consisted of three periods of religious war; the last commencing under Elizabeth and not yet closed. It had been said that materially and externally England had now conquered Ireland. She had done so. The Queen's writ ran through the island, and in a short time the Irish language must be forgotten. But in the war of principles—in the moral war—Ireland had conquered England, and she had planted her flag on the island of Great Britain and elsewhere as firmly as the