

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY BY J. GILLIES
FOR GEORGE B. OLIVER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR,
At the Office, No. 4, Place d'Armes.

TERMS:

To all country subscribers, or subscribers receiving their papers through the post, or calling for them at the office, if paid in advance, Two Dollars; if not so paid, then Two Dollars and a-half.

To all subscribers whose papers are delivered by carriers, Two Dollars and a-half, if paid in advance; but if not paid in advance, then Three Dollars.

Single copies, three pence; can be had at this Office; at Flynn's, McGill Street; and at Pickup's News Depot.

All communications to be addressed to the Editor of the TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE, post paid.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 1859.

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NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The 30th instant is now spoken of as the day fixed for the meeting of Congress to settle the affairs of the Italian Peninsula, and upon whose decision depend the fortunes of Europe, and indeed of the civilized world. Peace we are told by the diplomatists will be preserved; but in spite of these flattering promises, there is still much uneasiness, as to the good faith of the Sardinian Government. "If all the allies," says the *Times*' Paris correspondent—"directly interested in the Italian question were actuated by good faith, we might reasonably anticipate the fulfilment of the assurance given by Lord Malmesbury, that peace will not be broken, and that the Congress will end in those results which all Europe desires." The writer however plainly hints that, of the parties to the Congress, some are not in good faith; and seems to doubt of any very satisfactory settlement of the Italian question, without an appeal to arms.

The defeat of Lord Derby's Ministry by a majority of 39 upon Lord John Russell's amendment to the motion for the second reading of the new Reform Bill, would seem to indicate that the resignation of the Cabinet was inevitable; though up to the latest dates, we had not received either the news of that resignation having been tendered, or the names of the probable successors.

In Ireland by dint of skilful jury-packing, hard swearing, and well paid informers, the government had succeeded in obtaining at Tralee a verdict of guilty against one of the Phoenix prisoners. The reign of Titus Oates is again inaugurated in Ireland; and perjury is again at a premium as in the days of the Popish Plot. We cannot, therefore, but rejoice at the defeat of the Derby Ministry, and the probable speedy retirement of M.M. Whiteside and Napier into private life.—In Galway there had been very serious riots arising out of a visit to that City by Mr. George Brown's obscure friend Gavazzi. This is, of course, to be regretted, for the cause of truth was never yet promoted by rioting and violence; and as to this fellow Gavazzi in particular, it may safely be said, that he would have been morally dead long ago, had it not been for the improper notice taken of him by headstrong and imprudent members of the Church. It is as foolish, as it is wicked and contrary to the spirit and direct teachings of the Church, to employ physical force, or threats of force against such fellows as Gavazzi, Achilli, &c., &c.; for by so doing Catholics not only bring disgrace upon themselves, but secure a triumph for their adversaries. Violence, and brutality Catholics should leave to Protestants; for these are the natural weapons of Protestantism; by means of which alone its first victories were achieved, and by which alone it can maintain itself at the present day.

As we were going to press, the *Arabia* is telegraphed at Halifax; her news is important. Lord Derby has determined to try a general election, rather than resign, thus prolonging his tenure of office. The result of this appeal is doubtful; for whilst Ministerial losses are almost certain in Ireland, where, on account of the Phoenix Trials, the Derby Ministry is unpopular, it is not near so certain that what is lost in Ireland, will be compensated by gains in Great Britain.

On the Continent all seemed to indicate an appeal to arms. Austria insists that Sardinia shall disarm, as a preliminary to the meeting of Congress. Sardinia continues her hostile preparations; and troops are on their march from Vienna to Italy. The chances seem then at last strongly in favor of a European War.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—This branch of the Legislature, has seen fit to undo the work of the other House; and to reinpose the restrictive clauses, with reference to gifts and bequests to religious, charitable, and educational corporations, which were rejected by the Legislative Assembly. It now remains to be seen, whether the lat-

ter will submit to be dictated to; or if, amongst its members, there be energy and honesty enough to insist that its decision shall be respected and maintained. The principle at stake is a great one, and well worthy of a struggle. It involves the questions whether the individual has the right to give or bequeath of his own as he pleases;—or whether, to please the morbid hatred of the Mavworms of Upper Canada, a gratuitous and wanton insult shall be offered to our Clergy; the autonomy of Lower Canada shall be trampled under foot; and a monstrous outrage perpetrated upon the right of the individual to do as he pleases with his own. For it is indeed monstrous, that, whilst the law leaves every man at liberty to endow a brothel if he so pleases, to give of his substance for the support of prostitutes and the encouragement of debauchery; it should interfere to prevent any one from setting aside a portion of his wealth for the support of religion, or the relief of his suffering fellow-creatures.—It is argued by Protestants that the unseemly solicitations to which the sick are exposed on their death-beds from a grasping and unprincipled clergy, render these restrictions necessary; and as we have no desire to impose our will as law upon Protestants; as the latter are no doubt well acquainted with the character of their own clergy, with whom they are intimate; but can have no personal knowledge of that of Catholic Priests and Religious, with whom they never come in contact, though they evidently form their opinions of the latter, from what they observe in the former; we have no objections whatever to their imposing any restrictions they please upon the ministers of their own religion. What we object to, as illogical in theory and iniquitous in practice is, that Protestants should judge the Catholic clergy by what they observe in the Snawleys, the Pecksniffs, and Stiggins of their respective conventicles; and that they should seek to impose upon the former, infamous legal disabilities which may indeed be very necessary and urgently called for, in the case of the latter. We claim in short, for Catholics the exclusive right to legislate for their own particular institutions; leaving to Protestants the right to impose such restrictions upon Protestant institutions as they, from their well grounded distrust of the honesty and religious principles of the ministers with whom they are constantly in communication, and of whom alone they have any personal knowledge—may deem necessary.

The time of the Legislative Assembly has been for the most part occupied with the discussion of the Ministerial Seigniorial Tenure Resolutions; which, after a violent and unusually protracted debate, were carried by a large majority. Though it falls not within our province as a religious journal, to pronounce any opinion upon the merits or demerits of M. Cartier's scheme, we cannot refrain from noticing the unjust and illogical attacks that, in connection therewith, have been made on the Seminary of St. Sulpice of this city.

By the measure introduced by the Government for finally settling the Seigniorial Tenure in Canada, the Seminary will, of course, be deprived of its Seigniorial rights; which were guaranteed to it by the British Government, and solemnly ratified by an Act known as the Ordinance of 1840. It is, therefore, proposed, that for the pecuniary injury thereby inflicted upon the Seminary for the benefit of the entire community, whose interests are said to require the abolition of the Seigniorial system, a pecuniary compensation be made to the Seminary; an arrangement one would think most equitable; one which is always recognised in all other cases where the State seizes upon private property for public purposes; and whose justice would in this case be at once recognised, were it not that the compensation is to be made to a Catholic proprietor. But because an equivalent, or rather something approaching to an equivalent, is offered to the gentlemen of the Seminary in compensation for the loss of their Seigniorial dues, the Protestant press at once raises its howl against them, as guilty of unparalleled rapacity.

To all this it is sufficient to answer that the arrangement now proposed by M. Cartier's measure, is not of the Seminary's seeking; that if allowed, it would be well content to abide by the Ordinance of 1840; but that, if for the purpose of getting rid of the Seigniorial system, the terms of that Act and solemn public arrangement, be set aside, to the detriment of one of the parties thereunto, the latter has the right to demand full pecuniary compensation for the injury thereby inflicted upon it. No doubt it would be far more agreeable to our Protestant fellow-citizens, far more in consonance with Protestant traditions and the practice of Protestants, were the State to confiscate the property of the Seminary, without tendering any compensation whatsoever. But it does not follow that because Protestants are insensible to the requirements of honor and justice; because to them the Almighty Dollar is the sole legitimate object of worship, in whose service they are ready to do any amount of dirty work; that we in Canada should imitate the example set us by the Church robbers and Convent plunderers of Europe; or that to gratify the morbid hatred of the non-Catholic community

against Catholic institutions, we should violate faith, or break our solemn engagements.

On Monday Mr. McGee brought under the notice of the House, the series of outrages lately perpetrated against the Catholics of Saint Thomas; and called upon the Orange Attorney-General to interfere to put a check upon the "Scarlet Brothers'" audacity. Upon the night of the 1st instant, it appears that the Catholic Church at St. Thomas was attacked, and the life of the Rev. M. Frachon menaced by a gang of champions of "civil and religious liberty;" and that but for the timely arrival of assistance, the Priest would in all probability have been murdered. The attack was repeated on the following night; but this time the Catholic laity were on the alert, and have subsequently offered a reward for the apprehension of the aggressors; our Orange Attorney-General, of course, not deeming it worth his while to interfere with the freaks of his "Dear Brothers" exercised at the expense of mere Papists. To this state of things, so highly creditable to the administration of justice in Upper Canada, Mr. McGee called the attention of the House.

Thus goaded, the Attorney-General made answer that he had never heard of the outrages committed at St. Thomas; though more than two weeks had elapsed, and though the unprotected Catholics of St. Thomas had held meetings, and publicly offered rewards for the arrest of the rioters! But he promised that the County Attorney should be instructed to see that protection for the future be extended to the Rev. M. Frachon, and that steps should be taken to bring the guilty parties to justice.

It would seem, however, that though the Attorney-General was, last week, personally applied to for protection by the Rev. M. Frachon, the outrages complained of have been continued; and that only last Friday, the reverend gentleman had been stabbed in his own house by two ruffians, whose murderous designs had been fortunately frustrated, in consequence of their blow having been badly aimed. The knife struck upon the ribs of their intended victim, and glanced off from the region of the heart towards which it was directed. We shall watch with much interest the progress of this affair; but we must candidly confess that from an Orange Executive we do not expect any redress for wrongs perpetrated upon mere Papists. Particulars of this murderous outrage will be found in another column—furnished by the *Toronto Colonist* of the 19th inst.

There seem to be now no prospects of a speedy prorogation. Indeed there is but one way to diminish the length of the Sessions—and that is to curtail the members of Parliament's wages.—So long as they find themselves so well paid as they now are, for doing so little as they now do, it is to be feared that they will continue to talk against time, and to use every artifice to prolong the period of their legislative functions. They are far too well paid, and "that's a fact," as brother Jonathan would say.

On the 20th, the Bill to incorporate the Saint Bridget's Asylum, was brought down from the Council, to the Legislative Assembly as amended by the former. The Provincial Secretary, however, withdrew the Bill, as its promoters scorn to accept it with its insulting restrictive clauses.—For this we honor them; and we thank the Provincial Secretary for refusing to proceed with the Bill. Upon this question the motto of Catholics should be "No Surrender."

PLACE AND POLITICS.—The same object, viewed by equally clear-sighted men, but from different stand-points, may present itself under very different aspects. And so with reference to the question of whether it be more prudent on the part of Catholics to ally themselves, or make common political cause, with either the "Clear-Grits" or the Orange faction—or else to remain aloof from both, in the attitude of Independent Opposition—there is betwixt the *Toronto Freeman* and the *TRUE WITNESS*, a great discrepancy of opinion. We advocate the policy of "Independent Opposition," as the policy alone calculated to promote the honor and interests of the Catholic body. The *Freeman*, on the other hand, advocates in so far as the Catholics of Upper Canada are concerned, an alliance with the party known as "Clear-Grits;" of which George Brown is the head, or as Mr. Gowan would say, the "Alpha and Omega."

We cannot, argues the *Freeman*, speaking in the name of the Catholics of the Upper Province, we cannot "stand aloof from both parties;" for, if we do, "what is to become of us?" And he continues:—

"What would be the consequence were we to secede from both the parties, who occupy the political field in this country, to remain isolated and inactive?" (It does not follow that, because "isolated" the Catholics of Upper Canada need be "inactive.") "Why?" continues the *Freeman*—"it is clear we could not command sufficient influence to obtain for the starving laborer employment, even as a scavenger."

Now did we view political objects from the same stand-point as does the *Freeman*; could we bring ourselves to believe that the one great and sole legitimate end of all political action was to obtain a share in the bestowal of government patronage; to get a situation for this man in the

Custom House, or a job for that man in the Corporation; if Place were the goal, towards which alone we had to strive; and place-hunting the great, indeed the sole end of man's existence; then no doubt we should agree with our *Toronto* cotemporary; and with him should scout a course of policy—the adoption of which would not "obtain for the starving laborer employment even as a scavenger."

But believing as we do, that there are objects more worthy of the honest man's ambition than Government situations—holding, as we hold, that "place-hunting" is as dirty and dishonorable under a Brown-Dorian administration *in posse*, as under a Cartier-Macdonald administration *in esse*; and as we do not pretend even, that the political course which we advocate would obtain employment for any man, either as a scavenger, or in any other department—our cotemporary's arguments have no force with us; and our opinions as to the impolicy, and indeed infamy of an alliance betwixt Catholics, and the "Clear-Grit" followers of George Brown, remain unchanged.

We admit frankly, we have never attempted to conceal, the facts, that the policy of "Independent Opposition" by us advocated, can never lead to place or salary; that no one who adopts it need ever expect to improve his material condition thereby; and that it is a policy which no man who enters upon public life with any view of promoting his personal interests, with any idea of "being provided for," as the cant phrase is—will be simple enough to follow. It is a policy in short, which requires imperatively of all who adopt it, a perfect disinterestedness, and a total abnegation of self; it is a policy which requires us to follow the path of duty without swerving to the right hand or to the left, whether it lead to the Capitol, or to the Tarpeian rock. It is not therefore a policy that is likely ever to become generally popular. It will, we admit, not obtain for any man "employment even as a scavenger," or in any other dirty work.

But, on the other hand, as no honest Catholic, no Catholic with the feelings of a gentleman, would for a moment so much as entertain even a proposition to ally himself with Mr. Geo. Brown and his friends, so long as the latter are what they are, and during the course of the present session have approved themselves to be; so neither can the honest and consistent Catholic ally himself with the Orangemen, who indeed are Mr. Brown's only natural allies. In so far therefore as parties in Upper Canada are concerned—and if there be no political party distinct from the Orangemen on the one hand, and the "Clear Grits" on the other—it is the bounden duty of the Catholic to keep aloof from both, though not to remain "inactive;" and if he consults his own honor and the interests of his religion, to the policy of "Independent Opposition" he will adhere; even though that policy may not lead to his procuring "employment even as a scavenger." Indeed we cannot conceive how any Catholic—unless it be one who is ready to sell himself, soul and body, to any party that will pay him his price, and whose terms having been scornfully rejected by one party, carries the damaged goods to another market—can even for a moment seriously entertain the thoughts of a Brown alliance; until such time at least as Mr. George Brown, the advocate of Gavazzi, and every other lewd libeller of the Church, shall have done public penance for his sins by an abject public apology; and by his votes in the House made some atonement or reparation for his past offences. Now none of these things has Mr. George Brown done, or is Mr. Brown likely to do; we do trust therefore that, not even for the sake of obtaining employment as political scavenger to a Brown administration, any Irishman shall be found vile enough to advocate an alliance betwixt Catholics, and the impudent slanderer of their Clergy, their Religious and their Church—a fellow who has never manifested even the slightest contrition for his sins.

And at the risk of incurring the wrath of the *Freeman*, we will still contend that the only prudent, the only honorable and profitable political alliance that the Catholics of Upper Canada can form, is one with their brethren and co-religionists of Lower Canada; united to them, as the latter are, by the ties of blood, and of a common faith. There may be, we admit it with regret, foolish national jealousies which have hitherto kept apart those whom the voice of interest, whom the voice of honor, and the voice of religion, bid to be united. But it is—and the *Freeman* will pardon us for telling him so, in return for much good advice thrown away upon our humble selves—it is duty of the Catholic journalist to seek rather to fill up, or bridge over, than to widen, the gulf that now yawns betwixt his co-religionists of different national origins; and sure we are that our *Toronto* cotemporary is unjust when he goes so far as to speak "of the utter impracticability of such an union"—a union of Canadian and Irish Catholics—because of "the deep rooted antipathy felt by even the Franco-Canadian child, against our race and country."—This is untrue and ungenerous. There is much jealousy we admit, betwixt the two races; the natives of the Lower Province may not, in many instances, have done justice to the virtues, the

intelligence and merits of the Irish; amongst whom, in proportion to their numbers, may be found, to say the least, as many men morally and intellectually qualified to control the destinies and shed lustre on the history of Canada, as amongst any other portion of our community. All this we admit, and deplore; and it is because we admit and deplore it, that we deprecate a policy which, if carried out by the Catholics of Upper Canada, would only tend to widen and perpetuate the breach now unhappily open betwixt them and the Catholics of Lower Canada.

No! the interests of the Catholics of both sections of the Province are identical. They are all members of one body, children of one mother. One cannot suffer, without the other suffering also; and in that it is so, they are bound by the very principle of self-preservation to aid and comfort one another. This for years has been the burden of our song. It is this that we have urged upon the Catholics of Lower Canada, when disposed to treat the questions of Separate Schools and Orangeism as questions in which the Catholics of Upper Canada alone were interested. With this indifference to their own best interests, as well as to those of their persecuted brethren in the Upper Province; with this short-sightedness and inconceivable apathy, we have many a time reproached the men of good principles—*bons principes*—of Lower Canada; and yet it is with regret that we see that the same indifference, the same short-sightedness are recommended by the *Toronto Freeman* to the Catholics of Upper Canada, as the height of political wisdom. He speaks of a cordial union of the Catholics of both sections of the Province, and of all origins, with one another, as "dangerous, impolitic, and impracticable." It would be so, he argues, because it would lead to the establishment of "a wall of separation between ourselves"—the Catholics of Upper Canada—"and our Protestant fellow-subjects, which would shut us out from all political, social, and even business intercourse;" and such an exclusion from all share in the spoils of patronage, from all hopes of place, of salaries, and jobs, from all hopes of obtaining "employment even as a scavenger," would be an evil too great for the *Toronto Freeman* to endure, whilst the very thoughts of it almost bring tears into his eyes.

But here again, from our indifference to jobs, and our disregard of the favorite sport of the place-hunter, the *Freeman* and the *TRUE WITNESS* are once more at issue. Granting, for the sake of argument, that the ill-will of Protestants would follow the course of policy by us recommended, we should find therein but a proof of its soundness; for that which provokes the enmity of the enemies of our religion must, if that religion be good, be itself also good. In the enmity of the anti-Catholic world, which according to the *Freeman* would be the consequence of a cordial Catholic alliance extending over both sections of the Province, we should find no argument against that alliance; but rather a proof of its conformity with the precepts of Him Who pronounced them "blessed"—not whom the world loved and promoted to places of honor and emolument; but whom it blasphemed, and reviled and despitefully treated. Whilst by the fact that it would arouse the indignation of the Protestants of Upper Canada, if accomplished, we feel assured that the alliance by us advocated is what they most dread; and therefore that which, could it be brought about, would most promote the honor and interests of our Church, and of all her children.

Union amongst Catholics is our motto; the beginning and end of all our politics. For if united, we believe that our ultimate success is certain; that we shall obtain for ourselves, and secure to our children, the inestimable blessings of "Freedom of Education." This we may do, if united amongst ourselves.

But only upon that condition; for if split into factions, the members of each intent upon their petty personal interests; looking out for government situations, and estimating the merits of political combinations by the chances they offer of a new partition of official spoils; we shall quickly become, and we shall deserve to become, the laughing stock of our adversaries. Now of all the means for creating and perpetuating division in the Catholic body, the scheme propounded by the *Toronto Freeman* is the most deadly. We of Lower Canada would scorn to identify ourselves with the Clear Grits; we should feel polluted by an alliance with George Brown; and were our co-religionists of Upper Canada to pursue the course marked out for them by the *Freeman*, a total separation from their brethren of the Lower Province would be the immediate and inevitable consequence.

Let us then stick to our old colors, and rally round our old standard—the Cross. Why submit to the degradation of wearing the livery of any man? why put on the badge of any party in the State? why so demean ourselves as that our cause, which is the cause of God's Church, should be confounded with the cause of a Cartier, or a Brown, with the cause of the "Ins" or the "Ours"? If amongst these there be one who as a statesman will introduce and forward measures calculated to promote our objects, then let us, but in so far only as his measures will have that effect, support him by our votes; but let us be no man's slaves, let us be of no man's party. And if needs be, let us learn to content ourselves with