

REMITTANCES

ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND & WALES.

SIGHT DRAFTS from One Pound upwards, negotiable at any Town in the United Kingdom, are granted on—
The Union Bank of London, . . . London.
The Bank of Ireland, . . . Dublin.
The National Bank of Scotland, . . . Edinburgh.
By HENRY CHAPMAN & Co.,
St. Sacramento Street.
Montreal, December 14, 1854.

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON,

At the Office, No. 4, Place d'Armes.

TERMS:

To Town Subscribers. . . . \$3 per annum.
To Country do. . . . \$2½ do.
Payable Half-Yearly in Advance.

THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 5, 1855.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The position of the Allied armies before Sebastopol remains unaltered. The Russians occasionally venture upon a sortie, and are as constantly repulsed; reinforcements continue to arrive; but the wet weather has put a stop to the siege, and the consequent increase of sickness, is sending great numbers into the hospital. The greatest efforts are being made to supply the troops with winter clothing, and to furnish them with shelter against the rigors of a Crimean winter; but, to all appearance, all active military operations must be suspended till the spring, when it is to be hoped that our brave soldiers will be in force sufficient to bring the campaign to a successful issue. For the present, they can only remain on the defensive. It is said that the Russian Major who was taken prisoner whilst ordering his men to kill the wounded British soldiers, has been hanged in front of Sebastopol, by sentence of a Court Martial. Serve him right.

The Imperial Parliament was opened by Her Majesty in person on the 12th ult. In the speech from the throne, full justice was done to the gallantry of our soldiers and their noble allies, whilst the necessity for further exertions towards augmenting the military resources of the Empire was insisted upon. In the course of the ensuing debates on the Address, in both Houses, but one spirit manifested itself; and there can be no doubt that the country is fully prepared to adopt any measures, and to submit to any sacrifices, which the present war, undertaken in defence of the liberties and civilisation of Western Europe, may require. Lord Derby in the Lords, and Sir J. Pakington in the Commons, commented somewhat severely upon the shortcomings of the Ministry, who, it must be confessed, have not as yet shown themselves altogether so active in the prosecution of the war as they should have been. Great mistakes have certainly been committed; and the Duke of Newcastle, in his reply, admitted as much; but the language both of the Ministry and of the Opposition is such as to give assurance that, for the future, the war will be carried on with energy and determination. A "Vote of Thanks" to the Allied Armies and their respective Commanders, in which Marshall St. Arnaud, Generals Canrobert and Bosquet were mentioned by name, was passed unanimously by both Houses. It is also intended to make a liberal distribution of honors and rewards to the band of heroes who have so faithfully served their country in the Crimea. Medals are to be distributed, and commissions will be given to the non-commissioned officers who have distinguished themselves—bearing date from the 5th of November.

Some doubts are still entertained as to the value of the Austrian treaty; but a slight rise in the Funds would seem to indicate that a satisfactory arrangement has been entered into with the Court of Vienna. Prussia still keeps aloof from the Western Powers, but has sent a special Envoy to London.

PIETY OF THE FRENCH ARMY IN THE CRIMEA.

Whatever opinion one may form of the present Government of France, of its ultimate object in beginning the war which now threatens the whole of Europe, or of the issue of the gigantic struggle between the Eastern and the Western Powers;—there can be but one feeling in every Catholic heart, about the unhoped for increase of the true Catholic spirit in the French army and navy. And the change for the better in them, is only an index to the mighty revolution which has been going steadily on in the French nation for years past.

Without detracting from the share which others may have had in this great and good work, this much, at least, may be said of the men at the head of affairs in France,—they not only allow Religion to do her part, but they encourage and assist her effectually.—Be it mere policy, or be it the result of conscientious conviction,—it is a healthful policy, and has its reward.

After the harrowing details with which our English papers have been teeming since the Battle of Alma, and the carnage of Inkermann, the readers of the True Witness may be refreshed by the following extract of a letter written by one of the French Chaplains from Sebastopol,—and translated from the *Univers*:

"I trust that Providence is preparing a triumph for the Cross of Christ, as well as for our own flag,—and that it shall be given us to see history record one other instance, in which the glory of France forwards the glory of God. Our soldiers have brought the Cross with them to the East, it will remain implanted

there after them,—and that day will be one of the most glorious days in the life of our nation, on which the world shall behold its banners waving from the walls of Sebastopol, and its Cross enjoying freedom and respect on the shores of the Bosphorus.

"Our whole army are conscious of being the Missionaries of the Cross. Never yet did that Catholic feeling, which is the source of France's might, greatness, and influence, show itself in any assemblage of men by such open manifestations. The Chaplains are surrounded at every hour by that sympathy, that respect, that deep and candid affection, so much in keeping with the frank character of French soldiers. One of the Chaplains told me that, of the hours allotted each day for hearing confessions, not one single minute is left unoccupied.

"Among the sick and the wounded there is not one man that did not welcome, and implore the consolations of the Priest, and the supreme consolations of Religion. Not one even put off to the morrow. One person only refused to make her confession,—and that was a woman who followed the camp; the wretched creature was cut off by the cholera.

"All these intrepid warriors of the Alma,—all of them, from the Commander-in-Chief down to the youngest drummer,—all, even the Protestants,—wear the miraculous medal;—and a large proportion of those heroic hearts beat beneath the Scapular.

"I should have liked to see on the battle-field, in these brave fellows' places, the Editors of the *Siècle*, who do not wear the Scapular, and who joke about it, with that sort of wit and diction that only belongs to them. . . . I promise you, the figure they would have cut, would have been about as funny, as Mr. Karr's newspaper novels.

"*Monsieur le Curé*," said a wounded officer one day to one of the Chaplains,—You know that I am not one of the most devout men in the world? . . .

"I know my dear Sir, that you are a Christian."

"Well, just look at that bullet up there, on the board over my bed; you see it is flattened. . . . it is stamped with the likeness of my medal."

"Oh! but that didn't prevent you?"—replied the Chaplain, with a smile—"that didn't prevent you from getting hit in the leg with a bullet."

"Oh! aye, in the leg! . . . But you know I had't a medal on my leg."

A young infantry officer from your part of the country (Lyons), having been very severely wounded by a shot, asked the Chaplain to give him some pious books, not wishing, he said, to read any others. As the priest was returning to see him the day following:—"Don't come near me, Father,"—said he with a terrified voice—"don't come near me!"

The Chaplain, astonished, asked him what was the matter!

"But, Father, said the young man, 'don't you feel how horribly my wound smells?—You'll have to keep away from me; for I am eaten up alive with maggots. The surgeon fearing hemorrhage, does not dare to dress my wound. I am suffering dreadfully; but I know for what faults God is punishing me; it is an atonement which I willingly accept."

The Priest thereupon sat down, saying:—
"Well, well, let us have a little chat; don't you think I have seen worse wounds than yours?"

One might relate a thousand things as touching as these.

"I shall never forget," said M—— to me the other day—how joyfully our Engineers set about making a large Cross for me, and how the finest man of the Company next to my lodgings, carried this Cross through the streets of Gallipoli, immediately in front of General Carbuccia's coffin—who, as you are aware, had died of Cholera the night before, with well known sentiments of faith and resignation."

"Only a few days before his burial, the mere sight of my surplice had enraged the old Turks. But on that day, the Cross, borne along so bravely, passed through their midst without exciting a single murmur; and there stands that very Cross, until this day, surrounded by a hundred others that mark the graves of our gallant soldiers, and there it shall stand, thanks to the spell that there is in the French name, despite the fits of wrath into which the sight of this abhorred emblem throws the old grey-beard Mahomedans.

"Our courageous piety, our generous devotedness—this brotherhood of the sword and the Cross—this superhuman tenderness of the Priest, and the Sisters of Charity, confound the Turks, and astonish our English Allies.

"Our Ministers," said an English officer one day to the Father. . . . run away from the dangers which you court; they are in dread of the Cholera which you despise; we never find them where you are to be seen: our Religion can make neither Priests, nor Sisters of Charity; what inference can you draw from that?"

"You do not want me to answer that query?"—replied the Priest laughingly: "I think you can easily do so yourself."

"God grant that the answer may come home to many upright hearts and reasoning minds!"

"The Priest to whom these words were addressed had himself spent a whole month, without rest by day or sleep by night, continually bent over the beds of the Cholera patients.

"You know that our ships have brought away with them quite a multitude of wounded Russians, who were cared for just as well as our own men. Therefore, the Turks, who at first could not credit their eyes, seeing that the English had not acted in like manner, began to say to each other; the English are not such good *Franks* (that is, Christians) as the French;—they are of another Religion."

"And truly, French charity fulfils everywhere its glorious apostleship; one would think it endeavored to embrace the entire globe. Never was that expansive, conquering power of Catholic devotedness seen to assume such wonderful proportions. But this glory only costs tears of gratitude and affection.

"The Turks themselves are moved by the sight of it. They bear us a sympathy and a preference, which they take no pains to conceal; and wherever they meet one of our soldiers, they invariably salute him with the grave apostrophe of *'Bono Francese'*: this is all they know of our language.

"Quite a number of wounded Russians have asked the chaplains to administer to them the consolations of religion. Officers have abjured the Greek Schism, and died in the bosom of the Church, after having received absolution from the Catholic Priest.

"Do you know what I am?" enquired the Chaplain of the first Russian who had sent for him.

"Surely," answered the other; "I know you are a pope."

"But do you belong to my religion?"

"The Russian replied to this, by making the sign of the Cross.

"But is there no difference between your belief and mine?"

"I don't know of any."

"This was the answer given as by all their common soldiers. So that one may see in what ignorance the imperial Pope of Russia leaves his flock. As to these poor fellows, death only permits our Chaplains to make sure of their being in good faith, and then to give them the absolution which they crave.

"Father —, in dealing with them, uses as an interpreter one of the persecuted Nuns of Minsk who had taken refuge in France: she is a Polish lady, at present a Sister of St. Vincent of Paul, destined by Providence (for it would be almost impiety to say by chance) to heal in the East, the wounded bodies and spirits of the Russians.

"Do you not see in these facts, picked up at random from a thousand, manifestations replete with comfort and hope? No, it is not among an enervated nation that one could meet with such an ample harvest of devoted and heroic souls! France is still the most Christian country: her heart is still as generous, her sword as keen, as of old. Let us have hope, then, for the future is in the hand of God."

MAN'S LOWER LIFE.

The poetic idea that there is a mystic connection between the external world and the individual life of man, is one that has found favor in all times, and is underlain by a truth which is a key to some of the most mysterious phenomena of our being. Man was rightly named by the old philosophers the *microcosm*, and is the complex of all organisms. We find in him the vegetative life, the animal life which belongs to the brute creation, and with this the peculiar instincts of the lower races. And as in each of these we see, vaguely shadowed forth and anticipated, the distinctive characteristics of the creation next higher in the series, so in man we have in addition to that intellect whose dawn is apparent in the "half-reasoning elephant" a prophetic glance which anticipates that higher life which belongs to a nobler state of existence. Such glimpses of our higher being are found in the ecstasies of the Christian mystics like St. Theresa, who by asceticism and lofty devotion have so far subdued the lower part of their natures, that they have already in this world, anticipated in their glorious visions the privileges of "the just made perfect."

On the other hand, man's sympathies with the lower world, which he has in common with the inferior creation, are apparent in the influences which odours, darkness and sunshine, the approach of thunder and tempest, and the changes of the moon, exert upon his mental and physical being. The susceptibilities to these agencies are in no direct relation to his intellectual development, and are often most marked in the idiot or in the savage, who like the animals of his native forests, feels from afar the coming storm or the earthquake. The souls of such "ever beat in mystic sympathy with nature's ebb and flow," and they seem to share in the great world-life, or telluric individuality. Personally being—as Dr. Brownson has so well said—the last complement of a rational nature, capable of voluntary activity, it follows that, in proportion as man becomes subject to this bondage of nature with its rigid laws, he loses his personality and his freedom of will. His acts, like many of the surprising feats of idiots, clairvoyants, and somnambulists, resemble those which are prompted by the instinct of the lower animals.

Besides these spontaneous developments of this lower life, we are all more or less conscious of a peculiar state of being, when, having shut from our minds the outer world we awake to a dreamy existence in which "we touch the lower life of beast and clod." This is the condition in which are developed in sensitive subjects the phenomena of *clairvoyance*, which are unquestionably sometimes spontaneously produced; and the power of the mesmeriser is that of artificially inducing a similar state, in which the individual personality is for the time annulled, and identified with the telluric life; while it is also, in part, subjected to the will of the more powerful operator. Every mesmeriser has, however, felt that he evokes an agency which is not within his control, and develops powers which transcend his own intelligence. It has, however, been well remarked, that the ken of the mesmeric subject does not go beyond the ordinary facts of the material world, and cannot rise to the great moral and intellectual problems of our nature.

While we are thus disposed to regard mesmeric phenomena as merely abnormal developments of the lower life in man, it must be remarked that when these efforts are produced by the aid of a second person, whose own will to a certain extent sways that of the mesmerized individual, whose personality is for the time entirely lost—the moral consequences are most disastrous, inasmuch as the subject, in thus voluntarily abandoning to another that free will for the exercise of which he is accountable, commits an act of moral suicide, which is the deepest degradation of which a responsible being is capable—and exposes himself to be made the unconscious tool of the passions or designs of another man, and what is worse, of the demon himself.

"THE SPIRIT-RAPPER; AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY."—By O. A. Brownson. Little, Brown & Co., Boston.

"*Initium sapientie, timor Domini.*" "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"—says the Psalmist; and as to fear the Lord, we must first apprehend that He is—then, according to the Royal Secret—all true wisdom must be based upon the belief, that there is a God, the Maker and Lord of all things. Modern Protestantism, or Denialism, does not per-

haps go so far as to deny explicitly that there is a God; but the man who in the company of liberal Christians, should be so rash as to profess his belief in the existence of the Devil, would be esteemed far gone in superstition, and would be looked upon as a sort of moral and intellectual monster amidst the light and intelligence of the XIX. century. It is to restore this belief in the Devil, as a real and very active Personality, that Dr. Brownson has written the work whose title stands at the head of this article. Should this attempt prove in any degree successful, the author will have rendered no trifling service to the cause of Christianity; as, by reinstating Satan in the place from whence he has been ejected, he will have re-established in the hearts of his Protestant fellow-countrymen a belief in the necessity of a Redeemer from the power of Satan: and thus, when Protestants shall have been converted to a belief in the Devil, we shall begin to entertain hopes that their restoration to Christianity and the Church is not altogether hopeless.

That there is a Devil, and that he is still active amongst men, ever seeking to divert them from their allegiance to God, and to bring them under subjection to himself, is what the author undertakes to establish from the phenomena, which, sometimes under one name, and sometimes under another, have of late years, on both Continents, attracted so much of the public attention. The objective reality of these phenomena, Dr. Brownson contends, we must admit, or else be prepared to reject all human testimony; and if we admit their objective reality, to what causes, to what agencies—natural or preternatural—shall we assign them? Are they simply human-knavish, or super-human Devilish? If they are not the one, then must they be the other.

The author of the "Spirit-Rapper" evidently inclines to the belief, that the phenomena of "Table-Turning," "Spirit-Rapping," and Spiritualism in general, are to be classed in the latter category—as superhuman devilish; as artifices employed by the great enemy of souls to entice men to render him that worship which is due to God alone. But Satan has ever been the greatest fool in creation; and in so prominently asserting himself, it may turn out that he has only been contributing to re-establish a belief in the almost exploded dogmas of Christianity. From the foul Devil-worship into which the Protestantism of the United States has, to a considerable extent, subsided, the conclusion to the existence of a Devil is inevitable; and once admit Devil, the other articles of the creed will stand a fair chance of recovering their ancient hold upon the faith of mankind. As Voltaire—who was a sound Protester—used to say, "*Satan! c'est le Christianisme tout entier.*"

We have not space to allow us to develop our author's argument, by which he seeks to prove—1st—The objective reality of the phenomena of "Table-Turning," "Spirit-Rapping," and manifested in the "writing, tipping," and even "speaking mediums." 2nd—That these phenomena transcend the domain of the natural, and must therefore be referred to supernatural agencies; but if to supernatural, then to Satanic agency. The length however to which the delusion, superstition—call it what you will—has extended in the United States, may be judged from the following passage:—

"There are some three hundred circles or clubs in the city of Philadelphia alone, and the Spiritualists, as they call themselves, count nearly a million of believers in our own country. Table-turning, necromancy, divination becomes a religion with some, and an amusement with others. The infection seizes all classes, ministers of religion, lawyers, physicians, judges, comedians, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. The movement has its quarterly, monthly, and weekly journals, some of them conducted with great ability; and the spirits, through the writing mediums, have already furnished it a very considerable library"—p. 138.

But not to the United States of America alone have the ravages of this modern demon-worship been confined; though, there indeed they have been the most widely spread and most destructive—as was indeed to be expected, seeing that a great portion of the population of the States are unbaptised, and therefore literally heathens; over such a population it is not wonderful that the power of the devil should be signally manifested. Yet men of all countries, and of all persuasions—bad Catholics amongst the number—have fallen victims to the same degrading superstition; and, about a year ago, even in Canada, and until checked by the vigorous action of the Church, the moral pestilence was making sad havoc with our simple *habitans*. Thank God, we hear no more, amongst Catholics at least, of table-turning and spiritual communications; our people believe in God and His Christ; it is not therefore necessary with them, as with their Non-Catholic neighbors, that they should be converted to a belief in the Devil and his Imps.

The plot, or story of the work before us is very simple. "The hero, a Dr. —, being an unprincipled scoundrel, naturally sets up in business as a Philanthropist and a 'World-Reformer.' Evidently the first step in such a business must be to get rid of Christianity, whose spirit has always been opposed to the schemes of Philanthropists and 'World-Reformers.' Accompanied by a young and enthusiastic married woman, whom by his arts he has rendered his unresisting tool, Dr. — sets off on a 'World-Reforming' tour throughout Europe; where he organises 'spiritual circles,' and puts himself *en rapport* with the leading demagogues of the Continent. Foiled in his projects by the counter-revolution of '49—and more than ever convinced that Christianity—the grand support of the existing social order—must be got rid of, our hero returns to America, bent upon supplanting Christianity by a new religion which, like its rival, could appeal to a supernatural origin, and which could sustain itself by the evidence of miracles. But his projects are cut short by the interven-