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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 1853.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Parliament reopened on the 10th ult. In the Lords, the Earl of Derby called upon Lord Aberdeen to lose no time in declaring the intentions of her Majesty's government: for himself and his friends he was prepared to promise a cordial co-operation with the ministry, if their measures were calculated to promote the public welfare. Lord Aberdeen referred the noble Earl to the disclosures about being made by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons.

In the Commons, Lord John Russell entered upon a detailed explanation of the future policy of the ministry. They intended to lay before the House, the estimates for the year, without delay; there would be no increase in the number of men, voted before Christmas, for the service of the army, navy, and ordnance; but a considerable sum over and above last year's estimates would be required, for which increase, satisfactory reasons would be given. Amongst other measures which the Aberdeen ministry intended to bring forward, the noble Lord mentioned a Bill to enable the Legislature of Canada to dispose of the Clergy Reserves; a measure for the repeal of the Jewish disabilities; and a proposal intended to effect great improvements in the subject of education; immediately after the Easter recess the Chancellor of the Exchequer would lay before the House the financial statements; and in a few days, the Lord Chancellor would explain the measures in contemplation for adjusting the relations between landlord and tenant, in Ireland. After mature deliberation, ministers had come to the conclusion not to introduce, or enter upon the discussion of, any Bill for altering, or extending the Parliamentary franchise; immediately after the commencement of the next Session, it would be the duty of the government to introduce a measure upon this important subject. Amongst the notices of motions on the books of the House we find the following:—

Mr. Spooner's, to repeal the Maynooth Grant; Mr. Scholfield's amendment on the foregoing, to withdraw a State provision for any ecclesiastical or religious purpose whatsoever; Mr. Pagan's, to abolish Ministers' Money; Mr. G.H. Moore's, for a committee on the Established Church in Ireland; Mr. McMahon's, Irish Fisheries; Mr. Napier (ex-Attorney General) Land Improvement (Ireland) Bill; Tenant's Compensation (Ireland) Bill; Lending Powers (Ireland) Bill; Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Bill (read a second time, and referred to a select committee); Mr. Sergeant Shee, Tenant Right (Ireland) Bill, (read a second time and referred, along with Mr. Napier's bills, to a select committee); and Mr. Whiteside (ex-Solicitor General for Ireland), Courts of Common Law (Ireland) Bill, (read a second time.)

The Aberdeen government has announced its determination not to sanction the revival of Convocation, and to interfere if, upon its meeting on the 16th, that body should attempt to enter upon the despatch of business, beyond that already transacted, in framing an address to the Crown—any factious attempts, on the part of the Convocation, to resist prorogation by the government superintendent, or to assert its independence, would be immediately put down. The face of a meeting would be allowed, on the 16th, the day for which Convocation was summoned, after which it was to be immediately prorogued, and the government bishops and parsons quietly dismissed until further orders.

Another jolly row seems brewing in the State establishment, from which the lovers of fun may anticipate much amusement. It is a second Gorham business, the refractory superintendent in this case being the government bishop of Ripon. This gentleman has refused to ordain a Mr. Hayward, because the latter denies the doctrine of "baptismal regeneration," and the Low Church party, with the Earl of Shaftesbury, as President of the "Pastoral Aid Society," at their head, are up in arms. Another State clergyman, a Mr. Birch, declares that, the opinions expressed by Mr. Hayward are precisely those he himself entertains, and adds that, "if the latter gentleman is unfit to hold a curacy in the diocese, he (Mr. Birch) must be unfit to hold the higher, and more responsible office of an incumbent;" wherefore, he challenges the Bishop of Ripon to proceed ecclesiastically against him, in order to convict him of heretical opinions, as a means to suspend him, or deprive him of his benefice. The government bishop, having the decree of the judicial committee of the Privy Council on "Baptismal Regeneration" in the Gorham case before his eyes, has very prudently declined the challenge. There seems no prospect of healing the breaches in the government Zion

unless, in its wisdom, the High Court of Parliament take the matter in hands, and by Statute shall clearly define the limits, within which, the Grace of God may be allowed to operate in her Majesty's dominions. We trust that Mr. Cobden will move for a "Select Committee" of the House of Commons, on this very difficult and intricate subject—preparatory to the introduction of a "Bill for the removal of doubts as to the regeneration of infants in Baptism, and for the better regulating the influences of the Holy Spirit." Such a measure would be worthy of the genius of the great head of the Manchester School, and might prove serviceable in allaying those unhappy dissensions which now distract the venerable church, as by law established.

His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin has published his Lenten Pastoral, of which the following passage is especially worthy of notice:—

"And as the spiritual necessities of the poor claim, in an especial manner, your sympathy and assistance, you should be zealous and indefatigable in saving their children from the persecution now directed against them by those who, having contributed so largely to deprive them of the comforts of this world, seek to rob them of the hopes of a better—*who never breathe the language of respect or compassion for them, until they commenced the work of perversion and demoralisation, nor opened their hands to their relief, until they offered the wages of apostasy.* It is, we trust, scarcely necessary to renew the warning to our people, that, so far from suffering the agents and emissaries of such men to penetrate into the bosom of their families, and disturb their peace by polemical disputations, they should not suffer their footsteps to defile the very thresholds of their doors. We may pray for the conversion of these unhappy, deluded men, who are earning the wages of perdition, and who will bring the severest judgment of heaven upon their heads, unless they desist from their wicked course; but, according to the apostolical admonition, we should hold no communication whatsoever with them on religious matters."

The insurrection in Milan, though for the moment repressed, has caused much uneasiness to the friends of peace and order in Europe; it is a certain proof of the unceasing activity of Mazzini, Alexander Smith, & Co. On our sixth page will be found extracts from the proclamations of these gentry, in which they make no secret of their designs: amongst all his fine promises however, we do not see that Mr. Alexander Smith holds out any prospects to his New York landlady, of his intentions to meet her little bill. This is an oversight on the part of so great a hero; but all heroes have their failings, and Mr. Smith's seems to be a strong disinclination to pay his debts.

In Paris, the press swarms with the most violent effusions of hatred against Great Britain. A M. F. Billot, an ardent Legitimist, has particularly distinguished himself in this department of literature, which is, to say the least, rather ungenerous on the part of one of the partisans of that race for which Great Britain has expended so much of her treasure, and shed so much of her bravest blood. We could understand the following language in the mouth of a Bonapartist, but it seems rather strange in that of a Bourbonist. He is apostrophising the newly created Emperor:—

"When your victorious flag waves over the Tower of London, you will summon the Powers to a general Congress. Then an alliance shall be formed which may indeed be called holy.—France will resume her limits, and all the maritime positions to which she is entitled. Her colonies will be restored to her; Malta will be hers; Egypt will exist under her laws; Poland will have her limits, with her independence; Russia will be supreme in the East; Constantinople will once more be Christian; Austria will have her part in European Turkey; Hungary will be independent; Prussia will absorb the associated States; Italy will be free from a foreign yoke; Spain and Portugal will form one; and the Methuen treaty, like so many others, will be pulverized—*mis en pilon.* The seas will be free for all the same access, the same rights, the same tariffs, the same advantages. There will be no difference. The superiority of one will only be the result of its greater intelligence and activity; it will be man exalted, not as Proudhon means, but according to the sentiment of his interests united to his dignity; and the 'fraternity of peoples' will be henceforth a truth!"

In his postscript, the writer gets still more vicious: "Prince, I re-open this letter to recall the most ardent of my thoughts. Distrust the English within quite as much, and perhaps more, than the English without. Prince! it is to the English within that we should again owe, in a great measure, a new invasion of France by Continental Europe, if it was ever conjured, from their impious desires, rest assured of it. When they say 'All by the English,' we will answer them contemptuously, 'All by true Frenchmen; all against the English!'—*Anathema, then, on the English within!* Death to the English without! All from real France, and by France! France will never have any other cry. From the north to the south, from the east to the west, the sentiment is the same. All Frenchmen are united in this thought of honor and dignity.—And it is with truth that the poet has said—

"Et la Vendue n'ignorait son glaive Sur la pierre de Waterloo?"

The writer must be far gone indeed, when he, a Legitimist, can condescend to babble about "the fraternity of the peoples."

There is a report in the *New York Herald* of the 2nd inst., that a force of about 1500 men is organising at New Orleans, for another piratical attack upon Cuba: it is added that the brigands are to be commanded by one of the Hungarian fugitives, and that a mercantile house in Boston has undertaken to provide them with the means of transport. We hope that the Spanish government may have the hanging of the rascals. The *Tribune* states that Mr. Alexander Smith's proclamation, exciting the Italians to insurrection, is not genuine.

PERSECUTION OF THE MADIAS.

Under the above heading, the *Montreal Herald* of Saturday last favors us with a dissertation upon the enormities of Popery—as evidenced in the "Persecution of the Madias"—the massacre of the rebellious Huguenots in France on St. Bartholomew's Eve, 1572, and in its "usurpations and tyrannical inhumanities in Tuscany," and in every country "whenever and wherever the Ecclesiastical authority is placed above the Secular." In speaking of the Madias, the writer—we must do him the justice to admit—has had the good taste to refrain from reiterating the ordinary Protestant lie, that they have been imprisoned "for reading the Bible;" but, at the same time, he does his best to make it appear, that their punishment is the result of a religious persecution—that is, that they have been punished, as offenders, against the Church, and not against the State—that the persecution has been undertaken at the instance of Rome, and of the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic

Church; and that, therefore, Catholics generally are obnoxious to the reproach of being the friends of religious persecution, and the uncompromising enemies of religious liberty. Then, laying down as his major proposition that—"The persecution of others is an infallible proof of falsehood and error in the religious system which resorts to it"—he leaves it to be inferred that in the "Persecution of the Madias" we have "an infallible proof of falsehood and error in the religious system" of the Catholic Church. We demur, not to the conclusions drawn by our cotemporary, but to his premises; if the punishment of the Madias be the result of a "religious persecution, undertaken at the instance of Rome," we have no desire to shrink from our full share of the responsibility. "Rome is always as it has been," and will be, until the end of time. Romanism, or Catholicity, is, in Canada, what it is in Tuscany,—in Quebec, and Montreal, what it is in Rome, and Florence; if justly obnoxious to the charge of "inhumanly tyrannical" there, equally so here; for, in every age, and in every clime, Catholicity is ONE. This is our boast, nor shall we shrink from glorifying ourselves in the Oneness of Catholicity, because Protestants endeavor to find therein an occasion for our reproach.

We do not, therefore, seek to evade the "Madias" difficulty by representing the Catholic Church in Canada, as distinct from, and therefore not responsible for the acts of, the Catholic Church in Tuscany. Such a line of argument we abandon to Liberal Catholics; well suited to them, it is one which no honest Papist will adopt, and which no intelligent Protestant will respect. "Rome is now, in Canada, as it always, and in all places, has been;" and the conduct that the Catholic Church pursues in Italy, she will always, and everywhere, pursue, when she has the power; if "usurping" and "inhumanly tyrannical" in Tuscany, she puts forward the very same pretensions, and asserts the same principles in America; for the Catholic Church can never change—"always the same" is her motto, as it ever must be of the Church which was founded upon a rock by Him who is the same "yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" what God has formed, man cannot re-form. But let us examine this Madias charge in detail.

The Protestant version of this story varies, not only from the Catholic version, but from itself.—Sometimes it is one thing, sometimes another; there is no end to the lies which the Protestant press has circulated respecting these interesting martyrs. We will notice some of the most prominent; they are the following:—

Lie No. 1—"That the Madias have been imprisoned for reading the Bible."

Lie No. 2—"That Francesco Madias has died in prison."

Lie No. 3—"That his death has been caused by poison."

Of these three lies—the last two have been reluctantly abandoned by the majority of the Protestant press; we can hardly, therefore, be called upon to refute them. They have served the purpose for which they were fabricated, and put in circulation; they have done yeomen's service at many a Missionary Meeting, and on many an Evangelical platform, in company with many bigger, and time-honored, Protestant lies, the hereditary stock-in-trade of the conventicle. But, alas! they have at last been gathered to their Father, who was a Protestant from the beginning, and there remains now, only the first lie of the series fit for active service, and it, owing to the knocking about it has received, is very nearly "*hors de combat*," or, as Mrs. Gamp would say, "aged up." It is to the refutation then of this lie—No. 1 on the list—"that the Madias have been imprisoned for reading the Bible," and that this iniquitous act—for, if true, it is a most iniquitous act—is the work of the Catholic Church—that we address ourselves.

We meet this charge of our assailants with the following two pleas:—Firstly, that, even if the punishment which the Madias are now undergoing be the unjust and tyrannical persecution that it is represented to be, it is one for which the Catholic Church is not responsible—that it is wholly and solely the act of the Tuscan State, or Secular power. Secondly,—we deny that the imprisonment of the Madias is the result of a "religious persecution" at all. We assert, and we do so after having carefully examined the statements on both sides of the question, that the Madias have been punished, not for reading the Bible, not as Protestants, but as the proselytising agents of a band of foreign revolutionists; the only thing we regret is, that the punishment has fallen upon the paltry tools, instead of upon the designing knaves who employed them. We will now produce our proofs.

Our first plea,—that the Catholic Church is not responsible for the punishment of the Madias; that their imprisonment is not her doing, nor the result of any laws imposed by her influence upon a priest-ridden country; that, in fact, the punishment of the convicts is wholly, and solely, the act of the Tuscan State, or Secular power. We support this plea by referring to the fact, that the Law, under which the Madias have been tried, and convicted, is the "Tuscan Conventicle Act," a Law enacted in 1786, by the Grand Duke Leopold, a prince as notorious as his brother Joseph, for his constant opposition to Catholicity, and for his resistance to, and hatred of, Papal influence. We are not called upon to defend the policy, or the justice, of this Law, for it is one for which Catholics, most certainly, are not responsible, unless indeed the Church is to be held responsible for the acts of her enemies, and bitterest persecutors; it is enough for our purpose to show that the Law, within whose clutches the Madias have fallen, is a Leopoldine Law. We might indeed admit, that its provisions are harsh and tyrannical, as were those of most of the Laws of Leopold, one of the most arbitrary princes that ever reigned, without thereby making any admission unfavorable to the Church; we

might do this, we say; but we do not do so, for we think that, unlike most of the Leopoldine Laws, the one under discussion was a wise, and necessary measure of precaution against the hordes of revolutionists, who, in 1786, threatened, and a few years later succeeded in overturning, both throne and altar in most countries in Europe.

Secondly,—we deny that the imprisonment of the Madias is the result of a "religious persecution" at all. We assert that they have been punished—not for reading the Bible,—not as Protestants—not as offenders against the Church—but as conspirators against the peace of the State;—not upon religious, but solely upon political grounds—as the paid agents, as the hired tools, of foreign conspirators.

The Madias have not been imprisoned for "reading the Bible"—for there is no law in Tuscany against reading, or circulating, the Bible; neither was reading the Bible urged against them, as a crime upon their trial. In proof of this we appeal to the well known fact that, in prison, the Madias are provided with copies of the Bible which they may read as long, and as much, as they like. "It is not probable"—says His Grace the Archbishop of New York, in his admirable letter upon this very subject—"that any country would punish an offender for a crime, and yet allow him to continue, during the penalty, in the commission of the same. For instance, men convicted of forgery are not allowed to carry on the trade in the States Prison." So manifestly false is this charge against the Tuscan government, that most of the Protestant papers have at length abandoned it. The *London Spectator* admits that, whatever the cause of the imprisonment of the Madias "the ostensible one is not for reading the Scriptures," and other Protestant journals on this continent have frankly confessed the same. Still the lie is a good sound Protestant lie, and will long find knaves to circulate, and fools to believe it. For nothing is so hard to kill as a Protestant lie; refuted, abandoned, one moment, it is re-asserted, and taken up again, the next; nothing can equal the pertinacity with which the true Protestant clings to a lie, unless it be the "convulsive impetus of affection with which the Saints of the Tabernacle cling to some pet preacher whose whole life has been proved to be one vast succession of unclasticities"—*vide Spectator* of the 5th ult., in allusion to the bright star of the evangelical conventicle—Dr. Achilli.

Neither have the Madias been imprisoned as Protestants. For years before the trial, Rosa Madias and her husband, had been known to be Protestants, and yet, left unmolested. At Florence, there is a Protestant meeting house to which they had constant access for years, and no one thought of interfering with them. And in prison, it is admitted by all the Protestant journals, that the Madias are still visited, by, and receive the ministrations of, Protestant ministers. If Protestantism were then the offence for which the interesting martyrs were imprisoned, we ask any person of common sense, is it likely that the Tuscan government would allow the offence to be repeated in its public gaols, and as it were, under its very nose? Is it thus that States generally punish criminals? Was it thus that the Protestant government of England treated the Popish priests and laymen whom it imprisoned for assisting at the celebration of Catholic worship? Did that Government allow its victims to hear Mass in prison? We trov not.

But the Madias were tried, and sentenced to imprisonment, upon the charge of being the paid tools of that English evangelical, and revolutionary, party, which has, so long, and so fatally, disturbed the peace of Europe—*vide* "Alison's History." They were persecuted—as the sons of Lord Aldborough were persecuted—as the agents of sedition, hiding their vile purposes under the mask of religion, and therefore, as hypocrites as well as traitors, doubly odious. It was proved, on their trial, that these Madias—people in a menial class of life, the woman a waiting maid, and the man a *courcier*—were so amply provided with funds, that they could circulate 11,000 copies of the Protestant Bible—that they could hire, and pay, players of barrel organs, to carry about, and distribute, indecent pictures of the Blessed Virgin, and blasphemous caricatures of the most sacred rites of the Catholic Church. In express violation of the Leopoldine Law of 1786; which, after lying long dormant, was prudently resuscitated by the Tuscan government in 1849 upon the breaking out of the revolutions which have lately convulsed, and still menace the peace, and the very existence, of society in Europe—in defiance of the reiterated warnings of the Police, the Madias still continued to hold their illegal meetings with closed doors, at which large numbers of persons assisted; not for the purpose of religious worship—for as we said before, there is a Protestant meeting-house in Florence—but evidently with the object of carrying out the designs of their foreign employers, who furnished them with funds. At last the suspicions of the Tuscan government were aroused; with the scarce extinguished embers of insurrection and rebellion smouldering around them, harassed on all sides by the machinations of the disciples of Mazzini, Garibaldi, and all the cut-throat crew of demagogues and socialists, the Tuscan authorities determined, if they could not reach the chiefs, to punish the tools at least, of the revolutionary party; and for this purpose instituted proceedings against the Madias, whose connection with the foreign disturbers of the peace had been long notorious. We may regret that that government has condescended, or rather, in self-preservation has been obliged, to strike at such low game; but we see not how the justice, or the prudence, of its proceedings can be impugned, or why, because a scoundrel goes about with a seditious pamphlet in one hand, and a Protestant Tract in the other, he should be called a religious martyr! when visited with the chastisement due to his misdeeds. If Thistlewood, and the Cato Street