

REMITTANCES TO
ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES.

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THE TRUE WITNESS
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUG. 26, 1853.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The secession of Dr. Whately from the National Educational Board of Ireland, threatens to lead to a break up of the whole system, or at least to introduce several important modifications. An interesting debate upon this schism, unattended with any practical results, occurred in the House of Lords on the 28th ult. On one point the speakers seemed pretty nearly unanimous, viz., that the attempt to educate Catholics and Non-Catholics together had, after a fair trial, turned out a complete failure.

The Bills for ameliorating the condition of the Tenant farmers of Ireland have at last passed through the Commons, and are now under consideration in the House of Lords, where however it is expected that they will undergo such modifications as will render their provisions of little benefit to the class for whose sake they were introduced into Parliament. Some important amendments were made to the "Landlord and Tenant Bill" on its third reading. On the motion of Lord Monck it was moved and carried that Landlords should not have it in their power to distrain for rent upon the growing crops: this is justly esteemed a great point gained for the Tenants. That even in their present state these Bills will hardly realize the sanguine anticipations of their framers, the editor of the *Tablet* admits; but upon the principle that "half a loaf is better than no bread," he is willing to accept them as instalments of a debt due, and as fully as much as can be wrung from the British Government by the Irish party in its present condition, weakened as that party has of late been by the defection of so many of its members. Nowise discouraged however, the *Tablet* still recommends, as the soundest policy for Ireland, an uncompromising opposition to the present, and indeed, to any ministry, that shall not seriously and in good faith, address itself to the redress of the social, and politico-religious grievances under which Ireland groans, and make "religious equality" a part of its political programme.

The Eastern question presents no new features of any interest: all is undecided. What is certain is—that Russia is in full military occupation of the Principalities, exercises therein absolute rights of sovereignty, and has compelled the Hospodar of Moldavia to renounce his allegiance, and to refuse the payment of his annual tribute, to the Porte. Neither is there at present any appearance that the Russian Emperor has any design of withdrawing his troops; on the contrary, it looks as if he were more inclined to push his advanced posts across the Danube. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the preservation of peace is more than doubtful; and that the real object of Russia in negotiating is to gain time—to wait perhaps until the coming of winter, and N. E. gales shall compel the allied squadrons to withdraw from their present position near the Dardanelles.

Every fresh telegraph announces the increase of the ravages of yellow fever at New Orleans. The deaths have amounted to 260 in one day. The hospitals are crammed, and room is wanting for the sick and dying. As usual, under similar circumstances, the Catholic religious, and the Sisters of Charity, are conspicuous for their heroic self-devotion; many of them have already fallen victims to the pestilence.

WHAT HAS THE SUPPRESSION OF THE
RELIGIOUS ORDERS DONE FOR THE
POOR?

At a period when everything around us, in the political world, seems to announce, an attack upon these Orders and their property, and that the Catholics of Canada will soon be called upon, forgetful of differences of origin, waiving all minor considerations, to combine heartily for the defence of their convents, hospitals, and charitable asylums, against the aggressive spirit of Protestant democracy, it is certainly not an unprofitable speculation to inquire—"What has the suppression of the Religious Orders done for the poor?" Fortunately, in one respect, the results of their suppression have been so uniform, that it requires not a deep search into the records of history, nor a long and laborious investigation into the annals of foreign nations, to detect them. They are palpable, everywhere present, and unmistakable; alike in all ages, and in all lands—in the XVI century, and in the XIX: the same in England, France, or Spain. When therefore we are called upon to consent to the spoliation of the Religious Orders in Canada, let us see what their spoliation and suppression has done for the poor in any one country, and we may confidently

predict the same consequences in all. We propose to enquire—"What has the suppression of the Religious Orders done for Spain?"

We know from Protestant historians what benefits the institution of these Orders conferred upon the Spanish people. In the third volume of his History of Europe—p. 43—Alison thus enumerates some of them:—

"The charity and beneficence of the monks had set on foot in every part of the country, extensive institutions, which were effecting more than any others in relieving the distresses of the poor. . . . The friars acted as schoolmasters, advocates, physicians, and apothecaries. They were considerate landlords, and indulgent masters; peace-makers in domestic broils, and the prop of support in family misfortune; they provided amusements and festivities for the peasants, advanced them funds when assailed by misfortune, and furnished them seed, if the harvest had failed. Most of the convents had fundaciones, or endowments, for Professors who taught rhetoric, and philosophy, besides keeping schools open for the use of the poor. Superficial and free-thinking travellers, observing that the aged, the sick, and the destitute were always to be found in numbers round the convent gates, supposed that they created the sufferings they were so instrumental in relieving; forgetting that the poor will ever be assembled round those establishments where their sufferings are relieved; and that to represent such beneficent institutions as the cause of this distress is just as absurd as it would be to decry fever-hospitals, because their wards are generally filled with typhus patients."

Now let us look at the other side of the picture, and see what the suppression of the convents and Religious Orders has done for the poor. We copy from a late French paper:—

"In vain the venerable Bishop of St. Jacques, in the presence of more than 600 unfortunate resembling moving corpses, who daily besiege his gate, has sold his mules and his carriage. In vain has he reduced himself and his servants to the merest necessities, in order that he might give the rest to those who perish of hunger. All that he or the other bishops and clergy, all that the government can do, according to the *Esperanza*, is but a drop of water to extinguish the conflagration. When we speak of the Government, however, we must remember that a last contribution made by it of 3,000,000 of reals had not been distributed. . . . In the Mountains, the starving die by dozens, and in many places fevers of the most dangerous character are joined to the famine. Hundreds of sick expire for want of nourishment and medicine. The streets of our cities are encumbered with old men, women and children, with the visages of corpses, covered with miserable rags, and even worse, troubling themselves no longer except to die in quiet, and imploring with loud cries the succours of the public charity. At the gates of the Archbishop's Palace more than a thousand people wait for daily bread; and I hear that one day lately 4,500 poor assembled to receive the alms distributed in the city by one gentleman."

There is nothing wonderful in all this; nothing new, nothing but what might have been, from the beginning, predicted as the inevitable result of the suppression of the only institutions that ever have been, or that ever can be, competent to the relief of the sufferings of the poorer classes of society in periods of great or wide spread calamity. It was the same in England after the destruction of the monasteries during the great apostasy of the XVI century. In vain did the Legislature, by the most sanguinary edicts against poverty, attempt to diminish pauperism. Protestant Legislators starved, incarcerated, flogged, branded with hot irons, and put to death their victims by thousands: but still pauperism increased, and is increasing until it threatens and does threaten, to overturn the whole social fabric in every country, whether nominally, Catholic, or avowedly Protestant, which, deaf to the voice of the Church, heedless of the first principles of justice, and regardless of the claims of the poor, has laid its unhallowed hands upon the funds set apart by Catholic charity for the support of the suffering members of Christ's body. Vainly has Protestantism attempted to atone for its misdeeds by Legislative enactments, and legal provision for the poor. Cruel even in its philanthropy, Protestantism has but still more embittered the wretched lot of those whom it sought to relieve. It has destroyed the convents, and it has given Poor-Houses—those foul dungeons, accursed of God and man, from which the voice of the poor man daily ascends to heaven for vengeance upon his oppressors. Let us take a peep at the inside of an English Protestant Poor house.

"I am not going"—says a writer in the *London Times*, under date of the 28th May last—"I am not going to write of the unnecessary cruelty that separates the parent and the child—the husband and wife of 50 years—though I have seen very bitter tears stream down furrowed cheeks at the prospect, and witnessed the aged mother's strong grasp of agony on her sickly child, as in hard set tones she said—'they must not separate us.' Neither will I write of the kind of attendance bestowed on the sick and dying by the nurses—women, respectable enough, it may be, but of course wholly destitute of that gentle kindness which in such need is to be found, even in the most wretched home. It is true that I have shuddered at the keen looks of terrified dislike with which a dying woman has watched the retreating figure of the nurse from her bed-side, and sickened at the husky sounds—'Hush, she will hear you,' that stopped me, when in answer to the whisper—'I wish I had not left my home'—I tried to speak of another, and a happier one. These things are, I believe, inherent in the system, part of its very nature."

And therefore not worth talking about. Cruelty to the poor, brutality to the sick and dying, are "inherent in the system, part of its very nature," even by the confession of Protestant writers; and yet, be it remembered, that it is to this system that we must come, if like Protestant England we tamely submit to the encroachments of Protestantism, and resist not, by every means that God has placed within our reach, its threatened attack upon the private property of our Religious—or rather, for they are but the administrators,—upon the property, of the poor.

It is indeed the poor, rather than the Religious Orders, who are the first sufferers by the robbery of

the convents—but they will not be the last; they will yet be avenged upon their spoliators. The day of vengeance may be delayed—it may come neither this year, nor yet the next—unforeseen circumstances, the opening up of new sources of wealth—as for instance the wonderful gold discoveries in California and Australia may, by furnishing employment to the "classes dangereuses," postpone its coming for another generation; but come it must; and though terrible will be its coming, who can contest the justice of the retribution?—who will deny the right of the poor man to say to his oppressor,—"You have robbed me long enough, it is my turn now?" The great social problem of the XIX century, begotten of the religious apostasy of the XVI., yet awaits its solution; and no solution, save a bloody one, is possible; unless indeed, God in His mercy shall be pleased to bring back the wanderers to the fold from whence they have strayed, and to turn their hearts to obedience to the Pastor against whom they have rebelled.

Especially are the Irish Catholics of Canada interested in resisting every attempt to interfere with our Catholic hospitals, and convents. It is to these, under God, that many of them owe, not only all that they have, but their very being. But for these Popish institutions they would have been left to die like dogs in the streets; or worse, far worse,—worse both for body and soul—would have been handed over to the tender mercies of some government institution, some Canadian Ennistymon or Kilrush, with—instead of the Sisters of Charity to tend them—its nurses like those described by the *Times*, as inspiring terror and hatred, and from whose foul presence the moaning wretch impatiently calls upon death to deliver him. But for these Religious Orders, but for these Catholic institutions of Canada, the Irish immigrant well knows that he would have been left to die of sickness, to rot away with disease, or the slower tortures of starvation—unheeded, unpitied, unlamented; that but for them, and their gentle inmates, no kind hand would have been held out to succor him in his distress—no voice would have bad him, the stranger, to be of good cheer, and welcome to a foreign land—that no eye would have dropped a tear over his agony—and that, had he died, no tongue have formed one prayer to Heaven's mercy seat in behalf of the passing soul. Remembering then what they owe to these institutions, but which are now menaced, it behoves the Irish Catholics to be on the alert, and to make good use of the power which the laws of the country put into their hands, and which they will be called upon to exercise at the next general election; a period perhaps not very remote, and at which the question of Ecclesiastical property will be made a test question.

CLERGY RESERVES.

We have received a letter from a gentleman in Toronto—who, from his situation, is well qualified to judge of the general sentiments of the Catholic body of Upper Canada upon the subject of the "Clergy Reserves"—in which we are happy to find that the writer perfectly agrees with the opinions of the *True Witness* respecting the inexpediency of the ministerial proposition for "Secularisation." We say inexpediency, because we do not intend to involve ourselves in the question of abstract right. Whether the Colonial Legislature has the right to divert the revenues accruing from these Reserves to other than the purposes for which they were originally destined is not so much a question of importance to Catholics, as whether, even admitting that right, it be expedient, in the interests of morality, and religion in general, and of the Catholic Church in particular, to exercise it.

We may be singular in our belief that it would be unjust on the part of the Canadian Legislature to disturb a settlement which was made, and in good faith accepted, as final; but we think, and in this opinion we are confirmed by our Toronto correspondent, that many Catholics will agree with us as to the inexpediency of such a measure; will with us conclude that it would not only be liable to the reproach of a breach of faith, but that in its consequences, it would be productive of many, and serious evils to the cause of the Catholic Church, and Catholic education, in Canada. From motives of self-interest then—if not from the higher motives of a love of justice, and fair play—Catholics should pause ere they lend themselves to the support of a scheme whose avowed object is the spoliation of the only endowment held by the various Protestant religious denominations in this country.

Spoliation, secularisation—call it by what name you will—once commenced will not stop until there be nothing left to despoil or secularize. The Moloch of democracy is insatiable: his appetite will be but sharpened, not glutted, with the paltry mouthful offered him in the "Clergy Reserves;" he will swallow them, lick his lips, and then sing out for "more, more." Against this cry, it will be in vain to plead the rights of property, or the sacredness of treaties: never yet did democracy recognise the one, or bow before the other. It knows no right, but might—esteems naught sacred save the will of the majority—and its last word is "*La propriété c'est le vol.*" Can it be expedient for Catholics to ally themselves with such a power? Or do they think that their ally will be more tender of the rights of Catholics, because the latter shall have shown themselves regardless of the rights of their Protestant fellow citizens? He must indeed be a very sanguine man, and a very inattentive observer of passing events, who can expect that the secularisation of the "Clergy Reserves" will stop the maw of Protestant democracy, or who fails to perceive that the crusade, nominally undertaken against Protestant endowments, is in reality directed against all ecclesiastical property whatsoever. "Secularisation" may commence with the "Clergy Reserves," but Catholics may be assured that it will not end there.

Nor is it only because the "Secularisation of the Clergy Reserves" would afford a dangerous precedent, and a plausible pretext for an onslaught upon Catholic ecclesiastical property, that we oppose it as inexpedient; there are other dangers, still more menacing, consequences still more disastrous, that would inevitably follow the adoption of such a course.

The advocates of "Secularisation" are hardly at the pains of concealing their ulterior intentions. If they cry out for the "Secularisation" of the "Reserves" as the prop of State Churchism, it is that they may be appropriated to the support of State-Schoolism; to the strengthening of a system which the experience of neighboring countries has shown to be pernicious to morality and religion—subversive of all personal liberty—and which the Catholic Church, speaking by her assembled Prelates, and by the voice of the Sovereign Pontiff, has clearly and emphatically condemned. It is no secret that the design of the friends of "Secularisation" is to devote the spoils to the purposes of State education; to endowing an educational system from which, of course, the religious element must be eliminated, and of which, it is equally certain, that no conscientious Catholic can possibly avail himself. We can understand why such a system should be acceptable to a Protestant democracy; why the enemies of the Catholic Church should rally for its defence—why greedy aspirants after place and salary should long after its establishment: and why it should be readily adopted by statesmen, whose power and influence it promises to increase by means of the immense additional patronage that will be thereby placed at the disposal of the government. We can see, and appreciate the motives of these advocates for "Secularisation;" but what we cannot understand, is how any Catholic can look with favor on a proposal to put a sword into his adversaries hands: aye! and a sword that will be used with fatal effect. As Catholics then we oppose "Secularisation" because it means State-Schoolism, State Colleges, State Universities, and Godless Education.

What is the great educational principle asserted, and contended for by the Catholic Church throughout Europe and America at the present day? Is it not, that the education of the child does not belong to the State? and that the State has no right to interfere therein? What have the Catholics of Upper Canada, not aided by their brethren in the Lower Province, been struggling for, during the last two years, if not for "Freedom of Education"—freedom from all State trammels, and government interference? And to-day they are asked to support a measure destined to give the State almost unlimited control over the education of their children! It is no use disguising the truth. Poor, and sparsely scattered over the face of the country, hardly can the Catholics of Upper Canada hold their own under the present system, against the wealthy Protestant community which surrounds them. What then will be their condition, when, by the "Secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves," a permanent and prolific source of income shall have been placed at the absolute disposal of the government for the support of the very system which they have so long and painfully fought against, and over which they have at last obtained but, at best, a doubtful victory? It needs not a prophet's gift to foresee the result. If the "Secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves" menaces the integrity of the property of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada, it is destined to be fatal to all "Freedom of Education" in the Upper section of the Province. This alone should suffice to convince Catholics, and all friends of "Freedom of Education" of the impolicy of joining with the Brownites in their meditated crusade against Ecclesiastical endowments.

The *British Canadian* in criticising our narrative of the events connected with the Gavazzi riots at Montreal accuses the *True Witness* of distorting the facts of the case, in that it represented the first acts of violence or rioting, on the part of the mob, as subsequent to the advance of the police upon them, and as not having commenced until they had been driven away from the immediate vicinity of Zion Church. This view of the case may be unacceptable to the *British Canadian*, because it perfectly exonerates the crowd from the false charge of having attacked the said Church. But acceptable, or unacceptable, it is strictly in accordance with the testimony given by Protestants of the highest respectability, on the Coroner's Inquest, who, and not the *True Witness*, are answerable for its truth. We allude especially to Dr. McDonald, whose house, situated within a couple of hundred yards at most of the Zion church, commands a full view of the scene of action. In his evidence this witness deposed that:—

"He saw the police move and disperse the mob, which retired before the police, to opposite Mr. Wood's house:—at this point the mob commenced to resist the police."

Now if they "commenced" to resist at this point it is clear that the mob did not resist before; and therefore the statement of the *True Witness* is fully borne out by the evidence of a gentleman to whom even the *British Canadian* must give the credit of impartiality. Again, the same gentleman, at the close of his evidence, anxious to prevent any misunderstanding, corrected an expression calculated to give rise to a false impression. Having previously sworn that "he saw no attack made on the church by the people outside," he added that, he had seen none even attempting to get into the church. It would have been but honest on the part of the *British Canadian* if, whilst italicising certain passages from the narrative given in the *True Witness*, as especially obnoxious to the reproach of distortion, he had added that those passages were copied, verbatim, from the evidence of Protestant gentlemen, examined at the Coroner's Inquest.

The logic of our Non-Catholic cotemporary is on