

The True Witness.

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 8, 1859.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The *Adelaide*, from Galway, arrived at St. John's, N. F., on the 4th inst. The news from the seat of war is important. Another battle has been fought. The Emperor Napoleon telegraphs that "a great battle took place and another victory. The whole Austrian army formed a line of battle extending 15 miles in length. We have taken cannons, flags, and prisoners. The battle lasted from 4 in the morning till 8 in the evening." The Austrian force on the Mincio numbered 280,000 men. Napoleon had demanded permission to march 31,000 troops through Hanover to the Rhine. Prussia had threatened to assist in suppressing the Hungarian insurrection.

By the arrival of the *Asia*, which reached N. York yesterday morning, we learn that the allied armies have occupied Lonato, Castiglione, and Montebellario. At the latter place the allies pushed a reconnaissance as far as Goro, and surprised the main Austrian guard, who lost nine prisoners and some killed.

BRINGING THE MATTER TO AN ISSUE.—A respected Quebec correspondent sends us the subjoined, by way of at once and conclusively bringing to an issue the question, as to whether, at the late general election, Mr. McGee offered himself to the Ministry, and was by the latter rejected. Our correspondent says:—

Mr. McGee, in one of his letters, refers to Mr. J. A. McDonald. Why does he not ask Mr. Allyn to state what occurred at Donegana's Hotel, after the great Irish meeting nominating him (Mr. McGee) as candidate?

This is the simplest and speediest method for clearing up the mystery, and for vindicating Mr. McGee's character, if he be innocent of the intrigues imputed to him. Whilst at the same time, it is a process from which the guilty, but the guilty alone, have anything to dread, or will shrink. Will Mr. McGee then call upon, or rather, will he allow, Mr. Allyn to state publicly what occurred between himself and the latter at the Donegana Hotel of this City, shortly after the meeting whereat Mr. McGee was adopted as the Irish Catholic candidate? If he does, we have no doubt from what our Quebec correspondent adds in his communication to us, that Mr. Allyn will be delighted to comply with the request, and to avail himself of Mr. McGee's permission to relate the particulars of the interview alluded to. But on the other hand, if Mr. McGee shrinks from this dangerous but conclusive test, there can be, amongst intelligent persons, but one opinion as to his guilt.

It is important, highly important, that this matter should be thoroughly ventilated. Of two things one. Either the character of Mr. McGee has been grossly maligned; or the confidence of his political supporters—who gave him their votes under the impression that he was determined to adhere to, and on all occasions carry out, the policy of "Independent Opposition," to which by the "Resolutions" of their "Catholic Institutes" and "National Societies," the Irish Catholics of Canada were solemnly pledged—has been grossly abused.

For, if on the one hand, Mr. McGee cannot be held responsible for the acts of others, acting without his consent or connivance—and it was in this light that the undoubted intrigues of some of his Committee with the Ministry were presented to the public; so, on the other hand, if it be true—which we have been lately assured on the very best authority is the fact—that those intrigues were carried on with Mr. McGee's full knowledge and consent, it is evident that he is a man unworthy of confidence; that he is a double dealer, and mere political intriguer; and that as such, he can only bring disgrace upon all with whom he is in any way politically connected. Now though it be true—and it has been often cast in his teeth by those who had nothing else to urge against him—that the editor of the TRUE WITNESS is not an Irishman; still as a Catholic—and indebted, under God, for this happiness of being a Catholic to the heroic constancy with which, in the worst of times, the Irish race kept burning the torch of the Catholic faith in the British Isles—he cannot but feel jealous of the honor of those to whom he owes so heavy a debt. At the same time it is evident, that both the honor and the best interests of Irish Catho-

lics in Canada require that, if they be represented in Parliament at all, they be represented by men of honor and unblemished integrity; by men of unsullied reputation, clear of any suspicion even, of being capable of doing a mean or ungentlemanly action. In a representative, social position is much; talents, and powers of oratory to advocate the cause of his constituents, are of still higher importance; but infinitely more important than either social position, or the most commanding talents and winning eloquence, is a pure and untainted reputation for honesty and disinterestedness. A poor man of humble origin may make an excellent legislator; mediocrity of talent is not always incompatible with the functions of a useful member of Parliament; but the double-dealer, the intriguer, the time-server, and place-hunter, no matter how great his wealth, how noble his lineage, how varied and extensive his information, or how keen and brilliant his eloquence, is, and must be, a curse to his constituents; a standing reproach to, and brand of infamy upon, all those whom he appears to the world to represent. We do not undervalue social position; we have the highest respect for intellectual endowments; but, above all, we exact of our representatives that they be men above all mercenary motives, incapable of any sordid or dirty action. The qualifications, in short, that we chiefly look for in him whom we deem worthy to represent us, are the same as were required of the "pious chevalier" of old—that he should be "sans peur, et sans reproche." The Irish Catholic representative should be the Bayard of politics, or he will but bring disgrace, and obloquy on the Irish Catholic name.

And we are jealous of that name; we cannot—alms though we be, and are often taunted with being—we cannot hear unmoved, that name coupled with that of tricksters; nor without a feeling of shame and indignation, can we listen to the sneers and degrading insinuations with which that name is often uttered by the enemies of our common religion. But how vindicate that name, how wipe away that reproach, when one who is publicly taxed with political intrigues the most degrading, and with conduct of which no gentleman would for one moment allow himself even to be suspected, shrinks from investigation into the truth of the allegations preferred against him; whilst boastfully proclaiming himself to the world as the Representative of the Irish race in Canada?

No! we say—Such a one is not their true representative. He is no fair exponent of that gallant race, to whom, whatever faults of the head may be imputed, none can impute the characteristic vices of the Yankee pedlar. Impetuous and impulsive the Irish may be; but not mercenary, not sordid tricksters, making a traffic of their principles, and offering their consciences for sale to the highest bidder. Rash they may be, but they are not calculating intriguers; and when they err, as like other men, they often do, their errors are the results rather of their fiery passions, than of cold-blooded, deliberate treachery. Such a race, we contend, are not fairly represented, by one who, despite his talents—which we admire, and would fain have enlisted on the side of the Church—is destitute of fixed principle; and is more intent upon the advancement of his personal interests, than upon the interests of religion.

It is only lately, and unwillingly, that we have been compelled to recognise this to be the case with Mr. McGee. We cannot now, however, conceal from ourselves the fact, that it is not true that the intrigues which disgraced the late general election, were carried on without Mr. McGee's knowledge or consent, as we were once led to believe. Only very lately has evidence of Mr. McGee's complicity in those treasons been laid before us; and such being the case, we should be wanting in duty to ourselves, and to our Catholic readers, if we refrained from fear of clamor, from telling them the plain truth: that Mr. McGee is one who, in his political character—for with private life we deal not—is no credit, either to his country, or to those whom he pretends to represent. Here, however, unless Mr. McGee calls upon, or rather gives permission to, Mr. Allyn, to state publicly the particulars of the Donegana Hotel interview, we shall let the matter drop.

Only this would we observe to our Irish Catholic fellow-citizens. You say that you desire—as who do not desire?—to be respected; and you complain, with truth, that you are not always treated with the respect which you deserve. Why is this? Because it too often happens that you are judged, not so much by your own acts, as by the conduct of those whom you, in your confiding generosity, have raised to places of influence and dignity; because your political representatives have been unworthy of you; because intriguers have played upon your frank and unsuspecting natures; and with the cant phrases of patriotism in their mouths, have managed to conceal the mercenary designs which lay rankling in their hearts. You are judged of by your political representatives; and if these be not thorough gentlemen, in the true sense of the word; if they be not men of strict honor, as well as of shining abilities; if their hands be not clean, and their lips free from all deceit—how—O! how can you expect to be respected?

FOUR LETTERS TO A FRIEND. *The Relations of the Irish Catholics of this Province to the French Canadian Parties, and the Protestant population of Lower Canada, and the Conservative and Reform Parties of Upper Canada, considered.*

The above is the title, or heading, of a series of four letters, from Mr. McGee, on the state of parties in Canada, which have appeared at length in the columns of the *Toronto Freeman*, the *Montreal Herald*, and, we believe, some other journals of the Province. We have not reproduced them, because of their length, and because with many of the opinions therein expressed, we do not coincide; and we have delayed noticing them until the present moment, lest we should expose ourselves to the reproach of doing Mr. McGee the injustice of sitting in judgment upon him before he had finished his defence. This premised, we shall proceed to lay before our readers an analysis of these letters, with such comments appended as we deem called for.

The first letter of the series is devoted to the discussion of "French Canadian Parties," and the relations of Irish Catholics thereunto; and if the writer's design were to create strife, and to foment discord between Irish, and French Canadian, Catholics; to inspire the former with ill will towards the latter, and to furnish French Canadians with a valid cause of jealousy against their Irish brethren, he has, we must admit, accomplished his task with consummate ability.—That he may however fail in his pernicious and thoroughly anti-Catholic object, is our hope, and indeed our firm belief; a belief founded upon a well grounded confidence in the good sense of our fellow-Catholics of both origins, and their regard for the interests of their common religion.

For—we may be permitted to repeat here, what we have often before proclaimed—there are, there can be, no interests, properly considered, peculiar to any one section of our Catholic community. As Catholics, in virtue of the religious element, Irishmen have no doubt interests in common with all French Canadian Catholics, and distinct from, and opposed to, the interests—or rather the passions and prejudices—of all their Non-Catholic fellow-citizens. But, abstraction made of the religious element, and considered simply as Irishmen, they have no interests, no duties, and can have no policy, distinct from those, and that of French Canadians, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, or of British subjects by naturalisation. The "relations" therefore "of the Irish Catholics of this Province to the French Canadian Parties," are precisely the same as are the relations of English, Scotch, or Welsh, Catholics, to French Canadians. This self-evident truth premised, let us return to Mr. McGee's letter, No. 1.

Estimating the population of Lower Canada at about one million and a quarter for 1861, he assigns one-seventh only of these numbers, or about 170,000, to the Irish Catholic body. This he attributes, most falsely, and most maliciously, to the jealousy and exclusiveness of French Canadians; who hitherto have sought rather to repel emigrants from, than to attract them to, their own country; even when these emigrants were children of the same Church, professors of the same faith, as themselves. The old slanders which appeared a few weeks ago in the *Toronto Freeman*, to the effect that there exists "a deep-rooted antipathy," on the part of "even the Franco-Canadian child against our race and country," is, in substance, reproduced and endorsed by Mr. McGee in his letters addressed to his fellow-countrymen throughout the Province; and this assumed antipathy is assigned as the reason why Irish Catholics have hitherto preferred the United States, and even Upper Canada, to the French Canadian and Lower section of the Province. French Canadian jealousy of Irishmen, and exclusiveness, he pretends, have repelled emigrants; it is to this cause that the greater increase of the population of Upper Canada must be attributed; and he argues, why should we, Irish Catholics, interfere to prevent the consequences, in the form of "Representation by Population," from falling on the heads of those who have dealt so exclusively and unjustly with Irishmen?

"Why, we may ask, are the Irish inhabitants so few, especially on the St. Maurice and St. Francis? What became of those tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands who landed at Quebec the last thirty years, in search of homes and settlement? We shall find that Protestant Upper Canada secured 150,000 of them in the same years that Catholic Lower Canada only retained 50,000. We shall find—if we care to follow their fortunes far enough—that distant Iowa, and more distant Minnesota, has (sic) adopted more in the last ten years, than Lower Canada since the beginning! Frankly we say the reason is this—that emigration was never valued as highly as it ought to be, as a source of wealth and strength, in Lower Canada, and if this section of the Province has fallen behind Upper Canada in point of population, it is her own settled indifference to the acquisition of numbers from emigration which is mainly to blame. And it is really asking too much from us, emigrants of to-day, the brethren of the rejected emigrants of former days, to defend Lower Canada from the inevitable political consequences of her aversion to the settlement of her unoccupied territory, by men of European birth." (The Italics are our own.)

Before examining into the merits of this argument in favor of "Representation by Population," or rather this appeal to his countrymen not to oppose that measure—let us inquire how far the allegations on which it is based, are consis-

tent with facts. Is it true, in short, that French Canadians entertain "an aversion" to the settlement in Lower Canada of men of European birth? Is it true that French Canadians are jealous, exclusive, hostile, and repulsive towards strangers? Is it true that it is to that exclusiveness and hostility, that is due the preference given by emigrants to the United States and to Upper Canada? To every one of these questions we are prepared to reply in the negative. French Canadians, though naturally sensitive in the presence of strangers arrogating to themselves the title of a "superior race," are not averse to all Europeans; are not averse to the settlement in Lower Canada of Catholics of European birth. It is a foul calumny, propagated in the columns of the *Toronto Freeman* under another form; and one which we regret to see encouraged by so influential a personage as the junior member for Montreal.

In our issue of the 22nd of April last, and in reply to the *Freeman's* unfounded allegations respecting the "deep-rooted antipathy felt by even the Franco-Canadian child against" the Irish "race and country," we have already gone over this ground; and we need only cite one other argument to show that the people of Lower Canada, do not entertain that "aversion" to the settlement of strangers, attributed to them by Mr. McGee. That argument shall be Mr. McGee himself, and his present position.

For we contend that the aversion to strangers cannot be very strong, or generally diffused, in a community that has generously welcomed, and rapidly elevated to a post of honor, one who but some two or three years ago arrived amongst them, in many respects, a perfect stranger, and whose antecedents, in so far as they were known, were, to say the least, not altogether the most favorable. Yet, notwithstanding those antecedents; relying upon his promises of amendment, and his professions of repentance; and admiring his talents, his Canadian fellow-citizens, not only consented to forgive, and draw the veil of oblivion over Mr. McGee's past conduct, and to grant him a fair chance to retrieve his character; but by their votes placed him, a stranger, unconnected with any of the commercial or agricultural interests of the country, in the proud position of representative of the chief city of Lower Canada, and the commercial capital of British North America. To be sure, this was mainly due to the generous support given to him by his own countrymen; but that it could be done at all, is a proof that a large body of French Canadians must have acquiesced therein; and that the charge now urged against them by Mr. McGee is as false as it is ungenerous. How Mr. McGee has requested the confidence reposed in him, or how far his conduct justifies the "aversion" to the settlement of strangers which he attributes to French Canadians, are questions which we need not discuss at present. Suffice it to lay before our readers Mr. McGee's own words, delivered shortly before his election, with reference to this very charge of exclusiveness, hostility, or aversion, to strangers, which he now urges against the French population of Lower Canada. We copy from the *New Era* of October 22nd, 1857:—

"The descendants of the original occupants of the region over which we have cast our eyes"—said Mr. McGee, lecturing at Ottawa on the *Future of Canada*—"do not then claim too much in my humble opinion, when they ask Lower Canada as an heirloom. Their ancestors held the soil as sovereigns two hundred years before Wolfe landed at Quebec. For two centuries they held the Valley against the Puritans, the Hollanders, and the Iroquois; for the greater part of another century—until 'responsible Government' was conceded—they preserved their language, their religion, and their social life, against all attempts at Anglican assimilation, and they will not, now that they are above a million, yield what they so well defended when scarcely fifty thousand strong. Neglected by France, mistreated by England, they have been—for their own good perhaps—remorselessly driven in upon themselves. We must remember their experience before we pronounce them too exclusive. We must take them as we find them, and while professing to consider them fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects, we must not dishonorably seek to undermine that which they hold dearer than life itself—their social life, their historical rank, their language, their religion, and their nationality." The Italics are our own.

Here we have an eloquent and ample vindication of our French Canadian fellow-citizens, from the charge now urged against them by Mr. McGee; here we have it shown that it is by the neglect of France, and the mistrust of England, and not through any fault of their own, that French Canadians have been isolated, or "remorselessly driven in upon themselves;" here too we find a powerful condemnation of the "dishonorable" conduct of those who, through "Representation by Population," now seek to "undermine" that which French Canadians "hold dearer than life itself." Mr. McGee so completely refutes Mr. McGee, that the TRUE WITNESS need not add another word upon the subject.

And again, with regard to the assertion that it is owing to French Canadian "aversion," to the settlement of strangers, that the great mass of emigrants from Europe have directed their steps to the United States, and Upper Canada, we need only quote Mr. McGee, to refute Mr. McGee. In his letter, under consideration, he tells us that:—

"They—the emigrants—'have followed the lead of capital, as labor, skilled and unskilled, ever must.' Now in these words lies the secret of the pre-

ference given by the emigrant, and the Irish emigrant especially, to the Upper section of the Province. From an article transferred to our columns from the *Free Press*—a Reform organ of Upper Canada—it will be seen that "capital" whose lead labor must ever follow, has been expended more liberally on Upper, than on Lower Canada; that of the public expenditure prior to 1854, nearly three fourths were expended within Upper Canada; and that since that time, more than half has been expended in the same section of the Province. Here then, without being obliged to have recourse to the hypothesis of French Canadian "aversion" to the settlement of strangers, we can, on Mr. McGee's own grounds, find a full explanation of the preference awarded to Upper Canada by emigrants from Europe; and here again we add, Mr. McGee has spared us all expensively for a labored argument to refute his conclusions.

We would remark, however, that in urging as the TRUE WITNESS urges, Catholics of all denominations to oppose "Representation by Population," it does but urge them to consult their own interests, and the interests of their religion; that the TRUE WITNESS merely insists to-day, upon that upon which Mr. McGee and the TRUE WITNESS both insisted in 1857.

In the first place it is as an anti-Catholic measure that the Protestants of Upper Canada mainly insist upon "Representation by Population;" as witness the platform of the Orangemen, published by, and held up to reprobation in, the *New Era* of 15th December, 1857.

"THE ORANGE STANDARD."

(From the *New Era*, Dec. 15th, 1857.)

"No candidate, whether Orange or not, is to be supported unless distinctly adhering to, and determined upon all fitting occasions, whether in or out of Parliament, to carry out representation based upon population or territory, and without reference to the Provincial distinctions formerly existing."

It will thus be seen that, in asserting on the floor of the House and elsewhere, the justice of "Representation by Population," Mr. McGee has but borrowed a plank of the "Orange Platform;" he has also, and at the same time, cast away a plank of that platform on which he professed to take his stand when elected for Montreal. Thus, in his published Address to the Electors of Montreal, and in the last paragraph but one, he distinctly stated in 1857, that:—

"The Canadian Constitution, as it is, must be upheld, since all the reforms and ameliorations required can be obtained under it." The Italics are our own.

Now the "Canadian Constitution, as it is," and as it was in 1857, when Mr. McGee made the above public confession of his political faith, consists essentially, in the Legislative Union of the Two Provinces, with an equal number of representatives from each section. Touch these arrangements; substitute for the Legislative, a Federal Union; or adopt the principle of "Representation by Population," instead of the existing principle of Equal Representation, and the "Constitution of Canada" would be no longer "as it is." Mr. McGee is therefore bound, by the most solemn pledges, to uphold "Equality of Representation;" or, in other words, to oppose "Representation by Population;" because he is pledged to uphold the "Canadian Constitution as it is." It was on the faith of the pledges contained in his Address—[we refer to the one actually laid before the public, and not to the other Address which was to have been used had he been taken up on the Ministerial ticket]—that he won the suffrages of many of his fellow-citizens, whose generous confidence he has since, by his advocacy of "Representation by Population," so grossly abused; and it is because he has proved false to his pledged faith, because he has approved himself a pledge breaker, and unprincipled, that we now oppose him as a most dangerous "political enemy."

But enough for the present. We shall return to the "Four Letters to a Friend" in our next.

DIVORCE AND ADULTERY.—Not only as Catholics, but as Canadians, do we deplore the late action of the Legislature in the matter of the McLean Divorce Bill. Viewed by itself, it may seem but a small matter, that a legislative permission has been given to a particular individual to violate the laws of God; but as a precedent, that will no doubt be applied in cases analogous to his, the Divorce Bill, lately passed, may be looked upon as the fruitful parent of innumerable ills.

Paradoxical as the statement may at first appear, we are almost inclined to look upon the marriage laws as at present existing, or rather as administered in Canada, as more injurious to society and morality, than would be a law recognising an unrestricted right of Divorce. According to the present system, Divorce is a luxury reserved for the benefit of those only who have been guilty of adultery. The law in fact, as at present applied, holds out a premium to adultery. It says to the married pair, who from incompatibility of temper, or any other cause, lead a life of mutual hostility, and who long for the means of separation—"You must remain together, so long as you are chaste. I can give you no assistance—unless one, or the other of you, commits an act of adultery; in which case you shall be released from the bonds that now oppress you."

This is, we say, the practical teaching of the actual law; and its consequences are obvious.—