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We cannot see how Mr. Gladstone proposes to strengthen his position, or prolong the tenure of office of his party, by refusing constitutional freedom to Ireland. Many English liberals must regret to see him so completely governed by the Whiglandlord element. His Government promises in the queen's speech a measure of local self-government to English and Welsh counties, but reserves the case of Ireland for "separate consideration." Nothing is said of an Irish borough franchise bill nor of the extension of the right of voting to English agricultural laborers, measures imperatively demanded by every consideration of right and justice.

If Parliament confine itself to the very limited programme of legislation devised by the government, the session will be barren of any real practical good. Irish discontent will not be removed, nor landlordism saved, nor the union of the countries perpetuated by the abandonment on the part of the government of that vigorous and comprehensive spirit of reform so necessary in these times of mutation and social revolution.

ANARCHY IN RUSSIA.

The present condition of the Russian empire is one of the utmost gravity. The Sovereign seems powerless to check the disorder that everywhere runs rampant—his very life being constantly threatened. Violence, bloodshed and anarchy seem to be the order of the day in that unhappy country. The Russian government has been till quite recently supposed by outsiders to be one of the most stable and powerful in the world. It is now neither feared nor respected at home or abroad. The causes which have led to this state of things are not far to seek. The Russian government has been always based on absolutism of the extreme character. In the sovereign all authority in church and state is placed, everyone holding office in either being removable at his sole will and pleasure. Thus in one person is practically vested the entire administration, as well in spirituals as in temporal, of one of the largest empires in the world. Absolutism has never been, even in small countries, a successful form of government. In large countries it can have no other results but confusion, revolt, and anarchy, such as to-day afflict and threaten to rend in sunder the Dominions of the Czar. In the government under this system of so extensive a country as Russia, the sovereign has to commit the details of administration to persons responsible in no way to the governed. They have but one man to please, and are, therefore, frequently led into severities and exactions in the exercise of their authority highly offensive to the people. If they were in any measure, however limited, responsible to the popular will, much of the harshness and cruelty daily exercised in every department of the Russian administration would disappear. But as no such responsibility exists, Russian officials discharge their duties with the sole view of preserving their authority and that of their master, by means of the power placed at their disposal to enforce these orders. This absence of responsibility to the people whom they rule, renders it extremely difficult to procure the removal of incompetent and the punishment of criminal and corrupt office-bearers. Incompetency may work mischief, corruption and criminality prevail for years before notice of it can be taken by the heads of departments, and even when knowledge of it reaches the chief executive officers they are frequently deterred by personal considerations, or by the influence of others high in favor at court from putting a speedy termination to abuses springing from these sources. But, besides this grave disadvantage attendant upon the autocracy prevalent in Russia, there is another which weakens and endangers the position of the sovereign in his own court. Those who seek place or preferment endeavor to acquire as much influence at court as possible. For this pur-

pose they frequently have recourse to unworthy favorites, to be found unfortunately in almost every court of Europe. Between these favorites rivalry of the bitterest nature often exists, so that if the sovereign meet the wishes of one, he is almost certain to displease another, and thereby increase the lasting enmity of persons immediately about him in a position to weaken his authority and sometimes to put his life in jeopardy. No one, for instance, who has read the narratives of recent conspiracies against the lives of Russian sovereigns can doubt that many of those engaged in these nefarious plots hold positions of trust around the throne itself. Indeed, this deplorable state of affairs is not new in Russia. It has prevailed since the days of Peter the Great himself.

Another point in connection with the distribution of patronage in Russia is worthy of notice. To obtain the support of court favorites, candidates for office are obliged to resort to bribery. These favorites are frequently the recipients of large sums of money from office seekers who, when they obtain place, compensate themselves by exactions from the people. Thus the latter are made the victims of corruption in the court and rapacity amongst office holders.

Another cause of the weakness of Russia at home is the cruel and repressive policy pursued by its government to the people of such of its dominions as have been acquired by conquest. The people of all such portions of the empire, notably Poland, are treated with a rigor and barbarity that make the very name of Russia odious. The consequence is that the forced annexation to its dominions of such states not only adds nothing to the strength but materially increases the weakness of Russia at home. But the most prominent among the causes which have brought the empire of the Czar to its present sad state of anarchy is the powerlessness for good of the Russian state church. This institution is a mere political engine of which the sovereign himself enjoys full control. Its places of high trust and emolument are generally given to men of personal or family influence at court, without regard to other qualifications such as piety, learning, self-denial and the like—while posts of lesser rank and importance are filled by men remarkable only for ignorance and neglect in all things but the exaction of their title. It is a well known fact that when the ministers of any religion fall into public contempt, the religious system of which they are the exponents, soon also, comes to share that contempt. In Russia there is no difference in this regard from other countries. The people do not require the clergy, and will not permit them, wherever they can prevent it, to become mere political agents, to the detriment of their usefulness and influence as ministers of religion. But in Russia the relations between church and state are so closely interwoven, that the former absolutely depends on the latter for support and existence. The Russian state church, helpless and effete, could not in fact survive a day the destruction of the absolute monarchy of the Czars. The church in Russia has no influence or control over the masses of the people, who feel no beneficent results from the ministry of its priests. It is therefore a source of weakness and danger to the State, not a bulwark of defense in the hour of trial and peril. Altogether the outlook in Russia is one far from reassuring in the interests of peace and order.

A NEW CATHOLIC JOURNAL.

The Celtic World, a Journal ably edited and devoted to the interests of Catholicity and of the Irish race, is published in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn. A paper with such excellent promise and so honestly devoted to the interests of our coreligionists in America, should meet with support at the hands of our people especially in the state of Minnesota. We heartily wish the Celtic World a long career of usefulness.

The Ninth Battalion Voltigeurs de Quebec is about being disbanded and re-organized under other officers.

MORMONISM AND DIVORCE.

The threatened crusade against Mormonism in the United States cannot meet with the speedy and entire success it merits on account of the barbarous abuses legalized under the system of divorce prevailing throughout the union. In the New England States particularly the abuses attendant upon or resulting from divorce are so enormous as to strike all thinking men with the necessity of its abolition. Until, in fact, it is abolished there can be no real solid social progress in the republic. When it is known that in certain portions of the Union divorces are for marriages as 1 to 8, in others as 1 to 10, and everywhere alarmingly frequent, it must be evident that there is amongst our neighbors a moral delinquency of the very gravest character, and that the marriage contract is looked upon as one of mere convenience to be violated and set at naught whenever it pleases either one or both of the parties thereto. The facility with which divorces are attained everywhere throughout the republic places a premium on conjugal infidelity and thereby menaces the security of families, the peace, order, and good will so necessary among fellow-citizens. If crime prevails to an appalling extent throughout America, if every day adds its quota to the harvest of horror, sorrow and infamy which the year reaps, divorce is the principal cause. It robs homes of content, hearts of peace and love, tears wife from husband, mother from child, degrades man, unsexes woman, fills prisons and asylums, bestrews the purlieus of great cities with the wrecks of manly virtue, womanly dignity and motherly affection. Against an evil so gigantic it is the duty of every good citizen to work with might and main—for unless it be checked and overcome, this monstrous outgrowth of heretical license must bring about the destruction of the republic itself. The sanctity and indissolubility of marriage form the ground-work of national strength and national endurance. Remove these attributes of marriage and you have misery in families, heartlessness in individuals, chaos in states.

The Mormon difficulty is one which must receive immediate attention from the American people, but as we have remarked they cannot enter the fray against this degrading and inhuman system with the same strength and self-reliance as if divorce spread not its dark and loathsome shadow over their fair and blessed domain. If Mormonism be doomed, as we believe it is, divorce should follow it to the grave. Were these stupendous evils removed, marriages christianized and sanctified, family peace secured and perpetuated, the virtue of woman protected, and the fidelity of man ensured, the American republic might in every sense of the term be called the seat of happiness and the home of virtue.

GENUINE LIBERALITY.

We are always pleased to notice and hold up for commendation the course of a public man, no matter what his political views, who seeks to do justice to his fellow-citizens of every class and creed. At this time, especially when open as well as insidious attacks are being made on the Catholic Schools of this Province, which experience has proved to be a source of strength, not of weakness, to the educational system of Ontario, it is pleasing indeed to note the action of Mr. Meredith, member for this city, in the committee of the whole House on Friday last, on the bill respecting payments to be made under the municipal loan fund settlement. The hon. gentleman suggested "that in cases where an appropriation was granted from the fund for a certain purpose, the municipality should not be allowed to devote it to another purpose without a fresh application to the government. This would prevent the injustice done to the Separate School supporters, as in a case he had referred to previously. He thought, too, that when money was appropriated for common school purposes in a municipality in which there is no separate school, the separate school proportions should go to the separate school in the adjoining municipality, which might be used by the Roman Catholics of the first mentioned place. For instance, in London East there was no separate school, and the Roman Catholic children were sent to the separate school in London. He thought that the proportion for separate schools in London East should go towards supporting the School in London."

Mr. Meredith's representations had the effect of securing from the Provincial Treasurer a promise that he would consider the points raised. Mr. Wood will, we make no doubt, see that the suggestions of the leader

of the opposition are made to take tangible form in the bill. We may add that the member for London, on the occasion referred to, having made himself the exponent of that growing spirit of kindness and liberality so essential to our national progress, deserves the warmest commendation of men of all classes and parties.

HIGHLY CREDITABLE.

We are glad to learn that already \$14,000 has been collected in the diocese of Kingston in liquidation of the Diocesan debt, the Catholics of the "Limestone City" itself contributing more than \$4,000 of this amount. The remainder of the sum required to wipe out the debt entirely, will, we have every reason to believe, be shortly raised. The diocese of Kingston, the mother see of Ontario, may then enter free and untrammelled on a career of progress worthy its historic past. The collection in so short a time of the large amount mentioned speaks in terms most emphatic of the zeal of the generous, self-sacrificing and devoted priests of Kingston, and the liberality of the laity of that diocese. The clergy of Kingston have never been in the back ground in any work of religion, particularly when appealed to by their chief pastor. The success which has rewarded Dr. Cleary's first appeal to his clergy and people augurs well for his administration, which will, we have no doubt, redound not only to his own credit, but to the lasting benefit of the whole diocese. The action of the clergy and people of the diocese of Kingston in response so nobly, with such generous unanimity, to this first appeal of their venerated bishop, is highly creditable to themselves and to the whole Catholic body of Ontario. It is only by such a thorough union between the bishop, clergy and laity as Kingston thus presents in a work of Catholic zeal and charity that our holy religion can gain ground in this country. An example has now been set the whole Dominion, an example we are safe in assuming, from what we know of the Catholic body in Canada, sure to be followed whenever and wherever the interests of religion demand it.

OUR CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. Merrick, member in the Legislature of Ontario for the North Riding of Leeds and Grenville, is evidently troubled concerning the state aid granted to our charitable institutions. On the 9th inst. he inquired if it is the intention of the government (1) to rearrange the distribution of the fund set aside for hospitals and charities, or (2) provide for a more general distribution of said fund. The Treasurer having replied in the negative to both questions, Mr. Merrick gave notice of a motion for Monday, the 13th, for a "return showing the sums paid to each of the hospitals and charities in this Province in each year since Confederation, showing the total sum paid to each separate institution, and the population of the locality in which such institutions are situated." Mr. Merrick is, as every earnest "Grand Master" of the Orange body should be, dreadfully afflicted with a distemper which we may term papaphobia. A glance at the public accounts convinces him that Popish institutions are getting too much of government assistance. He then at once gets up his joins and rushes into the fray on behalf of Protestantism. Brave man! chivalric representative! who can make war on the orphan, the aged, the crippled and the abandoned. Noble association! Amiable Christian society! that can applaud such valiant action in a people's representative. The member for Leeds designs by the return for which he moved to make it appear that Catholics receive more than their due share of moneys voted by Parliament to hospitals and charities. It is indeed true that the Catholic people of Ontario have more of such institutions under the control of their church authorities than any other religious body in Ontario. But are they for this to blame? Is their zeal and generosity in assuaging every form of human affliction to be made a matter of reproach to them? Are the doers of good, be they Catholic or Protestant, to be deprived, in this free country, simply on account of their religious belief, of Government assistance in their efforts to relieve distress, remove affliction and ameliorate the condition of society? Every honest man, every patriotic son of Canada will answer these questions with an indignant negative. If Mr. Merrick takes the trouble to compare the amount given by Government to Catholic charities and that con-

tributed by the Catholic people themselves to these institutions he will see, unless purlined with prejudice, as we fear he is, that it is not by government aid these good works subsist, but by the generosity and devotedness of the Catholic people, aided by the kind co-operation of enlightened and large-hearted Protestants. His course on this subject is not that of an honorable man, it reflects no credit on the constituency he represents or on the legislature of which he is a member.

LECTURE.

We have much pleasure in informing our readers that His Lordship Bishop Walsh has at the request of the Irish Benevolent Society of this city consented to deliver a lecture in the Grand Opera House on Thursday, Feb. 23, bearing the title of "The Rome of Augustus Cæsar." His Lordship could not have chosen a subject more interesting, either from an historical, ethical or literary point of view. The scholarly attainments and oratorical gifts of Dr. Walsh are so well known that we need not promise our patrons what they all expect, one of the rarest intellectual treats ever offered the people of the city of London.

PARLIAMENTARY SUMMARY.

The fourth Session of the fourth Parliament of Canada was opened with much pomp and ceremony at Ottawa on the 10th inst. There was a large attendance of Senators and Commons and a vast concourse of people present. His Excellency's speech, which he read clearly and distinctly in the English and French languages, was much longer than is usual with such productions. The speech begins with a reference to the prosperous condition of the country, the plentiful harvest and remunerative prices enjoyed by the farmers—the development of manufacturing and other industries—the increase in trade and commerce and the prevalence of peace and order. Then follows a kindly and sympathetic allusion to the assassination of General Garfield. Speaking of his tour in the North West, His Excellency says:

"During the recess I had the pleasure of visiting the Province of Manitoba and of traversing the extensive prairies of the North West, and, from personal examination, can sincerely congratulate Canada on the possession of so magnificent and fertile a region, to be inhabited, I trust, in the course of years, by millions of thriving and contented subjects of Her Majesty. The immigrants have not confined themselves to Manitoba or its vicinity, but are scattered over the country westward to the base of the Rocky Mountains, and from the international boundary to the banks of the Northern Saskatchewan."

In view of the rapid settlement of the country the Governor General declared it the purpose of his advisers to invite the attention of Parliament to a measure providing for the division of the North West Territories into four or more provisional districts. He informed Parliament that during his visit to these territories he was met by several bands of Indians who expressed satisfaction with their treatment, but are likely long to remain a burden on the government, it being extremely difficult to induce the aboriginal population to abandon its nomadic and become self-supporting, by following the pursuits of civilized men. The rapid progress of settlement rendering the danger of collision between the whites and Indians more imminent, His Excellency declares an augmentation of the Mounted Police force necessary.

Besides measures relating to Civil Service and the readjustment of the representation in the House of Commons, the Governor General promises that the attention of Parliament will be drawn to bills for the winding up of insolvent banks, insurance companies, and trading corporations; and for the consolidation and amendment of the laws respecting the Dominion lands; for the amendment of the Acts relating to the Supreme Court of Canada; and Bills relating to the tenure of office of the Judges of the County Courts, and to fugitive offenders within the empire; and to the present anomalous position of the Vice-admiralty jurisdiction. On railway matters His Excellency is more diffuse. "The work of construction on that portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway between Prince Arthur's Landing and Winnipeg is being pressed to completion, and it is confidently expected that in July next railway communication will be established between these places. The section between Rat Portage and Winnipeg, one hundred and thirty-five miles in length, has been completed, and transferred under the terms of the contract to the Canada Pacific Railway Company, by whom it is now operated. Considerable progress has been made on the Eastern Section, commencing at Callander Station, and the vigorous prosecution of the work on that portion of the line during the present year provided for. In British Columbia, the work upon the section between Savona Ferry and Emory Bar is being carried on with every prospect of its completion within the time specified in the contract, and the line from the latter place to Port Moody, which has been carefully located during the past season, is now being placed under contract with a view to its completion at the same date as the section from Savona Ferry to Emory Bar. Upon the sections to be constructed by the Railway Company, the work has been most energetically carried forward. During the past summer the road has been graded for the distance of two hundred and eighteen miles and of the one hundred and sixty-one miles are completed and open for traffic. The company have in addition graded eighty-nine miles of branch lines. I am pleased to be able to state that the traffic on the Intercolonial Railway has largely increased, and that this line was, during the last fiscal year, for the first time in its history, worked without expense to the country."

After alluding to the opening of the new portion of the Welland canal between Allanburg and Port Dalhousie, the establishment of monthly communication with Brazil and inviting earnest consideration to the report of the Commission of factory labor, His Excellency addressing the members of the House of Commons said:

"The accounts of the last year will be laid before you. It will be satisfactory to you to find that the expenditure has been less and the revenue considerably more than the estimates of last year, leaving a surplus of over four millions of dollars. A portion of this sum has been used in the reduction of public debt by the redemption of matured debentures bearing six per cent. interest and the remainder applied to the payment for public works chargeable to capital account. The necessity of issuing the debenture loan, authorized by Parliament for those purposes has therefore been obviated."

The Estimates of the ensuing year will also be submitted, and will, I trust, be found to have been framed with due regard to economy and the efficiency of the public service."

Immediately after the delivery of the governor's speech the faithful Commons returned to their own Chamber, when the speaker having taken the chair several new members were introduced and warmly received by the House. The utmost good feeling prevailed on all sides, which will be, we hope, maintained throughout the Session.

On Friday, the 10th, the House took the speech from the Throne into consideration. The address in reply was moved by Mr. Bergeron, member for Beauharnois, who spoke in French, following closely the various matters referred to in His Excellency's speech and eulogizing the administration of the day. Mr. Guillet, the new member for West Northumberland, seconded the motion and dwelt at length on the benefit of the national policy, of which he is an advocate. Mr. Guillet made a very favorable impression on the House, showing more self-possession than is usual with members in their maiden speeches. At the conclusion of his speech Mr. Blake rose and was warmly received. He complimented the mover and second of the address and expressed satisfaction at the increased prosperity of the country which, however, he held to be due to abundant harvests more than to the successful administration of the government. He reviewed the Indian policy of the Ministry and considered it likely to prove burdensome. He deplored the omission of reference in the governor's speech to the boundary question, and rallied the government on their Pacific railway policy, which he claimed was devised in the interest of the Syndicate, and to the disadvantage of the country, verifying all that the opposition had maintained last year in discussing the railway bargain with that company. Mr. B. held, in alluding to the paragraph on trade and commerce, that Canada should have the right of making its own commercial treaties with foreign nations, and strongly condemned the Finance Minister's circular to the banks as a breach of business privacy, and also his declaration at an election meeting of his intention to remove the duties from tea and coffee. He concluded with a touching reference to the late President Garfield.

Sir John A. Macdonald replied at some length to Mr. Blake. He claimed credit for the government for the prosperous condition of the country, defended his Indian policy, and predicted the completion of the Pacific Railway within five years, half the time agreed upon. He declared that the land policy of the government would continue to favor the settler and discourage speculation. Sir John believed that the extradition treaty should be extended, but could not agree with Mr. Blake as to the necessity of securing for Canada commercial independence from the Mother country. The Premier also briefly but feelingly alluded to President Garfield's death, and took his seat amid the plaudits of his friends. The address was then carried and the house adjourned, the debate on the address being the shortest of the kind in our Parliament—very annals.

A BELL WITH A HISTORY.

A few days ago Menely & Co., of West Troy, N. Y., received from Rollo Bay, P. E. I., an old bell to be recast, the history of which, as given by the Rev. E. Walker, parish priest, is as follows:

Something more than 150 years ago the bell I sent to you to be recast pealed forth its silvery sound from the steeple of one of the Catholic churches erected on the American continent, and called to prayers the devout inhabitants of an Acadian village on the shores of St. Peter's bay in this island. When the English soldiers drove off the settlers and destroyed the village and the historic Grand Pre this bell was buried in the debris until 1870, when a farmer who was ploughing his field on the site of the old Acadian village struck the bell with his plough, and it was unearthed to the delight of the people. The parishioners of Rollo Bay, who are the descendants of those early French settlers at St. Peter's, got possession of the bell, and wish now to have it recast (it being cracked) and properly hung in the tower of their parish church.

The inscription upon the bell is as follows: "Jesu—Marie—Joseph—P. Cosse ma faite, Michelin 1733. I. H. S." and a large and a small cross.

Wedding.—The *Sarnia Observer* says:—"On Tuesday last, Miss Mary Gleeson, daughter of our respected townsman, T. Gleeson Esq., was married to Mr. James Wilson, of London, at the R. C. Church here, Rev. Father Bayard officiating. The wedding was an unusually quiet one, the early hour at which the ceremony was performed—8 a.m., preventing many from witnessing it who would otherwise have attended. The bride was attended by her sister, Miss Kate Gleeson, and Mr. P. D. Mulken, barrister, of London, accompanied the bridegroom. After the ceremony a wedding breakfast was partaken of at the residence of the bride's father. The newly-wedded couple left shortly after by morning train on the Grand Trunk for New York. The wedding presents were numerous and appropriate, and the best wishes of a large circle of friends and acquaintances accompany the bride to her new home."

God is full of bounty, particularly to those who invoke Him. The voice of our sins is not heard where the blood of Christ cries out for mercy.