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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 31, 1862.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE Federal victory of Somerset, about which so much was said and sung, is by this time reduced to very moderate dimensions. The Federalists, with much superior forces, after a hard fight, repelled an attack made upon them by General Zollicoffer, who was killed and whose troops were subsequently compelled to retreat with considerable loss in men and *materiel*. The Northerners also suffered greatly; and though a considerable time has elapsed since their victory, they do not seem to have been able as yet to turn it to any account, or to have attempted even to follow up their success—which they wou'd have done, if the first accounts published had contained any approximation to the truth. Both parties seem to have fought well, and the Confederates only yielded at last to greatly superior numbers.

The Burnside expedition, from which such great things were anticipated, has hitherto met with no distinguished success. The vessels of which it was composed encountered very heavy weather, and many of them, in consequence, were lost, together with large quantities of arms and ammunition. Their destination was Pimlico Sound, on the coast of North Carolina; a landing had been effected, and we suppose that an advance into the interior will not be long delayed.

The tidings of the release of Messrs. Slidell and Mason had been received in England with great joy; but Mr. Seward's despatch was not altogether so acceptable, and will probably furnish abundant matter for diplomatic controversy, though none, we hope, for hostile discussion.—The ground taken by Great Britain, in demanding the release of the prisoners, was this—That the *Trent*, from which they were seized, was engaged in an "innocent" voyage—as sailing from one neutral, to another neutral port; and therefore at liberty to carry whom or what her captain pleased, without becoming thereby liable to seizure upon the pretence of a violation of neutrality as carrying contraband of war. The position occupied by Great Britain on the question is one which she has distinctly recognised, as against herself, in the case of the *Hendric* and *Alida* in 1777—and amounts to this: That the cargo of a neutral ship, sailing from one neutral port, to another neutral port, cannot in any sense of the word be "contraband of war." Thus have British Admiralty Courts adjudicated, against the claims of British captors of neutral ships, and in favor of foreign Powers, during the war of American Independence.

Mr. Seward, on the other hand, in his despatch contends for the right of belligerents to capture neutrals on the high seas, even when bound from one neutral, to another neutral port, upon the plea of "contraband of war;" and if he released the gentlemen captured by Captain Wilkes, it was not upon the grounds that the *Trent* was pursuing an innocent voyage, and had a right to carry them from Havannah to St. Thomas; but on account of the manner in which the arrest was made, and because Captain Wilkes did not bring the *Trent* into port to be tried and condemned as a good and lawful prize. Here then is a great and important difference of opinion. Great Britain contends that neutrals have the right to carry whom and what they please from one neutral, to another neutral port, without molestation upon the high seas, from belligerents. The Cabinet of Washington denies this right; and we suppose much ink will be shed, and much red tape expended, before a mutually satisfactory agreement shall have been arrived at.

A correspondent writes to us from Quebec complaining of the omission of the name of the late lamented Father MacMahon, from a catcepenny book entitled "*Celebrated Canadians.*" That the deceased Pastor of the Irish Catholics of Quebec deserves a place amongst the "celebrities" of Canada, will be denied by none who deem that the highest civic and Christian virtues entitle their possessor to honorable posthumous mention; but when we consider how epemeral or flimsy must be the reputation or honor conferred by mention in such a work as that issued by Mr. Morgan, the friends of the late Reverend Mr. M'Mahon have really very little cause to regret the omission of his name from the book in question.

WELL DONE KINGSTON.—The Catholics of Kingston are foremost in every good work. First to hold a meeting for the relief of their famine stricken brethren; they have been the first to send material aid to Ireland in her distress—as will be seen from the annexed letter of D. Macarow, Esq., Secretary to the Committee. If we say the Catholics of Kingston, we by no means intend to claim for them the exclusive credit of the good work, for Protestants also have generously and most liberally contributed towards it. The Kingston collection alone, amounts already to the splendid sum of near Two Thousand dollars; and from the other parishes of the Diocess we may expect a similar enthusiasm, and similar results. All honor to Kingston, its zealous Bishop, and its warm-hearted citizens.

To the Editor of the True Witness.

SIR,—I have a most pleasing duty to perform in communicating the generous liberality of the people of Kingston in behalf of the starving poor of Ireland. The appeal of our beloved Bishop has been most generously responded to; and His Lordship has a right to congratulate himself, on the eminent success of his charitable exertions, to alleviate the sufferings of our countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic. The Catholics of this city have behaved nobly; every member of the Congregation contributing liberally and according to his means.

At the first meeting of the Committee, composed of some eighteen members, the handsome sum of seven hundred dollars was immediately subscribed by them—one mercantile firm in the city, subscribing one hundred and seventy dollars. The sub-Committee appointed to canvass the several Wards, have not yet reported, but are zealously at work, and expect to realise a considerable sum.

In reply to a circular addressed to some of our prominent citizens, one Protestant gentleman generously enclosed his check for one hundred dollars, accompanied with strong expressions of sympathy. As it is contemplated to publish the names of the several contributors to the Irish Famine Relief Fund in full, it is unnecessary at present to send you individual names.

On last Sunday, pursuant to the resolution of the Venerable Vicar-General M'Donell, published in your last, a collection was taken up at the Cathedral door, and the munificent sum of Six hundred and eighty-six dollars was received. His Lordship has this day forwarded to His Grace, the Archbishop of Tuam, a Bill of Exchange for Two hundred pounds sterling, and a similar sum will be forwarded by the next Steamer.—This from the city of Kingston alone! It is to be hoped that the other districts of the Diocese will respond with equal generosity to the eloquent and able circular of His Lordship, published in the last issue of the TRUE WITNESS.

As no time is to be lost, the matter should be taken up with promptitude and despatch in every section of the Province; in order to show to the world, that if the sufferings of our countrymen are unheard and unheeded by the Government at home, we in Canada love and cherish the memory of our native land, and truly sympathise with her in her affliction. Let us shew that "The lion of the fold of Judah" has not appealed to the charity of the civilized world in vain; and that, though British statesmen may sneer at Irish starvation, we in far off Canada have hearts to feel, and means to contribute towards the relief of our famishing countrymen.

The gratitude of all Irishmen is justly due to Mr. Devlin of your City, for his very able and eloquent letter on this subject. He was the first to call public attention to the matter; and on behalf of the Catholics of this city, I return him our grateful thanks for so doing.

D. MACAROW,
Secretary.

Kingston, 27th January, 1862.

IRISH FAMINE RELIEF FUND.—A meeting of the gentlemen of the several Ward Committees appointed on the evening of the 20th inst., was held on Friday last. The sum of $1,050 was handed in, though returns from all the Wards were not forthcoming; and there is every reason to believe that a very handsome amount will yet be collected in the City of Montreal.

On Sunday last it was also announced from the pulpits of the several churches that a collection would be taken up on the following Sunday, the 2nd prox., for the relief of the sufferers by the famine. This will complete the good work; and the result will be that the City of Montreal will be able to forward to His Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, a sum exceeding Three Thousand dollars.

MEETING AT PERTH.

At a meeting of the Catholics of Perth, held on Sunday the 26th inst., convened by the Very Rev. J. H. M'Donough, V. G., for the purpose of devising means to contribute timely relief to the sufferings of the starving poor of Ireland, the Chair was taken by the Vicar-General, and Mr. William Walsh was requested to act as Secretary.

The Vicar-General explained the object of the meeting. He said that the British Government, pretending to be deceived by the lying reports of Sir Robert Peel, were at present pursuing the same fatal course by which they had in 1847 murdered the Catholics of Ireland. They seem already gloating in anticipation over the depopulation—(as far at least as the Catholic population is concerned)—of patient and long suffering Ireland. Already the moans of the starving are sweet music to their ears; and soon they hope to be proclaiming once more that the "Irish are gone—gone with a vengence." It would seem indeed as if they had sent Sir Robert Peel to Ireland for no other purpose than to goad the Irish into rebellion. They will do their worst. What then, in view of such a state of things, is our duty as men, as Irishmen, and as Catholics? Manifestly out of the means with which God has blessed us, to endeavour, I will not say to thwart the hellish designs of the government, but to alleviate, if we cannot prevent, or heal the sufferings of our famine stricken brethren in the land of our nativity. Let Sir Robert Peel declaim as he pleases; enough for us that the greatest, the wisest in the land have spoken. The illustrious John Tuam bears witness to the sufferings which, as the ambassador of the God of Charity, he calls upon us to relieve. Fathers of families who listen to me,—you left comfortable homes to come to the house of God this day; the chill blast of winter cannot penetrate your well warmed dwellings; your children are well clothed and well nurtured. To whom are you indebted for such comforts? To God, who now appeals to you in the persons of His suffering little ones. Remember, oh! remember your brethren who are trembling in their mud-hovels without raiment, without food, without even fire. When you look with fond pride on your own happy offspring, forget not the anguish of those fond, those heart-broken parents whose ears are assailed by the famishing cries of their starving little ones. Oh! how happy, could you but relieve but one sufferer, dry up the tears of even one mourner. Give then, give in the name of Jesus, and with whatsoever measure you give, with the same shall it be given to you.

The following Resolutions were then proposed and seconded by the gentlemen present, whose names are attached:—

1. Moved by Mr. Wm. O'Brian, seconded by Mr. John Ryan, and

Resolved,—"That this meeting has learned with sincere regret, through reliable sources, that in many parts of Ireland the people are dying from the effects of cold and hunger; and that while we consider that the British Government are bound to arrest the progress of the famine which threatens the Irish people, their present inaction requires that it should be done by others."

2. Moved by Mr. S. Ferland, seconded by Mr. H. Ryan, and

Resolved,—"That whilst we look upon the appointment of Sir Robert Peel as Chief Secretary of Ireland to be an insult to the Irish people, it becomes still more aggravated by his late report regarding the state of the country, bearing upon the face of it its own conviction of falsehood."

3. Moved by Mr. P. Lenard, seconded by Mr. H. S. Gallagher, and

Resolved,—"That we have the fullest confidence in the truth of the reports of the sufferings presented, and to be found testified to, by Corporate bodies, and individuals in various parts of Ireland."

4. Moved by Mr. John Doran, seconded by Mr. P. M'Gowan, and

Resolved—"That the Government are neglecting their duty to our gracious Sovereign in trifling with the lives of her most faithful Irish subjects."

5. Moved by Mr. G. Northgraves, seconded by Mr. P. Griffin, and

Resolved—"That we deem it our duty, as far as in us lies, to save those who seem condemned by their natural guardians from the horrors of famine which threaten them."

6. Moved by Mr. John M'Eachon, seconded by Mr. John Manion, and

Resolved—"That for this purpose a Committee be formed to receive subscriptions, and that the amount be forwarded, with as little delay as possible, to the Archbishop of Tuam, through the Bishop of the Diocess, Dr. Horan."

——— "Turk, Jew, and Atheist,
May enter here, but not a Papist."

That the spirit of hostility, of blind unreasoning hostility, which the writer of the above hacknied distich intended to satirize, is still the animating spirit of evangelical Protestantism, may easily be gathered from the following announcement, which we find in the columns of the *Montreal Herald*:—

"Prince Albert, like the late Duchess of Kent, King Leopold, and others of their Serene and Royal relatives, was a believer in the Swedenborgian interpretation of the Bible. Neither he nor the Duchess of Kent underwent the ministrations of any clergyman, administration of sacraments, &c., in their last moments, though they both habitually took the communion at Easter. It is said that the Queen has also adopted the peculiar views of religious philosophy propounded by the learned Swede; and it is hinted that the unhoped-for calmness and resignation with which she has hitherto borne up under the irreparable loss she has been called upon to bear, may possibly be due to the consoling character of the convictions thence derived in regard to the nature of the transition that the world calls *death*, and which are usually found to exercise so powerful an influence over the minds of those who become conversant with the works of the author referred to. If such be really the case, and our excellent and beloved Sovereign can find, in the views referred to, any sustaining consolation under the grievous sorrow which has darkened all coming Christmas seasons for the Royal hearth of England, the fact could hardly be regretted by the most orthodox of her Majesty's loyal and affectionate lieges."

Were the Queen, anxious for her salvation, to become a Catholic, and were she to seek consolation in her troubles, not in the disordered fancies of a Swedish visionary, but in the Sacraments of the Church, her Majesty's Protestant lieges would very quickly show their loyalty and their affection, by rebellion, and by driving their Sovereign from her throne. Her conversion to Swedenborgianism is, however—as being merely a transition from one form of religious error to another—an event which the most orthodox, or Calvinistically evangelical, of her subjects can hardly regret, and does not presume to censure, or even criticise.

Many of our Catholic readers may perhaps ask, what is Swedenborgianism? and wherein does it differ from other forms of Protestantism which obtain in England? Swedenborgianism is a Swedish sect of which, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, Emmanuel Swedenborg, an enthusiast rather than a deliberate impostor, was the originator. It differs from the Calvinistic and Lutheran heresies in this chiefly—that it is a strong and earnest protest against that doctrine of "*justification by faith alone,*" which is the peculiar characteristic of these Protestant sects which arrogate to themselves the title of "evangelical." The great aim, or scope of Swedenborg was to denounce, and to overthrow this blasphemous and impious theory of justification. Against it all his batteries were directed, all the artillery of his logic and of his revelations was levelled. He saw visions, and he dreamed dreams. In these, he saw Luther excluded from the realms of bliss, vainly and eternally employed in writing down the words of his well-known formula—"*man is justified by faith alone*;" which words, as fast as they were written down, disappeared, as in the spirit world a lie cannot endure. Melancthon, according to the Swedenborgian visionary, was in a still worse plight; though even for Luther and Melancthon, there are hopes, could they but once see the necessity of joining charity to the faith that justifies. But for Calvin, whom Swedenborg describes as a gross sensualist, there is no redemption; he is cast down into the lowest hells, because of his blasphemous "decrees," and unconditional election. It is thus that Swedenborgianism deals with the idols and saints of evangelical Protestantism.

For the rest, Swedenborgianism asserts man's free will; rejects the doctrine of original sin; denies the Trinity, but preaches the rankest Sabellianism; and admits to a place in the canon of Scripture, the four Gospels, but rejects the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles attributed St. Paul; and gives to the whole a novel and peculiar interpretation, often laughable, but often highly ingenious. Such is a rough outline of the leading features of Swedenborgianism, and the tenets of its disciples—the "*Israel pneumatikos*"—the spiritual Israel, or New Jerusalemites, as they are sometimes called. Now were we to accept the definition of "Protestant" as laid down by some of our Protestant contemporaries, we should be forced to conclude that Swedenborgians were not "Protestants;" because they do not admit the authorised Bible as the word of God, or sole authority in things spiritual; and because, above all, the marked or distinguishing feature of their theology is the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity; and of their anthropology, the denial of justification only by faith, or that man is justified by faith alone. The question, however, whether Swedenborgians are Protestants, is a question we leave to the *Christian Guardian* to settle.

Whether the Queen is a convert to the Swedenborgian heresy, is a question which in like manner we abandon to the *Montreal Herald*, but upon which we will hazard no opinion. The only point to which we attach any importance is this—That evangelical Protestantism is lenient towards every form of religious error, or infidelity, but is severe only against Catholicity and Catholic truth.

EVANGELICAL LOGIC.—It must be confessed that evangelical Protestants are easily satisfied, if they are satisfied with the subjoined refutation of the "*Essays and Reviews*" by a Reverend W. Burgon; of whose sermons in proof of the Inspiration of the authorised version of the Bible, the Protestant press speaks in terms of the highest commendation. Whether the champion of orthodoxy is entitled to the extravagant praises awarded to him by his admirerers, or whether his logic is of the highest order, are questions which the following extract, published by the press as a specimen of his style, would not seem to authorise us to answer in the affirmative. We copy from the Quebec *Gazette*:—

"The Bible, be persuaded, is the very utterance of the Eternal, as much God's Word, as if high Heaven were open, and we heard God speaking to us with human voice. * * * The Bible, from the Alpha to the Omega of it, is filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit of God; the books of it, and sentences of it, and the words of it, and the syllables of it,—aye, and the very letters of it. *Nihil in Scripturis est otiosum* (said the great Casaubon) '*non dictio, non dictionis forma, non syllaba, non titesa*' Therefore *this* day's sermon has had for its object to remind you that the *Bible* is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the Throne! Every book of it, chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, (where are we to stop?) every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High! 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, well spake the *Holy Ghost*, by the mouth of the blessed men who wrote it. The Bible is none other than *The Word of God*: not some part of it more, some part of it less; but all alike the utterance of Him who sitteth upon the Throne; absolute—faultless—unerring,—supreme."

This is "tall talking" no doubt, as our Yankee friends say; and if bold assertion, without argument, or a shadow of argument, were sufficient to produce conviction, it would be entitled to the high encomiums lavished upon it. But there are some people, so peculiarly constituted, as to ask for proof; whilst others again cannot but feel that many of the propositions laid down by the Rev. Mr. Burgon, "Fellow of Oriel College and Select Preacher" are so manifestly untenable, not to say false, as to confirm, rather than to shake, the doubts created by the reverend authors of the "*Essays and Reviews.* It is certain, for instance, that the vowel points of the Hebrew text, upon which the accuracy of the English version, or translation of the Jewish Scriptures, depends, are modern, very modern innovations; and that therefore it is silly, almost blasphemous to claim for them, as does this champion of orthodoxy, a divine origin. Many texts, many passages, and some of the highest doctrinal importance, are even by Anglican divines treated as of doubtful authority, and as if they were interpolations—*e.g.*—the famous text of the three heavenly witnesses; and even the most extravagant champion of the Bible will hardly dare assert that the English translators of the Scriptures were divinely inspired, or preserved from the possibility of error. And yet, seeing that to the great majority of the people, the Bible is only accessible under the form of a translation—unless inspiration and infallibility can be predicated of the translators, the plenary inspiration of the original text can be of little or no value.

As an instance we may cite the mistranslation of ii. Tim. iii. 16, in which the Rev. Mr. Bargon, following the text of the Bible as set forth by Act of Parliament, indulges. "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" This we know to be false; for though it is impossible for any one, by the light of reason to assure himself of the inspiration of any Scripture or writing, yet natural reason is sufficient to assure us that many scriptures are not "inspired of God." The Anglican translation of the text makes the Apostle write nonsense, or rather falsehood; for it is certain that many Scriptures—the Koran, for instance, the Mormon Scriptures, the Hindoo Vedas, to say nothing of the writings of Eugene Sue, of Bunsen, or of the authors of "*Essays and Reviews*"—are not all divinely inspired; and it is, therefore, evident, either that the English version of the text involves a gross mistranslation, or that St. Paul writing to Timothy was not under the inspiration of God. The Catholic translation, which, faithful to the original Greek, merely asserts that, "all scripture divinely inspired—*pasa graphe theopneustos* is profitable *&c.* conveys a meaning to the reader entirely different from that which the Protestant translation is intended to convey; and this change of meaning is cleverly effected by the interpolation of the little word "*is*," which, by the reader unacquainted with the original, is accepted as part of the genuine text. On this simple word of two letters, a whole folio of controversy may be made to depend; and from this we may perceive therefore, how the slightest error on the part of the translator of divinely inspired originals, may totally corrupt and pervert the meaning of the inspired writer.

When, moreover, we bear in mind that the original Hebrew of the Bible was written without vowels; that to the Masoretic points which now supply their place, an antiquity higher than that of the sixth century of our own era cannot be assigned; that to the same series of consonants, written without the Masoretic pointing, the most entirely different translations may be given—as St. Jerome well remarks, showing that the consonants *d. b. r.* according as they are pointed, may be translated either "death" or speech;" and when we bear in mind also that in the absence of vowels, and of vowel points, there remained only the traditions of the Jewish Church whereby to determine the reading of the text of its Scriptures—we must admit—if we be amenable to the laws of logic—that the plenary divine inspiration of the By Act of Parliament Authorised Version of those Scriptures, rests upon a very fragile foundation.

This is to a considerable extent the line of argument adopted by the Rev. Dr. Williams, as defendant in the proceedings instituted against him as one of the Essayists and Reviewers, by the Government Bishop of Salisbury. It is one of the charges against the reverend accused, that he has called in question the predictive, or supernatural element in the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament; and to this the defendant replies, that he has but repeated what other Anglican divines and commentators have said before him, without reproach to their orthodoxy—or in other words, their legal fitness to hold offices of emolument in the Anglican Church Establishment; and that the true meaning of the original Hebrew is—from the peculiar manner in which that language was written—often so obscure, and so ambiguous, that it is impossible to predicate with certainty of any passage, an allusion to the Son of Mary, or a clear prediction with reference to Jesus as the Messiah.

TRACT DISTRIBUTORS.—These men, assuredly, need never ask the Lord to "gie them a gude conceit o' themselves." For self-complacency, or rather for a sublime impudence, verging upon blasphemy, they stand unrivalled. And yet these men are undervalued by profane and worldly persons. A perverse and wicked generation laughs, and sons of Belial poke fun at them as they go to and fro, about the streets; whilst little boys, doomed to perdition, hold them in derision, and utter uncomplimentary speeches against the holy men of whom the world is not worthy.

We have some of these "Tract-distributing" gentry in Montreal; some thirty, it appears, from the proceedings of a "Tea and Gospel Turn-out" lately held in the School room of the Wesleyan Church, presided over by a live Honorable, and of which a report is given by the Montreal *Witness*. These angelic ambassadors go about from door to door, scattering their waste paper with profuse hand, and congratulating themselves that they have found out a far more efficacious mode of diffusing gospel truth, than that which the benighted apostles and their immediate disciples followed. If poked fun at, they console themselves in their tribulations with the reflection that betwixt the sufferings of Our Lord, and the ridicule which their presence and mission provoke from amongst the worldlings, there is a remarkable analogy.

"The distributors must not be discouraged because of insult and derision; what could they expect more, when the Saviour was despised and abused.—*Witness, 18th inst.*

It was a Rev. Mr. Goadby who comforted the much laughed at "*Swaddlers*" with these