

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1861.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

SINCE the fall of Gaeta, and the exile of the King of Naples, there has been a sort of lull in the revolutionary tempest, and in consequence we have no exciting events to relate. Victor Emmanuel has assumed the title of "King of Italy," omitting, with much better taste than we should have expected from such a coarse drunken profligate, the time-honored formula—"By the Grace of God." The Pope still maintains at Rome the attitude of patient heroic endurance, for which even his enemies give him credit. He does not allow himself to be deceived as to the real state of affairs, and he hesitates not to avow his belief in the temporary triumph of the Protestant revolutionary party. He knows that there are many evils in the sanctuary, which must be expiated; that there are Italian priests false to their vows, a disgrace to their Order, the scandal of religion, the opprobrium of humanity, the worthy brethren of Achilli and Gavazzi—Catholics indeed in name, but Protestants at heart and in their acts, whose vices call aloud for vengeance to Him who rained down fire and brimstone upon the Cities of the Plain—and he knows that the infamies of the cloister must be purged by fire. "I know," said the Pope, according to a report in *L'Ami de la Religion*—"that our enemies will come hither. God will permit it on account of the crimes which are committed in the Sanctuary. No doubt there are holy priests in Italy, but you know that there are bad ones also." In illustration of this, the Holy Father alluded to the case of a Religious, who abandoned his Convent to fight on the side of Garibaldi, and who on his return assassinated the Superior of the establishment—and added—"I know that those who thirst for the blood of priests will be able to quench it; they will rush against the Rock on which I am seated, in hopes of destroying it, but after they have cleansed it from its rubbish, it will crush them." For himself the Holy Father fears nothing; him, men cannot harm, though they may slay the body. "If Victor Emmanuel enters Rome," continued the old man, majestic—"I shall seat myself in the Chair of St. Peter, and pronounce the greater excommunication again, and then I shall await my death with calmness from his paternal hand. *Cruz d'cruce*."

The anticipated attack upon the Eternal City is not viewed by Austria with indifference. It is confidently asserted that Prince Metternich has communicated to M. Thouvenel the contents of an official note from Vienna, wherein it is asserted that the Austrian Government will never recognize Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy—that if France withdraws her troops from Rome, their place shall be supplied by an Austrian army—and that if the revolutionists make the least movement either in Venetia or in Hungary, another Austrian army shall cross the Mincio.

The breach betwixt the Catholic Hierarchy and Clergy of France, and Louis Napoleon is becoming daily wider. With undaunted courage the Venerable Bishop of Poitiers has denounced the tyranny of the Emperor, the arch-enemy of the Church; drawing his loathsome features with a master's hand and photographic accuracy, and holding them up to the execration of the faithful as the features of a second Pontius Pilate. The likeness is striking, and the blow struck by the good Pastor has told with admirable effect. The Emperor, and his sycophants are furious; legal proceedings are to be instituted in order to silence the bold-spoken Ministers of Christ, and the journals which have had the audacity to publish the Bishop of Poitiers' Pastoral are, it is said, to be suppressed.—The Bishop of Orleans has also addressed a crushing rejoinder to Louis Napoleon's pamphlet published over the signature of M. La Guéronniere, and already ten of the French Prelates have sent in their adhesion to His Lordship of Orleans. Thus, no longer able to cajole the Church, Louis Napoleon will be obliged to throw off the mask which he has so long worn, and to exhibit himself to the world in his true character of Pontius Pilate.

Financial difficulties are also, we are happy to say, beginning to accumulate round the Imperial throne. The enormous frauds of Mires, in which probably Louis Napoleon was a participant, have excited almost a commercial panic throughout France. The names of many of the

most eminent of the mushroom dignitaries and upstart noblesse with whom he had surrounded himself, and on whom he relied as the props of his dynasty, are also seriously implicated in those frauds. M. Mocquard, the Emperor's private Secretary, has it is said, been arrested, and still more serious and damaging disclosures as to the general corruption and venality of the leading French politicians may daily be expected. Almost are we tempted to believe, as we earnestly hope, that this is the beginning of the end; and that France, whose Clergy are still so sound, and in the breast of whose people the faith still burns so vividly, is about to throw off the yoke of her present anti-Catholic ruler, and to re-assume her rightful place amongst the Powers of Christendom, as the champion of the Church, and the See of Peter.

The public news from Great Britain is devoid of interest. The Government Clergy have met in Convocation, and have been sorely troubled in mind by the notorious "Essays and Reviews." What to do with the work and its authors, the Right Reverend Fathers are at a loss to decide. They promise to consider, and to give the subject their gravest attention. They doubt, they fear, they think, they hope, and are at their wit's ends. They have tried condemnation, and with one voice the Protestants of England, wagging their heads, cry out, "It is not a condemnation of the work that we require, but a refutation; if there be virtue in your wigs, prove that the writers are in error, and we will believe in you." In the meantime its condemnation has but increased the notoriety of the offending work; and the *corpus delicti* thus brought prominently before the public, finds favor in their nostrils, and grows in popularity daily. The circulation of the book is unprecedented, and hardly can the publishers keep pace with the demand.

An interesting marriage trial is occupying much of the public attention in Great Britain and Ireland. It seems that a Catholic lady named Miss Longworth formed an acquaintance with a Major Yelverton, a Protestant, and that at the instigation of the latter, she very imprudently consented to a secret marriage. The matrimonial union was first contracted according to the law of Scotland—which does not require the presence of a Minister, or indeed of any witness—and subsequently was ratified before a Catholic priest in Ireland. But shortly after, this Major Yelverton, who is an unprincipled mercenary scoundrel, got tired of his wife; and attracted by the fortune of another young lady which he hoped would enable him to pay his debts, contracted a second union with the latter. Hereupon his true wife brought her action, which from the extraordinary circumstances of the case, as well as from the social position of the parties,—Major Yelverton being a son of Lord Arvonmore—is exciting no ordinary degree of interest.

There is nothing new from the United States, but nobody seems to believe that the new President, Mr. Lincoln, will be able to do anything in the way of cementing the fragments of the late American Union.

The following letter has been sent to the editor of the *Toronto Freeman*, from His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal:—

MONTREAL, 28th Feb., 1861.

(To the Editor of the *Canadian Freeman*.)

SIR,—Since, in your issue of the 21st instant, you have endeavored to avail yourself of the authority of His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal to establish your allegation that the *True Witness* is a venal journal, His Lordship has instructed me to transmit to you the following particulars, in order that your readers may convince themselves that you have misconceived those passages of His Lordship's letter which you have cited in justification of your accusations against the *True Witness*.

Between ten and eleven years ago, the English-speaking portion of the Catholics of Montreal, through the Rector of St. Patrick's Church, and several of the leading members of the congregation, requested His Lordship to encourage the establishment of a Catholic journal, to be published in the English language, and with the object of defending Catholicity against the attacks of an anti-Catholic journal published in this city.

His Lordship considering that such a journal might powerfully contribute to dissipate the prejudices which it was sought to excite against the Catholic religion, replied to these deputies that he would lend all his influence to assist in carrying out their project, so worthy of the lively faith which always characterizes the children of Catholic Ireland.

Shortly after this interview, His Lordship had a favorable opportunity to put himself in communication with others who might advise with him and assist him in carrying into execution so praiseworthy a design; and betwixt them it was agreed that the project of establishing a new Catholic journal should be encouraged, which journal, for good reasons, should bear the name of the *True Witness*.

When the question arose of giving an Editor to this new journal, the name of Mr. George Clerk, already favorably known for his acquirements and conduct, suggested itself. He undertook the charge of editor, but upon the condition that all religious articles published in the *True Witness* should be subjected to the surveillance and censorship of the Church, since, as he himself said, he felt the necessity of being constantly subject to the control of his Pastors, in order that he might not run the risk of writing anything contrary to the doctrines of the Church. You will thus perceive that the position Mr. Clerk now occupies is not one of his own seeking, and that the editorship of the *True Witness* was not entered into by him as a financial speculation.

Great efforts were made shortly after the estab-

lishment of the *True Witness* to put down this journal, which, with energetic independence, contended for sound principles without respect of persons.

Upon this, the Irish Catholics of Montreal, of Kingston, and other places throughout the Province, fearing that their journal might sink beneath the reiterated blows of many and powerful adversaries intent upon its ruin, clubbed together for its support, with the characteristic generosity of the children of St. Patrick whenever they deem the interests of religion at stake.

Under these circumstances, His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, and the others who had united themselves to him to encourage the project of establishing a Catholic paper, could not certainly remain indifferent. They too, therefore, taxed themselves. It was their duty to do so, and that duty they generously performed.

These facts should suffice to convince you that the *True Witness* is the work of the sound Catholic laity, acting under the patronage of their Pastors, and not that of the Bishops.

You will also please to remark here, Mr. Editor, that it never entered into the idea of any one to purchase Mr. Clerk by the process above indicated. The latter placed his services at the disposal of a Religion which is by its essence unchangeable and without variation in her teaching, and did not hire them to a party which, to maintain its opinions, is obliged to make for itself followers or creatures by the employment of bribes.

You have, therefore, strangely erred in treating as a disreputable means of corruption, that which was simply an honest and liberal assistance given to an honest man, who successfully defends the holy cause which had been entrusted to him; and as venality, that which, on the part of him whom you accuse, is a proof of a disinterested faith.

In so far as His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal is implicated, it is to be remarked that he would be vile indeed, could he have had recourse to corrupt means to purchase a distinguished writer, of whose services he might stand in need to defend the interests of Religion, in case he should not have been able to sustain those interests himself by honorable means. For, in fact, he who purchases a journalist is not more honest than the journalist who sells himself.

His Lordship would also remark that the reproach of being subject to the control of the Church, speaking by her Prelates, is a strange reproach for one professedly a Catholic journalist to bring against a Catholic editor; more especially when, as in the case of the *True Witness* since its origin, it has always been the boast, and the public profession of the editor so reproached, that he was entirely subject to ecclesiastical control, and acknowledged no other master. The editor who faithfully acts up to his public professions cannot under such circumstances be accused of venality, which always implies a violation of faith; and where the *True Witness* has erred, it has erred, not from excess of docility, but because, perhaps, the editor has been more energetic in his language than the Church could always approve.

These considerations are laid before you, in order that you may rectify the error into which you have certainly fallen in attempting to justify yourself before the public, which naturally expected a very different denouement of your polemic with Mr. Clerk. And, indeed, no one could have imagined that you had nothing to allege against the integrity of Mr. Clerk, but a phrase, by you misconceived, of his Bishop, who, be assured, has had no other object than to employ for the benefit of religion, the talents with which Divine Providence has been pleased to bless the editor of the *True Witness*.

His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal desires me, in conclusion, to let you know that if he was your Bishop, he would recommend to you, as well as to Mr. Clerk, greater moderation in your style—for any expressions with which you may reproach the latter as too harsh, are certainly to be found in your columns.

I am, Sir,

Respectfully yours,

J. O. PARR,
Secretary.

RIGHT AND WRONG.—The *Toronto Globe* boasts, and with truth, that the intimate connection of the Italians with the Holy See "has not prevented them becoming very Protestant in their ideas of right and wrong."

We believe this to be the case, and we cannot certainly congratulate the Italians upon the change that has come over them. "Protestant ideas of right and wrong," are not only different from those inculcated both by natural and revealed religion, but are directly opposed thereto.

It is a Protestant idea of "right," that the subjects of Catholic Princes may at pleasure rise up in arms against, and depose their rulers.—*Vide* Lord John Russell's despatches, *passim*.

It is a Protestant idea of "wrong," that it is a monstrous sin for Catholics, subjects of Protestant Princes, to resist the violence, or to attempt to throw off the oppression, of which they are the victims.—*Vide* Protestant press on Ireland, *passim*.

It is a Protestant idea of "right," that Catholic ecclesiastics should, in all things spiritual, be subject to the civil magistrate; should smug *Te Deums* at his order, and exercise their functions in obedience to his behests. It is also a Protestant idea of "wrong"—as shewn by the language and acts of the Puritans of England and Scotland—that, for the civil magistrate in any way to interfere with Protestant Ministers in the exercise of their self-assumed functions, would be a monstrous tyranny, to be resisted by arms if necessary.

It is a Protestant idea of "right," that anti-Catholic Princes are at perfect liberty to exile the Jesuits, and to confiscate the private property of Catholic institutions; but a Catholic Prince who should banish from his realm Protestant Ministers of religion, and seize upon Protestant places

of worship, would be guilty of a foul "wrong."

And to come nearer home, it is a Protestant idea of "right," that Catholic Lower Canada with a population vastly superior to that of Protestant Upper Canada, should have a number of representatives only equal to the latter; but that, if the population of the Protestant section of the Province be in excess, its representation should be increased in proportion.

Finally, it is an essentially Protestant "idea of right and wrong," that no faith should be kept with Catholics; and that it is perfectly just and proper to tax them for the support of Protestant schools, wherein their children are, incited to abjure the faith of their baptism, and to become children of the devil; whilst at the same time, it is also a Protestant idea that it would be a grievous "wrong" to tax Protestants for the support of the Catholic Church or of Catholic schools.—With these peculiar ideas of "right and wrong" a portion of the Italian people, and the rabble of the large cities, seem of late to have become thoroughly imbued.

In further illustration of our meaning, we quote the annexed paragraph from the *Montreal Herald* of Monday, wherein our Protestant cotemporary notices approvingly the persecution of the Catholic Church in Mexico, by the infamous Juarez, and the wholesale destruction of the convents and monasteries by the order of the same tyrant; and yet when Protestants are told that Convent burning is an essential part of their system, a practice which they applaud everywhere, and practise everywhere where they are strong enough to do so with impunity, the canting hypocrites turn up the whites of their eyes to heaven, and pretend that they are grossly wronged.—Thus it is that, at every moment, at every step, we are struck by the fact that Protestants have two sets of weights and measures; that Protestantism not only degrades the intellect, but debases the moral standard. See for instance how coolly the *Herald* speaks of the acts of the anti-Catholic ruffians of Mexico! and judge with what face he could condemn a gang of his own coreligionists for acting in a similar manner towards the Grey Nunnery in Montreal:—

"Mexico.—The news from Mexico is again very important. The Juarez Government has not hesitated to carry out its avowed policy in religious matters. It has put this policy into operation from the very moment of its being peaceably installed in the Capital, and the whole of the numerous convents of that city, which have been resumed by the Government as the property of the State, are being levelled to the ground, and their sites employed for the ordinary purposes of civil life."

What is right in Mexico would be right in Canada. If to set gangs of ruffians to knock down with pickaxes the buildings belonging to the Catholic Religious of one country, be a praiseworthy act, so would it be a praiseworthy act to demolish in a similar manner the Hospital of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Montreal. The Clear-Grits, through their organs, do approve of the process in one case; it is therefore a logical and perfectly legitimate deduction, that they would—if they had it in their power to do so—carry it into execution in another case. Morally, there is no difference betwixt the actual brutalities of a Juarez, and the destruction of the Catholic establishments of Lower Canada, contemplated by the "Protestant Reformers."

"In Protestant communities, the most vicious, the most immoral, are invariably to be found amongst those who have most logically carried out the fundamental principles of Protestantism."

This is the proposition which we have undertaken, in opposition to Mr. McGee, who impugns its truth, and held the *True Witness* up to reprobation through the columns of the anti-Catholic press for having enunciated it—to prove, theologically and historically; engaging ourselves also to show that as used by us, it was a perfectly legitimate argument against a Protestant press impeaching the morals of Catholicity. It must be remembered that we are arguing with one who professes himself a Catholic.

Protestantism is heresy in general. It implies not a particular form of heresy merely, but all possible heresy, and all heresy is mortal sin. This no one can deny, without denying the truth of Catholicity; and it is a self-evident proposition that those communities which have most consistently and logically carried out the principles of mortal sin, must be the most vicious, the most immoral, and the most thoroughly depraved.

Again, Catholicity is from God, and is therefore the system most favorable to virtue and morality. But Protestantism is the contradictory of Catholicity, and must therefore be from the devil. It must, we think, be self-evident, even to so poor a theologian as is Mr. McGee, that communities which have further departed from the system by God Himself established, and have the most consistently followed out a system which has the devil for its author, must be the most vicious and depraved. This will suffice for the theological argument; let us come to the historical proof of our proposition—of which, if true, the converse will also hold true:—

"That in Protestant communities the most virtuous the most moral, are invariably to be found amongst those who have least logically carried out the fundamental principles of Protestantism."

Now it is an indisputable fact that, of all non-

Catholic or Protestant communities, that which has the least logically carried out the principles of the Reformation, or great Apostasy of the XVI century, which has been the least consistent in its Protestantism, and which has therefore the least deviated from the Catholic type, is the Church of England; and we find also that, of all Protestant communities, the members of that denomination, and those of them especially who have the closest adhered to the old Catholic type, are the most virtuous, the most moral, the most exemplary in the discharge of all the natural virtues, and the most amiable in all the relations of life. This shall appear from this one simple fact—That, of all Protestant communities, the Church of England—to its credit be it said—alone upholds the theory of the indissolubility of marriage—upon which depends the happiness of the family, and the morality of society. As towards the decadence of the Roman Empire the multiplication of divorces attracted the attention, and provoked the complaints of the heathen moralists, so, to-day, there is no more certain sign of the moral degeneracy of a community than that which is presented by its divorce laws. Where divorce is legally permitted, facilitated or encouraged, there we may be confident that the very basis of morality is sapped, and the social superstructure in danger of falling. But the tendency of Protestantism, with the exception of the Church of England, is to substitute legalized concubinage for Christian marriage, of which the essence is its indissolubility.

Leaving the Church of England, and entering upon the next stage of Protestant development, we at once find ourselves amongst beings of a lower order in the social, moral, and intellectual scale. We get into what we may call the Red Brick Meeting-House class, and we detect at once a most unsavory odor. All our senses are offended, and disagreeably affected by the change from the society of the educated refined Anglicans, to that of the worshippers in the "Ebenezer," or the "Little Bethel;" by the transition from the grandeur of the Anglican translation of the Romish Liturgy—whose solemn cadences fall upon the ear like strains of exquisite music—to the nasal psalmody of the conventicle, and the stentorian platitudes of a Boanerges Spurgeon. The moral atmosphere we now breathe is heavy, tainted and corrupt. We have got amongst the class which furnishes us with the pious swindlers, and evangelical bankrupts—that class which, according to the *London Times*, has swelled the criminal returns by an increase of twelve per cent.; and which is almost as notorious for its hatred of Popery, as for its disregard of honesty in business.

Descending lower still in the scale, we find ourselves amongst what we may term the *molluscs* and *zoophytes* of the Protestant fauna; amongst creatures in which traces of Christian organism are almost imperceptible—as amongst the Mormons, and other kindred sects; and just in proportion as these have deviated from the Catholic type, so also do we find vice and immorality to prevail amongst their members.—Scotland, for instance, is more intensely Protestant than is England, and has carried out more consistently than has the latter, the principles of the Reformation. Accordingly, we find in Scotland a state of morals at which the heathen would have blushed. By the last returns of the Registrar-General for Scotland, published in the *London Times*, it would appear that in some parts of the North Eastern districts of Scotland, as at Aberdeen, the illegitimate births are to the legitimate, as one to five—or in other words, that one mother in every six is a harlot. These are facts for which the Registrar-General of Scotland, and not the *True Witness*, is responsible.

Look again at Sweden, where the principles of the Protestant Reformation have been still better carried out; and what, upon Protestant testimony, is the moral condition of Protestant Sweden?

"It is a singular and embarrassing fact," says the Protestant writer Laiting, "that the Swedish nation . . . having schools and universities in a fair proportion, and a powerful and complete church establishment, undisturbed in its labors by sect or schism, is, notwithstanding, in a more demoralized state than any other nation in Europe—more demoralized even than any equal portion of the dense manufacturing population of Great Britain"—*Laiting's Tour in Sweden*.

From statistics cited by the same Protestant writer, it would appear, that one in every hundred and thirty-four of the population of Sweden was a convicted criminal—the most common crimes being "child murder, poisoning and bestiality;" that in all Sweden the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate births was as one to four-teen, and in Stockholm, as one to one and a-half—thus shewing that Sweden is more immoral than even the most Protestant districts of Scotland.

We might well pause here, and boast that we had fully maintained our thesis; but we will instance another, and still more striking proof of its truth.

In no age, by no people, have the fundamental principles of Protestantism been so fully, logically, and consistently carried out to their final consequences, as during the last decade of the eight-