

The True Witness.

AND
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUG. 27, 1869.

ECOLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

AUGUST—1869

Friday, 27—St. Joseph Calascancius, O.
Saturday, 28—St. Augustus, B. D.
Sunday, 29—Fifteenth after Pentecost.
Monday, 30—St. Rosa of Lima, V.
Tuesday, 31—St. Raymond Nonatus, O.

SEPTEMBER—1869

Wednesday, 1—Beheading of St. John, Baptist.
Thursday, 2—St. Stephen, O.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The English Government has, it appears countermanded the order of an ironclad to Cuba to enquire into the matter of the detention of British vessels by the Cuban authorities. The crops throughout all parts of England promise well, and with the exception of wheat, an average yield is anticipated.

The *Morning Standard* in an editorial on Canadian matters, says: "There are probabilities of a change in the relations between Canada and Great Britain which would be distasteful to a majority of the inhabitants of the Dominion if they were consulted. If there is any dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs it is only by feelings that we can safely make intelligible to those south of the frontier. All that can possibly be done under the existing Government is to repudiate the notion that a withdrawal of the troops implies a desire to shuffle out of the responsibilities cast on Great Britain, by the presence of a flag in a Colonial territory, which means military administration. England is now in the hands of those who fail to appreciate the Canadian question."

An Imperial decree has been published in the *Journal* appointing Lebœuf Minister of War instead of Marshal Niel lately deceased. The French officials have arrested five more Carlist Chiefs on the Spanish frontier, thereby showing the determination of the French Government to enforce neutrality. It is asserted on reliable authority at Madrid that the preliminaries of a Treaty for the cession of Cuba to the United States have been signed.

Well, The Irish Church Disestablishment Bill is at last the law of the land; and in its worst form, Protestant Ascendancy has been thereby abolished. Much still remains to be done before religious equality be established in Ireland. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill must be repealed; and it must be left as free to the Catholic Bishop to assume and use the territorial title of Diocese, as to the Protestant minister of the sect in communion with the Established Church of England. If the State permit the assumption of such titles by the one, and recognise their use, it must deal in the same manner with the other. Even the religious question of Ireland is not yet disposed of.

And the great question, that is to say the Land Question, is as far from a solution as ever. Mr. Gladstone, it appears, is bent upon grappling with this great question at an early season; that he will do so successfully, that is to say, so as to satisfy the expectations of the Irish non-land owners, without revolutionising the social system of the Empire, is very doubtful.

For underlying the question is the question—To whom does the land belong? Is the claim of the so-called landlord, that the land is his, a usurpation, a theft? or is it a legitimate claim? Or is the theory that the land belongs, not to the individual landlords, but to the State or community, the true theory? In a word, the issue lies betwixt Individualism, and Communism.

Every loyal British subject must hope that Mr. Gladstone may find some means of solving this momentous problem—problem the most important that ever statesman was called upon to deal with. Should he succeed in conciliating Ireland his services as a statesman will surpass those of a Chatham or a Pitt.

The great difference betwixt the Church question and the Land question, that which makes the settlement of the first so easy in comparison with the settlement of the latter is to be found in this: That to settle the first the State had but to undo its own work, to repeal its own laws, to pull down its own creation. But in the

settlement of the Irish Land question, the operation is the reverse. The thing to be done is to create, to build up a new social system, and it is far easier to destroy, than to create.

The grievances of the Irish tenant proceed rather from the want of a law, than from the operation of any positive law on the Statute Book, whose repeal would suffice to redress the evil complained of. The sin of the legislator of the present day consists, in the eyes of the Irish tenant, in his inaction, in his leaving the relations betwixt landlord and tenant, to the natural operation of the laws of supply and demand; thus leaving it to the landlord to demand what rent he pleases for his land, and to the tenant to refuse or accept these terms. But the supply of farms being limited, and the demand for them being great, the landlord has it in his power to exact a rent, which, so the tenant says, the farm is not worth. Now no Land Law which shall leave it in the power of the Landlord to ask what he pleases for his land, and shall allow the rents to be determined by the ratio betwixt supply and demand, can remedy the evil complained of. Some positive enactment, not the repeal of any iniquitous law now standing in the Statute Book, is what is required; what is needed is a law which shall oblige the landlord to let his land, and to let it on conditions more favorable than the would-be tenant could obtain were prices left to the operation of the so-called laws of political economy.

That the tenant, after years of labor, and the expenditure of his capital on his holding, should be liable to have his rent raised, or to be ejected at a few month's notice, and should be unable to enforce from the landlord payment for the additional value which he, the outgoing tenant, by his sweat and by his money, has given to the farms, is a great grievance, and involves a monstrous injustice. But why take a farm, it is asked, on terms which leave it in the landlord's power to inflict such wrong? Because, and here is the answer, the competition for farms is so keen, and the supply so limited, that the holder of the goods can exact any price he pleases for that which he has to dispose of. The tenant is thus at the mercy of the landlord; and it is to reverse this state of things, to enable the would-be tenant to treat on terms of equality with the man who has land to let, that positive legislation is now called for.

Free Trade principles will not do here. Indeed the bane of Ireland in the social order, is the application of Free Trade principles to land. The tenant demands Protection from the Legislature; he wants a law which shall make it impossible for the landlord to raise the rent from year to year, just as bakers raise the price of their bread when the state of the flour market seems to authorise them in so doing. In fact all depends on this. For no law which shall leave it in the power of the landlord to raise his rents, can give the tenant any security for the capital which in the shape of labor or of its representative, cash, he may invest in his farm.

In a word Mr. Gladstone has so to legislate as to enforce the duties of property as well as its rights: God grant that he may succeed.

As has generally happened to prominent politicians raised from the position of democrats and popular agitators, to that of courtiers and responsible statesmen, Mr. Bright must find his official path strewn with many thorns. His great and universally admitted talents, naturally pointed him out to Mr. Gladstone as an important accession to the strength of the Cabinet, and the party of which he was the head; but by accepting office Mr. Bright has lost more than half his power. He is a demagogue and an agitator, or he is nothing; and it is impossible even for a man, even of the talents of Mr. Bright, to reconcile such contradictory functions.

Nor is this all. Mr. Bright, if he be a Minister to-day, is so as a Free Trader. It was in conjunction with the late Mr. Cobden that he rose to notoriety as the apostle of Free Trade; and with the success and permanence of that principle of political economy he, as a minister, must stand or fall.

But at the same time Mr. Bright is, or at all events is, believed to be, the most advanced amongst English politicians of the advocates of the popular Irish view of the Land Question. Now, unfortunately for his consistency, the principle of Free Trade, and the principle which underlies the Irish Land agitation, are irreconcilably antagonistic.

Free Trade, if it means anything, means what French Socialistic writers call the *"laissez faire"* the absolute non-interference of government in all matters of trade, business, buying and selling, leasing and hiring. Free Trade has for its axioms that the State or Government has, in these matters, no right to interfere directly or indirectly, whether for the benefit of the buyer or of the seller, of him who leases or of him who hires, of him who lends, or of him who sells. Its functions, its sole legitimate functions, are, not to prescribe the terms of any contract, but to enforce the observance of those terms upon both the contracting parties, until, by mutual agreement they release one another from the obligations thereby contracted.

To buy in the cheapest market, to sell in the dearest, is the golden rule of the Free Trader. That a thing is worth what it will bring in open market; that the price of the thing sold, leased or lent, whether it be a barrel of flour or a ton of coals, a house or an acre of land, or whether it be money that is loaned, is determined by the relation between supply and demand, and, that no legislative interference can make the scarce article cheap, or the abundant article dear, the demand remaining the same—these are the axioms of Free Trade; and if in any one particular, or on any pretence whatsoever, any one of these fundamental axioms be violated, Free Trade is but an idle dream, a mockery, a delusion, and a snare.

Now the direct contradictory of these so-called Free Trade axioms are by the popular party in Ireland assumed as axiomatic and self-evident. They assume as incontrovertible, that the State is bound in the execution of its proper functions to interfere betwixt the landowner and the non-land owner who wishes to hire a farm,—to protect the latter against the evil of a very limited supply of an article in great demand; that its duty is to determine the conditions on which the holder of the article shall for a time make it over to the would-be tenant; and the Free Trade axiom that a thing, say a farm is worth what it will bring in open market, is branded as a damnable social heresy which lies at the very roots of rack renting and all the abuses or grievances of the present Irish Land system.

In a word, the Irish Land question is a vigorous, almost a national protest against Free Trade in Land.

Now how is Mr. Bright to reconcile his political antecedents as a Free Trader with his *quasi* promises as an Irish popular reformer? Is the problem which the President of the Board of Trade—at the risk of for ever losing his reputation for intelligence and honesty, is called upon to solve. Evidently, by its very terms, the problem is insoluble. If Mr. Bright attempts to realize the expectations that he has led the Irish tenants to form, he pronounces the condemnation of those Free Trade principles by the advocacy of which he won his notoriety and his popularity. If on the contrary he remains faithful to his first love, and to his original principles, he must come to an open rupture with his Irish friends and supporters.

Nor is this all. The democracy of England, indeed we may say, the democracy everywhere, are the enemies of Free Trade. They look upon it as their enemy; and whenever it is in their power so to do, they make their enmity felt. Even in the U. States where, from its peculiar material conditions, one would naturally expect to find the so-called laws of political economy cheerfully submitted to, we find the operatives in open revolt against the principle of Free Trade as applied to the labor market. They demand that the article which they own—(labor)—be protected by the State; and they compel the Legislature to enact laws, determining the hours of labor, and intended in reality to determine by Statute the price of labor. Every Trades Union in England is a standing protest against Free Trade, or the principle that every man has the right to sell his labor for what he can get for it; and indeed underlying, vivifying the democratic agitation that to-day, throughout the world, is agitating the surface of society is the popular revolt against Free Trade and its principles. "*Communism, Socialism*" are the names applied to this revolt; and he must be a very superficial observer indeed who fails to see that in every country of the globe, the people, as distinguished from the *"bourgeoisie"*, or capitalists, are heart and soul anti Free Traders.

Therefore again Mr. Bright will soon find himself called upon to make another selection; to elect whether he shall remain faithful to Free Trade doctrines, and thereby break with democracy, to which he owes his political existence, his influence, and his seat in the Cabinet; or whether he shall abandon Free Trade, and henceforward look to an anti-Free Trade democracy for support.

We believe that Mr. Bright will not be long in making his choice. He is a democrat, and owes all that he has to democracy. He was a Free Trader, because Free Trade, not as an abstract principle, but as applied to the trade income, suited his pecuniary interests as a manufacturer, and furnished him with an appropriate text for denouncing hereditary landed aristocracy, and the country gentlemen of England. So far Mr. Bright was, and we dare say still is, a Free Trader; but when the day shall arrive, as arrive it must, when the advocacy of "Free Trade" principles shall be unpopular, we believe that Mr. Bright will, without a scruple, discard them.

We find these views confirmed to a certain extent in the last number of the *Edinburgh Review*—an organ of the old anti-Corn Law and Free Trade party. Speaking of the favor that the principle of Protection meets with in the Australian Colonies the *Reviewer* says:—

"This hearty devotion to the principles of monopoly confirms the suspicion that in England, the labouring classes were enlisted in the cause of Free Trade, not through love of its doctrine, but through

antagonism to the squirearchy; and that, if ever they obtain the control of the Legislature, they will reimpose a Protective duty in behalf of themselves." *Edinburgh Review*, pp. 238, 239.

Not a doubt of it. Free Trade, which implies unlimited competition, means cheap labor, and the democracy want to make labor dear. The democracy therefore hates and fears Free Trade, though to the capitalist it no doubt offers the fairest prospects of making profitable investments. But Mr. Bright, when he shall cease to be a democrat, or the representative man of English democracy, will cease to be of any consequence in the political order; so that when the day of trial comes, we expect to see him renouncing and indeed denouncing all his old Free Trade principles, by the advocacy of which he first became a power in the political world.

Protestants are fast beginning to complain of the evils to society that have their source in the low and mere worldly views that Protestantism gives respecting marriage. Thus in a paragraph in the *Witness*, we read that at a recent meeting of Anglican ministers at Toronto, the Bishop of that sect "spoke of the lax views, in reference to the sacredness of the marriage tie, now becoming so prevalent, especially in the neighboring republic, as evidenced by the frequency of divorces."

The Protestant Bishop should, however, have added that it is was to Protestantism, to the revolt against the Catholic Church and her doctrine that marriage is a sacrament, and indissoluble, that these lax views are owing; that the doctrine that marriage is a "mere civil contract" is essentially a Protestant doctrine, from which logically flow all the evils complained of, and the "frequent divorces" which he deplored. Either marriage is a sacrament, the parties to which are bound together by God in indissoluble bonds over which man and man's laws have no control; or it is a mere civil contract, which, like any other civil contract, whether for the delivery of a specified quantity of pork, or the construction of a line of railroad, may be dissolved by, and with the mutual consent of, the contracting parties. No intermediate position betwixt the rigid sacramental doctrine of the Catholic Church, and the views advocated by the "Free Lovists," is logically tenable: for if God has determined the nature and conditions of the sexual unions of His creatures, man has no power to set aside, or to modify God's laws; and if He has not so determined those conditions, then has He left every man, and every woman, free to determine them for himself or herself, and man has no right to abridge the liberty that God has seen fit to accord to them. In short, all human legislation on marriage itself—we speak not of the civil accidents thence necessarily accruing, such as the right of succession to property, &c.—is of two things, one:—Either sacrilegious trampling under foot of the Divine Law, or a monstrous and tyrannical interference with the rights of man. Catholics who insist that marriage is a sacrament, that the parties thereunto are joined together by God, and cannot, therefore, upon any pretext whatsoever, be put asunder by man, occupy an intelligible, a defensible position. So do the "Free Lovists" who maintain that, as God has prescribed no conditions for the sexual unions of His creatures, so man has no right to abridge or restrict the liberty that He has endowed them with. But the position of the party intermediate betwixt Catholics, and the Free Lovists, who twaddle decorously about irreligious views of marriage, and who yet dare not speak out boldly and assert that marriage is essentially a religious, rather than a "mere civil contract," who, though Protestants themselves, cry out against the lax views which their system naturally generates, is so absurd that it is impossible altogether to suppress a feeling of contempt for the intellect of these who occupy it. Were we not Catholics, we should most certainly hold, advocate, and do our best to disseminate the principles and practices of the Free Lovists, who, of all protesting sectaries, are, on the question of the union and relation of the sexes, the most logical, the most strictly in harmony with Protestant principles, and, therefore, the most anti-Christian, and the most dangerous to society. We do not say immoral; because morality implies a divine law, without which all acts would be morally indifferent.—Now the Protestant theory that marriage is a mere civil contract, and the subject of human legislation, implies that God has not legislated thereupon; that He has not determined the conditions of the sexual unions of His creatures, or how they shall be put together; and that He does not bind or join the contracting parties together, or otherwise man could not put them asunder:—therefore, as God, according to the Protestant theory, has not legislated upon the subject, there is no moral superiority in one kind of sexual union over another. Man's law may favor the one at the expense of the other; but if the Catholic doctrine be false, and the Protestant doctrine be true, though there may be a legal, there can be no moral, difference betwixt what is called marriage, and what is branded as concubinage.

Remittances in our next.

(Communicated.)

DEATH OF THE REV. MR. McDONALD.

We have to announce the death of the much regretted Rev. Mr. McDonald, a young priest who died of Yellow Fever, at the Island of Key West, Florida, on the night of the 21st July. Here are a few details respecting his last moments, which we insert with much pleasure, as they show in what great esteem he was held by the residents of that far distant land; what interests were taken in his sad lot, the moment he was known to be sick, and with what veneration we surround our Canadian Missionaries in the land of the stranger.

Here follows a letter of the Lady Superior of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, (Convent of Hochelaga), to M. l'Abbe Allard, at this moment in Canada:—

"My dear Father,—Scarcely had you left Key West half an hour—I could still see the steamer that was bearing you away—when they came to announce the sudden illness of our kind Father McDonald, who had fainted in the Sacristy, whilst robing himself to say Mass, and who had been taken ill of yellow fever. To tell you how I felt is impossible; I had thought of such a misfortune several times before your departure, but I did not expect it would take place so soon."

"My resolution was soon taken, which was to reach his bedside, accompanied by one of the Sisters, and to remain by him so long as the fever lasted. But, my God, what objections the good people of Key West brought to bear against us, fearing for our welfare, and that we might take the fever; they did all they could to convince us that it would be better for us not to go out of our convent. Message upon message came to forbid us to come into town; everybody takes part in the matter, particularly the doctor; human prudence exhausts itself in vain reasonings."

"Charity and the duties of the heart carried us towards our good sick Father; at sun down we went to the Presbytery—Sister Octavia and myself; our patient was in the greatest suffering from a violent fever, but calm and resigned. His unalterable patience was the edification of every body; I need, however, not tell you so, for you know the virtues which characterize the Rev. Mr. McDonald. He is an angel of piety, whether in health or sickness; all in him bears towards God."

"This morning, at half-past four, we went again to see our dear patient, and to join with him in our morning prayers. The fever had much abated; we remained only a quarter of an hour with him—he appeared to suffer much less. The doctor came to the convent at 8 a.m.; he was very desponding. He said the good Father McDonald was a little more feverish, but did not lose hopes of ultimately saving him, although he was very feeble; he objected to our returning to town. My God, my God, have mercy on us! They telegraphed to Havana last evening for a Jesuit Priest; they hope he will be here to-morrow evening. Heaven grant he may! We are all very anxious that the good Father McDonald may not die; for this good hope we all pray. Yes, we pray that God in His infinite mercy may spare him to us. Next week I will write you.—I have the sweet hope that he is out of danger. All the Sisters are as well as when you left them, as to health, but we are plunged into the deepest grief, as are all the Catholics in the island. The good Father McDonald receives the best attention from every body who surround him—nothing is spared to cure him on their part. I will write you again next week, and in the meantime pray for us."

Sr. M. E. Sup.

Convent of Mary Immaculate.

"Key West, Florida, 19th July, 1869."
"P.S.—We are just arrived from the Presbytery. Father McDonald is very bad, the doctor says he is in danger; we are in despair—we hope against hope. Death alone will convince us that he is not to remain with us; God is too good, he will grant our prayer."

Such are the details of the death of this missionary, fallen a martyr so young and so far from his friends; but whose virtues had already rendered so dear to the flock he was so much attached to. "*Beati qui in Domino moriuntur!*"

GOOD NEWS.—My dear Friends,—It is with feelings of joy that I announce to you the joyful tidings which I received a few days ago and will I am certain alleviate you of your long felt sorrow about the sorrowful news which was going around for some months past, that the Rev. Bernard McFeely whilst returning to Ireland was drowned. I received a letter a few days ago from one of his friends announcing his safe arrival on the green shores of Ireland after encountering many severe storms, and can only attribute his safe landing to the all powerful protecting hand of God. No doubt his many friends will be glad to hear of this, especially those around Fitzroy and Pakenham where he labored zealously for several years discharging the works of his holy mission and endeared to himself the love, respect and veneration of all classes coming in contact with him.

AMICUS.