

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, SEPT. 4, 1863.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

By latest advices from Europe the Polish question remained unchanged. The Poles were represented as having again defeated a Russian force, and as having captured a large sum of money. The policy of the French in Mexico gives, so says the Times, general satisfaction, and is looked upon as a conclusive and crushing reply to the pretensions put forth by the United States in what is known as the Munroe doctrine.

The attack on the sea defences of Charleston has been the only important military event of the past week. The enemy have as yet made no great progress, for though Fort Sumter is said to be a heap of ruins, Wagner still holds out, and with every prospect of being able to make a protracted resistance. Irritated at the obstacles he has encountered, the Yankee General Gilmour has threatened to bombard the City of Charleston; and has already succeeded in throwing some shells into its streets. This outrage upon the usages of civilized warfare has called forth an indignant remonstrance from General Beauregard; but we have not heard it condemned by any of those who were so severe upon the late King of Naples for threatening to bombard his rebellious subjects. King Bomba has become a bye-word in the mouths of Liberals; we doubt much whether they will apply the same epithet Bomba to President Lincoln, who, to say the least, has as well earned it, as did the much reviled King of Naples.

The conscription at New York passed off very quietly. It remains to be seen whether the drafted men will as quietly allow themselves to be dragged from their homes and families to carry out the bloody policy of the Abolitionists. Another attack upon Fort Wagner has, we are happy to say, been repulsed.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.

After a long and more than animated debate on the Address, and M. Sicotte's proposed amendment, the division in the Legislative Assembly took place on Friday night, giving to the Ministry a majority of three. The Quebec Daily News gives the annexed analysis of the votes:—

An analysis of the vote taken on Friday night results as follows:—

FOR MR. SICOETTE'S AMENDMENT.	
French Canadians	25
English Lower Canadians	14
Upper Canadians	21
	60
FOR THE MINISTRY.	
Upper Canadians	28
French Canadians	22
English Lower Canadians	3
	63

Sixteen members were absent. Messrs. J. H. Cameron and Dr. Brown paired off; Messrs. D. A. Macdonald and O'Halloran also paired off. Mr. Buchanan was absent, and the vacant seat for Essex, and the Speaker, make up the remainder.
The majority against Ministers in Lower Canada is 39; their majority in Upper Canada is 38. But for the defection from the Opposition ranks of Dr. Poulin, and the unenviable position of Messrs. Chambers and Perrault, the Opposition would have reversed the majority. Mr. Buchanan, who was absent would also have voted with the Opposition.

The other paragraphs of the Address having been agreed to, it was presented to His Excellency, and the House then settled down to the regular work of the Session. The opinion is very generally entertained that the present Ministry will seek to strengthen themselves by a *replutrage*, or an infusion of new blood. No measures of any great importance have as yet been brought forward.

"IMPROVING THE OCCASION."—Readers of the Globe and of the Montreal Witness must have remarked how, since the late elections and Ministerial changes, the zeal of these great organs of Protestantism, though never slack, has, as it were, been redoubled. Scarce an issue of either of these journals appears, without an attack of some kind upon the Catholic clergy, or the Catholic Religious. One day we have an account of the hellish artifices of a crew of Romish priests, to decoy a young and innocent female—beautiful and a great heiress of course, but name not given—into a Convent, and there to rob her of all her valuables. The next day, a charge of cruelty, or neglect towards their in-

fant charges is insinuated against the Grey Nuns of Montreal in the Witness; and the day following, the same journal will treat its readers to a tirade against the Ladies of the Hotel Dieu at Quebec, whom it accuses of exercising undue influences upon the Protestant patients in their Hospital. What these attacks upon priests and nuns, lack in wit, originality and truth, they abundantly make up for, by their violence, their malignity and their mendacity.

Whence, perhaps it may be asked, this increased out-break of venom, and this superabundant discharge of Protestant bile? The explanation of the phenomenon is, we think, very obvious, if we take into consideration the particular political aspect of the times.

The late elections, in so far as Upper Canada is concerned, have resulted in the return to Parliament of an overwhelming majority bitterly hostile to Lower Canadian institutions in general, and to its religious institutions in particular. At the same time the composition of the Ministry is such, as to excite—we do not say justly, for we would condemn no man without a fair trial—strong apprehensions, in the minds of all Lower Canadians for their national liberties, and in the minds of all Catholics for the integrity of their ecclesiastical property. It is feared that the country is to be ruled by the fanatically anti-Catholic majority of the Western Province; and that the Ministry have agreed to sacrifice the moral and material interests of Lower Canada to the iniquitous importunities of the Clear-Grits or Protestant Reformers of the West.—Now that which excites the apprehensions of Lower Canadians and of Catholics, serves but to excite the hopes of their enemies—the afore-said Clear-Grits or Protestant Reformers; and the latter are as sanguine and as firmly persuaded that the day of their triumph, and of Protestant Ascendancy has arrived, as Catholics and Lower Canadians are despondent. From a decidedly anti-Catholic Legislature, and from a Ministry strongly suspected of Clear-Grit, and Rouges or anti-Catholic proclivities, Protestants have everything to hope, and Catholics everything to dread.

Under such favorable auspices, therefore, it is but natural that our enemies should "improve the occasion" as the slang phrase of the meeting-house goes, or in other words "should strike whilst the iron is hot." Now is the time, they argue, for a strong pull, a long pull, and a pull altogether at those eye sores, the monkeries and nunneries of Lower Canada; now is the opportunity for invoking legislative action against these strongholds of Romanism and superstition. Let us then make the most of this golden opportunity; let us by all means avail ourselves of the advantages which the late Ministerial changes and the general election, have placed within our reach.

This, we take it, is the cause of the phenomenon to which we have above referred; and we must accordingly make up our minds to see our religious institutions more bitterly reviled, and more audaciously attacked than ever. Yet should not this discourage us, but should rather prompt us to rally more generously and more courageously than ever to their support; and to cast aside all these petty jealousies, those paltry intrigues of party, which by dividing have weakened the Catholic body, and given our enemies an important but we trust only temporary advantages over us. This premise we will address a few words to the Montreal Witness.

In its issue of the 27th ult., a writer from Quebec, and over the signature M., brings forward a serious charge against the Ladies of the Hotel Dieu, or Hospital of Quebec, under their charge. This institution, though exclusively Catholic, receives patients of all denominations; and even M. admits that "the nuns, as nurses, are unexceptionable." But he qualifies this admission by taxing them with employing undue influences, or improper means, to make proselytes to their own faith. The Protestant patients, so M. tells us, are allowed to receive the visits of their friends and relatives; but only during "two hours every day;" and he adds:—

"During the remaining twenty hours the poor Protestants, sick in body and weak in mind, are subjected to a regular system of proselytizing by the nuns. Then, while they are thus mentally and physically unfit to combat the sophistries presented to them, the priest is called in, and they are baptized, and so become members of a Church they would never have joined, had they been in health, or had they in their sick hours been attended by persons of their own religious views."

But it will be asked—why do not these Protestant patients receive the visits and attentions of their co-religionists? The writer in the Witness insinuates that this is effectually prevented by the artifices of the nuns, whom he represents as acting in the following manner:—

"A visitor has no possible means of finding out the Protestant patients in the different wards; the nuns refuse to give correct information, and it is only by chance that they are ever discovered."

This then is the gravamen of the charge against the Nuns; that they exercise undue influence over Protestants, when the latter are so prostrated by disease, as to be unable to exercise an intelligent act of choice; and that the nuns "refuse to give correct information." As we have no personal knowledge of the management, and internal discipline of the Hotel Dieu

of Quebec, though we have full assurance of the true Christian charity, and integrity of the heroic ladies by whom that Catholic charitable institution is conducted—we will reply, for the present, very briefly to their anonymous slanderer in the Witness.

We will not comment upon the striking incongruity betwixt his practice, and the teachings of that Book which he professes to respect as the Word of God, and whose pages, so he boasts, are ever "open" to him. That Book tells us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and in a word to return good for evil. The Protestant carries these sublime lessons into practice, by hating and reviling his benefactors; by cursing them who have spent themselves in his service; by doing all the evil in his power to those from whom he has received naught but good; and by calumniating those to whose tender cares, and self-sacrificing devotion, he perhaps owes his recovery from sickness, and consequently his present capacity for evil speaking, lying, and slandering. Upon this point we will not however further dilate.

We content ourselves with calling upon the correspondent of the Witness for the proof of what he advances against the Ladies of the Hotel Dieu. We invite him to furnish us with solid palpable facts, and not with mere vague allegations. It is not enough for him to show that patients who have entered the Hotel Dieu Hospital as Protestants, have left it Catholics. He must show—for this is the gist of his charge—that undue means have been resorted to, to effect this change; that unfair advantage has been taken of the sick Protestant's physical and moral weakness, to induce him to profess a religion, which in health, and in the full possession of his faculties he would have rejected. This is what M. has got to prove—and this also. That the Ladies of the Hotel Dieu have "refused to give correct information" as to the Protestant patients under their charge, when questioned concerning them by those who had either a legal or a moral right to make such enquiries—such as have parents, children, other relatives, or the regular spiritual advisers of the persons enquired about. Not every man—this we think all intelligent fair-minded Protestants will admit—not every stranger who mistakes impertinent curiosity for a heavenly commission, has the right to obtrude himself upon the nuns of the Hotel Dieu; and, under pain of being proceeded against by slander and calumny in the columns of the Montreal Witness, to insist upon their answering such questions as he may see fit to put to them respecting their patients, and their domestic arrangements. It should be borne in mind that the Nuns though Religious, are Ladies; that the Hotel Dieu is their property, their house, their castle, their home, and that their domestic privacy is no more to be intruded upon by strangers, than that of any other private individual; and that therefore they are under no obligation, legal or moral, to reply to any queries put to them concerning their patients by person who cannot show either their legal or moral right to question. We insist the more upon this point because it seems to us highly probable that M., the complainant, is one of those impertinent fellows who upon the pretence that they have a "call," act as if God had commissioned them to be rude, insolent and overbearing in their manners towards Romish priests, and Romish nuns, and who in consequence has met with the rebuff which his insolent pretensions merit. We shall say no more however upon the subject until we see whether M. will accept or decline our challenge. If he has proofs against the nuns we call upon him to produce them; if he has none, let him hold his peace, and by his silence acknowledge himself to be a convicted slanderer of the good Sisters—of whom, as St. Paul says, speaking of the faithful, "the world is not worthy."

The Montreal Witness deprecates all agitation for, all newspaper discussion of, the Repeal of the Union; but so long as the exciting cause of that agitation remains in force, so long will the Lower Canadians clutch eagerly at Repeal of the Union as their last plank of salvation. When our enemies of Upper Canada cease to agitate for Representation by Population, then, but not before, will the agitation amongst the Lower Canadians, for Repeal of a Union, which menaces them with a fate worse than death, at once subside.

The Union of the Provinces would be accepted, or tolerated by the Lower Canadians as *un fait accompli*, were the people of Upper Canada content still to abide by the terms or conditions on which it was originally constructed—we do not say contracted, for Lower Canada was not even consulted on the, to her, all important question, and the Union was forced upon her by, and for the interests of the Upper Province. The terms of that forced Union were all in favor of Upper Canada; and the principle of Representation by Population which the people of that section of the Province now so inconsistently invoke, was by them deliberately repudiated when the balance of population was greatly in favor of the Lower Province. Still

however would we let this pass; still would we let bygones be bygones, and would endeavor to forget ancient wrongs, were the people of Upper Canada content to abide by the terms which they themselves imposed on Lower Canada; and to accept for themselves precisely the same measure of justice, as that which, in the day of their power, they meted out to their neighbors on the East. To this, however, the people of Upper Canada will not agree. That which they inflicted upon Lower Canada they indignantly repudiate for themselves; and having formally disclaimed the principle of Representation by Population, when they were in the minority, they to-day when the situation is reversed, and their numbers exceed those of the people of the Lower Province, clamor for it, as the means of enabling them to domineer over "an inferior race." This of itself suffices to convince the Lower Canadians how insensible to every suggestion of justice and consistency must be the people who now seek to rule over them. It inspires them with an invincible repugnance to entrust their destinies to such hands; and teaches them to distrust all those professions of good will of which the Globe, the Witness, and other organs of the Protestant Reform press, are now so profuse.

But besides the dishonesty of the Protestant Reformers in now endeavoring to enforce on Lower Canada a principle of representation which they but a few years ago repudiated for themselves—we have their acts, and their words before us, to convince us that no promises, no engagements however sacred, can bind them; and that they lack only the power, to rob our Church, and confiscate the property of our Religious Orders.

We have cited the express language of the Globe on this point. "Treaties," says the organ of the Corypheus of the Protestant Reformers, "are like pie crust, made to be broken." How then can we rely upon any pledges, guarantees, or promises which that party might give or make for the integrity of our peculiar institutions?—When through the Globe, Mr. George Brown prates about "guarantees" that our religious institutions should not be interfered with, we remember that, according to Mr. George Brown, "treaties are like pie crust made to be broken;" and that this atrocious sentiment has never yet been formally repudiated either by Mr. George Brown himself, or by the Protestant Reform party in whose name he speaks.

We have moreover before our eyes the constant laudations by the Protestant press of every act of outrage and spoliation perpetrated against the Catholic Church by the Liberals and Jacobins of Europe. Here for instance is a paragraph which we clipped a few months ago from the Montreal Witness:—

"BREAKING UP CONVENTS.—It is good news to hear that the work of suppressing conventual establishments is going on in Italy. They are a moral, public, national nuisance, dangerous to the social, religious and civil interests of any people; sores, cancers and plagues in the body and soul of society, and the best thing that the Government can do for united Italy is to remove their root and branch."—Montreal Witness. (The Italics are our own.)

Be it remarked that the above language applies, not to some "conventual establishments" in particular, but to all such establishments in general, and without exception, or reservation in behalf of those of Lower Canada. They are denounced as nuisances, as sores, cancers, and plagues, dangerous not to the Italians in particular, but to "any people," and therefore the best thing that the Government of "any" country, whether of Italy or of Canada, can do with such establishments is "to remove them root and branch." These are the express words of the article in the Witness; these too are the sentiments of the entire Liberal, or Protestant Reform party as towards the religious establishments of Lower Canada; and from them it is clear that they lack only the power which Representation by Population would confer upon them, to reduce their theories into practice, to translate their sentiments into action, and to clear away the "conventual establishments" of Lower Canada "root and branch." Can it then be wondered at that the Catholics of this Province, profoundly attached as they are to their Church, and to those institutions which in the Witness are branded as plagues, sores, cancers and nuisances to be abated, should seek for safety in Repeal of the Union!

The Witness has also the amusing impudence to speak of that Repeal as "separating and isolating Lower Canada from the rest of the civilized world!" as if all countries not in legislative communion with the Upper Canadians were outer barbarians; as if outside the pale of the Clear Grit circle, there were no social salvation!—What then shall we say of other British North American Provinces?—of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward's Island? These are not united in legislative union with the Province of Upper Canada; are they therefore necessarily separated and isolated from the civilized world?

The Witness also denounces, not only as an "evil to the country" but as a crime, the agitation by parity of reason "for united Canada."

tion for Repeal of the Union. But, would we ask him, wherein is it more criminal for the Catholics of Lower Canada to agitate constitutionally for legislative independence, and separation from alien and Protestant Upper Canada, than it was criminal on the part of the people of the Italian Peninsula and of Greece to take up arms for their autonomy, and to demand separation from alien Austria and from alien Turkey? What better right have the Upper Canadians to insist upon the Union of the two Provinces, than have the Russians to annex the Poles? Neither religiously nor yet ethnologically does the Pole differ from the Russian to the same extent as the Catholic French Canadian differs from the Protestant Anglo-Saxon of the Upper Province; and if, in the case of others, Upper Canadian Liberals are so prompt to detect the injustice of the subjection of one race to another and alien race, how is it that they are so dull to perceive the rank injustice of the policy which they meditate towards the Lower Province?

This is the answer to the sophism which the Globe is never weary of repeating about the right of the majority to rule. Granting for the sake of argument, this right in the case of one homogeneous people, it becomes a wrong and a tyranny if applied in the case of two distinct and heterogeneous peoples—for its application under such circumstances would entail the subjugation of one race, of one people, to an alien race or people. The cause of Lower Canada against Upper Canada, in case of Representation by Population being conceded, would thus become the cause of "an oppressed nationality" on this Continent; and the oppressed race would be as much entitled to the active sympathies of all true friends of freedom, as were the Greeks when oppressed by the alien rule of the Turks, and as are the Poles the present victims of the alien Muscovites. All that we ask of the Globe is this—that it apply to the case of Lower ver Upper Canada the same principles as those which it applies to the case of Italy ver Austria.

In fine, speaking in the name of Lower Canada we would say to the Globe "deal frankly with us for once; speak out your thoughts." In what character do we stand towards you! in that of equals, or in that of a conquered and subjugated race? If you recognise in us your equals, fellow subjects with equal rights, and equal duties with yourselves, on what grounds do you pretend to enforce upon us a Legislative Union to the terms of which our assent was never given, and indeed was never asked? A Union of equals to be morally binding must be of the nature of a contract or bargain; but in the case of the Union betwixt Upper and Lower Canada the latter was not allowed even to have a voice. It was imposed upon her against her will by, and for the benefit of, the Upper Province; and therefore upon the hypothesis of perfect equality betwixt the two, it cannot be morally binding upon that Province which never was consulted upon its terms.

It is only upon the hypothesis that the Lower Canadians are a conquered, inferior and subjugated race, that you can logically defend the Union, or insist upon its perpetuation. For if you admit that we have equal rights with yourselves; and as the consent of the Legislature of Upper Canada to the Union Act was given, whilst that of Lower Canada was not even asked, you must admit that gross injustice was perpetrated upon Lower Canada, in uniting her to Upper Canada without the assent of her Legislature, and in spite of the energetic protests of her people. For this injustice you, in striving to perpetuate the Union, are yourselves morally responsible; and you must therefore, we say, abandon the "equality" hypothesis. You must, to be logical, and to evade the charge of inconsistency, and upholding admitted wrong, adopt the hypothesis that we are an inferior race, a subjugated nationality, having no inherent rights of our own, and holding our liberties on the precarious tenure of your good will and pleasure. But see to what a dilemma this hypothesis—which in insisting upon the perpetuity of the Union you must perforce adopt—reduces you! By denying to us equality of rights, you absolve us from equality of duties—for rights and duties are reciprocal. You assume towards us that attitude of Russia towards Poland, of Austria towards Venetia, which you yourselves denounce as a crime, authorising the revolt of the subjected race against the alien intruder; and you stand self-convicted before the world of falsehood and of double dealing, in that you condemn in others that which you yourselves practise towards your weaker neighbors.

HAVE WE A MRS. GAMP AMONGST US?—We are inclined to answer this question in the affirmative: we believe, firmly, that that venerable old lady is now engaged doing the scousation No-Popery paragraphs for the Montreal Witness, and that she occasionally presides over the editorial department itself of that evangelical journal. To whom, if not to Mrs. Gamp, can we attribute such atrocious onslaughts upon Her Majesty's English as are to be found in the subjoined paragraph which we extract from the Witness:—

The writer is denouncing the Grey Nuns, be-