

The True Witness

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 6.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

JULY—1866.

Friday, 6—Octave of St. Peter and Paul. Saturday, 7—St. Margaret, W. Sunday, 8—Seventh after Pentecost. Monday, 9—St. Elizabeth, W. Tuesday, 10—The Seven Martyrs. Wednesday, 11—St. Pius, P. M. Thursday, 12—St. John Gualbert, Ab.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The long dreaded and inevitable war has commenced at last. Can Great Britain during its progress maintain her neutrality, and avoid participation in the struggle?—is the question which is now of paramount importance to British subjects, but which it is not easy to answer. No doubt the people are all for peace, peace almost at any price, but yet events may well occur which shall force them to take part in the strife raging every where around them. Neither can it as yet be foreseen which side, if thus forced into war, Great Britain will espouse. Looking upon Prussia, Austria, and Italy as the principals, it may be said that, on the question of the Elbe Duchies—and as against Prussia, the sympathies of the people of England are with Austria; but on the Italian question, and with reference to Venetia, those sympathies again are against Austria, and are given to Victor Emmanuel, or rather, to Garibaldi.

The situation in the South of Italy is daily becoming more critical, daily more suggestive of the overthrow of the tyrannical rule of Piedmont. The evils which the conquest of Naples by the latter has entailed, can be no longer concealed; and even Liberals in the British Parliament, partisans of Garibaldi, are by the force of facts, compelled to admit them. Thus, in a recent debate upon Continental politics in the House of Commons, we find Sir Robert Peel making the following conclusive admission:—

"I do believe that in Southern Italy a very strong feeling exists against the system of government prevailing in that part of the country. I was one of those who at first strongly advocated the course taken by the King of Sardinia, and until I saw the treaty in which he was induced to embark; then I began to doubt whether the policy which this House and this country viewed with so much favour would be beneficial to Italy. I believe that the expectation framed in regard to the good Government of Italy, and to the unity of Italy, have signal failed. (Cheers.) I have information which assures me that in Naples itself, and in other parts of Southern Italy there is a state of things far worse than existed before the union of that old and important province to the other dominions of the King of Sardinia."

And how about Rome? This is the most important question of all: but as Rome is, and always has been, as the See of Peter, in a peculiar manner the object of a special Providence, and of obvious miraculous protection, Catholics can be under no serious anxiety on this head; God will take care; and even humanly speaking, it is not difficult to foresee that the contingency of Italy at war, not having been provided for in the Convention of Sept. '64, the astute ruler of France may thence deduce an argument for maintaining a force at once against the party of the Revolution.

The fate of the prisoners taken during the late Fenian raid is still undecided. Parliament continues its session, which promises to be a lengthy one, as in it is to be settled the nature of the local or municipal governments for the several parts of the new Union. The reports of the state of the crops are on the whole encouraging.

The Cuba brings us news of the formal declarations of war betwixt Prussia and Austria, and betwixt Italy and Austria. The Prussians had advanced on Dresden and U. Silesia. No decisive engagement had occurred.

The Ministry having been defeated in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone had had an interview with the Queen relative to the formation of a new Ministry. Nothing definite on the subject had transpired. By some it was thought that there would be a dissolution, and an appeal to the country. We are sorry to say that the cattle disease is spreading in Ireland.

FENIANS KILLED AT RIDGEWAY.—A respectable farmer resident at Ridgeway states that the misadventurers buried thirty-eight of their dead brethren at the Lime Ridges on Saturday afternoon, June 2nd.

On the subject of Confederation, and the Local Government of Lower Canada, a correspondent of the Sherbrooke Gazette writes as under:—

In the proposed new constitution there should be the three following guarantees to the Eastern Townships:—

I. Such a reconstruction of the Parliamentary Districts as that the English speaking and non-Catholic population may be permitted, as far as practicable, to act together; and that they may not, by any contingency, be deprived of their proper representation in Parliament.

II. That all churches in the Townships shall possess perfect civil and ecclesiastical equality; and that no religious body or collateral organisation shall have the civil power to levy taxes directly or indirectly on its own adherents, for any purpose whatever.

III. That all schools in the Townships, receiving public money, shall be strictly non-denominational. Christian morals shall be faithfully taught, but no Sectarianism.

What the writer is apparently aiming at is this:—That that portion of Lower Canada known as the Eastern Townships, should be erected into a distinct or separate State in the proposed Confederation. His demands are not suggestive of any excess of modesty upon his part, or on that of those in whose interests he speaks; and were demands similar in character to emanate from the Catholic minority of Upper Canada—who when the Confederation scheme shall have become *un fait accompli* will find themselves in the same position as towards a Protestant majority, as will the non-Catholic minority of Lower Canada, as towards a Catholic majority—they would be scouted with ridicule.

The first demand—that with reference to a redistribution of electoral districts in the Eastern Townships—is liable to the objection of vagueness; since it demands that the non-Catholic population of that district of Lower Canada "be not, by any contingency, deprived of their proper representation in Parliament?" without having first given a full definition of what constitutes "proper representation." It may well so happen that there is considerable difference of opinion as to what is right and "proper" in the premises, betwixt the Catholic and the non-Catholic population of the said Townships; and it would certainly be, to say the least, hasty, and illogical, to leap to the conclusion that the opinion of the latter as to what is their "proper" share of representation in the future local or municipal legislature, is the correct one.

Indeed the second demand enunciated by our writer is so strongly suggestive as to what are non-Catholic notions of propriety, that we are justified in our scepticism on this point. Taking the writer in the Sherbrooke Gazette as in some manner the exponent of the views and wishes of the non-Catholic party, we find that that party is not content with absolute freedom of religion for itself: that it is not satisfied that it be allowed to manage its own religious and ecclesiastical affairs, as it pleases, without interference, let, or hindrance from Catholics; but that it insists upon its right of imposing its own peculiar views of Church government upon Catholics, and of not allowing the latter to manage their affairs ecclesiastical as they please. It is not enough, in short, that all non-Catholics be guaranteed against all imposts, direct or indirect, for the support of Catholic worship, and the sustentation of Catholic religious edifices; but Catholics are not to be allowed to retain the tythe system, or such Church system as to them shall be the most acceptable.

But on the School question—which forms the subject matter of the third demand—even more strongly than on the Church question, does the correspondent of the Sherbrooke Gazette display the cloven hoof; and betray, what indeed could scarce have been kept secret, the real object of his non-Catholic friends—which is to impose by force upon their Catholic neighbors, a system of State-Schoolism which the latter have always protested against, as an outrage upon their rights as Christians and as parents.

The non-Catholics of the Eastern Townships, as represented by the spokesmen in the Gazette, have the impudence to demand that there shall be granted to them by law, power to tax their Catholic neighbors for the support of non-Catholic schools; and this is conclusive as to what must be their idea of propriety in other matters, which is as vague and confused as are their notions of morality, and sectarianism.

They ask that in these non-Catholic schools, from which "as strictly non-denominational," all distinctively Christian or supernatural dogmas must needs be excluded—(since there is no one such dogma to which some professedly Christian denomination or another does not object)—"Christian morals shall be faithfully taught."—But "Christian morality," as distinguished from "natural morality," is a morality based upon certain firmly believed supernatural truths; and therefore, unless such supernatural truths, be taught in the schools, no system of "Christian morality" can therein be taught either: but at best, only a system of bare natural morality, common to Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Infidel, and Atheist. Attempt to go one step beyond that very limited range of moral truth, which all men hold, and in that they are men of intelligent beings must hold in common, and you quit the domain of natural morality entirely, and encroach upon that of supernatural morality, with

which strictly non-denominational schools have no power to meddle; seeing that there is not one single supernatural truth, or Christian dogma, common to all denominations of professing Christians, upon which to base such a supernatural system. Now a system of morality which has not a supernatural basis, is not "Christian morality" at all; but simply "natural morality."

The slovenly, slipshod style in which our non-Catholic opponents deal with Her Majesty's English, throwing out their words with as little regard to the meaning of those words, as does our old acquaintance Mrs. Partington in her discourse to her grandson, Ike, is but the consequence, as it is the sign, of their loose or disjointed mode of thinking. The man who talks even of teaching Christian morality, without first teaching the Christian dogmas or supernatural truths upon which that morality is based, which vivify it, and alone give to it that peculiar character which distinguishes it from natural morality; or the morality which Christians and Heathen have in common—betrays his gross ignorance, his incompetence to deal with any even the simplest and most elementary social problems of the day. He is one with whom it is impossible to argue; because he cannot define; because so limited are his intellectual faculties, he has never yet accustomed himself to analyze, rigorously and exhaustively, the terms he employs. Before he can reason, he must learn to define and analyze; and therefore as a preliminary exercise, here is a task we propose to the correspondent of the Sherbrooke Gazette:—

Define your term "Christian morality," fully and clearly; distinguishing sharply, wherein it differs from "natural morality," and assigning, at the same time, the cause, nature, and extent of that difference. Define also "Sectarianism."

In the meantime, as Catholics, and as accustomed to weigh well the meaning of our words, we reject not only as impossible, and as involving a contradiction in terms, the school system which the non-Catholics of the Eastern Townships demand; but we assert that it is iniquitous, and a violation of our rights as parents, to tax us for the teaching of "Christian morality" in non-Catholic schools, in which therefore the supernatural dogmas of our religion cannot be taught.—As betwixt Catholics and Protestants there is, as there is betwixt all men, a "natural morality" in common; but there is no common "Christian morality," for in the supernatural order Catholics and non-Catholics have nothing in common.—The Christian, or supernatural morality of the former, is the morality which the Church teaches, and which the Catholic accepts as the supernatural rule of his conduct, because the Church teaches it to be so; and the Catholic moreover recognises in the domain of "Christian morals," no authority, no standard, or test of right and wrong, except the teaching of his Church. She is the Catholic rule of morals as well as of faith; and besides her, in the supernatural order, we recognise none other.

But a strictly non-denominational school, which as such could not recognise the Catholic Church as the one infallible authority on all questions, whether of faith or morals, in the supernatural or Christian order, would be obliged, if it attempted to teach "Christian morals," to assert some other authority in that order; and would therefore be obliged to contradict formally the fundamental article of the Catholic Faith—that upon which the whole Catholic system reposes. Is it then really the opinion of non-Catholics, that it is "proper" to tax Catholic parents for such a purpose? And, nevertheless, without so taxing them it would be impossible to teach "Christian morality" in a non-Catholic school.

As a case in point, let us take that of the union of the sexes amongst Christians; and we shall see there is no agreement betwixt Catholics and Protestants—and, we may add—and, just as little amongst Protestants.

The Montreal Gazette pertinently remarks, apropos of a suggested demand by the United States Government for the marauders captured during the late raid, that besides these criminal, we have several United States citizens locked up in the Provincial Penitentiary, who are, at least, as much the legitimate objects of United States sympathies and protection, as are the gentry who robbed the farmers near Freighsburg, and committed murder in Upper Canada.

On Sunday last a collection was taken up in all the churches of this City, by order of the Bishop of the Diocese, in favor of a mission to the Mackenzie River in the far North West, under the direction of Mgr. Farrand. This mission will be composed of a party of the Ladies of the Grey Nunnery, who leave their country and their homes for ever, in order to carry temporal and spiritual consolations to the Indians of the remote district we have mentioned. A long and painful journey is before them; and to assist them in their labors, and to lighten the load which the Sisters have taken upon their shoulders for the love of Christ, and these whom He came to save, was the object of Sunday's collection. The good and brave Sisters will carry with them the prayers of those whom they leave behind.

A letter from that good and zealous priest, the Rev. Mr. Northgraves, of Barrie, which we publish in another column, reveals the existence of a spirit in Canada, which pains us not the less, because for some time past, its outbreak has been by us expected. We see that there is a section of our Upper Canadian fellow citizens—we trust a neither large nor influential one—that is doing its best to inaugurate a social persecution against Catholics, indiscriminately, upon the pretence that they are disaffected, disloyal, and responsible in some manner for the late outrageous raids upon this free and happy country. False reports against the Catholic laity, and their clergy, are by a certain class of men, industriously circulated; by another class are greedily swallowed; and if this continues, it is to be feared that the moral consequences of the raid, will be far more lasting and deplorable than its material consequences. Is it not then the duty, as it is undoubtedly the interest, of all good and loyal citizens, of all denominations, to discountenance, and frown down this vile attempt to proscribe a large class of Her Majesty's Canadian subjects?

Protestants and Catholics, we say, are alike interested in checking this bad business, before it attains more formidable dimensions. Both have it in their power to do much towards this good end; and melancholy and disgraceful will the results be to both, should either neglect to do their duty? What is that duty?

In so far as Protestants are concerned, it consists in carrying out, in practice, the principle that every man is to be presumed innocent, until he be proved guilty; that no man deserves to be accused of, or taunted with, disloyalty unless by words or conduct he shall have been culpable of some overt act of violation of his duties as a British subject. It is not, because one or two here and there, have expressed wicked and disloyal sentiments; or because some scurrilous newspaper scribblers, imperinently assuming to speak in the name of the entire Irish Catholic body, have published pot-house treason, and, secure from interference on the part of the Government in their insignificance, bare with cheap courage and easy patriotism habitually defied and abused that Government: it is not, we say, to be assumed, because of this, that the sentiments of the one or two brawling demagogues, and the drivelling treason of the oracle of the low tavern, are the sentiments and principles of the Irish Catholic community, of a majority of them, or even of any considerable number of them. Not from vile materials such as these, is the duty of our Protestant fellow-citizens—friends and brethren we would fain style them, if they will but permit us to do so—to form their estimate of the moral and political principles of Catholics, and to judge the teachings of the Catholic Church. No! If they really want to know what, upon the duty of subjects to their rulers, what, upon loyalty and the sin of disloyalty, the Catholic Church inculcates always, everywhere, and upon all her children, we would refer our Protestant friends, to the published Pastorals of our Bishops; to the earnest and impassioned exhortations of such a one as the Rt. Rev. Dr. Horan Bishop of Kingston; and to the formal declarations of him whom all true Catholics reverse as God's Vicar upon earth, the Sovereign Pontiff. Read the last much abused Encyclical of the present Pope, would, we say to our Protestant friends, try and understand the rules therein laid down: meditate well the emphatic condemnation therein passed upon secret societies, the revolution and its agents; and then say honestly—Is there in Catholic teaching anything which can, by the extremest malice be tortured into an approval of sedition, disloyalty, rebellion of subjects against their legitimate rulers, of secret societies such as Fenianism, or wicked and murderous attacks such as Canada has lately suffered from! We appeal from the bigotry of the few, to the good sense, to the love of fair play of the many—that is to say, of the great majority, we believe—of our Protestant brethren.

This we humbly submit is their obvious duty; that of Catholics of all origins, is equally obvious, equally imperative. It is this.

Give no cause, by word or action, to the most censorious of your neighbors for those imputations which some seek to cast upon your loyalty against the excellent Government under which you live. If you are libelled and misrepresented in this respect, think not to vindicate yourselves by acts of violence or retaliation; but rather be it your aim to live down the calumnies uttered against you. Give the lie to them, in the face of God and man, by your loyal and orderly conduct; and if any amongst you—and in every class of society are to be found some sordid popularity hunters, who will seek first to arouse the passions of their hearers, and then turn those passions to their own personal advantage—set themselves up as preachers of disloyalty, hearken not to them: see not even to give them any countenance or encouragement: repudiate them with indignation and with scorn, as your worst enemies, and as traitors, intent only upon making tools of you, to serve their own vile ends. Nothing is easier to assume than the garb of the indignant and heart-bleeding patriot; every tavern can furnish its quota of your waskey inspired, self-

dubbed regenerators of Ireland: who half drunk, and wholly hoarse, belch out their maudlin treason, without trouble to themselves, but to the infinite injury of the reputation, and social happiness of you, in whose name they have the infernal impudence to speak.

There is no other way than this to allay the storm of social persecution which we fear some bigots, are even now trying to arouse against, first the Irish of U. Canada; and secondly against the Catholic Church. Duty to that Church of which they profess to be the children: duty towards, love and respect for, those good Bishops, Priests and Religious—who alas! are made too often to suffer for the shortcomings, or reputed shortcomings of their people—all proclaim how important it is, at the present juncture, for Catholics to give the lie, the emphatic lie, to the charges of disloyalty urged against them: and thus to deprive their enemies of the only grounds upon which the latter assume the right to persecute them.

Passing events in the U. States have already had the effect of dispelling some of those singular illusions respecting the moral principles of the Jacobin party, that the Globe and others of our journals, favorable to the cause of the North as against the South, have hitherto entertained, or professed to entertain.

For instance, the Globe tells us that it had "always regarded the editor of the Tribune"—Mr. Greeley—"as a humane and honest man, averse to war, averse to injustice in any form, so bound to right principles as to be able to disregard his party, when they were at stake."

A singular illusion this indeed, and one which none except those who were willing to be deceived, could ever have for a moment entertained! Recent events, however, and the approbation expressed by Mr. Greeley of the filibustering raids on Canada, have, in so far as the Globe is concerned, rudely dispelled this illusion, or hallucination. Our Toronto contemporary now sees the New York publicist in his true colors; in those colors in which every one able to read the meaning of the late war betwixt the Northern and Southern States, and to appreciate at their proper value the philanthropic professions of the Abolitionists, has all along seen him. Indeed to us it is incomprehensible how, incredible that, any person, not a born fool, or a resident of Bedlam, could for one moment have been deceived as to the real feelings of the political party in the U. States of which Mr. Greeley is a representative man, and of the consequence, to Canada of the triumph of that party's principles. For years, we say, it must have been self-evident to every man not wilfully blind, or not a born fool, that the defeat of the Southern States by the representatives of Conservative principles, by the Northern States, the representatives of extreme democratic or Jacobinical principles, was fraught with peril to Canada, and the sure forerunner of hostile demonstrations against the British Provinces in N. America. No man, not an idiot, could ever have entertained any doubts of this.

Indeed, and to do them justice, the party whose cause the Globe in Upper Canada, espoused, and which the Rouges in the Lower Province advocated during the raging of the war, never made secret of their ultimate intentions, or of their bitter unquenchable hostility to every thing British, and of their determination to be avenged for the action of the Queen's Government in the Trent affair. Not that the hatred of the North dates only from that occurrence; for even at an earlier period of the contest, its organs were filled with threats of the bloody execution to be inflicted on Canada when the "cruel war was over;" and of exhortations to the Irish to join the ranks of the army, in order that, having learnt the art of soldiering, and having aided the North to trample out the liberties and State Rights of the Southerners, they might be able to turn their practised hands against Canada, and inaugurate a revolution in Ireland, sure of the hearty sympathies, and the covert, if not open and visible assistance of the victorious North. This was, in substance, and from the very first outbreak of the war, the language of all the Northern organs of opinion, of all that section of the press which addressed itself more particularly to the Irish readers: this was the staple of the arguments urged by all the Fenian papers in Ireland, in favor of the Northern cause, and in favor of enrolments in the Northern army. Luby's paper suppressed last autumn, all the Fenian journals in Ireland, all the Fenian sympathizers in the States warmly espoused the cause of the North as against the South: because the least intelligent of them could not fail to perceive that the triumph of the North was the triumph of the Revolution and of democracy. Mr. Greeley's "distinct approval" of the late Fenian raids in Canada is the most consistent act of his public life, in perfect harmony with all his antecedents, and should have been foreseen long ago, even by one so short sighted and credulous as our now astounded Toronto contemporary.

Colonel Grotty, the Fenian, was examined at Courtenay on Tuesday, but was remanded. Testimonies have been sent to St. Louis for witnesses. The general opinion is that he will be convicted.