

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1861.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

We have not yet received confirmation of the tidings, which reached us last week, of the fall of Gaeta. This however is an event which may be hourly looked for.

All is still confusion in the United States.—Mr. Lincoln's inaugural address abounds with words, but gives no clear indication of the course he intends to pursue towards the seceding States, if the latter remain firm in their attitude of independence.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.—In consequence of this religious and national festival falling this year on Passion Sunday, its celebration will be postponed to Wednesday, the 20th inst., on which day the usual Procession will take place, and the customary High Mass will be sung at St. Patrick's Church by His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal. The Societies are making the necessary preparations to honor "The Day" in a manner becoming Irishmen and Catholics.

The Quebec Advertiser is offended with us for attributing "annexation" proclivities to the Protestant Reformers of Upper Canada; but at the same time our cotemporary admits that the events now transpiring in the United States are destined to have important results upon the Canadas. We take this opportunity of more clearly explaining our views.

We believe in the "Annexation" proclivities of the Protestant Reformers of Upper Canada, because all the political acts of the party which follows Mister George Brown, and bows down before the Globe, point that way. The terminus towards which Clear-Gritism in Upper Canada, and "Rougeism" in this section of the Province are hastening, is ultra-democracy—a political order incompatible with British connexion, because irreconcilably at variance with all those monarchical traditions, and institutions which it has been our good fortune hitherto to have retained, in consequence of our still forming a portion of the British Empire.

We should be glad if our Quebec cotemporary could convince us of error, by assuring us of the loyalty of the "Clear-Grits" or "Protestant Reformers of Upper Canada. The page of history is, however, open before us, and therein we read that Protestantism in the religious order, whilst the latter is as inevitably the forerunner of Caesarism or despotism—and we have no reason for believing that the Protestants of to day differ greatly from their spiritual predecessors of the XVI century. The existence, and formidable proportions of Orangeism in Upper Canada, strongly confirm our worst suspicions as to the disloyal tendencies of a large section of the extreme anti-Catholic party in that section of the Province; for Orangeism, in its origin, and in its essence, is Whiggish or disloyal. Catholics, as in Ireland in '98, may for a short season, and under extreme provocation, form a monstrous alliance with Jacobinism or Whiggery—which is but a diluted and rapid form of Jacobinism; but the natural affinities of Orangeism are with low radicalism, and the Orange dish-clout is the legitimate ensign of regicides, revolutionists and sans-culottes all over the world. It is the boast even of Protestants, that it is Protestantism that is revolutionising Italy.

It may be objected that in the North of Ireland the Orange body has always been profuse of its professions of loyalty, and active in upholding the authority of the British Sovereign.—This however is but an accident, for Orange loyalty is but the form in which Orangemen express their hatred of Catholicity. Orange loyalty proceeds, not from any love to monarchical institutions, or from any ill-will towards demagoguism, but from its antipathy to Popery, and its attachment to "Protestant Ascendancy." A republican or democratic form of government, which should ensure the stability of the latter, and give the means of persecuting Irish Catholics, would be more in favor with the children of Cromwellian soldiers, and the descendants of the Puritans, than are the present monarchical institutions of Ireland—which restrain in a great degree the malevolence, and put a curb on the fanaticism, of Irish Orangeism.

And it is for this reason that, in Canada,

especially, loyalty is no less the interest, than it is the duty of all Her Majesty's Catholic subjects. We do not ignore the intolerance towards Catholics of which, in the last century, the British Government was guilty, nor would we seek to extenuate its guilt in this respect.—But truth and justice compel us to admit that here in Canada, Catholics have not only no cause of complaint against Great Britain, but that they would be guilty of rank ingratitude, were they not thankfully to acknowledge the many benefits which they derive from British connexion, and from being subjects of Queen Victoria—amongst which benefits we may justly reckon that of being protected by the Imperial legis against the anti-Catholic fanaticism of the "Protestant Reformers," and their "natural allies" the Orange ruffians who, true to their instincts, insulted their guest, and the son of their Queen. We deplore sincerely, we condemn as heartily as any one can condemn, the foreign policy of the Russell-Palmerston Cabinet, and the encouragement which, to curry favor with Protestant democracy, our actual rulers give to Italian Jacobinism. But we remember the proverb that even "the devil is not so black as he is painted;" and we do not therefore deem it to be incumbent upon us, as Catholic journalists, to revile the government under which we live—the government which protects our persons and our properties, which not only respects our religious institutions, but is their best material guarantee against the assaults of the "Protestant Reform" party—as the vilest government in the world. Its faults against Catholicity, and these are great and numerous enough God knows, proceed not from the too great predominance of either the monarchical, or the aristocratic element in its Constitution, but from the inability of either the one or the other to resist the encroachments of the democratic element, which is always and everywhere intensely Protestant, and intensely anti-Catholic. We should be fools, indeed, worse than fools, were we by any means to encourage a policy tending to weaken those links which connect us with the British Empire, and to which we are indebted for those religious liberties which we enjoy in a degree unknown to any country in the world. In Canada, in Lower Canada especially, the most perfect religious liberty obtains both for Catholics, and for Protestants; and if we but compare the position of the former in this country, with that to which in professedly Catholic countries—such as France under Louis Napoleon—they are reduced, we must do justice to the wise liberality of the Government of Protestant Great Britain. Here no impertinent civil functionary presumes to criticise a Catholic Bishop's Pastorals; here no saucy "Jack-in-Office" interferes with the nomination of our Pastors, or attempts to curtail our rights as parents over the education of our own children; and no where has Queen Victoria better right to expect loving and loyal obedience from her subjects than she has in Catholic Lower Canada. Had Catholic Ireland been but dealt with, as we have been dealt with, Ireland would not be as she is to-day, the vulnerable point in the British Empire; nor would the latter have occasion to dread either insurrection from within, or invasion from without.

But were the "Clear-Grit" policy triumphant, were the "Protestant Reformers" of the West to obtain the upper hand, all this would be altered. Civil and religious liberty are incompatible with "Protestant Ascendancy." Freedom of education, i.e., the right of every man, as against the State, to the absolute and exclusive control over the education of his own children, would give place to a slavish and degrading system of "State-Scholism," which the "Protestant Reformers" of Upper Canada have long labored to set up in their section of the Province, and which Protestant democracy has already successfully established in the United States.—The sacred rights of property, the right of every man to give and bequeath of his own for religious and charitable purposes—implying of course the co-relative right on the part of religious and charitable institutions to hold all property so given and bequeathed—would be trampled under foot; and Catholic Lower Canada would soon be in a mere wretched condition than that to which "Protestant Ascendancy" has reduced Catholic Ireland. Here then—independent of the precepts of our religion—are weighty reasons why Catholics should be loyal British subjects, why they should strain every nerve to oppose the policy of the "Rouges" and the "Protestant Reformers;" and why they should carefully abstain from every word or act that might give color to the accusation ever urged against them by their adversaries; of being disloyal subjects of Queen Victoria, because Catholics. Some amongst the latter there may be, who are indeed so; and if such there be, we would recommend them—since no one compels them to reside in Canada and under the British flag—to leave the country as speedily as possible, and to entrust themselves to the tender mercies and liberal policy of a Louis Napoleon, a Victor Emmanuel or of a Yankee "Know-Nothing" mob. The Catholic, however, who voluntarily makes Canada his dwelling place, is bound by interest, in honor and in conscience, to be a loyal British subject, and to maintain in their integrity the ties which bind us to the British Empire.

THE BOSTON PILOT.—We must confess ourselves surprised as well as pained at the captious spirit of our Boston cotemporary, and the unjust comments by him made upon a short paragraph which appeared in the TRUE WITNESS of the 15th ult., with reference to the Catholic Priesthood of the United States. In our issue of the above date, we quoted the Boston Pilot to the effect that—"all of the seven Roman Catholic Archbishops, and more than half of the forty-nine Bishops of the United States are of European birth, while not one hundred of the 2,235 priests are natives of the United States;" and we prefaced our extract with the words "The Boston Pilot complains that." It is of the word "complains" that our Boston cotemporary now complains—for, contends the latter, "we would not complain of the fact," that, of the Catholic clergy of the United States nearly ninety-six per cent are aliens by birth.

We cheerfully retract the word "complains," and urge in extenuation of our offence, only this—That we could not deem that a Catholic citizen of the United States could record the extraordinary fact that not five per cent of the Catholic priests of that country were natives—that, in short, the United States had to depend almost entirely upon foreign countries for their Catholic clergy—with either pleasure or indifference. Were we compelled by the inexorable logic of statistics to record a similar fact of Canada—were we obliged to admit that nearly ninety-six per cent of our Catholic clergy were foreigners—we should do so with extreme regret; we should have before our eyes a fact upon which we could not look on with indifference; in which we should certainly, as Catholics, find no cause for rejoicing or exultation; and one therefore which we should record faithfully as journalists, but with profound regret, as Catholics. It is to us of Lower Canada a subject of congratulation, and of legitimate pride that, notwithstanding the inferiority of many of our physical conditions to those of the United States, we furnish Priests and Religious, not only in ample sufficient numbers for our own wants, but for the wants of our less fortunately circumstanced brethren in the faith. Not only here we require not to import ninety-six per cent of our Clergy from Europe, but we can afford to send Priests and Nuns to all parts of North America, to civilize and Christianise the Protestant communities of the United States, and to carry the Gospel to the remote settlements of Red River, and to the further shores of the Pacific. We rejoice and give God thanks, because this our country is able to furnish so abundantly to the wants of the Church; we should mourn were it with us, as it is with the United States—a country which, in spite of all its material advantages, its wealth, and far larger population, is indebted to foreign countries for all its Archbishops, for more than half of its Bishops, and for nearly ninety-six per cent of its Clergy; and our sin against our cotemporary consists in this, that we attributed to the Boston Pilot the same sentiments as those with which we are animated; and that we believed therefore, that it was with regret, and not with either indifference or exultation, that he announced the significant fact of the incompetence of the Catholic population of the United States to furnish a sufficient number of ecclesiastics for its own wants. Now, he who records a fact not exultingly, and not indifferently, "complains," or records it with regret; and this only was what we meant by our employment of the offending verb; but since it has given offence, we at once retract it, and recognise that the fact, that the Catholics of the United States are, in spite of their wealth, opportunities and numbers, indebted to foreign countries for nearly ninety-six per cent of their Clergy, is a matter, either of perfect indifference, or of rejoicing, to the Catholic editor of the Boston Pilot.

Our cotemporary condemns our logic in concluding from the extraordinary fact above cited—a fact without a parallel in the annals of Christendom—to the unfitness of the moral atmosphere of the United States to promote a vigorous Catholic life. We cannot here admit our error. If Lower Canada could not furnish five per cent of its Catholic clergy, if for the remainder we were obliged to have recourse to the United States, or to any other foreign country, we should at once admit that there must be something deleterious in the moral atmosphere of Lower Canada, something most fatal to Catholic life, of which the most certain and encouraging proof is numerous vocations to the priesthood, numerously replied to. Our cotemporary cites the case of an army, and we have no hesitation in admitting the relevancy of the comparison.—We should have our doubts of, nay a thorough contempt for, the military qualities of a nation whose army was officered almost exclusively by aliens, and which could not furnish from its native population five per cent of the Generals, Colonels, and Captains, it required for the defence of its territories. We may be pardoned therefore for doubting the moral salubrity of the United States' atmosphere, since, from amongst its numerous Catholic population, it can not furnish one hundred members of the priesthood.—If the Pilot urges that the great majority of the

Catholic laity of the United States are of foreign birth, and that the numbers of foreign priests are only in proportion with the numbers of the former, we ask—what then has become of the descendants of those thousands and tens of thousands of Catholics whom the stream of European emigration has, since the commencement of the XIX. century, deposited upon your shores?—Have they not fallen victims to your "common schools;" and an anti-Catholic system of education? If, on the other hand, the Pilot contends that the native born Catholics in the States are numerous, that the descendants of Catholic immigrants have, as a general rule, remained faithful to their ancestors' religion—whence comes it, we ask, that so numerous a body can furnish so few officers to the army of Christ? How is it—that with all your material advantages—you cannot furnish five per cent of your own clergy? Is not the cause to be found in your moral atmosphere, or, to use the words of Dr. Brownson, "in the conditions of American social life, which prevent the call from reaching the candidate, or the candidate from following the call when it has reached him?"—Brownson's Review, Oct. 1860, p. 500.

This is the Reviewer's explanation of what he calls "an extraordinary condition of things;"—whilst by the admission that "history furnishes the name of no nation in which the faith was fairly established and preserved for any length of time, unless by the aid of a native clergy—with the single exception of Japan"—p. 498—he virtually admits that unless this "extraordinary state of things" be speedily changed, the Catholic faith cannot be expected long to survive in the United States. Our deductions from the facts cited by the Pilot are similar to those enunciated by Dr. Brownson. We believe that the youth of the United States are so intent upon the things of this world, so fervent in the worship of Mammon, or the All-mighty dollar, that either the call, or vocation to the priesthood, never reaches the ears of those towards whom it is addressed, or that reaching them, it is disregarded for the things and riches of this world.—"Inclination"—we again quote from Dr. Brownson—"urges them to hasten on and join their comrades who are already in the thick of the exciting scramble for distinction and gold"—p. 501—and in the midst of the confusion, "the thoughts of a vocation to the priesthood" are soon forgotten. This is the explanation of the phenomenon given by a distinguished American, and we see not how we can be amenable to the strictures of the Boston Pilot for having adopted it.

In justification of our reprobation of those who encourage the emigration of Catholics to the United States, we refer the Boston Pilot of March 1861, to the Boston Pilot of November 1860, and to the latter's criticisms upon the invitation of Governor Banks to keep "Thanksgiving Day." In that article, and speaking in the name of his fellow-Catholics, the Pilot asked:—

"Where are our privileges? Do they consist in the fact that we have to pay for godless schools, in which our holy religion is assailed, and our ministers are ridiculed? Are we to be thankful, because, after having contributed our quota to the support of schools on which we cannot rely, we have to pay again for the benefit of a sound and healthy education for our children? This is a glorious country, indeed. But it is a fact that the worst feature in the Church and State emigration is most prominent, and disgustingly hateful in the presumptuous interference of the State to force us to give our children up to teachers who are the enemies of our faith. We shall never be guilty of such monstrous abuse of our understanding as to acknowledge as a blessing from heaven what in fact is one of the most powerful machines made to play against the spiritual welfare of a Catholic generation."

This is our justification. The country in which Catholics are treated by the State as the Boston Pilot pretends that Catholics are treated by the United States, is not the place to which the stream of Catholic emigration should be directed; and no honest man should refrain from warning the Catholics of Ireland against exposing themselves to "one of the most powerful machines made to play against the spiritual welfare of a Catholic generation."

Le Canadien entertains a profound, almost Protestant, aversion for logical abstractions, amongst which he classes our objection to his argument in favor of Confederation as an easy means of obtaining a separation betwixt Upper and Lower Canada. We retorted that separation must—if Upper and Lower Canada are to enter into the Confederation as separate and distinct States—precede, logically and actually, or in point of time, the Canadien's proposed Confederation. To this our Quebec cotemporary replies in his issue of 27th ult.:

"Throw aside your logical and chronological subtleties. We have to deal with the most vulgar and practical affairs, with a Legislative act which shall simply and simultaneously decree, without embarrassing itself with your logical antecedents—Confederation and Repeal of the Union, or if you please, Repeal of the Union and Confederation, and it will be thus decreed in spite of all chronological logic to the contrary.—Canadien 27th Feby.

Decreed! but by whom? There is but one body conceivable that has, or can have the right so to decree, in so far as Lower Canada is interested; and that body is the Legislature of Lower Canada. The Legislature of the United Ca-

nadas is no doubt morally competent to decree the repeal of the existing Legislative Union; but—and herein lies the whole pith of our logical subtleties "arguties"—we deny altogether its right to legislate for the future of Lower Canada as a separate or distinct Province. No Legislative body, not the exclusive Legislature of Lower Canada, has, or ever can have, any right to dictate as to its future; and the first indispensable steps towards the realisation of a Confederation, of which Lower Canada shall form a distinct State, are these:—

1. The Repeal, *per et simple*, of the Legislative Union.
 2. The summoning of a Lower Canadian Parliament, which alone is morally competent to discuss the conditions of a Federal Union, of which Lower Canada is to form a separate State.
- Our objection, therefore, so far from being a mere logical quibble, involves one of the most essentially practical things in the world, as we have already endeavoured to impress upon the mind of our Quebec cotemporary. Confederation implies a voluntary compact entered into by several independent States, and is incompatible with the idea of a political union imposed by a force *ab-extra*; as would be the case were a Federation imposed upon Lower Canada, either by a decree of the Imperial Parliament, or by a decree of the United Legislature of the two Provinces. In the latter, a majority might well be in favor of the Canadien's plan, although of the Lower Canadian representatives, the great majority were opposed to it; and therefore is it that we of Lower Canada should insist, as an indispensable preliminary towards Confederation, upon having all the details of that measure submitted to, discussed in, and ratified by the distinct or separate Legislature of Lower Canada. But this implies the actual repeal of the Union, and the restoration of the ancient Parliament of Lower Canada.

This right will be enjoyed by Nova Scotia, by New Brunswick, by all the other Lower Provinces of which the proposed Confederation is to be composed; with what show of reason, or of right then can it be refused to Lower Canada? Are the Lower Canadians, in very deed, an "inferior race" that they should not be allowed the same control over their future destinies, as that enjoyed by the people of the Lower Provinces? Is it for the independent Legislature of New Brunswick to discuss the terms upon which it shall become a member of the proposed Confederation; and shall not we insist that equal privileges be accorded to us of Lower Canada? Why should our future destinies be submitted to a body of which it might happen that two-thirds of the whole were in favor of a Confederation, and two-thirds of its members for Lower Canada strongly opposed to such a measure? How could a political system formed under such auspices, and imposed upon Lower Canada by a force *ab-extra*, be termed a Confederation?

"The Federal compact" says Mr. Tache himself—"le pacte fédéral—shall be based—repealed—upon the perpetual and inalienable delegation of the powers of the separate governments of the Provinces to the general government"—p. 241. (The italics are our own.)

But until Lower Canada be again by Repeal of the Union, established as a separate Province, until she again enjoy her own separate Legislature, the above basis for a Federation cannot even be laid. It is, we hope, evident to the Canadien, that since the New Brunswick Legislature cannot delegate or alienate any of the powers of Nova Scotia, so also the Legislature of the United Canadas has no moral right to delegate or alienate any of the powers of the separate government of Lower Canada. The very first condition of a Federal Government, as laid down by M. Tache, in the passage cited above, exacts as a condition *sine qua non*, a separate government, and a separate Legislature for Lower Canada, before the plan of a Confederation, in which Lower Canada is to enter as a separate State and upon terms of perfect equality with Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, can even be discussed. All that our existing united Legislature is morally competent to perform is, to repeal the Union; this effected, the rest must be left to the free and independent action of the several independent or separate States of which the Confederation is subsequently to be composed.

In a word—"Confederation" implies a voluntary compact entered into by Lower Canada, with the full exercise of all her powers as a separate government; and she cannot exercise those powers until she have a separate government, and a separate Legislature of her own, to delegate to the general or Federal Government, such portion of her powers as she, for a consideration, may deem fit to part with. This is what we meant by asserting the logical and chronological antecedence of Repeal of the Union; for until the Union be repealed, Lower Canada cannot have her separate government; and until she has her separate government, there cannot even be concerned any political organism morally competent to make delegation to a Federal Government of any portion of her powers as a separate Province. This is no logical subtlety, but a very stubborn fact.