

REMITTANCES TO ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES.

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Montreal, March 1853.

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 15, 1853.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The infamous "Ladies' Bed-Rooms Inspection Bill" has received its quietus for this Session at least; and for another year, the Catholic ladies of England may retire to rest, satisfied that the privacy of their bed-rooms will not be violated before morning, and without any dread of being aroused by some obscene beast of a Government Commissioner, breaking into their sleeping apartments, and hauling them out of their beds in order to subject them to his filthy queries. Catholic parents, too, who contumaciously persist in sending their children to Catholic schools, may keep their minds easy for another twelvemonth. The Law of Protestant England, does not, as yet, authorise any man, to insist upon having private interviews with their daughters, or to take indecent liberties with them, in their bed-rooms.

It was on the 22nd ult. that Sir Robert Inglis, in the House of Commons, moved the second reading of Mr. Chambers' Bill, in a speech compounded of about equal parts of misrepresentation, and ignorance of the nature of vows: "In Bavaria," he remarked, "it was not possible for a nun to take vows for life; and vows were there obliged to be taken for a limited period." How any man, who knows what is meant by a vow, could have uttered such trash is incomprehensible—"Not possible to take vows for life!"—Why—who can prevent a nun—or any one else—from taking vows for life, or for as long a period as she thinks fit? A vow is a compact betwixt God and the vower alone; over which no third party can, by any possibility, have any control, either in the way of compulsion, or of releasing from the binding force of the compact. Vows can be by no means affected by any human law; they derive not their force from any earthly tribunal; nor can any authority, save that of God, absolve from them, or modify their conditions. How then can any law of Bavaria, or any other country, prevent a nun from taking vows for life, or for any period that the vower may think fit to assign? The utmost the State can do is, to ignore such vows, and to attach no penalty to their violation; but to prescribe, or limit the terms of a vow, exceeds the might of all the tribunals and of all the princes, of the earth. Until dissolved by God Himself, speaking through His organ,—the Catholic Church—the vow remains in force, and, in spite of all human legislation on the subject, remains for ever binding on the vower. But Sir R. Inglis has evidently no very clear notions of what a vow is, or whence its binding force is derived.

Mr. Phinn moved as an amendment to the motion—"That the Bill be now read a second time," that all, after the word "That," be omitted; and the space filled up by the words—"be referred to a select Committee." The House divided on the question—"That the words proposed be left out, stand part of the question," when the numbers were—Ayes, 178; Noes, 207;—majority against the second reading, 29. Mr. Phinn's motion—"That the Bill be referred to a select Committee," cannot come up before the 20th inst., which is tantamount to a postponement for 6 months. When it does come up, Mr. Lucas intends giving notice of the following, as an amendment upon Mr. Phinn's motion:—

"That it appears to this House that no ground has been laid for inquiring into the propriety of altering the law for the protection of the inmates of conventual establishments, by showing a prima facie case that the existing law is insufficient for that purpose; and that it is therefore inexpedient to appoint a select committee to consider of new regulations for the better protection of such inmates."

Almost every speaker during the debate was opposed to the Bill, if that may be called debate, where the argument was all on one side. Mr. Phinn opposed the measure, because:—

"It was as unconstitutional a measure as had ever been submitted to the House; and because he felt humiliated that any lawyer should have submitted to the House a measure that began with a falsehood. He denied any one to adduce a single case to support the allegations of the preamble. He opposed the measure because it was destructive of all liberty, and would be fatal to the constitution of the country, by the fearful powers which it conferred upon the Commissioners."

"Mr. L. Whitt opposed the measure as a piece of unmanly, and cowardly legislation. If the Hon. Baronet—Sir R. Inglis—insisted the suppression of the Nunneries, why did he not adopt the more manly course of introducing a bill with that avowed object?"

"Lord John Russell spoke still more strongly against the Bill, denouncing it as false in the allegations of its preamble, and as ruinous to personal liberty. 'Pass this Bill,' said the noble lord, 'and where would be the safety of our houses?'—Words Parliament authorise any Commissioner appointed by the Crown—without even an affidavit to found the proceedings upon—to break into every man's house at his pleasure? This would indeed be setting up a general tyranny; and he had therefore no hesitation in voting against the Bill, as he considered it a measure which was not founded on any proved circumstances; which began with a preamble not justified by facts, and which went on to provide enactments, which, so far from being favorable to civil liberty, were eminently hostile to it;—and which, while hostile to the liberty of all communions,—Protestants as well as Catholics—would be most offensive to the latter, and could only tend to exacerbate the feelings of the inmates of religious houses." Several other members gave expression to the same sentiments; and though plenty voted for the second reading, not one was found bold enough to attempt to defend the principle involved in the Bill."

We have dwelt thus long upon this measure, because it is one in which the Catholics of Canada are deeply, personally, and immediately, interested. If Nuns may be detained in convents against their will, in England, the same possibility exists everywhere

else, and therefore here. If it be sound logic in England to argue because, "there may"—therefore "there are"—and to assume the duty of the Legislature to provide a remedy, the logic is equally good, and the duty of the Legislature equally clear, in Canada. No reason can be assigned why the nominees of the Crown should be empowered to make domiciliary visits, and break into every man's house at pleasure, in one country, and not in another. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that had Mr. Chambers' Bill passed at home, some similar measure, conceived in a similar spirit, and provided with similarly abominable enactments, would have been introduced here. It behoves the Catholics of Canada therefore to be on the alert; to be determined beforehand to tolerate no such legislation; and to let their Protestant fellow-citizens understand in plain, but unmistakable language, that, whilst they pretend not to interfere with the domestic privacy of the latter, they will allow no interference whatever with their own—that, so long as Catholics can raise an arm in self-defence, they will, at all hazards, protect their dwelling houses from intrusion—their convents from desecration—and their sisters and daughters from insult, outrage, and pollution.

There is little, besides the proceedings in Parliament, of any interest. The Camp at Chobham—where 10,000 real, live, soldiers are under canvas, and go through reviews, and sham fights—is a source of intense amusement to John Bull, and has proved a formidable rival to the Great Industrial Exhibition at Dublin.

By the *Arabia* we learn that Turkey had formally demanded the intervention of the Four Powers: if this be true, war seems certain.

THE INQUEST AND ITS RESULTS.

"Much cry and little wool." For upwards of a month the Coroner's Jury have been sitting, during which time, folio volumes of evidence have been written down, and no end of contradictory assertions have been sworn to as Gospel truths. No wonder then that no mortal Jury could decide upon a verdict; or that the melancholy circumstances which led to the slaughter of so many citizens, on the evening of the 9th ult., should still be enveloped in an, apparently, impenetrable mystery. We know now, just what we knew a month ago; and no more—That there was a lecture—a crowd—shouting—a struggle with the police—firing from the people inside the church, upon the people outside—and firing of the troops upon both insiders and outsiders. The question—who is to blame? is as far from having received a practical solution as ever.

The Jury was impanelled to ascertain how—Walsh, Gillespie, Clarke, McGrath, Hutchison, and others came by their deaths on the evening of the 9th of June. But this question involved a good many others; and it was the hearing of all the contradictory evidence upon these, that occupied so much of the time of the Court. Was there an attack on Zion church, during the lecture? If so, was it of such a nature, so serious and violent, as to justify the firing of the audience upon the crowd outside? Who ordered the troops to fire? The Mayor, or the officers? Or did they fire without orders? These were the questions upon which the Jury really had to form an opinion.

That there was no necessity for the firing of the troops, was a subject upon which, from the beginning, all were agreed; the difficulty was to decide upon whom to lay the blame of this firing, and its melancholy results. Whenever anything untoward occurs, there must always be a victim; somebody or other, something or other, must be sacrificed as a peace offering to popular fury; and popular fury is never very nice as to the choice of its victim; only a victim it must have. In this case the Mayor was pitched upon for the victim, and not without reason. Thrice had he been elected Mayor, almost unanimously; and his conduct during his Mayoralty, had, upon several occasions, elicited the highest praise. Popular feeling was tired of singing the Mayor's virtues. Besides, the Mayor was a Papist—"a rabid Popish Mayor," our Bytown Protestant calls him; and had still further rendered himself obnoxious to a considerable number of the Protestants of Montreal, by refusing the use of the City Concert Hall to Gavazzi and his friends. When to all these atrocities, it is added,—that, of the victims of the firing of the troops, the majority were Protestants, we at once perceive how naturally "popular fury" pitched upon the Mayor as the proper victim. That he ordered the troops to fire, was at once put down as a fact not to be contradicted; and, if not broadly asserted, it was, at least, covertly insinuated, that in so doing he—the Mayor—had been actuated by motives of religious antipathy; that—to quote our Bytown friend—"defenceless Protestants had been massacred by a rabid Popish Mayor." This was the color attempted to be given to the Mayor's conduct in more than one quarter. Indeed, the *Montreal Gazette* hesitates not to call the 9th of June, the Montreal St. Bartholomew's day; the part of Charles the IX enacted, of course, by the Hon. Charles Wilson.

But the true explanation of the vituperation of which the Mayor has been made the subject, is to be found in the fact, that the balls of the soldiers' muskets took effect upon the bodies of Protestants. Had it been otherwise—had the Mayor, under precisely similar circumstances, ordered the troops to fire—but, had the victims been only Catholics, and mere Irish—we say it deliberately,—and every body who knows any thing of the tone and temper of the Protestant press of Canada will agree with us—had the victims of the soldiers' fire been mere Irish Papists, so far from having been abused, the Mayor would have been "very much applauded, for what he had done." We should, in that case, have heard nothing of motions by members of the Corporation for removing his pic-

ture from the City Council Hall: On the contrary, we rather suspect that so strong would have run the current of Protestant opinion in his favor, that the best artist on this continent would have been engaged to take a back view, by way of variety, of the patriotic Mayor; to hang up in the same Hall along side of the front view; and that Daguerrotypes of the sitting member would have been hawked about the streets as memorials of the zeal, and prompt determination, evinced on a trying occasion by the high-spirited, and never-enough-to-be-praised Mayor of the city of Montreal.

But they were not all Irish Papists that were shot. Musket balls are no respecters of persons; and thus that which would, under other circumstances, have been called a "Providential dispensation," has come to be looked upon as a "Massacre of defenceless Protestants by a rabid Popish Mayor;" and the conduct of the latter to be stigmatised as "culpable and unjustifiable" by one section of the Jury. "Ah! gentlemen, what a pity for the Mayor and the troops, that they were not all Romanists who were shot by the fire of the military. You would, in that case, have besmeared the one with your praise, and adjudged a vote of thanks to the other."

We do not intend to pronounce any opinion on the conduct of the Mayor, of the officers, or of the troops. There are so many discrepancies in the evidence that it is impossible to decide, whether the Mayor cried out to the troops to fire, or whether the latter, mistaking the voice of some of the surrounding crowd, for the voice of the commanding officer, fired without orders. The conduct of the officers and men of the 26th will yet become the subject of investigation; and it does not become any one to anticipate the decision of the proper military tribunals. A similar reason induces us to refrain from making any comments upon the conduct of the Mayor, during the riots.

But we cannot pass over in silence the unwarrantable attempt, on the part of the minority of the Jury to brand the Mayor, Mr. Charles Schiller, and several of the other witnesses, with the crime of perjury, because their depositions are contradictory of, and contradicted by, the depositions of other witnesses examined. No doubt there are great discrepancies in the evidence adduced on the Inquest, and that many of the depositions are irreconcilable with certain well known facts: but why—unless it be that the evidence of the Mayor and of Mr. Schiller was at variance with the prejudices of our intelligent jury men—they should have singled out the above named gentlemen, as especially reprehensible, we do not understand. In Mr. Schiller's evidence there is nothing but what is perfectly reconcilable with the evidence of Mr. Esdaile's witnesses, as we shall yet take occasion to show; and in the long and rigid examination to which the Mayor was subjected, we have looked in vain, for anything to justify the insinuations of perjury contained in the finding of the minority. The Mayor is a Catholic, and so is Mr. Schiller; and we suspect that it was rather a hatred of Popery, than a love of truth, that dictated this extraordinary finding. But we shall have more to say upon this subject on another occasion.

As to the Charge itself, we have no hesitation in saying, that it is a very partial or, one-sided document; and that we do not believe that it was the work of the Coroner himself, whose impartiality we have already noticed. Whether we look upon it as containing an exposition of the law, or a statement of facts, it is unworthy of respect. It is not only not supported by, but, in many of its allegations, it is directly opposed to, the evidence given on the inquest. It asserts an attack on Zion church when there was no attack proved; it asserts too, that the man Walsh—who was most wantonly, and brutally murdered, if ever a man in this world was murdered—was "prominent amongst the assailants" of the church. And yet, if one fact was clearly established during the whole investigation, it was this:—That Walsh, an unarmed man, with neither stick nor stone in his hand, was shot in the back, whilst running away, and again, whilst staggering from the effects of previously received wounds, by some dastardly ruffian, who, we are very sure, would never have dared to look his victim in the face, if both had been equally well armed. But we must postpone until next week, our further remarks upon the Gavazzi tragedy, its antecedents and consequences. One thing would we beg our readers to bear in mind—that, by the evidence, it appears that the rioters were inside the church, as well as outside; and that, of the "worshippers," as they call themselves, in Zion church on the evening in question, some were beastly drunk, or to employ an oriental metaphor, were "in a decided state of beer."—More of this anon.

Since our last issue, three more deaths, from wounds received on the evening of the 9th of June, have occurred; of Thomas O'Neil and James Lewis, who were shot by the troops; and of Donnelly, shot by the party who rushed out of Zion church.

A Court of Inquiry, upon the officers and men of the 26th regiment, presided over by Col. D'Urban, is now sitting.

Sergeant Foy, of the Quebec police, has commenced legal proceedings against the editor of the *Quebec Chronicle* for defamation of character; damages laid at £500.

We regret to have to report several acts of rowdy ruffianism on Tuesday evening; two or three individuals were attacked and brutally ill-used. What the mischief are the police about, that the scoundrelly perpetrators are not handed over to justice?

A collection was taken up on Sunday last in St. Patrick's Church, in aid of the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum. The amount exceeded £200.

CORONER'S INQUEST CONCLUDED.

On Thursday, the first witness sworn, was a garrulous old woman in a bran new suit of clothes who called herself Mrs. Brown, but who, if report may be believed, is the real true and identical "Mrs. Harris." This witness occasioned much merriment in court by the extraordinary manner in which she gave her evidence, and by her fondness for detailing little domestic experiences—such as that she had a brother, a Captain at Gibraltar; that she was the daughter of an old officer in the 42nd; and similar interesting revelations, in the Mrs. Cluppin's, and Mrs. Saunder's style.—The court had at last to interpose and beg of the dear old lady not to "talk so much." In substance, her evidence was to the effect—that she was much afraid of the low, wild Irish—one of whom knocked her bonnet over her eyes—that it was one of those who gave orders to the troops to fire, and that he said it was the "Holy Virgin." The witness at last grew restive, and objected to the number of questions, and manner in which, they were put to her; but her objection was overruled by the Coroner. After the reading of her depositions, the old lady made a very handsome apology to the Irish, for any remarks of hers that might have appeared offensive. "She did not wish to insult the Irish people."

David Dean—Piano Forte maker—When returning from the lecture, saw a conflict between two parties in Fortification Lane; saw a rush towards McGill Street, and heard shots fired. Heard the words "Fire Fire," as he thought, by the Mayor. Heard an officer give the words "make ready, present;" and heard the same command repeated to the upper division.—Saw an officer come up after the firing, and give orders to a sergeant about "firing by files," in case it were necessary to fire again. [Witness was asked the question repeatedly how this officer was dressed, and each time, swore most positively that he was certain that this officer had on a blue frock coat. Afterwards, having most likely learned that this was impossible, he tried to shuffle out of it, by saying he meant that he was certain that an officer spoke to the sergeant, but that he only believed that he had on a blue coat. The gross prevarication, to use the mildest term, of this witness, excited the disgust of every person who heard him.] The witness then pretended to identify Lieut. Quilty who was in court, in plain clothes, as the officer that gave the command to fire. Saw several officers on the ground that evening; to his witness's belief, they had all blue coats. Saw an attack on the church; was as certain about the attack on the church, as he was that the officer who gave orders to the lower division had on a blue frock coat. A ball struck the church, but did not know whether it made any mark or not. The witness was then subjected to a smart cross-examination by Mr. Devlin, and having evidently learnt that it was impossible that the officers in command of the troops on the evening of the 9th inst., could have had on "blue frock coats," he endeavored to shuffle out of this difficulty, though, as we said before, he had previously most positively sworn—not once or twice only—but repeatedly, that he was certain that the officer whom he saw giving orders to the sergeant in the lower division had on a blue frock coat. The witness was allowed to leave the box, no one apparently thinking it worth while to detain the fellow any longer.

On Friday, the Jury proceeded to view the body of Thomas O'Neil, who had died the same evening from the effects of a gunshot wound received on the evening of the 9th ult. Dr. Reddy gave evidence as to the nature of the wound.

Julius Scriver, deposed that, immediately before the troops fired, he heard some one near the lower division give the words "ready, present;" but could not say by whom they were given; they appeared to be given as an ordinary military command. Heard no command given to the upper division.

Robt. Wylie Hutchinson—sergeant of City Police—Was on duty on the evening of the 9th, and heard the Mayor read the Riot Act. Before he had done reading, some one cried "Fire Fire," and immediately the troops fired; was certain that these words were not uttered by the Mayor. Witness dreaded, though the police had driven the mob back, that the latter might return and beat the police. At the time the people fired from the church, the police had driven the mob back, and the latter were running away. Witness did not see any attack made on the church.

Wm. Donohue—Water Police—Heard the Mayor read the Riot Act. Did not hear the Mayor cry "Fire Fire," but heard some one else cry out those words. Did not hear Lieut. Col. Hogarth give any commands to the troops to fire. People in the vicinity of the troops were urging the soldiers to fire. Did not know the names of these persons, or of those who were standing near the Mayor.

On Saturday the examination of Wm. Donohue was continued.—There was no crowd about the Mayor whilst he read the Riot Act, but there was much confusion immediately after, and the Mayor might have used the words "Fire, Fire" without witness hearing them. In his opinion, it was Mr. Morrison the lawyer who urged the troops to fire; saw Morrison run from the lower to the upper division, and also another respectable looking man in a black coat who looking over the soldier's shoulders cried out "Fire." Could not get hold of this man to arrest him.

Richard Sandilans—Water Police—Heard the Mayor read the Riot Act, but did not hear him cry out "Fire, Fire," or words to that effect, though he, witness, must have heard these words if uttered. Saw Mr. Morrison the lawyer come up to the Mayor, and heard him say, "Do you see that Mr. Mayor? They are murdering the people!" At an early part of the evening, had been sent to drive a lot of people from Latour Street, who murmured at being so treated. Heard somebody say, "We are strongest; we will go into the church; we will have him out?" Did not know if these words had any reference to Gavazzi.—At all events the threats were not carried into execution, as the mob were beaten back by the police. Did not hear Lieut. Col. Hogarth give the orders to fire; must have heard him, if the orders had been given.

Samuel Medill—Water Police—Heard the Mayor read the Riot Act; but did not hear him say "Fire, Fire." Did not see the crowd with whom the police had a scuffle, fire any shots in the direction of the church.

Henry L. Sharing—Heard some one cry out "Fire, Fire," but was certain that it was not the Mayor.

On Wednesday, Mr. Morrison denied having carried arms, having called upon the people inside the church to turn out, or having cried out to the troops to fire.

S. Medill was re-examined, but nothing new was elicited from him. The coroner then refused to hear any more evidence, and delivered the following charge.