

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1868.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

MARCH - 1868.  
Friday, 27—The Precious Blood.  
Saturday, 28—Of the Feria.  
Sunday, 29—Passion Sunday.  
Monday, 30—Of the Feria.  
Tuesday, 31—Of the Feria.  
APRIL - 1868.  
Wednesday, 1—Of the Feria.  
Thursday, 2—St. Francis de Paul, C.

REGULATIONS FOR LENT.—All days of Lent, Sundays excepted, from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday included, are days of fasting and abstinence.

The use of flesh meat at every meal is permitted on all the Sundays of Lent, with the exception of Palm Sunday.

The use of flesh meat is also by special indulgences allowed at the one repast on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays of every week from the first Sunday after Lent, to Palm Sunday.—On the first four days of Lent, as well as every day in Holy Week, the use of flesh meat is prohibited.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Lord Mayo has brought forward the Reform Bill for Ireland: its chief feature is a proposal to lower the qualification for the franchise from ten to five pounds for the boroughs. McKay has been tried for, and convicted of treason, and has been sentenced to 12 years penal servitude. Mr. Gladstone has given notice in the House of Commons of his intention to move a Resolution that the House go into Committee on the Irish Church question. The Continental news is of little importance.

The impeachment trial in the United States is of course the great topic of the day, but people seem inclined to take it very quietly. The chances seem to be strongly against the President who will probably be deposed, as a political nuisance to the revolutionary party now in the ascendant.

In our Legislature it seems that the question of determining upon the line for the projected intercolonial railroad will be the great business of the Session.

THE BRIGHT CURE.—Amongst the many remedies propounded by the state doctors for pacifying Ireland, and restoring prosperity to the cultivators of her soil, that which, in certain quarters has been most favorably looked upon is the "Bright Cure," of which the main ingredients are these:—

That the State should buy up the lands of the large Irish proprietors, and resell in small lots to suit customers; to the tenant farmers of Ireland, who would thus be transformed from tenants into landlords themselves.

This plan has been objected to because, according to some it involves an act of spoliation; but waiving the question of right or wrong, and supposing the plan to have been fully carried out, we are at liberty to question its expediency; we may be permitted to doubt whether it would after all of itself permanently allay Irish disaffection, and promote the material prosperity of the people of Ireland, who are, it must be remembered, and who long will be, essentially an agricultural people, with no other industry but that connected with the cultivation of the soil, and the development of its resources, to fall back upon; and therefore dependent for their material well being upon the prosperity of agriculture, and the development to their highest power of all the resources of their land.

It is evident at first sight that, of itself and unconnected with other measures, Mr. Bright's plan would not reach the religious and political sources of Irish discontent. It would not abate the nuisance of Protestant Ascendancy; neither would it restore to Ireland her autonomy or national independence. Now certainly the Established Church, the anti-Catholic legislation which the maintenance of that institution necessarily entails, and the lack of national independence, are to be counted amongst the causes of that disaffection towards Great Britain which so generally prevails amongst Irishmen.

It is also more than doubtful, to say the least

—whether Mr. Bright's plan, even if fully carried out, would at all promote the agricultural prosperity of Ireland, or tend to the development of the latent resources of her soil, or in other words—whether it would tend to promote the material prosperity of the new owners and cultivators of the land of Ireland.

For it is again evident that, unless the large landed estates of Ireland be broken up into very small parcels indeed, so as to give almost every Irishman resident in Ireland proprietary rights in the land, there would still be left a large number of the people in precisely the same position as that which they are in to-day—that is to say, without an acre of land which they can call their own, and with no other industry, save that of agriculture to fall back upon. The application then of "The Bright Cure" necessarily presupposes the breaking up of the land into very small lots—or in other words a very minute division and subdivision of landed property, and the creation of a "peasant-proprietorship."

But such division and subdivision of the soil is incompatible with a good system of agriculture, and the development of the natural resources of the country where it obtains. The plan has been fully tried, and wherever it has been tried it has proved ruinous to the general agricultural prosperity of the country; and in the long run most ruinous to the small landed proprietors in particular. It has delivered them, it is true from the oppression of a landlord and the exactions of the rent collector; but in revenge it has crippled them with debt, and handed them over, hopeless and helpless to the tender mercies of the usurer. 'Tis but the old story over again. "Out of the frying pan, into the fire."

We know that this is a view of the system of small landed properties, and of the effects of minute subdivision of the soil, not generally taken by democratic writers upon the subject; but we can support these views by very high, and quite unexceptionable evidence, because the evidence of one who is notoriously the advocate of the Revolution and democracy: who is the most prominent opponent of the existing social system of Europe, and the warmest sympathizer amongst foreigners, with the people of Ireland against the British landed aristocracy—in a word of M. Louis Blanc, the great Apostle of Socialism, the uncompromising enemy of landlordism, and of aristocracy in every conceivable aspect; of bourgeois aristocracy, no less than of what remains of feudal aristocracy.

M. Louis Blanc is, as of course our readers know a Frenchman, and for years has made France his special study. In France again the system of the partition of the soil amongst a number of small landed proprietors has been fully tried, and under the most favorable conditions: for if there be a country in the world, in which from its peculiarly favorable conditions of soil, climate, and position that system has a chance of success, that country is France. Now it must also be borne in mind that the system of small landed proprietorship in France is the great and most permanent work of that French Revolution of which M. Louis Blanc is the poet-laureate; to glorify which, and to extol whose blessings, has been the cherished labor of long and industrious years. Now what does M. Louis Blanc testify as to the results, the inevitable or logical results, of the division of the soil of France amongst a large number of small, independent landed proprietors? Let us open his well-known work entitled "Organisation Du Travail."

Our readers then—many of them at least—will be surprised to learn on such unimpeachable testimony, that amongst the most prominent of the consequences, the inevitable consequences, of this sub-division—*morcellement*—of the soil amongst a large number of small, but independent landed proprietors, are these:—

- (1) That the cultivators of the French soil are, as a class, poorer and more wretched now than they were before the Revolution of '89;
- (2) that, on the whole, the people of France are worse fed than they were in the middle of the eighteenth century; and,
- (3) that the wealth of the country, in so far as produced from the soil, is as compared with population, steadily on the decrease.

The present peasant owner of the soil is unable, from want of capital, to cultivate it properly, or to extract from it even the most meagre remuneration of his constant toil. Here is his state as described by M. Louis Blanc:—

"In the meantime what do we see? Every small proprietor is a day laborer; master at home for two days of the week, during the remainder he is the serf of a neighbor."

"Here, in fact, is how things pass. Such or such a cultivator who owns a few poor acres of land, which, cultivated by himself, yield at the best some four per cent, hesitates not when the opportunity presents itself to round off his property. This he does by borrowing at ten, fifteen, twenty per cent—for if credit be scarce in the rural districts, in revenge it is not so with usury. The consequences may be guessed. Thirteen milliards—this is the debt with which landed property in France is actually burdened; which means that side by side with a few financiers who have made themselves masters of the industry, arise a few usurers who have constituted themselves the lords of its soil.—*Organisation Du Travail*, c. 3.

Again, here is another fact testified to by the same authority, which we throw out for the consideration of the advocates of small landed proprietors:—

"Amidst upwards of Five Millions of families at-

tached in France to agricultural pursuits, are reckoned Two Millions, Six Hundred Thousand, comprising about Thirteen Million individuals whose maximum revenue source reaches the sum of 60 francs"—about eight dollars and forty cents.

Here again is another sketch, another appreciation of what "peasant proprietorship" has done for the owners and cultivators of the soil:—

"Had this strange system under which we reckon proprietors only by the miserable patches *parcelles*, which are ever mul splying on a soil torn to pieces—no other effect than that of drying up the milk in the nursing bosom of the State, it would be enough, too much. But here the moral life of the people is as much interested as its material life. What matters it that the peasant owes some acres, if an absurd system of sub-division—*morcellement*—and of isolated cultivation deprives this ownership of all that would help to connect it in the mind of the cultivator with ideas of security, of well-being nobly won, of dignity and independence? What profits it to him that he is no longer the serf of a landlord—*seigneur*—if he be the serf of the money-lord, of a limb of the law, of a village squire, or of a usurer? Is it not to be feared that his heart turn sour, that he become savage in temper, that shut up as in a citadel within his wretched domain where he reaps naught but sorrow, and over which grasping hands will soon be outstretched, he become used to mistrust and hatred. Can you wonder that this Frenchman this merry-laughing, this songster in days of old, no longer laughs!"

This, then, upon the showing of the foremost champion of the French Revolution, is what that Revolution has done for the French peasant in elevating him from the position of a vassal, to that of an owner of land. Let us see what it has done for the population, generally, of France.

On the people of that country, generally, the material effect of the subdivision of the soil amongst peasant proprietors, has also been very injurious. They are worse fed than they were before the Revolution of '89. Again we quote from M. Louis Blanc's work:—

In Paris, before that Revolution, the average consumption of animal food was reckoned at 68 kilogrammes; to-day it is only 55; and the writer adds:—

"What is certain, from the general statistics of the kingdom published in 1837 by the Ministry, and cited by M. Raudot (de l'Yonne) is that the average annual consumption of animal food is for every person, not even 55 kilogrammes, but only eleven kilogrammes 35, which amounts to about one ounce per diem."

Again:—  
"In his *Précis de la Géographie Universelle* by M. de Brun, the number of peasants who are deprived of animal food except on certain feast days, is not reckoned at less than 20 millions."

This is owing to the constant and rapid decrease of all kinds of animals fitted for food; a decrease not only in quantity but in quality, for this is the necessary consequence of subdivision of the soil, and of peasant proprietorship.

And again:—  
"In 1788, when its population was but 25 millions, France reaped, one year with another as many Millions of pounds of grain, as it did when its population had increased to 32 millions."

And, agast at the prospect of ruin before him, and which, under the system of peasant proprietorship is inevitable, the writer cries out:—  
"Marvel then, if you can, that they who grow the grain are reduced to eat black bread, and that the vine has no wine to promise to those who cultivate it!"

To sum up—M. Louis Blanc shows from statistics, that whilst the food consumers in France increase about 5 per cent in the course of every ten years, the production of articles of consumption diminishes at the rate of 8 per cent during the same period: and this he shows is the direct consequence of the breaking up of the soil into small properties, and its distribution amongst a large number of peasant proprietors. Land so divided and held cannot maintain cattle, and we know that without cattle there is no meat: again without cattle there can be no manure: and without manure, the wheat grower cannot expect a good crop, since he can only take off the soil, what he himself puts of organic matter into the soil, in the shape either of seed, or of manure. In a word M. Louis Blanc concludes:—

"Under what aspect soever we may please to consider the problem we must always arrive at this conclusion:—  
"That in respect to agriculture, division is destruction."

Therefore we conclude—not to a sort of communism in land, with M. Louis Blanc, who will have neither large landed proprietors, since these, according to him, are fatal to liberty, nor small landed proprietors for these are fatal to agriculture and the development of the natural resources of the soil—but to this:—  
"That Mr. Bright's plan, irrespective of its merits or its demerits in so far as the rights of the present legal owners of the soil of Ireland are concerned, would, if carried out, be ruinous to the agriculture of Ireland, and the development of the resources of its soil: since it would necessarily create, and is indeed intended to create, a small peasant proprietorship in Ireland, which the experience of France shows is ruinous to agriculture, ruinous to the peasant proprietors themselves, and deeply injurious to the material and moral well-being of the entire community."

We have not the presumption to propound these views as our own: but respectfully tender them to the careful consideration of those who cry out—"why does not the British Government adopt, in whole or in part, Mr. Bright's scheme for setting at rest the Irish question." Against the English democrat, whom however M. Louis Blanc would denounce as a bourgeois aristocrat, we cite the carefully studied, and lucidly expressed views of the French Socialist, whom no

one can accuse, or even for a moment suspect of any sympathy with the landlords of Ireland, or quasi feudal British aristocrats. If M. Louis Blanc be right, then is Mr. Bright nothing better than a charlatan, or quack: and his "Cure" as bad as the *Bright's Disease*.

"I thought it my duty to say openly; to say at Vienna—to say at Turin—to say at public meetings in this country that I thought Italy had a right to choose her own form of government. I believe the time has come—not when treaties shall be thrown aside, but when the treaties which are not in conformity with the wishes of the inhabitants of the countries that are ruled should be altered and to a certain degree annulled, in order to make their governments conformable to the people that are ruled." \* \* \* \* \* But with regard to all these countries I think the time has come, when the people, the inhabitants will have to be heard. If their governments are conformable to the wishes of the people they will be confirmed and maintained; if they are not conformable to the wishes of the people, we shall see armies led by skilful commanders, and under the direction of able ministers, who will take care to make the Governments conformable to what they know to be the national wish." (Lord Russell before the Cobden Club at the Star and Garter Inn, London, July 20th 1866)

England is in an undignified state of alarm. "The greatest nation in the world" is afraid. Twenty-six millions of Britons, who "never can be slaves" tremble before the Fenian (secret) society. Army and navy are in an abnormal state of excitement. Policemen, detectives and that scourge of modern society—the political informers are at a premium: Irishmen in general, but Irishmen without the brogue and with a nasal drawl, in particular, are at a discount. Undignified though it may appear, England is afraid. Perhaps it is a bad conscience that prompts this fear. Perhaps it is the memory of past misdeeds done in the flesh, that robs the heart of moral support. "*Mens conscia recta*" is the two-thirds part of valour, and England is afraid. His Worshipful the Mayor and the Peers and Peersesses who at Southampton petted Garibaldi when he arrived to dispossess and it possible to destroy the Papacy, now find to their dismay certain Irish Garibaldians extemporized at home after the latest Italian model, this time with the avowed object of despoiling and if possible destroying—not the Papacy, but British rule in Ireland. These generous Britons who so bountifully supplied Garibaldiism with arms and ammunition and money wherewith to carry on its unholy warfare against Rome, are now beginning to find their own devices turned against themselves, and to learn to cost, that iniquity is often punished in this world *in kind*.

Those English ladies, who in boudoir and drawing room scraped the snowy lint for Guiseppe's wounded heel, and dropped the silent tear for their exploded *bogus* hero, will doubtless feel no conflict of duties when the irresistible logic of facts impels them to a similar expression of sympathy towards the Irish Garibaldians. England is afraid—Dean Close says with a greater fear, than when the First Napoleon threatened England with destruction. Be that as it may, England is afraid. She who has preached so eloquently to continental nations the incendiary doctrines of "modern liberalism"—she who through her ex-premier has declared that "armed revolution" is the legitimate remedy for "national discontent"—she who through this same statesman's incendiary speeches, gave countenance and moral to the Italian revolutionists, she who was the first to propound the doctrine of the autonomy of nationalities, she it is now who finds those doctrines turned against herself; she it is who in her turn finds "armed revolution" knocking at the gates of her largest cities in vindication of the rights of "national discontent"; she it is who now complains of countenance given to her enemies by nations at peace with her; she it is who trembles before the spirit which she has herself evoked, and which she seeks in vain to allay. Iniquity ever brings its own punishment. The aiding and abetting revolution, has brought retribution to her own doors.

It is hardly just to blame the pupils and not the masters. "Wo to him by whom scandal cometh," is as applicable in the temporal as in the spiritual order—in the political as in the religious life. The Fenians are blameworthy, but the mill stone is for their instructors. The influence for good or evil of men in power can never be over estimated; and when we consider the attraction that superior talents and even wealth have for the "vulgar herd," we can understand how dangerous those qualities are in the hands of unprincipled men. It had indeed been well for England had Earl Russell weighed long and carefully the possible consequences of his ultra-Radical doctrines enunciated so persistently against Rome. It might indeed be a small matter for a British statesman to lend his high sanction and the whole weight of English diplomacy to the despoiling of "the weak man of the Vatican," under the insane plea of "nationalities;" but it was a silly blunder to do so in the very hearing of a people, who have for so many years bewailed the suppression of their national autonomy. When *Æsop* beheld the man who had been bitten by a mad dog, showing a crust of bread dipped in the blood, to the first cur he met, as a specific against the consequences of the wound, he warned him not to let the other cur of the city see him, "else we shall all be eaten up immediately." Had Earl Russell pondered well this

table, he would have seen how dangerous the enunciation of doctrines meant only against the Papacy is, when made in the hearing of neighboring discontent. The whole tendency of British sympathy, and British diplomacy, and British influence has undoubtedly been, of late years, against Rome. No doctrine too monstrous, no principle too revolutionary to be urged against the Holy See. But, unfortunately for England's internal tranquillity, there were apt listeners within ear-shot, who proved equally apt pupils in adapting those same doctrines, and those same principles to their own peculiar case. If Fenianism has sprung up and thrived of late years on British soil, it is in no small degree due to such speeches as that of the noble lord at the Cobden Club, at the Star and Garter Inn, London.

The whip for the scandalized, but the "mill-stone" for the scandalizer.

SACERDOS.

FIRE MARSHAL.—With reference to the appointment of a competent person to fill this important, and newly created office, we find the following in one of our Canadian journals, over the signature of A. Somerville:—

PROSPECT.—MR ALFRED PERRY.—By a recent Act the Government is to appoint a Fire Marshal in Montreal. Local newspapers are recommending Mr. Alfred Perry for this magistrally responsible position. A Fire Marshal armed with high powers, seems requisite in Montreal to detect incendiaries. Let me add my word of commendation in favor of Mr. Alfred Perry of Montreal. I have known him nine years, and have seen him on occasions of extreme difficulty, peril and trial. I have known the most distinguished Captains of Fire Brigades in Great Britain for nearly forty years, but never saw I one to excel or equal Alfred Perry in sagacity of plans, promptitude of action, daring courage. He was in France, a stranger in Paris a few years back. He saw a fire; could not resist the impulse to join in; ascended to a giddy height apparently swathed in flames; got the configuration under control, before a crowd of acclaiming witnesses, one of whom was the Emperor Napoleon III. A medal presented to Mr. Perry, attests the Imperial approbation. But I estimate his hero of Firemen for the position of Fire Marshal on higher grounds than personal courage. He has a large mental grasp, quick perceptions, philosophical sagacity, thorough knowledge of human nature, especially Montreal human nature.

ALEXANDER SOMERVILLE,  
The Whistler at the Pough.

As citizens of Montreal we can heartily endorse the above: and there can be no doubt that the City will have reason to be thankful if the nomination of Fire Marshal be conferred on Mr. Perry. He is a most active and efficient public servant: and will we are sure, if appointed, be the means of detecting and bringing to justice some of those scoundrels to whose nefarious practices many of the fires are to be attributed. In the interest of the whole community, except the aforesaid fire-raisers of course, we sincerely hope that Mr. Perry may get the appointment.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.—Throughout the Province the Day was honored by our Irish fellow-subjects. At Toronto from respect to the memory of their lately deceased President the National Society abstained from the usual procession, but in all the Catholic Churches of the city, Mass was sung in honor of the Feast, and the religious ceremonies were duly observed.—At Ottawa there was a Procession and a Banquet in the evening, and at Quebec the customary celebrations took place. Everything passed off in the greatest order, and the fact that in Montreal not a drunken man was to be seen, has elicited a great many eulogistic notices from the press.

On our sixth page will be found an interesting communication from an esteemed correspondent, on the attitude of the present ruler of France, towards the Italian revolutionists.

Mr. John Doherty has kindly consented to act as agent for the TRUE WITNESS in Peterboro and vicinity, Subscribers in arrears will please favor Mr. Doherty with a call.

THE SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO.

UNSECTARIANISM.

(To the Editor of the True Witness)

In Ontario we hear a great deal about the unsectarian character of the Public Schools, and if you except Roman Catholics from the list of sectarians, there is, no doubt, much truth in the assertion. "The Public" Schools, we are assured by the chief superintendent, "are based upon christianity and christianity pervades the whole system";—that is christianity as understood by the different sects, and as distinguished from the Catholic Church, or to use Dr. Ryerson's own words—*Bible Christianity*. All the different sects hold the Bible as the organ of Gods will to man, hence provision is made in the law to have the Bible introduced into Common Schools wherever practicable; that is wherever the presence of Roman Catholic children do not render it imprudent to do so. Roman Catholics do not admit the Bible to be the organ of God's will to man. With them the Church is the sole organ or teacher; the Church is to the Catholic what the Bible is to the different sects, and even more; the Church is the sole teacher; all other voices but her's are the voices of men. Hence it clearly follows that Bible Christianity should not be the basis of a School system or its pervading spirit, for Roman Catholics; it follows equally clearly, that it is and can be the only one which recommends itself to non-Catholics in general.

But this Bible Christianity basis is not the only feature of the Public School system which makes it so acceptable to Protestants in gener-