

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 6, 1860.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE mail by the *Anglo-Saxon* contains some details of the long-talked of interview of Louis Napoleon with the Prince of Prussia at Baden, but of the real business transacted betwixt these august personages we have no reliable information. All the German princes were present, much to the disgust, it is hinted, of the Emperor, who had proposed to himself a quiet friendly talk with the Prince of Prussia, without the intervention of witnesses. We are told also, that just as the "Empire is peace," so this Baden interview is the prelude to a Continental millennium, when the sword shall be beaten out into a reaping hook, and nation shall no longer rise up in arms against nation. All however is mere speculation; nothing positive is known of what transpired betwixt the "Man of Destiny," and the mob of crowned heads who assembled to do him homage. Perhaps however we shall ere long have our German Question, just as we have had our Italian Question, and are apparently destined to have our Irish Question, or "La Question Irlandaise."

For this is the title of a new pamphlet announced for publication in Paris—whether with, or without the sanction of our illustrious ally who can tell? Its tone may be judged of from a passage from the Dedication, wherein the writer addresses himself to the Great Britain in the following significant terms:—

"My dear John Bull!—It is one of your oratorical habits to profess the warmest sympathy for suffering peoples. You willingly applaud revolts if they occur outside your territory; and the struggles of national independence, provided they do not attack British authority, produce eloquent admiration on your part. You subscribe at this moment for Garibaldi."

"What am I to think of these liberal manifestations? According to certain people, when you are affected by the misfortunes of a nationality and you cry 'Bravo!' to a revolution, it is less through goodness of heart and generosity of sentiment, than from calculation and an acute perception of your personal interests. I know, on the other hand, what you would reply to anybody who should speak to you of the Hindus you bound to the cannon's mouth, or of the Ionians, to whom you refuse annexation to Greece. With that baughty assurance which characterizes you, you would say, 'Inauze are the people who do not appreciate the blessings of British civilization.' Did not one of your Lords proclaim that Great Britain is the light of nations and the preservation of the world?"

"However that may be, I take you at your word. You admit that people ill governed have a right to require reforms, or to dispose of themselves as they please. I do not require more."

"This fact being established, I will speak to you in a friendly tone, of a people who have more right to your interest than Hungarians, Poles, Lombards, Roumans, Sicilians, or Neapolitans."

"It is the Irish of whom I wish to speak. Do not exclaim. You will permit me, I hope, were it only for my own instruction, to study 'the blessings of English civilization' in Ireland. Where shines 'the light of the world' have I not a right, and even a duty, to enlighten myself?"

"And, moreover, if by chance there are some reforms to be accomplished—small or great—would you not be glad that I had attracted your attention to that neglected part of the United Kingdom? There are certain services which friends owe each other. Friendship obliges, and, as one of my classics says,—

"Un veritable ami toujours dur, inflexible, Sur nos fautes jamais ne nous laisse paisible." I use to you consequently, my dear John Bull, that of right belongs the dedication of these pages.

"Your frank neighbour,
"JOHN OF PARIS."

This question of "oppressed nationalities" is certainly an embarrassing one, and one with which the "Great Britain" were he endowed with a very moderate amount of foresight would be loath to meddle. Sicily may have been sadly misgoverned by the Neapolitan Bourbons, and Sicilians may have many a sound grievance to urge against the Kingdom of Naples. But however oppressive may have been the latter towards its island neighbor, there is no wrong than can be urged against it, which has not its counterpart, aye and more than its counterpart, in the British Isles; there is no act of cruelty, no injustice of which Naples has been guilty towards Sicily, which has not been equalled, if not exceeded in cruelty and injustice, by British legislation towards Ireland; and assuredly in Sicily there is no such monster grievance, no such crying iniquity, as the Protestant Church as "By Law Established," nor are there betwixt the Sicilians and the Neapolitans those ineradicable differences of race, language, and religion which distinguish the Catholic Celt from the Protestant Anglo-Saxon who bears rule in Ireland. These are facts which "John of Paris" will no doubt bring out in strong relief; and from these facts as his premises he may perhaps—who can tell?—draw the inference that, if armed insurrection is a holy thing in Sicily, it would be no less holy

in Ireland; that if a Garibaldi has claims upon the sympathies of the friends of freedom and civilization throughout the world, the champion of Irish independence, who should raise the standard of Ireland's nationality, and who should do for Dublin, what the Sicilian filibuster has done for Palermo, would merit the thanks and applause of the civilized world. Should the Parisian pamphleteer adopt this line of argument, it is certain that his facts, or premises, could not be contradicted; and it is not easy to see with what arms the Great Britain, who shouts for Garibaldi, would attempt to refute his argument, or inferences, from these facts. It may be urged however that the "Great Britain" is specially privileged, and altogether superior to those moral laws by which ordinary mortals, and mere Papists are bound.

From Sicily itself we have little important to report. Garibaldi is apparently organising, and is certainly enforcing with great severity the law of the conscription upon his Sicilian subjects; it is also said that he is preparing to carry the war across the Straits to the mainland, and to advance through Calabria upon Naples.

The domestic news is of no interest. A warm discussion upon enlistment for the Pope in Ireland elicited from Mr. Cardwell the confession that Government was utterly powerless in the matter; that it had done all it could do to prevent the emigration to Italy, but that it had hitherto failed in bringing home an illegal act to either priest or layman.

The arrival of the *Great Eastern* at New York, after a voyage of 12 days from Southampton, forms an epoch in the history of navigation. Though the time occupied by her trip may at first be deemed incredible to her powers, it must be remembered that she was out of trim, and that her bottom was very foul. But her powers of endurance were severely and satisfactorily tested during the voyage by a smart gale of wind she experienced on the 19th; and it may now be assumed that the question of her merits both as to speed and safety, has been conclusively settled. We regret to learn that she encountered an accident in port, whereby severe injury was inflicted upon the port paddlewheel, which will occasion an additional expenditure of some thousands of dollars. It is said to be in contemplation to bring her round to Portland, where the authorities have been at much trouble and expense in preparing a suitable berth for the monster ship. From New York we hear of the sad fate of a wretched apostate of the name of McNemany. The unhappy creature upset his lamp, and was burned to death, in consequence apparently of being in such a condition as to be unable to take care of himself.

The Prince of Wales may be expected in Montreal about the 24th of next month.

On Monday last, His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal commenced his Pastoral tour to the different parishes and missions of his Diocese.

AN "ENGLISH CATHOLIC."—Over this signature in the *Kingston Daily News* a very silly person naively makes confession of his ignorance, and asks the following question, which of itself affords conclusive proof of the truth of his previously made confession. He asks whether the Catholic Church considers the B. Virgin:—

"an omniscient and omnipotent being, who can at all times, and at the same moment of time, listen to and attend to the prayers of so many millions of the faithful scattered over this mundane sphere?" [A vile phrase that some "mundane sphere" why could the doctored creature not say "earth" at once like a Christian?—or, in other words, whether she is considered as possessing the attributes of God?]

These questions are easily answered; though after all it is doubtful whether it be not too great a condescension on the part of a Catholic—not an "English Catholic"—to notice such silly twaddle at all. We reply however thus:—

The Catholic Church—meaning thereby the Church in communion with the Apostolic and Roman See—does not consider the B. Virgin to be either "omniscient or omnipotent," or ought but a finite though highly exalted creature, who owes all she has to her Creator, the One Eternal Infinite God Whose name be blessed for ever; and in like manner the Catholic Church would account it rank blasphemy to attribute to that highly exalted but still finite, or limited creature, any one of the attributes of her infinite and unlimited Creator.

We may believe of the Saints reigning with Christ, and of His Blessed Mother in particular, that they are, that she is, no longer subject to, or limited by, the same conditions of time and space as those by which we of this "mundane sphere" are limited—without attributing to the Saints and the Blessed Virgin, any one of the attributes of God, of the Absolute and Unconditioned; we may believe them to be even as the angels, and as therefore possessed of faculties far transcending our limited faculties, without believing them to be either omniscient or omnipresent.—As we have before had occasion to remark when treating of this subject, the infinite is not a multiple of the finite, but its contradictory. Infinite knowledge, or omniscience, differs from finite knowledge—no matter to whatsoever extent the latter may be carried—not in degree, but in kind; and bearing in mind what a mere speck or

atom this "mundane sphere" is when compared with the rest of the visible creation, we might without any violation of these principles, attribute to the Saints a knowledge of all "mundane" transactions, without any approximation towards the absurd hypothesis of the "English Catholic," that we attribute to them "omniscience and omnipotence." It is possible—such are the degrading tendencies of heresy—it is possible that Protestants entertain such a low and erroneous idea of God as to assign to Him no higher attributes than those which Catholics predicate of His glorified creatures;—but, if so, this convicts, not Catholics, but Protestants, of idolatry and gross religious error; it is a convincing proof we say, not that Catholics think too highly of the Saints, but that Protestants think too meanly of God.

If an "English Catholic" merely betrays his ignorance of the true meaning of words when he assumes that a knowledge of what transpires in this finite "mundane sphere," is identical with omniscience, or infinite knowledge, in the concluding paragraph of his communication he approves himself to be not only an ignoramus, but scurrilous and blasphemous: as for instance when he associates the name of Venus with that of the Blessed Virgin Mother; of her who in her chaste womb held Him Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; of her from whose virgin teats the Word made flesh, the Incarnate God, imbibed nourishment. "A beautiful improvement upon the vulgar worship of Venus, which was invented in the olden times to gratify man's yearnings," is the sentence passed by this silly and scurrilous blasphemer upon the honor which the worshippers of an Incarnate God render to her of whom God took flesh; and we believe that it would be beneath us seriously to enter into controversy with such a one, and upon such a topic. It is indeed but in strictest harmony with the eternal fitness of things, that he who entertains such low grovelling ideas of God as to attribute to Him nothing more than what Catholics attribute to the Saints, His creatures, should also fall into most revolting error respecting the Incarnation, its due place in the Christian system, and her who was the fellow worker with God in that sublime mystery. Their opposition to the *cultus* of the Saints as taught and practised by the Catholic Church, betrays the false notions of God and His attributes entertained by Protestants; and in like manner their opposition to the *cultus* or religious honors rendered by the Catholic Church to the Blessed Mother of God, in particular, betrays their disbelief in the doctrine of the Incarnation, their incapacity to realize the fundamental truth that the "Word was made flesh." In fact, all heresies, or errors imply a misconception or denial of that sublime mystery, and are best refuted in terms of the Blessed Virgin—that is to say, by defining or assigning to her, her true place in the grand scheme of man's redemption; and no one who truly comprehends the doctrine of the Incarnation as taught by the Catholic Church and as underlying her entire system—even though he refuses his assent to that doctrine—can fail to admit the admirable harmony, the logical coherence betwixt it and the "Mariolatry," or "Saint Worship," which ignorant but conceited Protestants denounce as idolatry.

Instead therefore of disputing with our Anglican friend, we would content ourselves by earnestly recommending to his serious meditation the words of the Nicene Creed, as contained in his own Liturgy:—

"Who was Incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary."

ANGLICANISM AND DIVORCE.—In our discussions with our Protestant cotemporaries upon the Marriage Question, we have often insisted that, even by Anglicans, the indissolubility of the marriage tie was recognised; and that, in theory at least, the Anglican, as well as the Catholic Church, taught that the law of Christ relative to the sexual unions of all baptised persons was "one with one, and for ever." Always have we given credit to the Anglican Church for having, in spite of its Protestantism, retained certain fragments—highly valuable even though only fragments—of Catholic truth.

That in so doing, we have only done justice to Anglicanism, is manifest from the language held by the Protestant Bishop of Toronto at the late Synod of the Anglican clergy. According to the *Echo*—an Anglican journal—the reverend gentleman is reported as having thus delivered himself on the Marriage Question, and the Divorce law:—

"The law of the Church of England, which is the law of Christ, is that marriage is indissoluble, and on this foundation the law of marriage, which is the oldest, the greatest, and the most universal of all social institutions, has ever rested in England. It was thus settled at the Reformation, on the basis of Holy Scripture, and the just restraints by which it is guarded, appear to have been in harmony with the entire sense of the public almost to the present time."

We accept the reverend gentleman's declaration in so far as the law, or theory of the Church of England is concerned; but we must be permitted to express our respectful surprise at the other portions of his remarks. If the Reformation settled anything as to the marriage question in England, it was to declare it no longer indissoluble; and in practice, the law of the land on the same question has ever been opposed to that which the Protestant Prelate tells us "is the law of Christ." It was, as every schoolboy knows, impatience of the restraints imposed by Catholicity upon the Sovereign's headstrong passions that led to his rupture with Rome; and if in any one thing the spirit of the Reformation—whether as it developed itself in Germany or in England—and its essential opposition to Catholicity, be more prominent than in another, it is in its opposition to the ancient law of the Church—"One with one, and for ever." The fathers of the Reformation on the Continent expressly

taught that polygamy was lawful; and, in England, the sanction of a Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury was never wanting to the amorous and lascivious Prince desirous of breaking the bonds which united him to a disagreeable partner.

But whatever may have been the case, it cannot be denied that in England of to-day, the law of the land expressly recognises the dissolubility of marriage, and must therefore be opposed to that other law which a Bishop of the Church of England affirms to be the law of Christ. Now the law of the land, and the law of the Church of England, being thus, upon a most important question, diametrically opposed to one another, it is of some interest to note to which of these laws so opposed—that of the land, or that of Christ—the dignitaries and Ministers of the Church of England yield allegiance. It is—as throwing strong light upon the claims of the latter to a divine origin, and to be a branch of Christ's Church upon earth—important to enquire whether in dealing with the matrimonial unions of its own professing members, the Church of England shapes its course according to that which it proclaims to be the "law of Christ," or according to "Acts of Parliament," directly opposed to that divine law. The theory of the Church of England is, we admit, that marriage is indissoluble—what, we ask, is its practice?

Were its practise in conformity with its theory upon the question of marriage; did its Bishops and Clergy who confess that, by the law of Christ, marriage is indissoluble, and that therefore the human law which sanctions divorce is essentially anti-Christian, make their acts to conform with their professions, the second marriages of divorced persons would not be celebrated in, or sanctioned by the Church of England. Its Ministers would boldly refuse to admit to the participation of its sacraments persons living in a state of legalised adultery; and the Bishops of the Church would issue positive injunctions to their clergy, never to sanction by their presence the second marriage of a person whose first partner was living, even though he or she might plead an Act of Parliament, or the sentence of a Court of Law annulling his or her previous marriage; for even a Protestant must admit that it is incompetent even for the Imperial Parliament to repeal, or set aside the "law of Christ." Thus at least would the Church of England act, were it conscious of its divine origin, were it truly a member of Christ's Church, or were it anything but the creature of the same authority which, in direct opposition to the law of Christ, enacts that marriage is not indissoluble.

But the Church of England does none of these things, but on the contrary tamely submits itself to what it knows to be the anti-Christian legislation of the land. Not only do its ministers refrain from hurling their anathemas at the heads of persons, its professed members, availing themselves of the legalisation of divorce to contract fresh sexual unions during the lifetime of their first partners, to whom, by Christ's law, they had been indissolubly united; but they, the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, take an active part in the violation of the Divine ordinance by assisting at, and giving the nuptial benediction to, impure and adulterous sexual unions, contracted in defiance of that law which the Anglican Bishop of Toronto assures us is "the law of the Church of England, which is the law of Christ." The Apostle bids his converts from amongst the Gentiles not to trouble themselves with scruples about meat and drinks, but for conscience sake to eat whatsoever is sold in the shambles, without asking questions. The bishops and clergy of the Church of England seem to give an extended application to the Apostle's precept, one to which indeed he never could have dreamt that it would be stretched.—In practise, the doctrines of the Church of England with respect to its divorced members coming before it to ask its sanction and its nuptial benediction to their new sexual unions is—"Marry every couple that present themselves before you, and ask no questions for conscience sake." It is thus that our Anglican friends seek to reconcile their Christian theories with their anti-Christian practices; and to keep on good terms both with the law of Christ and the law of the land, though the two are mutually contradictory, and irreconcilable with one another.

If on the one hand this monstrous inconsistency, this humiliating subjection to human law when opposed to Divine law—this glaring violation of the precept which teaches that it is better to obey God than man—pains and shocks us, yet it is not without its advantages to the cause of Catholicity; for it tends to drive conscientious and reflecting men into the bosom of that Church whose theory and whose practise are in strictest harmony; and which never hesitates, and never has hesitated, to brave the fiercest wrath of man, whenever man's law is, or was, opposed to Christ's law. Never—such men argue with themselves—never would the true Church of Christ, the true Catholic Church, lend her sanction, even in appearance, to an infraction of the law of Christ; never would she refrain from denouncing, and from thrusting back from her altars, should he have the temerity there to present himself, the disobedient son who, in defiance of the law of the Church, which is the law of Christ, should dare to avail himself of an Act of Parliament repugnant to the Christian law of marriage; never under any circumstances would a divinely instituted society or Church countenance, by the presence of its ministers, the violation of the fundamental law of Christian society, "one with one and for ever." And yet the Church of England as "by Law Established," does all these things; the conclusion is irresistible, that she cannot be the Church of Christ. The sum of the matter is this:—

The law of Christ asserts that marriage is indissoluble.

The law of England is the direct contradictory of the law of Christ, inasmuch as it asserts that marriage is not indissoluble.

The Church of England recognises, in theory, the law of Christ with respect to the marriage unions of its members, but in practise humbly conforms itself to the anti-Christian law of the land.

BROWNSON'S QUARTERLY REVIEW.—The July number of this admirable Catholic periodical, containing articles on the following subjects, has come to hand:—

- I. The Papal Power.
- II. Dr. Arnold and Catholic Education.
- III. The Tyranny of Progress.
- IV. Politics at Home.
- V. Literary Notices and Criticisms.

In his first article the *Reviewer* returns to a work published some years ago by M. Gosselin, the Rev. Director in the Seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris, upon the origin of the temporal power of the Popes in the Middle Ages. The Rev. M. Gosselin, in his work, contends that that power formed part of the *jus publicum* of Christendom, and was conceded to the Popes by its several sovereigns. The *Reviewer* admits this; but contends that the Popes held their temporal power not merely *jure humano*, but *jure divino* as well; that that power flowed as a necessary consequence from the relative positions of the two orders, the spiritual and the temporal—of the first of which orders the Pope, as Vicar of Jesus Christ, was the visible head or representative upon earth, and of the second of which, the Emperor, as chief of the temporal order, was head. Though the *Reviewer* thus claims a divine origin for the temporal power of the Popes, he is careful to restrict the exercise of that power to spiritual objects, or to the advancement of the spiritual order itself; it is an authority *over* not *in* the temporal order that he asserts, and temporal authority only in so far as "every temporal act on some side touches, and must touch the spiritual."

In the second article—the "School Question" or education, is rather glanced at than discussed. The writer complains, and perhaps with truth—that the Catholic schools in the United States are, considered from an exclusively material or worldly point of view, inferior in several respects to the common or Non-Catholic State schools. This we say may be, most probably is, true; nor do we see how, considering the material advantages which State patronage confers upon the latter, or Non-Catholic common schools, it can well be otherwise. Put however the Catholic and the Non-Catholic school on an equal footing as before the State, and we doubt not from the zeal of our coreligionists in the United States, and the noble efforts of their Pastors, that the latter considered merely as an instrument for imparting material or secular information, would soon equal, if not outstrip, its hitherto more favored rival. It is indeed much to be regretted that the leading Catholic periodical in the United States, and we may say in North America, either maintains a strange silence upon the School Question—the most important politico-religious question of the day—or at best utters but a faint and uncertain sound thereupon. We do not question the *Reviewer's* perfect orthodoxy; but we do fear that he is too much afraid of "public opinion" to speak his mind fully and fearlessly upon a subject upon which his Non-Catholic fellow-subjects entertain such strong and deep rooted prejudices as the School Question; and that the fact that the "common schools" are an American "net" operates powerfully against his passing upon them a withering and justly deserved condemnation. The inevitable tendency however of democracy, such as obtains in the United States, is to squeeze all courage, all manhood, all independence of opinion, out of those who are subject to its baneful influences; and we should be thankful therefore that our *Reviewer* has left in him enough of moral courage to hint a dislike to the Godless and tyrannical system of State-Schoolism which prevails amongst our democratic neighbors. There is no tyranny so relentless, so inexorable, and to its victims, so degrading, as the tyranny of "public opinion;" and we cannot therefore be surprised to find that even the Catholic spirit of *Brownson's Review* is benumbed by its malign influences. In justice however to Dr. Brownson, we should state that the article on Education whose deficiencies, or sins of omission, we mention with regret, is not from his pen, but from a casual contributor.

The article on the "Tyranny of Progress" is a learned and powerful article, the general spirit of which is decidedly adverse to the spirit of the age. It does not thence follow however that the writer is in error, or the latter in the right. What is certain is, that even in the material order, the only effect of the much vaunted social progress of the day is, if it makes the rich richer, to leave the poor poorer, more wretched, and more abject in their wretchedness, than at any previous period of the world's history, of which we have any positive information. As the writer truly and forcibly observes of modern Protestant civilization: "There is more squalid misery, vice, and disease festering at this moment in any one of the great centres of civilization, than Dr. Livingston discovered in all Africa."

The fourth article on Politics at Home is our favorite, and from the contents of a note at page 360, we are warranted in attributing it to the pen of Dr. Brownson himself. At its commencement we find the following observation (which we cordially endorse) on the tyranny of "public opinion" in the United States:—

"The constitution and laws guarantee us the most perfect freedom of thought and speech, but public opinion, which in a Democracy, is supreme, and reigns as a despot, exercises here a more effectual restraint on both thought and speech than is, or can be exercised by the most arbitrary and despotic government in the Old World."—p. 261.

In like manner we heartily approve of the *Reviewer's* condemnation of an alliance betwixt the "Catholic cause," and "political parties;" his denunciation of the practice of appealing to the "Irish vote," to the "German vote," in American elections; his manly vigorous abuse of the place-hunting mania, as rife in the United States as in Canada; and his scathing exposure of the ignorance and political immorality of those brawlers, who make the bestowal of government situations the test of the respective merits of political parties. In all these things—though by the *Reviewer* immediately applied only to the United States—there is so much that is directly applicable to the social and political condition of Canada, that we cannot refrain from making