

The True Witness.

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.
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We beg to remind our Correspondents that no letters will be taken out of the Post-Office, unless prepaid.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 14.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

APRIL—1865.
Friday, 14—GOOD FRIDAY.
Saturday, 15—HOLY SATURDAY.
Sunday, 16—EASTER.
Monday, 17—Easter Monday.
Tuesday, 18—Easter Tuesday.
Wednesday, 19—Of the Octave.
Thursday, 20—Of the Octave.
The "Forty Hours" Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will commence as follows:—
Saturday, 15—Grand Seminaire, Montreal.
Monday, 17—Convent of Vercheres.
Wednesday, 19—Joliette College.

TO OUR DELINQUENT SUBSCRIBERS.—We are compelled to address ourselves to this very numerous class of the subscribers to the TRUE WITNESS, with the object of inducing them to pay up, a portion at least, of the arrears in which they stand indebted to this office. That the "times are hard," and money unusually scarce, are the excuses with which our demands are constantly met; but we do think that a little, a very little exertion on the part of those to whom we address ourselves, would enable them to discharge our claims upon them, and spare us the disagreeable necessity of asking, but asking in vain, for the payment of a just debt.

We would respectfully invite all who are interested in the TRUE WITNESS to endeavor to extend its circulation. If each one would send in a new subscriber; and if the new and old would make it a rule to pay their subscriptions, that would be doing something substantial for the paper.

To our paying subscribers, our best thanks are tendered.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

Surpassing all other news in importance, is that of the final conquest of the Confederate States by the Northern Federal States, and the consummation of the greatest political iniquity of which, since the partition of Poland in the last century, the world has been a witness. In so far as France and England are concerned, their conduct has been worse than a crime—it has been a blunder.

On the 8th instant, the brave, but unfortunate General Lee, finding further resistance useless, and with that aversion to all unnecessary effusion of blood which characterises brave soldiers, submitted to the inevitable, and with his whole army capitulated, on condition of not serving again until regularly exchanged. On these terms men and officers have been permitted to go free on parole. Thus sadly has terminated one of the most heroic struggles for freedom and independence on record, and another brave and chivalrous people have been blotted out from the list of the nations.

After the evacuation of Richmond, which the inhabitants set fire to before leaving, in order if possible to save their homes from pollution by the foe, General Lee was unable, from want of men to make head against the enemy. His only chance consisted in effecting a junction with General Johnston; and this chance gone, he had no choice, but either to sacrifice uselessly the lives of his gallant soldiers, or to capitulate. If he could not save his country, he has saved his honor; and his name to all generations will be enshrined in the Pantheon of history along with those of a Tell, a Sarsfield, Palafox, of Stonewall Jackson, and the innumerable army of martyrs.

For the rest there is nothing of importance to record. All the raiders have been discharged from custody, with the exception of Lieutenant Young, there being no evidence against them.—Her Majesty has issued a Proclamation suspending the operation of the Imperial extradition Act, so long as the Canadian Act is in force. This action of the Imperial Government is a full vindication of the decision of Judge Coursol.

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

—The Seminary of St. Sulpice of Montreal has made the noble donation of One Thousand dollars to the Catholic University of Ireland.—With that liberality which so distinguishes him, C. Brydges, Esq., has given to the Rev. M. Beausang, who is collecting for the above named institution, a free pass on the Grand Trunk while he is engaged on his mission.

The *Courier du Canada* will, we hope, pardon us for endeavoring to set him right as to the opinions and policy of the TRUE WITNESS which it seems to us that he misapprehends, since he speaks of us as having opposed to the death, *combattu, a Voutrance*—the project of Confederation. This is incorrect.

We have, on the contrary, always been careful to pronounce no opinion on the question of Confederation, further than this: That it might very likely be the best arrangement possible; but that so long as we remained Provinces, subject to Great Britain, "Confederation" in the true sense of the word, was impossible, and unnecessary. What we have opposed then is not Confederation, which means a political partnership betwixt sovereign and independent States; but the plan and the details of a scheme of Union, adopted first by the Quebec delegates, and subsequently by our Provincial Parliament. These we have opposed; and in so doing we have but done what—before the results of the Quebec conference were made known—all the French Ministerial press, the *Journal de Quebec*, the *Canadien*, the *Minerve*, formally pledged themselves to do, should the Ministerial plan of Union be what it actually is.

For instance, the *Journal de Quebec*, of the 6th September last, and whilst all was yet uncertain as to the details of the Ministerial plan, except in so far as through his organ, the *Globe*, the President of the Council had been pleased to divulge these plans—the *Journal de Quebec*, we say, assured us: first, that the plan which the Ministry intended to bring forward and lay before the Provincial Legislature would be submitted also to the electoral body, before being sent to England for approval by the Imperial Government. The Italics are our own.

"If they—the Chambers—accept it, it will have necessarily to undergo another trial before the Electoral body, and then if it comes forth victorious from this second trial, it will be sent to London to receive Imperial sanction."

In the second place, the *Journal de Quebec* solemnly pledged itself to oppose the Ministerial measure of Union, should it appear that thereby sovereign control would be given to the central over the local legislatures. Here are the words of our contemporary:—

"Were we compelled to select, we would prefer a single legislature to a central parliament and local parliaments, in case the former should have sovereign control over the others; we should be spared at least the inconvenience of an expensive tyranny. It might be despotic, but at all events it would be cheap despotism, whilst the other whilst oppressing would beggar us."—*Journal de Quebec*, 6th Sept. 1864.

Now the project of Union actually laid before our Legislature by the Brown-Cartier Ministry does give sovereign control to the central, over the local legislatures; in that every act of the latter is thereby made subject to the veto of the central government, which will of course always represent the majority for the time being in the central parliament. We therefore have opposed that project, as "a despotism which whilst oppressing would beggar us;" and if by so doing we have erred, our error consists in holding today the same political opinions which, only six months ago, we and the *Journal de Quebec* held in common. We know not what arguments may have been laid before the latter to induce it to support that which it had solemnly pledged itself to resist as a "ruinous despotism;" but in that these arguments have never been made public, in that they have never reached our ears, we may, we trust, be pardoned if we have not been thereby converted.

So also the *Canadien* of the 26th of August, "protested energetically" against the theories of the *Globe* and the *Gazette*, which these journals, alas! only too accurately informed on the subject—assured us formed the basis of the plan agreed upon by the Brown-Cartier Ministry; and thus defining Confederation, the *Canadien* affirmed its resolve to oppose, even as the TRUE WITNESS has opposed, such a scheme of Union as was actually laid before our Canadian Legislature:—

"In order that there be a Confederation there must be a certain number of sovereign independent States delegating to a central government a definite portion of their rights and their power: if this order be inverted, if Sovereignty be transferred from the States, to the central authority, the independence of the one is suppressed, and the omnipotence of the other established. The local governments will become mere extended municipalities at the mercy of the central power, without any real freedom in their own affairs, and destitute of influence upon their general destinies."—*Canadien*, 26th August, 1864.

What more than this has the TRUE WITNESS ever said against a scheme of Union in which Sovereignty is vested in the central authority; and by which not a definite, but an indefinite, and therefore in practice an unlimited, power is conferred upon the same central government. If in our opposition to the Ministerial scheme we have erred, we beg of the *Courier du Canada* in charity to remember that it is only because we have always maintained unswerving fidelity to our principles; to the principles which but about seven months ago, we still professed in common with the *Canadien* and the *Journal de Quebec*.

Again the *Minerve*—not then anticipating what the Ministerial scheme would actually turn out to be—thus committed itself on the 30th of September last. The Italics are our own:—

"We are for a Confederation in which the Federal

principle shall be carried out to the fullest extent
"The Federal power shall be sovereign no doubt, but its functions will extend only over certain general questions strictly determined in the Constitution."
"Such is the only plan of Confederation that Lower Canada will accept."
"For no consideration will we modify our opinions upon this subject, and to sustain them we will put forth all the strength at our disposal."—*Minerve*, 30th August, 1864.

Now no one will pretend that in the scheme of Union laid before the Legislature, the Federal principle is carried out or applied to its fullest extent—*dans toute son etendue*; seeing that an impartial critic of that scheme, like the *Edinburgh Review*, praises it for its strong centralising tendencies, and for the very subordinate position which it assigns to the Provincial or local governments:—

"In order to centralise authority, and to reduce as far as may be to a municipal level the local legislatures, all matters of a general character are, in addition to those enumerated in the Resolutions placed under the control of the Federal Government."—*Edinburgh Review*.

Neither will any one pretend that, according to the Ministerial project of Union, the functions of the Federal Government would extend "only over certain general questions strictly determined—bien determinees," seeing that by that scheme it is provided that all matters of a general character "not especially and exclusively reserved" for the control of the local governments should be held to be subject to the central authority; or in other words, that the powers and functions of the said central government be indefinite, and undetermined, so as to embrace everything not expressly given to the local governments, which may be deemed to be of a "general character," the central government being the judge.

If therefore the TRUE WITNESS has opposed the Ministerial plan of Union laid before the Legislature, it has but done what only six months ago the *Minerve* (Ministerial) pledged itself solemnly to do, with all the strength at its disposal. We may have erred; but if so, we have erred only in this: that we have been true to our principles; true to our pledged word; that we are not like a weather-cock blown about by every passing breeze; and that faithful to the promises made by the *Minerve*, we have refused to "modify our opinions for any consideration."

If we recall these things it is not to condemn others, but to justify ourselves; but to show that opposition to the details of the Ministerial scheme of Union—details which when first announced to the public through the columns of the *Toronto Globe* and the *Ministerial Gazette* provoked a general cry of indignation and pledges of opposition thereunto, from the French Ministerial press—does not at all imply opposition to Confederation, or a league of sovereign and independent States, delegating to a central authority by them created, a limited and strictly defined portion of their several sovereign rights. We have not committed ourselves on the question of Confederation, but this we have done.—We have expressed a decided opinion against the details of the measure submitted by the Ministry to our Legislature, and by the latter adopted; and because that measure is in all its chief details, the very opposite or contradictory of Confederation. It is no small matter of congratulation to us that, in this hostile opinion to the Ministerial scheme, we find ourselves in perfect accord with a publicist so competent to form an intelligent opinion, so competent from his position to form an honest and independent opinion, as M. Rameau, from whom we might almost be suspected of having plagiarised, so identical with his, in every respect, are our views on the great question of the day.

And we might cite as in our favor M. de Montalembert as well as M. Rameau. According to the former, the great danger to liberty at the present day proceeds from the centralising tendencies of democracy. Wherever there is a movement towards centralisation, there, no matter what the formulas may be with which the thing is covered, there we may trace the influence and the march of the accursed spirit of democracy. And again, wherever democratic principles are in the ascendant, there there is to be seen a movement towards centralisation; so that he who is the opponent of the one, must be necessarily the opponent of the latter. Now the manifest centralising tendencies of the Ministerial scheme of Union for the British North American Provinces are insisted upon, as its most characteristic feature, by the *Edinburgh Review*, the great organ of the Liberal party in Great Britain; and we therefore conclude from the presence of these centralising tendencies to the essentially democratic character of the scheme itself. Hence our opposition to it; for to-day, it is neither from the monarchical nor from the aristocratic element that danger to liberty is to be apprehended, but from the preponderance of the democratic element, and the triumph of Liberalism. As we are not ashamed of our Conservatism, or ultra-Toryism if our opponents please to call it so, so neither do we in the least regret that opposition with which the *Courier du Canada* reproaches us, to a scheme which had Mr. George Brown for its author, and of which the political godfathers and godmothers were the Clear-Grits of Upper Canada, and the Rouges of Lower Canada.

The hapthng may have been subsequently adopted by others who call themselves Conservatives; but to those who remember the terms of the Brown-Dorion Coalition it must be manifest that the real parents of the measure were as we have stated, the "Clear-Grits" and the "Rouges."
The St. Alban Raiders were transferred on Wednesday last from Montreal to Toronto, there to stand their trial on the charge of having violated British neutrality. Should however, the prisoners be acquitted on this charge there is nothing to prevent the Federals from again claiming the rendition of the prisoners, whose fate would then be in the hands of the Upper Canadian judges whose extraordinary decision in the case of Capt. Burley of the Confederate Navy was the very contradictory of that of the Lower Canadian Bench in the case of the officers of the Confederate Army engaged in the attack upon their enemies at St. Albans.
The fifty thousand dollars voted as indemnity for the sum said to have been captured by the men and officers of the Confederate army at St. Albans, and by them brought into Canada, and which sum was improperly restored to them when discharged from custody by Judge Coursol, has been applied for by the Federal authorities: who have been informed that it shall be paid over to them upon their making good their claims to it in a legal manner. Of the propriety of this restitution there should be no two opinions. As prize of war, the Confederates forfeited their right to the money, by bringing it into British territory: as the Confederate man-of-war steamer *Alabama* would have forfeited her captor's rights over a Federal prize, by her carried into British waters without having been declared a lawful prize in a Confederate Court of Admiralty. The right of ownership in the money seized at St. Albans, thus reverted to the original owners the moment it became transferred to British soil—no matter what the status of the captors: and though the rendition of the latter would be a monstrous violation of our pretended neutrality, an act viler than that which we condemned in the Prussians who undertook to give up to the Russians, all political Polish refugees within their territory; the restoration of the property, or prize of war, captured by Lieut. Young, and the Confederate force under his command, to its original owners should be approved of by all who do not allow their sympathies in favor of a just and righteous cause, and of a gallant but unfortunate people, to get the better of their reason.

pealed to figures. He showed by census returns that from 1851 to 1861 the Catholic population of England and Wales had increased at the rate of about 12 per cent, the numbers of Catholic Clergy at the rate of 37 per cent. He showed that, whilst in 1836 there were only 472 Catholic places of worship in England and Wales, in 1863 there were 802; that since 1830 the number of convents had increased from 16 to 186, and that where in the first epoch there was not a single monastery, to-day there were 58.

Now if in England, in enlightened England with its "open bible," and all the light of modern science, Popery not only holds its own, but rapidly and constantly advances, what reason is there to hope, or to believe that in other countries, the circulation of the Bible, and the spread of knowledge shall have the effect of causing defections from Popery? What grounds has Protestantism for boasting that Catholicity only flourishes in darkness and ignorance, and that it cannot live in the broad light of day? Is England then in which Popery so flourishes, and advances with such giant strides, the favored abode of darkness? Has the light of science and of the Gospel not yet dawned upon it?

And it is a remarkable fact that whilst it is in enlightened England, and amongst the most highly educated and refined section of English society, that Popery makes the most rapid progress, and wins the greatest number of converts it is only amongst those whom Protestants themselves denounce as the most ignorant and degraded peoples of Europe that any important defections from Catholicity can be detected.—As compared with Italy, all English Protestants will assert the intellectual superiority of England; and yet whilst in England Popery progresses, it is in Italy that, according to Protestants, the Holy Protesting Faith is most rapidly advancing. Is not this a marvellous thing? Is it not a full and ample refutation of the Protestant thesis, that Protestantism commends itself to the intelligent and educated; that ignorance is the mother of Catholic devotion, or as our critics style it, of Romish credulity? Here then is the dilemma which proposes itself to Protestants.—They must admit, either that ignorance is favorable to the spread of Protestantism, or that the till lately priest-ridden people of Italy, amongst whom Protestantism progresses, must be far more enlightened and better educated than are the people of England, *par excellence* the land of the "open bible," where Popery is not only not losing ground, but is every day achieving new triumphs.

Admitting, which to a certain extent we certainly must, the defections from the Catholic Church in Italy, we attribute them not to any spiritual but to purely secular motives. They indicate a political rather than a religious distemper; they proceed not from an "open bible," not from the spread of education, or dogmatic considerations of any kind, but from the troubled state of society, and from attachment not to the principles of the Reformation of the XVI. century, but to those of the Revolution of '89. No man can seriously entertain the idea that the Italians care one straw for the Lutheran formula of Justification, or that their hostility to Popery is in any way connected with the Calvinistic theory of Predestination. God has not promised His grace to any particular nationality, and it may perchance so happen that the Italians of the present generation, as did the French of the last, shall reject the faith; but we may be well assured that if they do so, they will not erect unto themselves a church either after the pattern of that of Geneva, or of that of Lambeth. The object of their *cultus* will be a Goddess of Reason; their prophet and priest will be neither Spurgeon nor Cumming, but M. Ernest Renan, or Jean Jacques Rousseau.

And relying on the promises of Christ to His Church, and the history of the past which shows us how those promises have always been fulfilled, we may confidently expect that any defections from the faith in Italy will be more than counterbalanced by accessions elsewhere. It was so in the sixteenth century. The losses which the Church then sustained through the apostacy of the Northern nations of Europe, were in a few years more than compensated for by the triumphs in America—as Macaulay well remarks. So no doubt will it be in this our day. When they that were bidden to the royal wedding would not come, but spitefully entreated the king's servants sent to call them, the Lord sent into the highways, and hedges, and the wedding was furnished with guests; for to the nations that have rebelled against the Church, and have cast away with sacrilegious hands the treasure of the faith, the menacing words of Jesus are as applicable today as they were to the Jews of old:—"Therefore I say unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." That England may be that favored nation we would fain hope, though scarcely can we bring ourselves to expect it; for we remember the terribly significant words of our Lord to those who had once rejected His freely proffered grace, that "none of those men that were called shall taste of my supper." For the heathen who have never as

Is CATHOLICITY INCREASING OR DECREASING?—To suit the exigencies of the moment, or of the case which they are trying to make out, Protestants make the most contradictory assertions upon this point. If the object is to take up a collection at an Anniversary Meeting, or collect funds for a proselytising society, the decay of Popery is eloquently and energetically insisted upon. The "Man of Sin," we are told, is trembling on his throne, and his panic-stricken subjects are on the point of throwing off their allegiance. A little, only a very little, more exertion and cash on the part of Protestants are required to assure the final triumph of Gospel principles over the errors and superstitions of Rome.

At other times, however, the object is to inspire terror of Rome, to make Papal aggression a plea for legislative aggressions upon the properties and personal liberties of Papists—and then indeed we hear a different story told. The rapid and alarming increase of Romanism is insisted upon, and Parliament is loudly and vehemently invoked to find some means for putting a stop to the inroads of the hated and dreaded superstition. Thus in one breath will Protestants blow both hot and cold.
It may be asked, which of these two contradictory assertions is the more worthy of credence? The best answer to this is to point out the striking fact that, when to suit their purposes Protestants insist upon the "Decay of Popery," they deal only in the vaguest of statements; that they carefully eschew statistics, and official documents, and appeal to the testimony of very intelligent and very respectable witnesses no doubt, but who nevertheless have all this about them in common—that they have neither local habitation nor a name.
On the contrary, when a Spooner or a Newdegate is endeavoring to arouse a weary and somewhat apathetic House of Commons to more vigorous action against the encroachments of Popery, it is to statistics, to official and easily verified documents that he refers his hearers, as conclusive as to the "Alarming Increase of Romanism." There is for instance much good argument in the figures cited by poor dear Mr. Newdegate in the recent debate in the House of Commons, and which we think is pretty conclusive as to whether in Great Britain at all events, Catholicity is on the increase or decrease. Mr. Newdegate's object, be it remembered, was to provoke the House into naming a Committee to enquire into the numbers and the condition of Religious Houses in the United Kingdom.
With this end in view Mr. Newdegate ap-