

The True Witness.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 17, 1857.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE America from Liverpool, 4th inst., arrived at Halifax, on Wednesday morning. Her news is of no great interest. The Bill for doing away with the odious impost of Ministers' Money in Ireland, was read a third time in the House of Lords, on the 26th ult. Lady Franklin's expedition in search of the remains of her husband, sailed on the 6th inst. Spollen, the reputed murderer of Mr. Little, has been committed to take his trial. The Dublin correspondent of the Times, tells the following curious story with respect to this mysterious case:—

"Among the means resorted to shortly after the crime was committed, for assisting to discover the murderer was clairvoyance; and, at the same time, there was forwarded to the police authorities from England a statement, alleged to have been made by a clairvoyant operated upon in the usual way, that the murderer's name was 'Pollan,' or a similar name, and that he lived in a cottage near the railway.' The clairvoyant was a boy employed in a factory in London, and the foreman of the establishment who forwarded the communication to the police here, mentioned that the boy's powers in this respect had been frequently tested and found useful."

From France we have tidings of the discovery of a serious conspiracy against the Emperor; twenty-one persons, said to be in communication with the Republicans at Genoa, have been arrested. Gen. Cavaignac is officially announced as one of the opposition candidates for Paris. The harvest prospects were most excellent.

The news from India is alarming, and would almost seem to justify the fears of some that the days of British dominion in that quarter of the globe are drawing to an end. The disaffection of the native troops seems to be almost universal. At Delhi, the ancient Mogul capital, the European residents have been either massacred, or compelled to seek safety in flight; whilst the insurgents have proclaimed as Sovereign a descendant of the old Imperial race. These things are by some supposed to be intimately connected with Russian intrigues. The Times calls loudly upon the Government for an active display of its force to avert the impending calamity. "The total subjection of the country" and the re-organisation of Indian society have now, it says, "become a matter of necessity. To retain power in India, we must sweep away every political establishment and every social usage which may prevent our influence from being universal and complete." These are sage counsels, no doubt; but the tenacity with which Asiatics have from time immemorial adhered to their ancient social usages, renders it doubtful whether even Great Britain, with all her power, will be able to carry them into effect.

METHODISTS AND DEMONIACS.

How are we to treat the victims of the Spirit-Rapping mania? we have been asked—Are we to look upon them, as dupes or as impostors? or shall we admit the truth of their marvellous narratives, and attribute the phenomena, whose existence we cannot deny, to supernatural, but diabolical agencies?

There is a great aversion amongst a certain class to admit the possibility even, of the supernatural, at least at the present day. Long ago, eighteen hundred years ago, for instance, they will grant you that there were bona fide cases of diabolical possession, or obsession; they will recognise in the demoniacs spoken of in Scripture, something more than mere ordinary madmen; and will not pretend to call in question the testimony of Our Lord Himself to the reality of Satanic interference with the affairs of this world. But—would we ask—if these things have been, why may they not be again? and why, if we admit the actuality of the facts in one case, should we positively refuse to admit their possibility in another? For this is the last stronghold of the sceptic, when driven by the force of evidence from every other position; he denies the possibility of the phenomena; and because he in particular has never experienced the like, he boldly affirms that they are contrary to universal experience, and therefore could not have occurred. With these men all argument is useless.

Yet why we should assert demoniac possession to be contrary to universal experience, we cannot understand; seeing that its phenomena are not confined to the "Spiritist" sect of Protestants alone, but are well known to and openly manifested amongst the Methodists, and other sectaries. The phenomena at all events, of the "Revival," the "Love Feast," and "Camp Meeting"; are so analogous to those formerly attributed to demoniacal agency, that it seems but natural to assign to both a common origin, and a common father—the devil; and though some thing of course must be put down to the score of mere animal excitement, more perhaps to hypocrisy and a love of notoriety, yet after every deduction, there will still remain in the well attested phenomena of the "Camp Meeting," a residuum for which it is impossible to assign any but a supernatural and diabolical agency. The howlings, the contortions and incoherent ravings of the "Revival," cannot be accounted

for save upon the hypothesis of a real Satanic interference, and actual demoniacal possession.

In her novel of Dred, for example, Mrs. Stowe has given us a vivid, and we doubt not, a faithful description of the strange scenes that occur at one of these disgusting orgies. Though published in a work of fiction, there can be little doubt, we say, of the truthfulness of the following sketch; for throughout her work Mrs. Stowe invariably shows herself favorably disposed towards Methodism and its ministers. Here then are the colors in which she portrays:—

"A METHODIST REVIVAL.—A circle of men and women, interspersed with children, were sitting, with their eyes shut, and their heads thrown back, singing at the top of their voices. Occasionally one or other would vary the exercises by clapping of hands, jumping up straight into the air, falling flat on the ground, screaming, dancing, and laughing.

"O, set me up on a rock!" screamed one. "I's set up!" screamed another.

"Glory!" cried the third, and a tempest of "amen's" poured in between.

"I's got a sperrience!" cried one, and forthwith began piping it out in a high key, while others kept on singing.

"I's got a sperrience!" shouted Tomit whom Aunt Rose with maternal care, had taken with her. "No, you an't, neither! Sit down!" said Aunt Rose, kneading him down as if he had been a batch of biscuits, and going on at the same time with her hymn.

"I's on the Rock of Ages!" screamed Tomit, struggling desperately with Aunt Rose's great fat hands.

"Mind yourself!—I'll crack you over!" said Aunt Rose. And Tomit, still continuing rebellious, was cracked over accordingly, with such force as to send him head-foremost on the straw at the bottom of the tent; an indignity which he resented with loud howls of impotent wrath, which, however, made no impression in the general whirlwind of screaming, shouting, and prayer.—p. 200.

Now, we know from the Apostle, that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."—1 Cor., xiv. 33.—Protestant Version. If therefore scenes such as the above do occur at Methodist Meetings, we may safely conclude that, not God, but the Devil, is their "author;" and without either presumption on the one hand, or superstition on the other, we may logically and safely attribute the loud howlings of impotent wrath—and the whirlwinds of screaming, shouting and praying, to the father of all confusion, who is the Devil.

But we shall be told, it is not in a work of fiction, even though it be from the pen of an earnest Protestant like Mrs. Stowe, that we can expect historical accuracy of delineation, or find the data whence to deduce an important theological conclusion. Very true! but Mrs. Stowe is not our sole authority for the facts which take place at these Methodist gatherings. We find them everywhere recorded, in the pages of friends and foes to Methodism; and adduced, sometimes as a proof of its hellish, at other times of its heavenly, origin. The facts of the howling, of the shouting, screaming, yelling and leaping are established beyond all reach of controversy.

Take, for example, as a fair sample of Methodist devotional exercises, the following, for which we are indebted to the Christian Guardian, the Methodist organ of Toronto; and which he inserts in his columns, not only without insinuating any suspicion as to their truth, but—as signs of the spirituality of his religion. We think that, after reading the following extracts, the reader will feel inclined to suspect that Mrs. Stowe has intentionally softened down some of the most repulsive features of a "Camp Meeting;" and that, disgusted with the ribald blasphemy, and the profanity of the actors therein, she has very prudently suppressed the most striking of their inspired utterances. The reader however shall have the opportunity of judging for himself. The first article from which we shall borrow is credited to the Morning Star, another Protestant journal, and is headed:—

"RELIGION MAKES ME HAPPY.—It was our privilege to attend a 'love feast' with the colored brethren at 'Ebenezer' on the P. M. of the 4th inst. We declined to commune with the masters of their popular church in the A. M. because we would as soon commune with a man who robs a brother man of his gold, as with one who robs a brother man of himself; but we esteemed it a privilege, an honor, to come around the table of our Lord with these poor oppressed children of our heavenly Father. At the close of the communion services, an hour was allotted them for relating the dealing of the Lord with them. The scene that followed cannot be described. We will however give a few expressions taken down at the time from sixteen successive testimonies:

10. Man about fifty-five. "I seek de Lord when a little boy, fader! kinner, moder a sinner. First, I go into de garret and pray little easy, I know nothing—say, almost nothing—sometimes wait an' hour like a Quaker; till de spirit set my tongue going. I kept close to Massa Jesus two or three years—he read me well, and I get to be a big stout boy in religious things. Den he help me to pray, down in de kitchen with de old folks, and when my own fader and moder turn children and ask me learn dem to pray, den I no Quaker, but roo it out quick and loud. Children, Jesus can make you pray like de bishop."

11. Old man. "I very poor man; my paper good for nothing here, cause I han't got myself—but my paper good in heaven, cause Massa Jesus dorsa it for me. He good curety—his purse never fail, Bless de Lord Jesus Christ."

12. Woman of sixty. "I's a poor old slawewoman when God turned my darkness into light; but when de dungeon open, when de chain fell off, I felt like a little gal, and dis old cripple mighty spry on de foot yet."

13. Man of forty. "When I left de devil's army I join Captain Jesus during de war. I'm on the march to-day. I never surrenders. When de wind blow hard, I stick de closer to de old flag-staff. Keep de colors flying, brethren, keep de colors flying, every sojer hab a crown by-and-by. Glory, Hallelujah!"

Here is another—in the same style, and from the same source. The writer is describing a "Love Feast":—

"Next, a young sister arose. 'I come to dis lub-feast wid a bery heavy heart. I didn't mean to speak, but I can't set still any longer. I's afraid dat I's mighty backslid. I's had such a heap to do, dat I keep puttin' off prayer, an' night would come, and I so tired, dat I thought no harm not to pray. I's afraid I's backslid.' I does wish I had more time to pray, an' get to meetin's. O, brudren, pray for me. I tink I feels a little better.' Here the sympathies of the whole audience seemed to embrace at once the penitent victim, and her soul was manifestly struggling into liberty. Shouts and words of encouragement reached her from all parts of the house, when the big tear began to roll out of enormous eyes, and the speaker proceeded. 'Yes, I's feelin' better. Glory to Jesus! Glory to Jesus! He forgives! I's feelin' better!' and at this point, she commenced jumping, and in the glorious confusion that followed, we could make out nothing, but now and then the shout, 'I's feelin' better! Glory to Jesus, he forgives!'"

After a little lull and an attempt by Uncle Frank to divert the speaking to that end of the room, a white brother arose. After stating in substance that he was always happy to meet them with his colored friends, and that he hoped to meet them all in heaven, where the distinction of color would cease, he resumed his seat. A faint response of 'God bless you, Massa Jones,' was all we heard in reply.—'Massa Jones' was a small, sallow man, eyebrows very low, and eyes gray and small; between them there seemed to be a kind of a gnarl or a knot; his mouth was round and puckering. Order was now nearly restored, when another character, which will be readily recognized by all observers of the negro character, came under notice. She was a large woman, features not very irregular nor black, but looking sleek and shining brown; well formed; temperament of the highest class for the colored, full of spunk, and possessing a very fluent use of the tongue. She was evidently a little vain of her qualifications; and others of her class about the neighborhood might have reason to be proud of her, if it were not that her love of talk perpetually impelled her to look up something to talk about. It became very convenient for her to deal in inventions. Among white people, it would have been said of her, she was somewhat given to tattling. She also was a specimen of one of those moralists among our people of color who bring themselves to believe that there can be no crime in their petty thefts—that what the master has, they earned, and if he does not supply them, they have a right to supply themselves. She would go to meeting and shout, and if in the evening, take a poultry yard on her way home. In the place of that moonlight dullness in her eye, there was the glassy brightness of cunning. The chains of slavery lay hard on such limbs. Our heroine, whom we have described, and who we hope does not practice upon the principles of ethics which we have introduced, now arose, with a nondescript bonnet full of yellow ribbons and flowers. She was a captain among them, and every eye and ear seemed intent on listening.—'Bruders! I's here dis mornin' case I likes to be in just such places. I's not ob dem dat would neglect a feast. Many years ago God convart my poor, blind soul. It war way down in ole Virginy. I never forgets de time nor de place. I finds out I's a miserable sinner, and dat Jesus save by him grace all dat come unto him, wheder brack or white. I tinks to myself if dere be any chance for me, now am de time. I prayed mightily. I thought once I should go down to hell, I felt I war so bery bad; an' one night, when comin' in from de milkin', I feel so bad dat I spill 'bout half de milk. I gets down behind a big tree an' dere I ask my Jesus if he meant to save me if I would bust. I axed him, crying, as if dis heart would burst. I kept a axin' him, when all at once a voice say to me, 'Yes.' A voice come down dat tree an' say to me, 'All my promises are yea, an' amen, to every one dat believe.' O dat lubly voice! Bruders I hears dat voice dis mornin'. It war de voice ob deliberation; it was sweet to me as de honey. I still hears dat voice every night. I knows my Redeemer lives! Hallelujah!" Here the audience had been wrought up again to an intense point of feeling, and "glory" "glory" spread electrically all over the house.

After jumping three or four times about a foot and a half from the floor, our speaker relapsed into a somewhat graver tone, and resumed. "I knows I ain't as good as I ort to be, and some ob you knows it too. I intends to do better. By de glory ob God an' de grace ob God, I intends to be better. I feel like 'ginnin' anew, Uncle Jake!" and here the old man of the corner threw up his face with a saintly smile. "I intends to meet you all in hebbon."

Here again is the description of the conversion of a "deaf mute," whose faith came, not by "hearing," but by seeing; and whose "incoherent noises" the writer in the Christian Guardian blasphemously attributes to the Holy Spirit. The Italics are our own:—

"At the commencement of the meeting his levity was calculated to call forth rebuke; but as the meeting progressed and he saw penitents seeking the Lord—that is, wildly gesticulating, leaping, and falling into violent convulsions—he became deeply interested—presented himself for the prayers of God's people, and began to pray earnestly for himself. His sincerity was evinced by his gestures—the motion of his lips, and the deep solemnity of his countenance. When this deaf mute rises to speak, or engages in prayer, it is impossible to describe the deep emotions often produced. His incoherent noise produces an effect almost electrical. I never witnessed so conclusive an evidence to my mind of the reality of the Spirit's operations on the human heart."

"Of a "Spirit's operations" no doubt; but of what Spirit? of God or the Devil? Not the Spirit of God assuredly; for His Blessed Spirit does not manifest itself in wild uncouth gestures and "incoherent noises;" but if not the Spirit of God, then of the Evil One; and the Catholic may well add that it is impossible to have more conclusive evidence of the reality of the Evil Spirit's operations on the human mind than that voluntarily adduced by Methodists themselves, in their own narratives of their religious

assemblies. The prophets of Baal leaping madly round and over their altars—the frantic contortions of the Sibyl—the fearful shrieks of the deaf-mute, demoniac mentioned by St. Mark—were not in their times more convincing proofs of the reality of Satanic possession, than are the wild gestures and "incoherent noises" of the deaf-mute convert in the Methodist conventicle, in the XIX century.

It is thus, as impossible to assign a natural or celestial origin to the phenomena of Methodism, as to those of Spiritism: the well attested yells, leavings, and incoherent noises, in the one case are as supernatural or diabolical in their origin, as are the table-turnings, and the communication through the mediums, in the other; and as neither set of phenomena can, without an insult to the Divine Majesty be attributed to God, we must necessarily conclude that both are the work of the Devil, operating on, and through, his servants upon earth.

Thus do we get rid of the argument based upon the assumed impossibility of supernatural manifestations, and of diabolical possession, in the present age. We believe that such things may be, because such things have been, and are; and with the facts of Methodism staring us in the face, we cannot reject as impossible the equally well attested; but not more marvellous phenomena of which the Spiritists are the witnesses. That amongst the latter there are, as there are among the Methodists, numbers of impostors, we have no doubt; but, with the evidence before us, we think that we have no reason to doubt of the reality of demoniacal possession amongst a still larger number of the adherents of both of these modern Protestant sects. With this answer our querist must for the present rest content; and if he is prudent, he will avoid exposing himself to the power of the Evil one, by frequenting, either the "Circles" of the Spiritists, or the Meetings of the Methodists. Arcades ambo.

ORANGE RUFFIANISM.

That upon the whole the city of Montreal is, for a seaport—and during the summer months, the resort of strangers from all parts of the world—one of the most quiet and orderly cities on this Continent, no one can deny; it is therefore with the greater regret that we have to record the unfortunate occurrences of Sunday and Monday last, which have given rise to much excitement, but which we trust will not be allowed seriously to affect the good understanding that generally obtains betwixt all sections of our mixed community. New York has its "Plug-Uglies" and other gangs of ruffians; every large city contains some rowdies in its bosom; and it is not therefore to be wondered at, however much it is to be regretted, that here in Montreal we have a set of low bred, ill-conditioned vagabonds, who, under the name of "Orangemen," periodically disturb the peace of our otherwise orderly city.

Sunday last the 12th inst., being the anniversary of the conquest of Ireland by the Anglo-Dutch under the Prince of Orange, was desecrated by the efforts of some of the aforesaid rowdies to insult, and provoke to violence their Irish fellow-citizens. From an early hour, a flag bearing the image of the hero of Glencoe, and appropriate mottoes, was displayed from one of the windows of the "Odd Fellow's Hall," Great St. James Street. This naturally attracted a crowd, and it is said that two or three pistol-shots were fired at the obnoxious banner; whilst by way of keeping up the excitement, a parcel of low-bred ruffians—chiefly blackguard little boys, the dregs of the back slums of the city—perambulated the streets with orange lilies, which they insolently and ostentatiously persevered in thrusting into the faces of the passers by; thus by the impertinence of their demeanor provoking the threshing which in one or two instances they received from those whom they had insulted. A row seemed imminent; but thanks to the exertions of the Acting Mayor, and the praiseworthy efforts of Mr. Rodden and other Protestant gentlemen to preserve order, the flag spoken of above was withdrawn; the crowd dispersed, and order was restored. The most disgraceful part of the day's proceedings remains yet to be noticed; and that is, the efforts of some persons, calling themselves Ministers of the Gospel, to inflame the angry passions of the mob; and by means of "sermons appropriate to the occasion"—ostentatiously advertised in the public journals—to keep alive those unholy animosities which it was their duty, as citizens, to do their best to allay. When we remember that the occasion which gives to the 12th of July its historical notoriety, was the defeat of a brave and loyal people, fighting for their religion and their national independence, and defending their lawful king, their native land, and the altars of their God, against the unprovoked attack of an alien usurper, who, without the shadow of an excuse, had with a foreign army invaded their country, it must, we think, be patent to the dullest intelligence that a "sermon appropriate to such an occasion" must have been altogether out of place in a building dedicated to the worship of Him, Whose mission was a mission of peace and love to all men; and was fitted only for the atmosphere of the brothel, or low grog-shop. Yet, to the disgrace of our age, men, calling themselves Chris-

tians, and professing to be Christian clergymen, were to be found in our midst on Sunday last, thus stimulating the passions, and appealing to the prejudices, of their hearers!

Sunday night, passed off quietly; but we regret to say that on the following evening the disturbances were renewed.

A man of the name of Carson, who keeps a grog-shop at the corner of St. Peter and Notre Dame Streets, had made himself very conspicuous by threatening, and presenting pistols at, inoffensive passers by, for which he has been committed to take his trial at the next term of the Court of Queen's Bench. On Monday night it would seem that a large body of ruffians were assembled in his drinking house, and several shots were fired from the windows into the streets below. This was followed by an attack upon the house, which was broken into; and of its occupants, some received a few severe blows in the scuffle. It is said—we know not with what truth—that Carson, the keeper of the grog-shop in question, had on the Sunday previous, presented a pistol at, and menaced, the life of a priest.—This however is denied; and though such things are but too common with Orangemen—who delight to display their courage against priests and women—we trust that in this instance it may turn out to be, as the Herald supposes, an exaggeration of the assault upon the man Hennessy, for which Carson is now bound over to stand his trial.

Whilst this row was going on in one part of the city, a fire unfortunately broke out in Mr. Douglas' saw-mills near the canal, and rapidly assumed menacing proportions. The several fire companies hurried to the spot, and here again another disgraceful row occurred. How it originated, or to whom the chief discredit is attributable, we cannot say at present; but this is certain, that the men of the "Union" and "Queen" Companies—which we believe are made up of Orangemen, exclusively—got a severe drubbing, and one of their number, a plasterer named Saddler received a dangerous wound in the face. The police turned out in force, and after a short time order was restored, and the flames subdued, though not till the whole of the property connected with the mill had been destroyed. It is said that the fire was the work of an incendiary; but this also is as yet only a rumor, for which we trust there may be no foundation.

We cannot terminate our notice of these melancholy and disgraceful proceedings, without, as Catholics, heartily expressing our condemnation of the violence of which we fear it is but too true, that several of the party opposed to the Orange firemen were guilty. To defend such violence is impossible; and any attempt to do so, would but bring disgrace on a good cause. The Church, though she authorises self-defence, is always and everywhere the enemy of violence; never can she approve of rioting and bloodshed; and the worst service that her children can render her, is to fight and brawl with their Protestant neighbors, in her name. These men should be given plainly to understand that, by calling themselves Catholics, they give scandal to religion—that if Irishmen, they are a disgrace to their country—and that, no matter what their creed or nation, they are a curse to society, and abhorred by all honest citizens. Alas! there are many who will fight for their religion, but there are few who will conform their lives to its holy precepts.

Neither can we let the present opportunity pass without doing justice to our Protestant fellow-citizens. Of these, the great majority are, we firmly believe, heart and soul, opposed to all "Orange" demonstrations; to their exertions in it a great measure owing that the Twelfth passed over without anything more serious than a black eye, or a broken head; and it would be as unjust to hold them, as a body, responsible for the outrages of the Orangemen, as it would be to make the Catholics of Montreal generally, or the Irish in particular, responsible for the violence of which some Irish Catholics may have been guilty at the fire in Griffintown on Monday night. All true Catholics must reprobate the one; and all respectable Protestants will repudiate the other.

ENGLISH AND IRISH CRIME.

In a late number, we established from the criminal statistics of the British Empire for 1854—the latest year of which the returns have as yet been published—the important facts that, in proportion to their respective populations, Protestant England and Wales, furnish a far greater number of criminals, than does Catholic Ireland; and that the offences of the Protestant section of the Empire are not only more numerous, but of a far more serious character, than are those of its Popish neighbor. Another point of considerable importance, in a moral point of view, is brought to light by the Dublin Review—of whose able analysis of the criminal statistics of the British Empire, we avail ourselves—viz., that whilst in proportion to its population, crime has, during the last seventeen years, considerably diminished in Ireland, it has been steadily on the increase in England and Wales.

In 1837, the populations of England and Ireland being to one another as 7 to 4, the total number of convictions in the two countries was very nearly equal; being for England one in every 813 inhabitants; in Ireland, one in 812.—In 1854, Irish convictions had decreased to one in every 928 of the population; which in the sister country they had increased to one in every 782. But deducting on each side the convic-