

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

Carrying out into practice the idea suggested by his Speech at the opening of the French Chambers, the Emperor of France has addressed letters to the Sovereigns of Europe, requesting them to look favorably upon his plan for the remodelling and pacification of the Continent, and to send their several representatives to the forthcoming Congress. Amongst the Sovereigns to whom this invitation has been sent is included the Pope, whose status as an independent Sovereign Prince, rightfully ruling the Ecclesiastical States, is thus officially recognised by the French Emperor; as it will also implicitly be recognised by all those other European Powers who send their representatives to a Congress in which a Minister of the Sovereign Pontiff takes a part, as representing one of the Sovereigns of Europe. For all, or any, of the contracting Powers, after such formal recognition of the Papal Sovereignty, to demand of the Pope that he should abdicate his functions as Temporal Prince, renounce his independence, and descend to the level of a subject—and the subject of such a one as Victor Emmanuel, an habitual drunkard and profligate—would be an inconsistency too flagrant to be tolerated; would be tantamount in short to asking the Congress to undo its own work, and to declare its proceedings null and void. We must suppose, therefore, that Louis Napoleon, who is no simpleton, in addressing the Pope as a Sovereign, in requesting him to take part in a Congress of the other independent Princes of Europe and as the equal of those other Princes, intends not only to recognise at the present, but to maintain for the future, the actual status of the Sovereign Pontiff. In virtue of his position and office the Pope is the natural and sole legitimate head or President of any such Congress as that which Louis Napoleon proposes; and though from the apostasy, or falling away from the faith, of so many of the Northern Powers, it is impossible that at present any European Congress should meet under the presidency of the Pope, it is certainly of no slight consequence that His Holiness should be represented in such a gathering as one of the independent Princes of Europe; and therefore in respect of his Temporal Sovereignty at least, as the equal of the most powerful and most legitimate amongst them.

That the Congress will ever meet is however more than doubtful. Prussia and Austria receive the French Emperor's proposition coldly, if not with evident disrelish. Great Britain will think about it, but before entering into any engagements would like to have some information as to the questions which are to be laid before the Congress. Russia, against whose hold over Poland the said Congress would be called upon to take immediate action, makes no sign of approval or of disapproval; and Victor Emmanuel alone of the European Sovereigns has yet given an unqualified adhesion to the scheme of Louis Napoleon; whose proposal for a general European Congress has certainly not re-established any confidence in his pacific intentions, or allayed the very general apprehensions of war in the Spring. Meantime the Poles make what resistance they can to their oppressors; and though to the on-looker it seems as if their game were up, and their last stake gone, they manifest as yet no signs of yielding.

There has been severe fighting during the past week, at and around Chattanooga, and there can be no doubt that General Bragg has received a very severe blow from his opponent; though it is highly probable that the Federals have exaggerated their successes. General Meade having crossed the Rappahannock with the army of the Potomac, compelled General Lee to fall back. Telegrams announce heavy firing, from whence it is surmised that a general engagement has taken place; but the Federal authorities are so parsimonious of truth, that it is impossible from their statements to form any decided opinion as to the results of the movements now going on. The siege of Charleston still continues.

By the Scotia, from Queenstown, 22nd ult., we learn that the Pope has given his consent to the proposed Congress, and will take part therein through his representative. The other Euro-

pean Powers still hold aloof, and without decidedly condemning the scheme, ask for "more light" as to the intentions of its promoters. In other respects, the news from Europe is of little general interest.

A BITTER PILL.—The evangelical world makes many a wry face over the very unpalatable, though no doubt wholesome dose presented to it by Sir Frederick Bruce, author of a history of the late war in China, and from his long and intimate acquaintance with the political and social condition of that country appointed to represent the British Empire at the Court of Peking. A gentleman better qualified for the post could not have been found, and his representations of course carry immense weight with them. Hence the disgust of the evangelical press at his late revelations respecting the actual condition and future prospects of Protestant Missions in China, made through the medium of an official despatch to Lord Russell; who, to make matters worse replied that "Her Majesty's Government approve your views with regard to Missionary effort in China."

Sir Frederick Bruce then, with ample opportunities for observing, after long experience, and having no private ends to serve, must, by Protestants at least, be accepted as the most valuable, as he is also the most recent, of the many witnesses to the effects and prospects of Protestant Missions in China. His evidence is concise and conclusive; for in his despatch to Earl Russell, in the very first sentence he asserts that:—"Experience has clearly proved the failure of the Protestant Missionary enterprise;"

and acting upon, and arguing from this notorious failure, he as a British subject and as a Christian, having the honor and the interests of his country and of his religion at heart, recommends that no official countenance be given to Protestant Missionaries in China; since they by their behavior bring Christianity into contempt amongst, and make England to be detested by, the Chinese. In the words of the London *Christian World*, which as an evangelical organ is quite furious upon the subject, he, Sir Frederick Bruce, "has turned against them"—(the Protestant Missionaries)—"and set himself to oppose, and as far as he can, prohibit, all street-preaching;" and to insist that the Missionaries should actually be men of education, and acquainted with the language of those to whom they attempt to preach the sublime mysteries of Christianity. This demand will seem reasonable to most unprejudiced persons, but to the *Christian World* it appears "in the last degree worthless and puerile." True, the first Apostles underwent no course of collegiate training in Greek and Latin ere they went out to preach the Gospel to the gentiles; but then the Apostles had a supernatural faculty, the gift of tongues—which enabled them to dispense with a preliminary study of languages.—To this "gift" the modern Protestant Missionaries do not pretend; and therefore it does seem to us, the London *Christian World* notwithstanding, that education, and a moderate knowledge of the Chinese language, should be expected from him who undertakes to teach the Christian religion to the Chinese people. The absurd gibberish in which the uneducated missionary attempts to impart the mysteries of Christianity to a singularly fastidious people provokes their laughter; even as would be the case in England, were foreigners ignorant of English, to set up their tubs, and to commence street-preaching in London or Liverpool. Thus we fully agree with Sir Frederick Bruce when as the result of long experience, and impartial observation of facts, he gives it as his opinion that, whilst the preachings of the Protestant Missionaries are useless, or worse than useless to the ignorant classes, and should therefore not be countenanced by the British Government,—

"none but men of condition, well acquainted with Chinese literature, and able to express themselves with purity in Chinese," have the least chance of impressing the minds of the educated classes. For thus expressing himself the British Envoy in China is by the *Christian World*, denounced as an "inflated creature" and a son of perdition. The conventicle authorities are powerful in excommunicating all who differ from them in opinion, and refuse to repeat their peculiar shibboleth.

But this is not the whole, nor even the worst of this "inflated creature's"—(so our evangelical friend styles Sir Frederic Bruce)—offence. Not only has he put it officially on record that Protestant Missions in China are worthless and worse than useless; and that "experience has clearly proved the failure of the Protestant Missionary enterprise"—but he actually bears favorable testimony to the success and lasting prosperity of Roman Catholic Missions in China.—Not only—we quote from the London *Christian World* as copied by the *Montreal Witness* of the 31st Oct.—does this "insolent envoy," all through his despatch,—

"speak of the Protestant Missionaries of England and their work with a malicious contempt that merits the severest censure;" but he actually,—

"speaks with some respect of the Catholic Church;" and thinks that,—

"the position of the priests is essentially different

from that of Protestant Missionaries." Amongst the many reasons which the British Envoy assigns for entertaining this opinion, the following is particularly insisted upon. "Because the priests do not enter the country professedly as Missionaries, but as the spiritual ministers of Chinese congregations already in existence; not for the purpose of proselytising, but to look after Christians whose families have been resident there, as Christians, for generations." From this the *Christian World* charitably surmises that Sir Frederick Bruce has "given himself over to the Roman apostasy;" but we think that it affords additional testimony of the extent to which the Catholic Missionaries have succeeded in converting the Chinese to Christianity, and of the permanence of their work, in spite of the unremitting persecutions to which all Catholics in China are exposed.*

Nor is this all; the cup of bitterness is not yet full, and another mortification is in store for the saints of Exeter Hall. Not only does the British Envoy to Peking writing officially to his government speak with "a malicious contempt" of Protestant Missionaries and their work; not only does he "speak with some respect of the Catholic Church" and, incidentally, admit the extraordinary success of Romish Missionaries—but the British Government instead of rebuking the clear-sighted, truth-loving, and plain-speaking Minister, as from deference to Exeter Hall it should have done—actually endorses every word of his offensive despatch: for Lord Russell in replying thereunto, expressly says:—

"Her Majesty's Government approve your views with regard to Missionary effort in China."

This is the last drop which makes the *Christian World's* "earthen vessel" run over, this the last straw which breaks the noble, and much enduring camel's back. If Sir Frederick Bruce for telling truth, and giving good counsel to the Imperial authorities, be denounced as "inflated with pride, wretchedly conceited, an ignorant coxcomb, an inflated creature, an insolent Envoy without the least personal knowledge of the religion of the Lord Jesus," and "destitute of real Christian sentiments,"—for in such terms does the evangelical organ belabor the unhappy man—what shall be said, what shall be done with the impious Minister who actually approves the other's views with regard to missionary efforts in China? The task is too much for the *Christian World*; the editor's feelings are, as Mr. Gamp would say, "too many for him." He feels, he admits, his impotence to deal with such an enormity as it deserves to be dealt with. In sublime wrath he invokes all the powers, not of heaven nor yet of hell, but of Exeter Hall to crush the Minister who has dared so to wound the feelings of the saints and elect vessels. Had it been an adversary that had done this—an avowed enemy of the Holy Protestant Faith that had said this thing, he could have borne it. But no, it was a familiar friend, the writer of the Durham Letter, the instigator of the Popish Aggression panic, the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, that had thus lifted up his heel against the conventicle, and exposed its inmates to derision, and the bitter mockery of the world. "Had these," so does the *Christian World* pathetically conclude its long record of injuries and disgraces heaped upon it by the British Government—"had these been the words of Lord Palmerston few people would have been surprised"—(for Lord Palmerston is a notorious scoffer, and capable of poking fun at Spurgeon himself); "but coming from the pen of Earl Russell"—(whose staunch Protestantism cannot be called in question)—"they are unaccountable and demand an explanation, which we trust the various Missionary Societies will lose no time in seeking to obtain."—*Christian World*, as quoted by *Witness* of 31st Oct.

We trust so too; for certain we are that the more the question is ventilated, the stronger the light thrown upon the state of Protestant Missions in China, the more completely shall the substance of the British Envoy's despatch be established, and the full approval given thereto by Her Majesty's Government be justified. If the Missionaries are prudent, however—and they generally are very prudent in all matters concerning their persons and properties—they will forbear from provoking investigation into their conduct in China, their commercial transactions, and their mode of living. These are matters that will not bear looking into, or too close an inspection—and this no one knows better than the Missionaries themselves. They will therefore swallow the pill though a bitter one, and stick to their profits.

* To the extent and permanence of Catholic conversions in China, the *Edinburgh Review*, of October last, bears the following testimony—incontrovertible, because the testimony of a staunch Protestant, in favor of Popery:—

"Our explorers, as they now penetrate into the secluded interior of China, are constantly surprised by the discovery of large, and well conducted congregations of Catholic Christians, all but utterly unknown to the Western world, descended from those whom the successors of Xavier converted."—p. 283.

We see by our Toronto exchanges that the Reverend Archdeacon O'Keefe, of St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto, has been lecturing with great success at Newmarket on "The Powers of the Human Mind."

THE CHURCH AS A PROFESSION.—It is as a "profession," as a means of making a living, that Protestants look upon the ministry; and they take what, if Anglicans, they style "Holy Orders," or, if dissenters, they accept what in the unctuous slang of the saints is termed "a call," just as their neighbors select a secular business or calling, and with an eye to the profits to be made out of it. It is therefore incumbent upon the friends of the Protestant Establishment, especially at the present moment when there is so much difficulty in obtaining men of education to fill Anglican pulpits, to show that, as compared with other professions—the Army, the Navy, the Bar—or commerce—the Church offers the greatest number of rich prizes and the smallest number of blanks. This is the object of a lately published pamphlet reviewed by the *London Times*, and bearing as its title "*The Church as a Profession.*" The advantages of the Establishment, and the reasons for adopting it as a profession are thus eloquently summed up and enforced by the writer:—

THE CHURCH AS A PROFESSION.

"To a man entering the Church at the present time he sees himself in competition with, say, 18,000 men for—
"Two Archbishops, 15,000l. and 10,000l. a year; and the best positions in rank;
"Twenty-five Bishops, 10,000l. to 4,200l. a year;
"Twenty-seven Deaneries, 2,000l. to 1,000l. a year;
"A hundred Canonries, 1,000l. to 500l. a year;
"A hundred and fifty livings over 1,000l. a year;
"Fifteen hundred livings between 1,000l. and 500l. a year.
"Nearly all the best livings of 300l. a year and a house by the time he is fit to receive one.
"Compare this with the law, the army, or physics.
"Viz. sat. sup."

The *Times*, whose views are of course not the most spiritual, and whose conceptions of the status of an Anglican minister are not elevated—seeing that it describes him as "an officer of the State, charged with a dignity and duties of which the State gives him a monopoly"—is nevertheless staggered a little at this business mode of advocating the advantages the Protestant religious life. Our Lord of old laid down as the essential conditions of His service, abnegation of self, the forsaking of the things of this world, and the taking up of the cross; and the modern advocate of Anglicanism hold out as a lure to the young Levite—the prospects of incomes varying from £15,000 to £300 a year! Even the *Times* feels the inconsistency of this appeal, and thus comments upon it:—

We frankly own that we do not know what to say to this list of the prizes of the Establishment. The Church teaches voluntary service, self-denial, abnegation of all sorts, content, renunciation of the world, more than eye-service, and a good deal more, which hardly seems compatible with holding out a long list of high dignities and good livings to the young enthusiast considering whether it is his duty to devote himself to her service.

And when by hazard a young man of devout aspirations, and honestly anxious to perform what he believes to be his duty, does enter the ministry of the Anglican establishment, he invariably meets not with encouragement, but rebuke from his superiors, and the dispensers of ecclesiastical patronage. "Above all, gentlemen, no zeal," is the advice which in the spirit of a Talleyrand, the Establishment gives to all its ministers; and though it can wink at, and forgive, all manner of heresies and false doctrines within its fold, zeal or earnestness is the one crying sin on which it has no mercy. For the zealous man there is no promotion, no prospect of the "fat things" of the church. "So far"—says the *Times*, continuing its comments upon Anglicanism—"from merit, goodness, spirituality, service, constituting invariable and acknowledged claims to promotion, they often disqualify to a certain extent." The Establishment being itself a compromise, naturally hates men of strong convictions; hence its predilection for what are called safe men, that is to say, men who are so profoundly indifferent on all vital religious questions, that they will never disturb the peace of the church by pronouncing a decided opinion in favor of any particular dogma; hence the selection of such men as the late Dr. Whately, an avowed Sabellian, and Canon Stanley, a disciple of the school to which we are indebted for "*Essays and Reviews*," to fill its most important and lucrative posts. What the Establishment requires from its ministers, is indifference, a gentlemanly kind of indifference, or latitudinarianism, upon all matters of dogma, a good classical education, and a potentiality for editing a Greek play. But even the highest classical attainments will not save their possessor from ostracism, or exclusion from all lucrative situations, if he be truly an earnest and conscientious man, "Take such a man," says the *Times*, "conscientious, and if you will a high-wrangler, or a first class man; take him through a course of divinity," and let him really try and do what he believes to be his duty as a minister of the Gospel; and at the end of twenty years "he will be unfit not only for any dignity, for any living in a good quarter, but even for good clerical company." Such is the estimate that the leading journal of the English Protestant world forms, and pronounces, of the Church of England as a profession.

This will throw light upon the motives which have of late years compelled so many of the best and most learned ministers of that church to "go over to Rome" as the saying is. Rome—the

Catholic Church rather—hold-out prospects of worldly advantage of her children; she has no rich Anglican, no fat deaneries, no sinecure living her servants; but on the other hand she does punish zeal in her service as a crime, not as conscientious devotion expose her priest persecution and insult. Right or wrong, in earnest, and expects that all her ministers shall be in earnest. Firmly convinced of the truth of all she teaches, and firmly convinced that no truth can be unimportant, or that her fastidious tastes of a sceptical age, she does her service, not "safe men," but honest, but men who will not consent to a complete betwixt God's truth and the devil's lie; men who believe firmly that two and two four, and who are not afraid to give public place to their sincere convictions. For such there is no place in the Protestant Establishment; therefore they flock naturally to the Church where their zeal, their earnestness, "extreme" views, if you will, are held in; and whose ministers are not disqualified for ecclesiastical dignities, or rendered unfit for clerical company, because they are conscientious, promising Christians, as well as accomplished scholars; and because for years they have zealously devoted themselves to doing the will of their Master Who is in Heaven. In a worldly point of view, and as far as material tests are concerned, of course the Anglican tabernacle is the more eligible as a "profession," but to him who hates sham, who abhors promises, and of whose philosophy it is an axiom that of contraries both cannot be true, the Catholic Church, or "Rome," as her enemies call her, presents attractions infinitely more powerful than any that the Parliamentary Church of England can offer, to the enthusiastic and the conscientious. Therein lies the secret of the many conversions of Anglican ministers. The hot man delights to push his principles to their extreme or ultimate consequences; and only in the Catholic Church can those Christian principles which Anglicanism still professes, be logical and fully carried out.

Historicus, the well known writer in the *Times* on the seizure of the "Steam rams," thus answers the question—"why an English merchant may supply a belligerent with guns and all other munitions of war, but not with ships?" *Historicus* thus replies:—

"An English merchant may manufacture cannon and all other munitions of war for a belligerent, because there is no law to prevent it. An English shipbuilder may not equip a vessel of war or a transport for a belligerent, because there happens to be an English Act of Parliament which expressly prohibits his so doing. The English Government do not interfere with the first class of transactions, because they have no authority to do so; they stop the second, because it is their business to enforce the law."

Accepting *Historicus* as an authority, on the law of the case, and assuming the fact that the steam rams in the Mersey are destined for the Confederate States, it follows that the fitting, arming and equipping of those ships by the subjects of a neutral State for the service of one belligerent party—is an offence; not against the other belligerent party, not against international law, but solely against the Municipal law of the neutral State aforesaid. Upon this hypothesis, and if *Historicus*'s law be correct, Great Britain is under no moral or legal obligation to any other State to enact a Foreign Enlistment Act at all. She is at liberty to repeal that Act to-morrow if she so pleases; and were she to do so, the building in English ports of men-of-war for the service of the Confederate Government would be a perfectly legitimate act, and one of which the Federal authorities would have no right to take cognisance, or to complain.

In short, as *Historicus* lays down the law—and he cannot certainly be suspected of entertaining prejudices favorable to the Confederates—it is only in virtue of a positive municipal law, that it is wrong for a British subject to furnish the Confederates with armed ships for their navy; and the wrong done by so doing, is a wrong done, not against the Federal, but against the British Government. The former therefore can have no right to interfere in the matter at all; either to claim the enforcement of the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act by the British Government against British subjects, or to claim compensation for damages inflicted upon Federal ships through the violation of that Act. This is the ground now taken by *Historicus*; but it must be admitted that in his eagerness to advocate the cause of his friends the Federals, *Historicus* has not been very careful to maintain his own consistency. If the only reason why "an English shipbuilder may not equip a vessel of war or a transport for a belligerent, because there happens to be an English Act of Parliament which expressly prohibits his so doing;"—and since England is under no moral or legal obligation to pass, or maintain on her Statute Book, such an Act of Parliament, it follows that, whatever amount of damage to Federal shipping may have been caused by the *Alabama*, the English Government is the sole aggrieved party, and the only one that has any right to complain. Before the Federals can logically establish any