

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, OCT. 5.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

OCTOBER—1866. Friday, 5—St. Placidie and Others, M. M. Saturday, 6—St. Bruno, O. Sunday, 7—Twentyfourth after Pentecost. Holy Rosary. Monday, 8—St. Bridget, W. Tuesday, 9—St. Denis and Others, M. M. Wednesday, 10—St. Francis of Borgia, C. Thursday, 11—Of the Blessed Sacrament.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

It was confidently expected in Europe that the Treaty of Peace between Austria and Piedmont would be signed in a few days. There have been serious disturbances at Palermo, and hard fighting between the insurgent patriots and the Piedmontese troops.

The news of the weather in the British islands is such as to raise suspicions that the crops will be less than an average: nor will the expected deficiency be made good by importations from France, as there also the heavy and long continued rains had caused great injury.

The Fenian movements in the United States have assumed a new character. We are told that Gen. Santa Anna has hired them to carry out his designs upon Mexico, and that for this purpose several large sea-going ships have been provided and equipped.

After all it seems that ex President Davis is not to be brought to trial, either during the course of the present or of the next month. For nearly a year and a half this gentleman has been kept a prisoner, and sometimes subjected to the vilest indignities, untried, uncondemned.

Canada has been blessed with several consecutive days of fine warm weather. These, we may hope, will enable the farmer to save and house a great part of his outstanding crops.

ST. PATRICK'S BAZAAR.

The Bazaar in aid of the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum will be held on the 10th of October, in Mechanics' Hall, Great St. James Street. The lady friends of the Asylum are canvassing among their acquaintances in order to carry out the object of the Bazaar.

THE ROMAN LOAN.—On Monday evening a large meeting, presided over by His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, and at which His Lordship the Bishop of Ottawa, many of the Clergy, and a large number of our most distinguished citizens of both origins assisted, was held in the spacious and handsome Salle Academique of the College of St. Mary, which the Rev. Jesuit Fathers had kindly placed at the disposal of the Catholic public for the object of their gathering.

We regret that from want of space we are unable to give a full report of the speeches delivered on the occasion. That by M. Cherrier was most brilliant, and was loudly applauded, as indeed it deserved to be, for a more happy and powerful defence of the Holy See, and the Temporal Power of the Pope, we have never listened to.

"How"—in this form is the objection couched—"can the subjects of the British Government, free themselves, give their aid to rivet the chains of tyranny upon the people of Rome?"

This is but an ordinary specimen of Protestant logic, which always starts with the petitio principii, or the assumption of the truth of that which the opposite, or Catholic party denies, and which in short constitutes the entire matter at issue.—The Government of the Holy Father, we reply, is not tyrannical or oppressive. It is a legitimate Government, exercised by the rightful rulers, for the benefit of the governed; and though we do not pretend that it is perfect, that it cannot be amended in some of its details; though we do not deny that reforms are possible, and desirable, we assert that it is as free from imperfection as any other existing government in Europe or America; and that if amendments and reforms therein are still possible, the fault lies, not with the Pope, who has earnestly striven to supply what was defective, to restore and reinvigorate what was worn out, in the political machine; but with the party of the Revolution, which has since the accession of the present occupant of the Papal Chair, set itself against the carrying out of these reforms, and responded to the Holy Father's earnest efforts after reform, by assassinating his Minister, and driving him into exile.

But is there not disaffection deep and wide-spread in Rome amongst the subjects of the Pope? does not (this prove that his Government is a tyranny?) and have not the people the right anyhow, if his rule displeases them, to depose him, and to set up a Government of another pattern, and more after their own hearts?

Dangerous logic this in the mouth of an Englishman—for the retort is obvious:—"Is there not disaffection deep and wide-spread in Ireland amongst the subjects of Queen Victoria? does not this prove that her Government is a tyranny? and have not the Irish people the right, anyhow, if her rule displeases them, to depose her, and to set up for Ireland a Government of another pattern, and one after their own hearts? Take care what you do, we say to our anti-Papal opponents! Beware lest in your anti-Catholic zeal, you make out not only a case against the Pope, but a case in favor of the Fenians. You are treading on very delicate ground.

We find ourselves in no dilemma. We admit the existence of Irish disaffection; we trace much of that disaffection to British misrule, past and even present; but we do not, therefore, and because we recognise the existence of defects in the political order in Ireland, advocate the cause of Revolution. We do not entertain with complacency, or seek to justify, the policy of the Fenians. If it be urged that from the Government of Pius IX., no peaceful reforms can be hoped for, we reply:—"This is false; the present Pope inaugurated his reign by an effort to reform; and well would it be for Ireland, and the peace of the British Empire, if the Imperial Government were one half as well disposed to do justice to the Catholics of Ireland, as is the Pope still, to ameliorate by every possible means, the civil Government of the State over which he rules.

It is because we are British subjects, and loyal British subjects, that we defend the Pope against the Revolution, and cheerfully do our best to enable him to stem its progress. For, let it not be imagined that the storm of wild democracy now raging around him will have spent its fury, and shall have subsided into a calm, when its particular object at Rome shall have been accomplished. No! The triumph of the Revolution over the Pope will be but a prelude to other triumphs; it is as a means, and not as a final result, that the enemies of all kings, of all constitutional order, and of all religions are so

eagerly bent thereon—for well they know that the Papacy is the Malakoff of modern European civilisation, and of that social and political order, which they are anxious to subvert. This stronghold taken, this citadel captured, the reduction of the besieged City would follow as an inevitable consequence. For, let the English partizans of the European Revolution be assured of this:—That when the waves of Continental democracy shall have swept away the throne of the Pope; that of no Queen or Emperor in Europe will be worth a year's purchase. In doing our best therefore to prop up the one, we are rendering most effective service to the other; in fighting the battle of the Pope, the oldest and most legitimate sovereign in Europe, we are fighting not only the battle of the Church and of Christian civilisation; we are upholding the cause of all kings, and of all peoples, since the triumph of the Revolution would be as fatal to the liberties of the latter, as it would be to the prerogatives and dignity of the former.

The unhappy Italians have by this time partially realised the truth of this. They are crushed with taxes, they are torn from their homes to swell the ranks of the Piedmontese army, and they may now repent at their leisure, their folly and their wickedness in having espoused the cause of the Revolution, against Legitimacy and Constitutional order. But the end is not yet, for as yet the Revolution has not dared, even in Italy, to show itself in its true colors. Its time has not fully come; and on attendant, it is content to avail itself of such tools as the drunker boor whom it hails as King of Italy, and his courtiers. It is content to wait until by these its paths shall have been made straight, until the soil be properly prepared for the seed: until the work of centralisation be accomplished, and all the local liberties of the Peninsula shall have been trampled out. Then it will be time for it to assert itself; and as in France in 1789, there were waiting upon and behind the political economists, the bourgeois revolutionists of the National Assembly, the more thorough men of action, the Jacobins of the Convention, and the Terrorists of '93—who also intended to have their Revolution; so in Italy to-day there is a party beneath that of which Victor Emmanuel is the nominal leader, waiting only for the convenient moment to blow him and his adherents to the—party whose name it is deemed indiscreet to mention to ears polite. The Liberals know that to overset the existing social and political order of Europe, and to introduce the regime of Communist fraternity according to the Gospel of Jean Jacques, Christianity must be got rid of: but to get rid of Christianity the Catholic Church must be destroyed; but to destroy the Catholic Church, the Pope must first be destroyed; and like most of our evangelical Protestants, they confound the overthrow of the Temporal Power of the Pope, with the downfall of the Papacy. Therefore is it, that they are for the present so intent upon the overthrow of that Power, confident that all the rest—to wit, the downfall of the Spiritual Power of the Pope, consequently the collapse of the Catholic Church, and consequently the extinction of Christianity—will follow inevitably and immediately as a matter of course. Then, when the rock of Peter shall have been overwhelmed in the flood, then when the gates of hell shall have prevailed, then shall have sounded the hour of triumph for the Revolution; then will the kingdom of the devil and his angels be at hand; then, when the infamous—"Panjane"—shall have been crushed, when the Galilean in the person of His Vicar upon earth, shall have been defeated, then, but not before, shall the throne of the Revolution be set up upon earth, and then will commence the new era of universal brotherhood, after which the Apostle of the Dagger now so ardently sighs.

RIOTOUS PROCEEDINGS AT QUEBEC.—We have seen with regret the account of a disturbance that took place at Quebec a few days ago. The facts are these:—

A building, with ground attached to it, was lately made over by the Government to a Catholic educational institution. The authorities of the latter, acting as they supposed in their right, fenced in a portion of the grounds so made over to them, and thereby, it is pretended, deprived the public of a promenade to which it was—or fancied itself entitled. Hereupon a mob of rowdies collected, and with acts of great violence broke down the obnoxious impediment. Of course the question resolves into this:—Was the land or ground assigned to the Catholic institution in question, public, in the sense of belonging to the public as a promenade? or was it land which the Government, had it retained it in its own hands, would have had the right to enclose, and exclude the public from? On this question of law we offer no opinion.

But we do most certainly take the liberty of expressing our surprise at the terms in which the Quebec Daily News, professing to be "an exponent of the feelings of the Irish Catholics" speaks of this high handed outrage against an ecclesiastical institution:—

"We cannot deny that there is a strong feeling abroad that the ecclesiastical authorities are too rapacious in their desire to acquire property under one

pretext or another. In a city, two-thirds of the population of which is starving half the year round, stately edifices are raising their majestic heads in every quarter. All of these edifices have to be built from public subscriptions, the Church reserving the sole control over them. If ever this Province shall pass into the hands of the Yankees they will make a clean sweep of these corporations.

Well, if two-thirds of the population of Quebec are starving for half the year round, it is to the enterprise of the "ecclesiastical authorities," whose "rapacity" our contemporary seems to condemn: it is to the occupation which they furnish by the erection of the "majestic edifices" complained of, to the starving mechanics, artisans, and laborers of the City of Quebec, that the latter are indebted for employment and food during the other six months of the year at all events. The ecclesiastical authorities are thus, by the showing of our carrying contemporary, public benefactors, since the great want of the working classes in Canada is work—and that want the said authorities supply in their "stately edifices."

These too, it must be remembered, are erected, not to flatter the pride, or to pamper to the sensuality of the rapacious builders; but for the use in great part of the artisans, and of the very class to which the latter belong. These stately edifices are churches in which the spiritual wants of the poor man are provided for; or they are convents and hospitals in which he is taken care of in sickness and old age, and his bodily ailments are carefully attended to: or they are schools and colleges in which liberal and useful as well as Christian education is given to all on easy terms. Would it be well for the laboring classes of Quebec if works which in their construction furnish employment and food to hundreds, and which when completed are devoted to purposes of religion, education, and charity, were suspended? We trow not.

But our contemporary lets, as the saying is "the cat out of the bag," or in other words displays the cloven-hoof of democracy, when as a climax to the offences of the ecclesiastical authorities, he adds—that the Church reserves to herself exclusive control over the buildings which she erects. What would our contemporary have? Would he have the Church divest herself of that control? and thereby make over to either the Government, or to the laity, the control over her churches, her schools, her colleges, and her convents? God forbid! We know well what would be the consequence in a spiritual point of view, if the temporalities, even, of the Church were submitted to popular control. So too, do the Revolutionists of Italy: and it is in the hopes of thereby making itself supreme in things spiritual, that European democracy is now clamoring for the overthrow of the Pope's Temporal Power. God forbid! we say, that an exponent of the Irish Catholics of Quebec should seem, even, to favor such a movement; nevertheless, the objection insinuated against the ecclesiastical authorities of Quebec, in that they retain in their own hands exclusive control over the temporalities, or material property of the Church, is not only akin to, but identical with, the objections urged by Italian Revolutionists against the Temporal Power. The Quebec Daily News, if it be what it pretends to be, should seriously reconsider its ill-advised language.

In common with the TRUE WITNESS, some of our French contemporaries have commented upon the formal charges made by the Montreal Witness of the 5th ult. against the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Canada. This has elicited from the evangelical journal in question, the following reply, which we give as not merely a literary curiosity, but as an excellent specimen of evangelical honesty:—

ST VINCENT DE PAUL.—We have been blamed by a number of French Canadian journals for inserting an article which called the Paolotti, or Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Jesuits of the 19th century. These papers assure us that there is no foundation for such charge; for the Society does not mix itself up with politics, but devotes itself wholly to works of charity, &c in reply, we have to state, first, that the article in question consisted of extracts from an account published in Britain by a gentleman of high standing respecting the Society in Italy. In Canada Society may not have the same character. Second, We would ask whether our contemporaries consider the term Jesuit one of reproach, or of commendation? and, if the latter, wherefore are they displeased that the Paolotti should be likened to them. Third,—If to take no part in politics be a distinguishing merit of the Paolotti, have the Jesuits this merit? Finally, we are happy to republish the assurances of Canadian press that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is in this country exclusively occupied with works of charity. —Witness, 21st ult.

It matters, after all, but little what such a one as the editor of the Montreal Witness says about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or any other Catholic institution. The man who has been publicly made to eat his own words, in two successive issues of his own journal, who has been forced to acknowledge himself a liar and a slanderer—as has been the editor of the Witness in the case of a Scotch nobleman, whom he had foully traduced—is not one from whose evil report, man, woman, or child has ought to fear. To the man of honor, he is but an object of scorn, mixed with wonder, how, after such humiliation, the fellow dare show his head in any society outside of the walls of the Provincial Penitentiary.

We will only point out that the editor of the Witness, who in his issue of the 5th ult., positively asserted—not upon the authority of others,

but as of his own knowledge—that "it"—the Society of St. Vincent de Paul—

"is seeking to do for Canada what it has partly accomplished in Italy."—Witness, 5th ult.

that, "its object" in Canada, "is to arrest the progress of civil and religious freedom."—Id.

and that,—

"it is seeking to do this, precisely by the same methods here [the Italics are our own] that it has adopted in Europe—especially in Italy."—Id.

in his issue of the 21st ult., and when called upon to bring forward his proof of the truth of these very positive allegations, tries to shuffle out of the unpleasant dilemma in this wise:—

"In Canada, Society may not have the same character;"

as that which, according to some other anonymous liar and slanderer, copied by the Witness, the Society has in Italy.

Then why in your issue of the 5th did you assert positively, not as a suspicion, not as a possibility, or as a probability, but as a FACT, that it had? that its objects in Canada, and the methods which it adopts for attaining these objects are precisely the same "HERE" as those attributed to it in Italy by the Italian defamers of the Society? Either the Witness of the 5th ult., when he brought his positive charges against the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Canada, had certain reasons for knowing them to be true, or he had not. If he had, how comes it that, only a few days after, on the 21st of the same month, he admits that those charges may be false? If he had not, what do our Protestant fellow-citizens think of having for their representative, and their champion in the press, one who makes positive and serious charges against others, without having any good reasons for knowing those charges to be true?

This, however, is not our business. Rather should we as Catholics thank God, and congratulate ourselves, that the cause of Protestantism is defended and advocated by such a one, so utterly regardless of the laws of truth, and honor, and Christian charity, as is the editor of the Montreal Witness.

DEATH BED CONVERSIONS.—The Courier de St. Hyacinthe announces the conversion to the Catholic Faith, and consequent reconciliation with the Church, of a gentleman named William Burns, Notary, at Roxton Falls. His abjuration was received by the Rev. M. Michon on Sunday the 16th ult. and on the following Monday the convert died, at the age of 56.—Hereupon some of our evangelical contemporaries affect to sneer at the conversion, as if being consummated almost in articulo mortis it were of no value whatsoever.

Now in our eyes this is what gives to its chief importance, its chief value and significance. As we should look upon the death bed conversion of a Christian, to Mahomedanism or to Buddhism as a fearful portent, so do we look upon the death bed conversion of a Pagan to Christianity, or of a Protestant to Catholicity, as a strong testimony to the truth of our religion. Many a man will live a heathen, because heathenism imposes no restraints on his passions who nevertheless would gladly die a Christian: many a one will gladly live a Protestant, because no doubt in a worldly point of view the Protestant enjoys many advantages over the Catholic, who nevertheless would fain depart this life in the Catholic Faith: but we never yet heard, either of a Christian who desired to renounce Christianity for Paganism, or of a Catholic who desired to renounce Catholicity for Protestantism, on his death bed, or in the prospect of immediate death. It is when men are in the full vigor of life and health, when their animal passions are strong, when death seems to them remote, and their visions of a judgment to come, of heaven and hell, are dimmed and obscured by the fogs of earth, that they are most prone to exchange the restraints of Catholicity for the license of Protestantism. At the hour of death man's spiritual vision is clearer, and his apprehension of spiritual things more acute: and so, we find that at that dread hour, many even of the most notorious Protestant French philosophes of the last century, cried out for the Catholic priest, to reconcile them with the religion which they had repudiated, the Church which they had mocked, and the God whom they had blasphemed and defied.

There is in death bed conversions the same value that there is in death bed confessions and depositions made in articulo mortis, or in the expectation of certain and immediate dissolution. To these confessions and depositions the law of all civilised nations attaches great importance, because there can be no reason to doubt of their sincerity, and of the good faith of the deponent. In the same way, the good faith of the dying convert to Catholicity cannot be called in question, and no one can suspect him of being actuated by those mercenary motives, with which the "Soupers" and the converts of the French Canadian Missionary Society, are but too naturally taxed. At all events we know that the latter improve their worldly condition by their professed change of religion: whilst we know that the former can be actuated solely by anxiety for the salvation of his soul.