

REMITTANCES

ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND & WALES.

SIGHT DRAFTS from One Pound upwards, negotiable at any Town in the United Kingdom, are granted on The Union Bank of London, London. The Bank of Ireland, Dublin. The National Bank of Scotland, Edinburgh. By HENRY CHAPMAN & Co., St. Sacramento Street. Montreal, December 14, 1854.

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON, At the Office, No. 4, Place d'Armes.

TERMS: To Town Subscribers . . . \$3 per annum. To Country do . . . \$2 1/2 do. Payable Half-Yearly in Advance.

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, DEC. 15, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

In consequence of the exigencies of the war, Government has taken up several of the Cunard steam-boats, for conveying reinforcements to the Crimea. We are likely therefore, for some time, to have a regular mail steamer only once a fortnight. The Collins' line will, it is said, change their days of sailing to Saturdays, and bring out the alternate mails.

The Pacific from Liverpool, the 30th ult., brings but gloomy tidings from the Crimea. The Allies, it is true, have received large reinforcements, and more are on their way to join them. But, on the other hand, their losses are great, and the enemy receives his reinforcements still more rapidly. Since the 5th ult., there has been nothing done apparently—the Allies hold their ground, and that is all. By despatches from Prince Menschikoff, it would appear that the bombardment had almost ceased on the part of the besiegers, and that no great amount of damage had been inflicted on the defences; though the loss to the Russians in men, is admitted by the writer to have been very heavy. The Allied Generals have demanded an explanation from the Prince respecting an order said to have been issued by him to his troops, to give no quarter; and a Russian General enforcing these orders, has, it is said, been taken prisoner and hanged. We have news, too, of disasters by sea.—A violent storm on the night of the 14th ult. had destroyed many of the Allies' transports, and seriously damaged some ships of the fleet; the loss of life is not stated, but it must have been very great.

From the general tenor of the despatches, it would appear that the prospects of the Allies, if not desperate, were very gloomy. It is beginning to be understood that the strength of Sebastopol, as a fortress, has been greatly underrated, and that the expedition sent against it, is utterly inadequate for the purpose. By sacrificing a portion of their fleet, the Russians have effectually closed up the entrance to the harbor, thus rendering an attack from the fleet impossible; the whole work therefore has devolved upon the land forces, who, in the original draft of the campaign, were intended to act rather as auxiliaries to the navy, than as principals—but who now find themselves called upon to do, single handed, that which, under the most favorable circumstances, would have been an arduous undertaking for army and navy combined.—That the soldiers of the two armies will do all that men can do, there is no doubt; that they are able to thresh any number of Russians that may be brought against them in the field, they have proved at Alma, at Balaklava, and on the Inkerman; but it is almost too much to expect of them to carry a strongly fortified post, defended by some of the most formidable works in the world, abundantly furnished with artillery, and occupied by an enemy, not only actually superior in numbers to the assailants, but with his communications open in the rear, and thus able to receive any amount of reinforcements that the gigantic Russian Empire—prodigal of the lives of its subjects—is willing to send for the defence of its great naval arsenal, on the possession of which its very existence as a maritime power in the South of Europe depends.

Still the Diplomats are at work with their tape and protocols. With the view perhaps of paralysing Austria, the Czar has given out his willingness to treat on the following terms.—1. A common guarantee by the five Powers of the rights of all denominations of Christians, subjects of the Porte. 2. A common Protectorate of the Principalities. 3. and 4. Revision of pre-existing treaties, and the free navigation of the Danube. These propositions, which if made in February last, would probably have been accepted, and have staved off hostilities, will not now be deemed sufficient. The Allies require some material guarantee that Russia shall not again put forward her exorbitant claims over Turkey, the moment that their fleets and armies are withdrawn from the shores of the Black Sea, and thus occasion another Eastern Question as difficult of solution as the present. Thus, in spite of their want of success in the Crimea, we learn that France and England are assuming a higher tone; and have notified the Western Powers that they will no longer accept the "four points" as the basis of negotiations; but that they intend to take, and retain hold of the Crimea, as a pledge for the future good behaviour of the Czar. The war spirit is aroused, and the people of Great Britain seem ready to submit to any sacrifices requisite to bring the contest into which they have been forced, to a satisfactory conclusion. Parliament will meet in December, when it is said the income tax will be raised to ten per cent, and a loan of ten millions will be contracted for. As sign of the times, we may

mention that John Bright, the Peace Society man, has been publicly burned in effigy at Manchester.—Everything seems to denote that we are but at the commencement of a long and arduous struggle, in which the resources of the Allies will be taxed to their utmost.

"Why should Common Schools be either Catholic or Protestant?" asks the Sun. Because, if they have any religious character at all, they must be either the one or the other, is the answer that common sense dictates. In the religious order, all that is not Catholic is Non-Catholic, or Protestant.

But why should we not have schools—where the broad principles of religion and morality—upon which all sects profess to agree—are inculcated along with the various branches of secular education?—again asks our cotemporary. Because there are no such principles: because there is no one principle of Christianity—meaning by Christianity a system of supernatural religion—on which all sects, or denominations of Christians, do agree. Here again is a sufficient answer to our cotemporary's query.

"It seems to us"—he says—"that schools may be sound and moral, ay, and Christian too, without being, in the strict sense of the word, either Catholic or Protestant." It seems to us that this remark of our cotemporary betrays a gross ignorance of the very essence of Christianity as a system of supernatural, as distinguished from natural, religion. If Christianity were but a republication of the natural law, as some contend, our opponent might, indeed, with some show of reason, talk about his "broad principles" on which all sects were agreed. But Christianity, if a supernatural religion, is something more than natural; and that something more consists in the dogmas which it propounds to man, as necessary to be believed, and in the practice of certain duties, and the performance of certain acts, as the necessary consequence of a belief in these dogmas, or doctrines—undiscoverable by man's reason, and therefore supernaturally revealed. Now, though in the natural order, it is possible to find some such "broad principles" as our cotemporary speaks of—the moment we ascend to the plane of the supernatural order—that is, the moment we pass the threshold of Christianity, considered as a system of supernatural religion, it is impossible to discover any one principle upon which all denominations of Christians are agreed. The fundamental truths of the one, are the falsehoods and corruptions of the other.

Teach children at the Common Schools—says the Sun—Christianity without dogma.—There is no necessity for instilling into them the dogmas of either one sect or another; they may be taught along with their education, to fear God, to love justice, mercy, and truth." Brave words these—but have they any meaning?

For first, "what is truth?" what is that truth which children are to be taught to love?—and what is a Christianity, from which the dogmas of all sects have been eliminated, and which contains not the "dogmas of either one sect or another?"

Secondly, wherein would such a Christianity differ from the "absolute religion" of the Rev. Theodore Parker? Easier would it be to form a conception of a Lord Mayor—a universal Lord Mayor—without chain, or robes of office, without head, feet, or wherewithal to sit—than of such an abstract Christianity as the Sun proposes to have taught in our Common Schools. An abstract of a plum pudding, without raisins, suet, flour, or spices, into which the accidents of eggs and butter entered not, would be about as profitable to the bodies of the students, as such a Christianity—abstraction made of all the dogmas of "either one sect or another"—would be to their souls.

The Sun is evidently of the "Liberal" school; a school which, professing to abhor dogmas, is of all sects the most intensely dogmatic. It has indeed but one fundamental dogma, but on that it insists as strongly as ever did the most rigid Calvinist upon "absolute predestination." To be a "Liberal Christian" it is necessary to accept the dogma—that no dogma is necessary for salvation.

But will the Sun, will any one else, deign to enlighten us as to this "absolute Christianity" which contains not the dogmas of "either one sect or another?"—or show us wherein it differs from pure Deism? Let us have a Catechism of this abstract Christianity; and let us at least know wherein, and of what, it consists. Before we can consent to be taxed for teaching it, let us at least know what it is that is to be taught, and whether, after all, it will be worth the teaching.

The proposition of the Sun is not new, and if it has not been carried into execution, it is simply because it is impracticable. It must, indeed, be a subject of regret that the differences amongst nominal Christians should be so great, and so many, as to render any common religious education for the children of all denominations impossible. Nevertheless, it is so; and, regret it as we may, it is a fact which we cannot attempt to overlook without infringing upon the rights of conscience. As in religion, betwixt Catholic and Protestant there is nothing in common, so there can be no education partaking in the slightest degree of a religious character, which shall be equally acceptable to both. If then we have Common Schools, they must be schools entirely destitute of all religious, and therefore of all Christian, character.

But do our Protestant fellow citizens wish for such schools? We do them no more justice when we admit that, for the most part, they do not: even the Sun desires to see our Common Schools "Christian," and we respect him for it. The cry for the "Bible in our Schools" is general amongst our Protestant fellow citizens. Do we blame them for this?—do we desire to deprive them of the privilege of

using a book which they consider an essential ingredient in the education of their children? Far from it: we respect the principle which they advocate for themselves—but desire only that they will be equally just towards us poor Papists. They consider the "authorised version" of the Bible as the basis of all religious education: they look upon it as the "Word of God;" and so considering it, and so believing, we should despise them if they did not insist upon its use in schools to which they were by law compelled to contribute. We as Catholics, do not accept the "authorised version" as the Word of God at all; neither do we consider that the Bible is, or can properly be made, the foundation of religious belief.—History tells us that Christianity is older than the Christian Scriptures; that the latter proceeded from the Church, which cannot therefore be based upon them; and therefore we do not consider it either necessary, or advisable, to place the Bible in any form, or in any version, in the hands of our children, because by so doing we should be lending our countenance to the Protestant principle that a book, and not the Church, is the pillar and ground of the truth." The difference betwixt Catholic and Protestant consists—not in the different interpretations which they put upon the utterances of an authority recognised by both—as betwixt the different Protestant sects—but in that they do not recognise any common and supreme authority in religion at all.—Now the simple fact of placing the Bible in the hands of children implies that that book is the source of all religious knowledge. This we deny; and therefore, as implying a false principle, do we object to the reading of the Bible in schools to which we are compelled to pay. We are perfectly willing to respect the opinions of our Protestant fellow citizens; but we demand of them that they shall equally respect our religious opinions; thus the only arrangement possible under the existing circumstances is one which shall secure to Protestants the use of schools in which their mode of giving religious education is employed—and to Catholics, schools in which the children of Catholics shall be instructed in accordance with the religious opinions of their parents. In other words, equal and impartial justice imperatively requires separate schools, for Catholics and Protestants, if public education is to retain any religious character at all. Banks, Rail-Road Companies, and public institutions which make no pretence to any religious character, and which have no connection with any religious objects, may indeed be common to both Catholics and Protestants, without being either Catholic or Protestant. But schools, in which the principles of Christianity are to be instilled, and of which religious, as well as secular instruction is to be one of the objects—must be either Catholic or Protestant, and cannot therefore, be "Common" to both. And this is the answer to the Sun's question, "Why should Common Schools be either Catholic or Protestant?"

On Sunday last, the preacher in St. Patrick's Church recommended to the charitable consideration of his congregation, the destitute condition of great numbers of the lately arrived Irish girls; who, owing to the lateness of the season, and the pressure of the times, have been unable to procure service in any respectable families—and who, in consequence, have been exposed to much suffering and great temptations. We are happy to learn that the good Sisters of the "Bon Pasteur" have promptly come forward to meet the immediate necessities of the case—by throwing open, for the reception of Irish girls out of place, one of their rooms, calculated to accommodate forty lodgers. A trifling expense may be necessary at first, to put the room in order, and to procure the requisite furniture; but we feel assured, that, for so desirable an object, the Irish of Montreal will, as usual, cheerfully respond to any appeal made upon them. God only knows to what hardships, insults, and temptations many of these poor innocent Irish girls are exposed in our great city, upon their first arrival from their native land. Miscreants of every description lie in wait for them; speculators in vice make a traffic of their miseries, and as a matter of "business" plot the ruin of their souls. By whom then can they expect the helping hand to be stretched out to them, to snatch them from the gulf of vice and infamy which yawns for their reception, if not by their fellow-countrymen and co-religionists—the children of the same soil—the inheritors of the same faith, and of the same hopes of immortal life? See to it—would we then say to our Irish friends—see to it, that none of your poor innocent Catholic countrywomen, be left exposed to the snares and temptations which await them on their arrival. It is not their bodies only—it is their innocence, their immortal souls, that will be exposed to danger; if we neglect our duty.

The subject was brought before the notice of the City Council on Monday last; when a letter from the Rev. M. Villeneuve of the Seminary was read by His Worship the Mayor—in which the writer drew a sad, but true picture of the destitution and depravity which prevails amongst a considerable portion of the lately arrived female immigrants. One hundred and thirty females are now in prison; some sent thither as to a place of refuge—many sentenced to confinement for their bad conduct, on account of which they had previously been turned out of the sheds, where they had hitherto found shelter. The Mayor took up the matter in a manner alike creditable to his head and his heart; and we trust that the Corporation will kindly lend its aid to arrest the growing evil.

It must however always be borne in mind, that the mass of pauperism with which we are burthened is of British, not of Canadian origin; and that it is the vice, the misery, and squalor, generated in the old country that presses so heavily upon our means of relief. It may be asked—why do not our convents

and other Catholic asylums provide for these poor creatures? Alas! our convents, our asylums, are crammed full, and their funds, as it is, are taxed to the utmost. Our charitable institutions were founded with the view of meeting the wants of the poor in Canada, and for this end they are amply sufficient; but they cannot suffice for the vast mass of poverty and distress which comes to us yearly from abroad. Pauperism, which is the product of Protestantism, is generated in Great Britain too rapidly and too extensively for our Catholic institutions in Canada; and thus, in spite of the liberality of our citizens of all denominations, the exertions of our Clergy, and the heroic self-devotion of our Sisters of Charity, it still happens that hundreds of poor penniless creatures roam about our streets, looking in vain for where to lay their heads. We are burthened, in fact, not only with the poverty of Canada, but with the pauperism of Great Britain and Ireland; and our institutions are not numerous, or wealthy enough to bear the burden which Protestantism casts upon them.

"This state of things"—said the Mayor with justice—"furnishes a just cause of complaint," and gives us a good claim on the Executive for assistance. If Government will persist in casting these helpless creatures upon our shores, it is bound to prevent them from becoming burdensome to the community. This was the view taken by the Mayor, the conclusion of whose speech upon the occasion we give below:—

"This state of things furnished a just reason of complaint. We, the citizens of Montreal had a just right to complain that these poor destitute females should be thus pitilessly cast upon our shores, and imposed as a heavy burden upon us, by those whose legitimate duty it was to succor and provide for them. A representation of the facts ought to be made to the Executive, accompanied by a demand that provision be made for these poor friendless females. It is not right that they should be allowed to remain, at once a charge upon our revenues, and the cause of contamination to the morals and of offence to the decency of our community. He must be allowed to make only one more remark. It was stated out of doors that our Treasury was overflowing, and that a reduction of assessment ought therefore to be made.—If, indeed, our Treasury was overflowing, he would ask in the name of all that was benevolent and charitable, in the name of common humanity and for the honor of our common nature, that the surplus be applied to establish an asylum for these poor unfortunate, destitute objects. Besides affording a protection to the morals of the community, many of these now friendless creatures might be converted into good and useful members of society; and others, not yet wholly lost, might be timely saved from the ruin and shame to which they were now being hurried—happily, in many cases perhaps, against their own will. But he feared it was not within the means of the city to provide such an asylum, and he would, therefore, call upon the government of the country to take notice of the appalling fact that 130 helpless females were cast upon our community destitute and unprotected, and exposed to all the allurements and snares which vice holds out to her victims, and want and misery but too often impel them to embrace. He might be told that the lamentable fact was a proper subject of consideration for the Emigration Office. Perhaps so, but they all felt what results would follow an appeal to the emigrant agent whose deputy here was besides well acquainted with the facts. He again urged upon the Council to make application to the Executive to remedy so alarming a state of things, and concluded by informing them that besides the 130 females in question, both the Catholic and Protestant Asylums of the city were now filled; and, if the truth were known, the city was at present burdened not with 130 only, but with at least 200 of the female pauper population of the parent country."

At a subsequent meeting of the Council, it was proposed by Councillor Day, seconded by Councillor Ricard, and carried unanimously—that—in compliance with the prayer of the Rev. Mr. Villeneuve, a sum of £100 be granted to make a temporary provision for destitute females: and that the Executive be applied for reimbursement.

An esteemed Catholic correspondent calls our attention to a letter that has appeared in the Protestant journals, over the signature of "The Abbé Laborde, of Lectoure"—in which the writer, who, it must be admitted, adopts rather a singular method of addressing the Sovereign Pontiff—through the columns of the Protestant press—warns His Holiness against defining the "Immaculate Conception" of the ever blessed Mother of God, as an article of faith; and threatens him with his—the Abbé Laborde's—serious opposition, should he prove deaf to this warning; the writer pretends also to have Scripture, the Fathers, and the voice of Christian antiquity, on his side. Our correspondent, who asks us to reply to this letter, attaches—so it seems to us at least—a great deal too much importance to a document, intrinsically unworthy of notice, and which derives but little claims to our respectful consideration, from the position of its author.

For instance, were it avowedly the production of a heretic, we think our friend would at once admit that it was unworthy of a serious reply. It is only because it comes from one who calls himself a Catholic, and who prefixes to his name the mysterious title of "Abbé," as if he were some high ecclesiastical dignitary, that our correspondent attaches any weight to it at all. Now, if upon examination, it should turn out that in spite of his "Abbe-ship"—his professions of Catholicity—and his appeals to the Fathers—the writer is but a heretic in disguise, and misrepresents the authors to whom he appeals, we think that our correspondent would agree with us, that his letter to the Pope is as little worthy the serious notice of a Catholic journalist, as if it came avowedly from the classic regions of Wapping, and bore upon its face the imposing autograph of the Reverend Ebenezer Styles of Squash Lane.

Be it known to our friend then, that the title "Abbé," as used in France, does not necessarily imply the possession of any important ecclesiastical office, and holds out no guarantee for the orthodox