

The True Witness

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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NEWS OF THE WEEK.

IN the absence of more exciting topics, the work of the ex-Jesuit Passaglia on the Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope forms the great subject of conversation in political circles.

We may expect stirring news soon from the United States. The great combined naval and military expedition has sailed under sealed orders and its destination is therefore unknown, unless it has been divulged by traitors.

MR. GEORGE BROWN SPEAKS HIS MIND. "Our natural ally" occasionally allows his temper to get the better of him; and upon occasions blurts out the truth in a manner that must be somewhat disagreeable to the more prudent members of the "Protestant Reform" party.

The bonied phrases, the bland and almost courteous tones of the advocates of Representation by Population, and their silly twaddle about "checks and guarantees" have never deceived us for an instant as to their real object—that object being the more complete subjection of Catholic Lower Canada to their Section of the Province.

"If John Bull had imposed the preponderance of his dead a century ago, as he should have done, there would have been less French chattering in the Legislative Halls of Canada at this moment, wooden ploughs would have ceased to exist, and the petitions to Parliament would have exhibited fewer marks and more signatures."—Globe.

ent of the views, wishes, designs, or "idea," of the whole body of "Protestant Reformers" and which they hope to accomplish by means of "Representation by Population."

The words copied by us above should be allowed to sink deep into the heart of every French Canadian, because they convey in concise and most expressive form, a notion of the sentiments entertained toward, this section of Canada, and towards Her Majesty's loyal French Canadian Catholic subjects, by the "Protestant Reform" party.

Hence too our incessant exhortations to Union. For long years this has been the object of all our writings—the Alpha and Omega of all our politics. Union amongst all Catholics, no matter what their origin; and war to the knife with the Clear Grits, and the principles of the "Protestant Reformers!"

We see it announced that M. Masseras, whose eloquent and logical lectures upon the Civil War in the United States, and its causes, have attracted such crowded audiences in Montreal, will lecture again on Tuesday evening next, at the Bonaventure Hall, upon the subject of the "Acadians"—the proceeds of the lecture to be applied towards defraying the expenses of the removal of that interesting and ill-used people to the Bay of Chaleurs.

This is at once an essentially Catholic, as well as essentially patriotic movement—one therefore which every Catholic, and every lover of his country, should do his best, according to his abilities, to promote. M. Masseras too is a lecturer of no ordinary stamp; and we hope that these considerations will suffice to fill the Lecture Room on Tuesday evening next to overflowing. Remember then Bonaventure Hall, and the Lecture for the Relief of the Acadians.

ANOTHER PROTESTANT CONGREGATION.—Our readers must all have heard of that Protestant sect called "Spiritualists," whose chief act of worship consists apparently in the laying, or imposition of hands upon deal tables.

This glaring deficiency is however about to be supplied; for by an announcement in the Montreal Herald of Tuesday last, we learn that a preliminary meeting of the "believers" or faithful is to be held in Bonaventure Hall this evening "for that purpose"—that is to say—for the purpose of showing believers aforesaid "the expediency of uniting their efforts, in forming a body or society."

Upon the whole we do not regret this movement amongst our Protestant fellow-citizens; for we have no fear that Catholics will be so silly as to put their trust in household furniture; and we think that the spread of this peculiar form of heresy or Protestantism will have the effect of convincing intelligent Non-Catholics of the evils of a system of which "Spirit Rapping" and "Table Turning" are legitimate, and perfectly natural developments.

We of course disclaim all sympathy with the "Spiritualists" and their objects. To us, as Catholics, all Protestant sects are alike objectionable, nor can we recognise any greater religious difference betwixt the Calvinist and the Spiritualist than that which exists betwixt Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee.

MONTALEMBERT AND HIS CRITICS.—Many have risen up in judgment against this distinguished writer. Some because of his ardent attachment to constitutional liberty, others, because of his no less ardent attachment to the Catholic Church—have assailed and persecuted this great and good man, of whom France should be proud, and in whom the Church recognizes one of her most faithful children.

The charge generally adduced or insinuated against this eminent statesman and publicist is that of inconsistency; for according to the Protestant Tradition, Catholicity is the enemy of freedom, and the profession of Ultra-monte principles is incompatible with the advocacy of constitutional liberty. Now the truth is that the most striking feature in Montalembert's career, from his first appearance on the political stage—and that career commenced for him at a very early age—is its invariable consistency.

eloquent champion of the cause of Poland against Russia; and he is not a partisan of the Italian Unitarians; he does not sympathise with Victor Emmanuel and his generals in their efforts to subdue and annex the Kingdom of Naples to Piedmont.

"In the first of these countries Montalembert has lately renewed the attention directed to Poland's wrongs by a pamphlet written with all his usual perverseness, since all that he now writes on behalf of Polish liberty might, at least, as well have been said on behalf of Italian liberty."—Herald.

Now the truth is, that it is upon the same principle as that upon which he condemns the action of Russia as towards Poland, that Montalembert condemns that of Piedmont towards the Kingdom of Naples. The Russians and the Poles are to one another as are the Piedmontese and the Neapolitans; the people of the South of the Italian Peninsula entertain towards those of the North, precisely the same sentiments that are entertained by the Poles towards their Russian oppressors; and as the military rule of the alien Muscovite over the unhappy people of Poland is an outrage upon humanity and Christian civilisation, so in like manner is the bloody regime set up by Cialdini and his brother Piedmontese butchers over the unfortunate Neapolitans, a crime which cries aloud to heaven for vengeance.

The rule of Piedmont in the Kingdom of Naples in short is a pure military despotism; it is upheld, not by the affections of the people, for the people universally loathe it, but by 80,000 foreign bayonets; in short, in every particular it is the exact counterpart of Russian rule in Poland; established by the same process, continued by the same means, viz., wholesale military execution, fusillades and arbitrary decrees of exile.

ANOTHER "MORTARA CASE."—We would call the attention of our readers to an extract from the Agra Weekly Register, which will be found in another place. It relates to the son of the brave Irish Catholic, Scully, who with his own hands fired the train of the powder magazine at Delhi, during the Indian mutiny, and perished heroically, a martyr to his country and his duty.

All Scully's family were massacred by the mutineers with the exception of one boy. The latter alone was saved; and the Government took possession of him, and have placed him at the ordinary Orphan Asylum for soldier's children, where they are bringing him up a Protestant—though the son of Catholic parents, who would rather have with their own eyes been the witnesses of their child's murder by the mutineers, than have been accessory to the eternal death of his soul, by bringing him up an apostate from the faith in which alone they placed all their hopes of salvation.

But apart from the religious or supernatural question altogether, what shall we say of the justice of that Government, which thus deals with its Catholic subjects? In the Mortara case, made so much of by the Protestant press, the father, by his own act, was accessory to the conversion of his child to Christianity. He deliberately violated a law expressly enacted for the protection of members of his race and creed, against the imprudent zeal of Christian servants; and by his own tort, or wrong-doing, was thus the direct occasion of all that followed.

His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, accompanied by the Rev. M. Plamondon, proceeded to Quebec on Monday evening, to pay his respects to His Excellency Lord Monck, as the representative of that Queen whom we all, whether Catholics or Protestants, delight to honor.

A LUCID EXPLANATION.—The Montreal Herald rebukes the ignorance of Protestant Scotland, in that it has lost sight of the meaning of the "Feast of All Hallows," or All Saints, as the Church of England calls it; and at the same time he undertakes to dispel that mental darkness which he deplors. In the following terms does he explain the origin of the Festival, and of the Fast with which it, as are all other Festivals, is preceded, and which is known by the popular name of Halloween or Hallow Eve; just as the Fast preceding Christmas is known in England as Christmas Eve, or Vigil of the Festival of the Nativity celebrated on the following day. The Herald thus goes to the root of the matter:—

"Halloween, the eve of the Feast of All Hallows or All Saints, as the Church of England calls it, from a Religious, has become a National Festival among the Scots, many of whom are, doubtless, ignorant of its ecclesiastical origin."

The "ignorance" of the Herald upon the very subject upon which he undertakes to enlighten "the Scots," is certainly amusing. Halloween never has, and never could have been a "religious festival," because, so long as its observance was in any manner connected with religious or ecclesiastical observances, it was observed as a "religious fast," which is the direct opposite of a "religious festival." Its religious observance in Scotland was confined to Catholic times; and in those times, certainly, no Catholic would have dreamt of observing either the Anniversary of Our Lord's death upon the Cross, or the Eve of a solemn Feast such as All Hallows, as a day of merry making, feasting, and sumptuous living.

If the Herald's explanation of the origin of Hallow's Eve be inaccurate, that which follows, with regard to the Festival on the following, or All Saints' day, is perfectly mysterious, not to say unintelligible. Still commenting upon the ignorance of the Scots, he says:—

"They know not that the advent of the Saints on the following day was the reason why it was of old believed the Powers of evil—witches, devils and other mischief-making beings, and especially those aerial spirits, the Fairies—were so active on Hallow-
een."

"Who is this that wrappeth up sentences in unskillful words?"—or as the Anglican version has it—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"—and who shall expound to us the mystery of "the advent of the Saints on the following day?" For "Sir Oracle," who from his official tripod undertakes to enlighten the human race in general, and Scots in particular, upon the subjects of fasts, festivals, and ecclesiastical observances, this "advent of the Saints" is a saying somewhat of the hardest, and we know not who shall bear it.

How thoroughly illogical and absurd the most talented minds can become when battling against the known truth, must be an object of wonder and commiseration to every intelligent Catholic. And yet it is but the natural consequence of that pride of intellect that refuses to walk in the path others have trodden, but prefers to strike into the trackless wilderness without compass or clue to direct it. Thus it is we daily see men of no ordinary intellect stumbling and floundering through a vast swamp of tangled illogisms in a fruitless endeavor to attain the firm ground of truth.

"The subject will clear of itself, if we bear in mind two considerations. First that the nature of inspiration can only be known from the examination of Scripture. There is no other source to which we can turn for information; and we have no right to assume some imaginary doctrine of inspiration like the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church. To the question—What is inspiration?—the first answer therefore is: That idea of Scripture, which we gather from the knowledge of it." (The Italics are our own.)

It is related of the augurs of Pagan Rome, that they never met without laughing at the absurd credulity of those who believed in their divinations. How Benjamin Jowett, when he met himself in this sentence, could refrain from laughter must be a matter of astonishment. The absurdity of proving any degree of inspiration (worthy of the name) from the Scriptures themselves is beyond all bounds. The ridiculous figure of such an abortion must have been too much even for its parent. If Mr. Jowett, like a good Church of England clergyman, wishes to deny the inspiration of Scripture altogether—well and good; that is quite another thing; but let him say so, and then the world will understand him, and will write him down an infidel accordingly. But the idea of expecting the world to accept the inspiration of the Holy Scripture on its own authority, is beyond all precedent of logic. And to make his inconsistency the more amusing, the Essayist labors throughout to establish the necessity of coming to the reading of the Scriptures divested of all (what he calls) modern theories of interpretation; but to read each portion of