

## THE TRUE WITNESS

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, OCT. 9, 1857.

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE *Niagara* arrived at Halifax on Wednesday with Liverpool dates to the 26th ult. We give a summary of her news as transmitted by telegraph. There was nothing new from India. Gen. Havelock had recommenced his march upon Lucknow, having left his sick and disabled at Cawnpore. It was rumoured that Lord Elgin was about to be named Governor General in the room of Lord Canning who is to be removed to some other office. Before Delhi no change has taken place in the posture of affairs. The mutineers are constantly making sallies from the place, and are as constantly repulsed by the besiegers. "Their fighting," writes an officer from the camp and speaking of the mutineers, "in the open is contemptible. They hold walls, &c. well." At Cawnpore General Neill is giving the blood thirsty fiends who have fallen into his hands a salutary lesson which will have we hope a good effect on the Asiatic mind. The Bengal *Hurkaru* of the 5th of August thus describes it:—

"The building in which the massacre took place is described as looking like a slaughter-house. According to the last accounts General Neill was compelling all the high-caste Brahmans whom he could capture among the Sepoys, to collect the bloody clothes of the victims, and wash up the blood from the floor, a European soldier standing over each man with a 'cat,' and administering it with vigour whenever he relaxed his exertions. The wretches having been subjected to this degradation, which of course includes loss of caste, are then hanged, one after another. The punishment is said to be General Neill's own invention, and its infliction has gained him good credit."

In the Bombay Presidency another mutiny had broken out amongst the Sepoys at Dharwar; at Madras however everything was perfectly tranquil. Reinforcements are beginning to arrive; and if the handful of troops now encamped before the walls of Delhi can hold their own until the large force now on its way to India can reach the field, the mutiny will no doubt be speedily crushed, and British dominion established on a firmer basis than ever. Five hundred French had arrived at Calcutta with the object, it was supposed, of defending French interests at Chandernagore.

The European news is of little interest. The mediocrity of England in the quarrel between Spain and Mexico has been accepted, and the Conference will shortly be held in London.—Public attention in England has been strongly directed to the advantages of creating an army Brigade from the middle classes, and it was expected that the Government would take the matter up. At Belfast the disarmament process is going on, and if impartially applied will have the effect of restoring peace to that distracted city. The Government investigation into the late riots proceeds slowly; but enough has already been elicited to prove the intention of the "Orangemen" to establish a "reign of terror" over their Catholic fellow-citizens. Thus the *Belfast Mercury* remarks that:—

"During the reign of terror in the south and west it was usual for parties of agrarian offenders to go out with their faces blackened and serve Rockite notices on those who had rendered themselves obnoxious to their policy. Under the Delhi code of the Sand-row mutineers a more open system was carried out; and, as we have heard, 'notices to quit' were served by persons who used no disguise whatever. Several families of the Roman Catholic party were obliged to leave their houses on the edict of these self-constituted dictators; and where prompt obedience was not paid to the order, very summary proceedings followed. The antagonism thus called into existence set on foot the lawless attempt to get up 'gun clubs' by the other party; and, between these two factions, the town of Belfast has had a dark spot placed on its escutcheon, which it will require some exertion to sweep away."

On Sunday the 20th ult., the notorious Presbyterian mountebank Hanna again attempted to get up a row; but the reverend gentleman was quickly stopped by the Mayor, who prohibited his street preaching, and sent the mortified "swaddler" home again much discomfited. It is to be hoped that equally prompt measures will be taken elsewhere to put a stop to those disgusting exhibitions of mingled blasphemy and fanaticism, wherein the "saints" delight to indulge—like the Pharisees of old whom Our Lord denounced, as loving to pray and do their alms in public, in the streets and market places, in order that they might be seen of men.

## THE INDIAN MUTINIES.

THAT the Catholic journalist should repudiate with horror the vindictive ravings of a portion of the British press, is laudable, and no more than what we have the right to expect from him; that the Irishman should profit by the events now transpiring in India, to remind the self-satisfied

Anglo-Saxon of the atrocities perpetrated upon Irishmen; and upon Irish maids and matrons; by Orangemen, and the upholders of Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, is but natural; but, for the honor of the Irish and Catholic name, we should protest against any appearance even of sympathy with the ruthless fiends of the Bengal native army, and reject with indignation the charge too often urged against us by our enemies, that, to be a good Catholic, one must needs be a bad subject, and take delight in the defeat and sufferings of our fellow-countrymen.

It would almost seem however as if some of our cotemporaries were anxious to furnish arguments in support of this dishonoring imputation upon the loyalty of Catholics, subjects of the British Empire. In this suicidal policy the TRUE WITNESS cannot join. We have not so learned our religion, nor has our Church ever laid it down as an article of faith, that hostility to our legitimate civil rulers is an evidence of our attachment to our ecclesiastical superiors. To "honor the King," is a duty inculcated by our holy religion; and though of course the Catholic is at liberty to seek redress of wrongs and removal of grievances, whenever he is oppressed, he is never permitted to seek these desirable ends, save by peaceable and constitutional means. This doctrine may be unpopular with some. It may be called slavish and unpatriotic; but whilst the Church teaches it, we as Catholics, are well content to hold it.

We repeat therefore that as a Catholic, we protest against the accusation which we have more than once met with in the columns of our Protestant cotemporaries—that, Catholics necessarily sympathise with the mutinous Sepoys, and would rejoice in the defeat of the brave men now gallantly struggling against fearful odds beneath the burning sun of India; and as we cannot but regret that any of our Catholic cotemporaries should seem even to give occasion for so vile a slander, we cannot refrain from entering our protest against certain passages which appeared in the last number of the *Toronto Mirror*. Not that we would accuse or even suspect our cotemporary of approving the unmentionable atrocities of the revolted Sepoys; but it does seem to us he has allowed his very natural feelings of indignation against British misrule, both at home and abroad, to betray him into some very ridiculous exaggerations. As for instance when he gravely tells us that:—

"The atrocious acts of the mutineers are not those of the inhabitants of India, but of a host of mercenaries, a horde of Anglicised Legionaries, who for the last century have been fed upon the civilisation, the tracts, and the Bibles of Christian England."

And that:—

"Awful indeed is the manner of the revenge of the Sepoys, but in British garrisons, and under British officers they have learned their civilisation."

A very slight acquaintance with the history of India, and of the customs of the various races which have inhabited that region since the earliest ages of which we possess any authentic records, would have prevented our respected, and generally accurate cotemporary from falling into the above ludicrous errors. In the first place—the "mutineers" or Sepoys—are "the inhabitants of India;" and, in so far as the Bengal Army is concerned, are, for the most part, of the very highest "caste"—Hindoos of the Hindoos. It is a fact well known to every Indian officer, and one which has operated very disadvantageously for the discipline of the native army of the Bengal Presidency, that its soldiers have been selected too exclusively from amongst the high "caste" Brahmans—that very class, or "caste" which is most tenacious of its ancestral customs and the least amenable to European influences. Indeed, though we are not in possession of all the facts connected with the present outbreak, there can be no doubt that one of its exciting causes was the strong attachment of the Bengal Sepoy to his peculiar "caste" privileges, and the jealousy with which he viewed all attempts on the part of the British government to "Anglicise" him, and to induce him to adopt the customs of European society.

The truth is that, so far from the Sepoy having become "Anglicised," or having shown the slightest tendency to exchange his civilisation for that of his British masters, the latter have been, to a very considerable extent, "Hindoised;"—if our cotemporary will pardon us the word; and have shown too great a promptitude to throw off their national characteristics, and to adopt those of the subject races. In his anxiety to get rid of the reproach of being a "griffin," the newly arrived Briton has, we regret to say it, too often forgotten that he was a Christian gentleman; and has been content to merge his European civilisation in that of the effeminate and debauched Asiatics by whom he was surrounded. To this may perhaps be partly attributed the slight estimation in which the British officer has of late been held by the native troops; who in the days of Clive, looked upon their European officers as almost a superior race of beings, with whom it was vain to contend.

In the next place, the "atrocious acts" of the mutineers, so far from having been learned from their British officers, or being the effects of European civilisation—are essentially and characteristically Asiatic in all their features. When

the Oriental would express in the strongest manner, his scorn, hatred and defiance of his foe, he invariably seeks to accomplish his object by outraging the latter's female relatives. Chivalry, to which we owe our respect for woman, is a plant of exclusively European growth; nor do we believe that under any system of training it would be easy to impress the Asiatic mind with those sentiments of compassion for the weak, and veneration for women and children, which, before their conversion to Christianity, were instilled by the historian as characteristic of the barbarians of the Western world. In the East, from the earliest ages, the women and children of the vanquished have always been deemed the lawful spoil of the victor, to minister to his lusts; whilst in Europe—thanks to our adherence to the peculiar traditions of our Indo-Germanic ancestors, and to the exalting influences of Christianity, which made the noble warrior gentle, i.e., a gentleman—female chastity has been held in honor, and cruelty towards the weak, has been almost universally stigmatised as the act of the coward. Even the Roman heathen could applaud the poet's maxim—"parcere subjectis, sed debellare superbo;" whilst we doubt if in the language of any Asiatic nation there is a word to express the European idea of "gentleman."

It is also, to say the least, an exaggeration to compare the prompt but righteous military executions inflicted by Sir Henry Lawrence upon armed mutineers, with the long protracted tortures inflicted by Nena Sahib and his gang upon "armed women and children." According to the laws of all civilized nations—Catholic or Protestant—the crime of the soldier who takes up arms against his officer is punished with death; but to put non-combatants to death, and to torture worse than death—and that with every refinement of cruelty that brutal ingenuity can devise—is an act for which no gentleman, no Catholic should attempt to offer any apology.

But it is more than an exaggeration on the part of our cotemporary to assert, as he does, that "both sides are massacring all they can lay hands on." Of the mutineers this is true, but not of the British troops before Delhi; and it is a foul libel on these gallant men, of whom no inconsiderable portion are Irish Catholics, to insinuate that, because in fair fight with the foe they neither give nor take quarter, like the latter, they massacre "all they can lay hands on." As yet there is not a single well authenticated instance of the slightest violence offered by the British troops to the women or children of the mutineers, or indeed to any except the mutineers themselves, who have richly deserved the doom that has been awarded them. Our cotemporary's moral sense must indeed be dull if he cannot discriminate between the righteous military execution of mutineers taken with arms in their hands, and the wanton massacres of women and children of which the Sepoys have been guilty; and we certainly cannot altogether acquit him of the *supplicatio veri* when he coolly informs his readers that—"if Nena Sahib has murdered several hundreds of women and children at Cawnpore, Sir Henry Lawrence has blown hundreds from the guns at Lucknow—"Hundreds"—but of whom? we ask. Not of "women and children," but of mutinous soldiers, who hardly deserved the honour of dying a soldier's death, and whose lives by the law of every civilized community were justly forfeit.

Neither is it strictly true that—"if the Sepoys have mingled indecency with cruelty, the Parliamentary Blue Book informs us that they first learnt the practice from Warren Hastings and the European tax-gatherers." We are no apologists for the cruelties exercised by the, not "European" but—native "tax-gatherers" upon the unfortunate ryots; but we deny that the infamous practice so eloquently denounced by the immortal Burke is of British origin, or was "learnt from Warren Hastings." The use of torture for the collection of revenue has been from time immemorial an Indian and indeed Asiatic institution, which every successive dynasty has in its turn employed as a means of enforcing payment of its demands upon the cultivators of the soil. It flourished under the Emperors of the Patan, as well as of the Mogul dynasty; it existed in full vigor when the imperial sceptre passed from the hands of the feeble descendants of Aurungzebe into the iron grasp of the British soldier; and the charge to which the present rulers of India are justly obnoxious is—not that they introduced, but that they connived at, and consented to profit by it; and that, in their alliances with the native Princes, they did not expressly stipulate—as they should have done—for the total abolition of the infamous custom. The melancholy truth is that the East India Company have ever been more anxious about their dividends, than the moral or material welfare of their subjects; and thus willingly availed themselves of the pre-existing native machinery for squeezing the "lacs of rupees" out of the unhappy ryots. For this it is impossible to offer any excuse; but at the same time, it argues a gross ignorance of Indian history to pretend that the use of torture was first introduced by the English; or that the present mutiny of our pampered and petted Sepoys is in

any way connected with the atrocities of the Rohilla war, the wrongs of the Begums of Oude or the judicial iniquities of Elijah Impey.

It is in no hostile spirit towards the *Mirror* that we pen the foregoing remarks, nor with any intention of palliating the many abuses of power of which the East India Company and their agents, have been guilty towards the native races of India. As lovers of truth, and not altogether ignorant of the history of that country, we admit the existence of those abuses, whilst as Christians we heartily denounce them. But at the same time, we would desire to record our deprecation of that maudlin sympathy which in certain quarters has been, either openly expressed, or but faintly concealed, for the vile ruffians who have signalled their courage by the murder of women and children; and as Catholics, jealous of the honor of our holy religion, and we hope not altogether ignorant of its teachings, we would indignantly repudiate the accusation too often urged against us by our enemies—that the faithful Catholic cannot be a loyal subject; and that if he sincerely loves his Church, he must needs rejoice in the humiliation and misfortunes of that Government beneath whose flag he is voluntarily a resident, and from whose laws he demands protection for his life and property. This at least we may say with confidence; that of all men, our Catholic Bishops and Clergy, whether in Canada, or in Ireland, the least deserve to have any imputations cast upon their loyalty, or patriotism; and that that layman who, by word or deed, encourages the notion that they inculcate disaffection towards the State, as a duty towards the Church, renders them but a very unwelcome service, and thereby exposes the name of Catholic to the undeserved reproaches of our Protestant slanderers.

"In closing the discussion," as to the comparative merits of the United States, and Canada, as fields of emigration for the European Catholic, the *New York Freeman* contents himself with repeating that "State-schoolism" is a foreign importation, the product of European absolutism—and that "democratic institutions" are "dead against it."

Our cotemporary may flatter himself that he has proved these two propositions; but still he has not told us from what European country the United States imported the "State-school system," now almost universally established throughout the Union; and how it has happened that the "democratic institutions" of his country have failed in preventing the introduction and general extension of a system to which they are opposed in deadly conflict.

Indeed, when dropping theories, and coming to facts, we find that the principle of "State-schoolism"—or in other words, the doctrine, that Education is the legitimate function of the State—is a principle unknown to, and abhorred by, all the old monarchical and aristocratic States of Europe—that it has crept in, since the great religious apostasy of the XVI. century—that it has been most loudly asserted and strictly carried into practice by the most ultra-democrats of the Old World—and that it has reached its highest point of development in the democratic States of North America, where, with the exception of the Catholic press, not a voice dare raise itself against it—we must say that "facts" do not seem to support the thesis of our esteemed cotemporary.

That "State-Schoolism" is the "product of absolutism," we fully admit, and of "democratic absolutism" as well as of those other forms of "absolutism" which obtain in some parts of Europe. It is the corollary of the proposition that "as against the State"—whether that State be represented as in Russia by a Czar, or as in the United States by a brute majority—the "individual has no rights." Now this proposition is essentially democratic: it underlies and is the basis of, all the political and social systems of the democratic reformers of the day; it is the direct contradictory of the old European and aristocratic principle, which erred, by exaggerating the rights of the individual as against the State; and though it formed no part of the system of the great men who laid the foundations of the American Union, and who were Republicans, and not democrats, it is one of the axioms of the democracy of this Continent. The individual has no rights, except in so far as he is a member of a political organism—is the last word of democracy; and if he has no rights, he can have no right to educate his child as he will.

The proof of the pudding is however always in the eating; and the proof of the democratic origin of "State-Schoolism" on this Continent, is to be found in the fact, that it did not originate in any of the monarchical or aristocratic communities of North America, but amongst the democratic communities of New England, the inheritors of the traditions of the Pilgrim Fathers—to whom we do not suppose that, either their most ardent admirers, or most bitter enemies, will attribute any monarchical or aristocratic predilections. To the "Pilgrim Fathers," the democrats of the XVII. century, the sworn foes of kings and nobles, do we owe the introduction of the "State-School" principle in America, which has spread from New England to the other States of which the Union is composed, and which we in Canada have imported from the United States. So completely is this the fact, that "State-

Schoolism" is but the synonym for the "Massachusetts school system."

What prospects our Catholic friends on the other side of the lines may have of ridding themselves of this foul incubus, we know not; but judging from the tone of the Non-Catholic press, which certainly expresses the political opinions of the overwhelming majority of the population of the United States, we should say that there was no institution to which the great mass of the people were more firmly attached, as their surest bulwark against Popery, than that of "State-Schoolism." It is to the Yankee stump orator what that noble and much abused animal, the "British Lion,"—of whose noble qualities it is considered an act of treason to hint so much even as a suspicion—is to the pot-house brawler in England. Drawing our conclusions from these premises, we cannot avoid the opinion that, notwithstanding the noble efforts of the Catholic minority of the United States for "Freedom of Education," the present slavish and degrading system will continue to flourish for many a long generation. Such too will be our inevitable fate in this country, unless we can successfully check the progress of democratic ideas, democratic principles, and "democratic institutions" amongst our Canadian people. Every thing, in short, which tends to assimilate our social and political institutions to those of the United States, is inimical to our liberties; for liberty in Canada, which has nothing to fear from the feeble monarchical, or aristocratic elements in our form of Government, has everything to dread from the triumph of modern democracy. This is the secret of our opposition to "annexation," and of our attachment to what the *N. Y. Freeman* most unjustly calls "the decrepit civilisation of the French Canadians."

Such an expression from the mouth of a Catholic does indeed surprise us. "Civilisation," as understood by Catholics, is a fact in the moral and not in the material order; and if so, will always be there most vigorous, where the principles of true religion, the basis of all sound morality, are best understood and practised. Now, admitting to their fullest extent the many material advantages which the United States possess, in the shape of a better climate, an Atlantic sea board whose ports are never choked up with ice for five months of the year, &c., &c., the moral advantages it must be conceded are—if the Catholic be the true religion—altogether on the side of the French Canadians; as may be proved by the comparative scarcity amongst them of these hideous crimes which prevail in the United States to an extent unequalled in the most corrupt communities of the Old World. The Yankees are, no doubt, better speculators, more "cute" at a bargain, and far greater proficient in the art of "going-a-head," or over-reaching their neighbors; but the French Canadians, as a body, are, it cannot be denied, the better Christians, and therefore the more highly civilised of the two—even though their home-spun coats may be of coarser texture than, and their agricultural implements far inferior to, those of their Anglo-Saxon neighbors. The sneer of the *New York Freeman's Journal* about the "decrepit civilisation" of the French Canadians, is but the boast of the "superior race" of Protestant Upper Canada; and the fact that a Catholic should chime in with such an error, is but another melancholy proof of the injurious effects of the deleterious Protestant atmosphere of the United States upon the most robust of Catholic constitutions. We, however, who in Canada are not so much exposed to its deadly influences, still assert the infinite superiority of the "civilisation of the French Canadians" to that of the great mass of the citizens of the United States; and we do so upon the same principle that we assert, and that the *Freeman's Journal* will, we suppose, admit, the infinite superiority of the civilisation of Catholic Ireland to that of Protestantised England and Scotland—in spite of the more perfect development of the material resources of the last named countries.

## THE IRISH BAZAAR.

It is hardly necessary, we presume, to remind our readers that the Annual Bazaar for St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum will open in the Mechanic's Hall, Great St. James St., on Monday next (the 12th inst.) The complete success which has hitherto crowned the exertions of the Ladies leaves us little room to apprehend a failure on this occasion; but for many reasons we do hope that even an unusual effort will be now made on behalf of the Orphans. If any one is disposed to murmur at the frequent applications of the Ladies, (though for our own part we can hardly suppose anything so discreditible to the gallantry of our citizens) let him only remember that nearly two hundred human beings are in a great measure depending on the Bazaar for their yearly support—certainly for their clothing; that a long and severe winter is approaching, and that from the fearful commercial depression of the times, the Asylum may contain a much larger number before the winter is over. These poor children are left destitute in our midst—we are not bound to provide for them? Another strong argument in favor of the Orphans is, that no one ever misses what he gives to the poor—who can say he was ever the poorer for what he bestowed in