

## THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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THE TRUE WITNESS  
AND  
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 1851.

## PENAL LAWS.

The adjourned debate upon the Bill of Pains and Penalties, against the Catholic Bishops of England and Ireland, was chiefly remarkable for the speech of Sir James Graham, who, although opposed to the principle, and voting with the minority against the second reading of the bill, has hitherto abstained from entering into any discussion on the details of the measure, in the hopes, that ministers would deign to give an explanation of the principles involved in the new clause borrowed from Mr. Walpole, and of their ulterior views. Such an explanation, the Rt. Hon. Baronet complained, had not been given. The fine phrases of the Attorney-General, and of Lord John himself, had, as is too often the case with ministerial explanations, only enveloped the whole affair in still deeper mystery, and rendered that which at best was obscure, at last perfectly unintelligible. One thing alone Sir James could distinguish; the hostility of the Government to the Catholic religion. He pointed out in a masterly manner the dangerous consequences likely to ensue from the patch-work the ministers were making of the bill; sewing on a piece of new cloth to an old garment; tacking Mr. Walpole's amendment to their original measure. He shewed how the preamble was at variance with the first clause, and how the whole was repugnant to every principle of justice. He shewed how, if the present bill pass, it will be illegal for a Catholic Bishop to exercise the slightest episcopal function—to administer a sacrament, or ordain a priest—how every marriage solemnised by a Catholic priest will, in consequence, be illegal; the issue of such marriage illegitimate in the eye of the law; and in fact, how it will be in future, impossible, to fulfil any act of Catholic worship without violating the law. He, as a lover of plain speaking, recommended the substitution of the following, for the preamble as it now stands. "Whereas it is expedient, on account of public clamor, to prevent the spread of Popery throughout this realm, and to check the full and free exercise of its spiritual authority in the same, be it enacted, &c." He next pointed out the danger to which this bill exposed the peace of the country, and the impossibility of governing Ireland; and well did he declare, what, in the opinion of every Catholic, is the true meaning of the Penal Laws. "I CONSIDER THIS CLAUSE AS A DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST EIGHT MILLIONS OF HER MAJESTY'S SUBJECTS." Sir James is right, and as a declaration of war will it be accepted, by every Catholic in the British Empire. This called up Lord John, who does not like to hear things called by their proper names. His little lordship professed great alarm,—very great alarm, at this plain language of Sir James Graham. Catholics ought to feel thankful to the British Government for the wrongs and insults heaped upon them, and he hoped they would be good boys, and let themselves be trampled upon, with all due submission to the Majesty of the House of Commons. Mr. Walpole followed suit, and hoped that the country might not witness a repetition of the offence of last autumn. Alas! for the hopes of men! Alas! for the dignity of the House of Commons! The Pope will not be awed, and is not dismayed at the roaring of the British Lion. The offence so much dreaded by Mr. Walpole has been again repeated. Not only has Christ's Vicar on earth passed final sentence upon the system of Godless education, but he has also been pleased to fill up four of the vacant sees—Southwark being one. The others, in spite of Penal Laws, will be filled up in due season; and new Papal aggressions will shortly call forth new amendments upon the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, to be like Mr. Walpole's clause, passed by great majorities, and destined like it also—to be set at defiance.

The Catholic Defence Association is progressing rapidly. His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Prelates of Ireland, Lord Arundel, and many gentlemen, in and out of Parliament, have approved of, and sent in their adhesion to the Society. On the 10th instant, a general meeting was to have been held in Dublin, in order to give to it the necessary organisation, and to decide upon the measures best calculated to resist the iniquitous aggression of the British Government.

It gives us great pleasure to be able to announce, that the opposition to the proposed alterations in the School law, will not be confined to Catholics. We have seen, with much pleasure, a letter signed by four Protestant ministers, who strongly object to the proposed measure; and though their opposition proceeds from reasons, different from ours, yet, we hail it as a good omen, and as a sign that the prayer of the petition, upon education, which we noticed in our last, will be rejected. The opposition of the four gentlemen to whom we allude, is rather to the details, than to the principle involved in the petition. They object to it, because of the probability that the projected Board of Education would contain a majority of Catholics amongst its members; were they assured of a Protestant majority, their objections would soon melt away into thin air. We object to it, without any regard to the probable religious opinions of the majority; but solely upon the principle, that all State interference with religion, or religious education, is, in the present condition of mankind, evil, and impracticable without violating the rights of conscience, and the first principles of personal liberty. We are advocates of free trade, as before the law, in things spiritual, as well as in things temporal; in the Church, as well as in the market place; in religion, as well as in corn or cotton. Maintaining the perfect equality of rights, as before the law, of Catholic and Protestant, we contend, that it is unjust to compel the former to pay for the support of an educational system; which his Church and his conscience condemns; and that it is equally unjust to expect the latter to contribute one farthing, towards what, if he be an honest man, he must consider as a system for the propagation of error. This liberty is, we are happy to say, enjoyed in this part of the Province, to a high degree, by both parties. By the law, as it at present stands, our Protestant brethren in Lower Canada, are entitled to separate themselves from the Catholic majority, and to establish "Dissentient Schools," for the education of children of their own communion, and supported by the share of money, which falls to them, out of the public grant, and local taxation. This privilege, so cheerfully accorded to our Protestant brethren in Lower Canada, where the great majority of the population is composed of Catholics, and so grudgingly conceded to Catholics in the Upper Province, where the majority is Protestant, is but an act of simple justice; and it is only by recognising the principle of separate schools, for the members of different religions, that State assistance for educational purposes, can be made available; or compulsory taxation for the support of schools, can be prevented from degenerating into gross injustice.

Mixed education, or the education of Catholics and Protestants in common, is impracticable, and is not desirable, even were it practicable; unless, indeed, indifference in matters of religion be desirable; and laxity of faith and morals be reckoned an advantage. Its invariable result is, to produce a confusion of ideas, betwixt right and wrong.—Its inevitable tendency is, to obliterate the line of demarcation betwixt truth and error; to foster the dangerous opinion that all religions are equally good; an opinion which, in a few years, generally expresses itself by the formula, that all religions are equally bad and false; and to diminish the horror which every true believer ought to entertain, for false doctrine, heresy and schism. But some pretend, that these certain evils, in a moral and religious point of view, will be more than counterbalanced by the feelings of mutual good will, which the system of mixed education is likely to produce; that by educating children of different religions in common, they will be more likely to love one another, when grown up. According to this theory, "Easy reading lessons," and Cocker's Arithmetic, are to supply the place of the grace of God; and the memory of threshings from the same cane, is to be a bond of social union in after life. We doubt much, whether the results would justify the expectations; or whether that system of training is sound, which proposes to form good citizens, by making children, bad Catholics. We rather think that children will best learn to fulfil their duties towards the State, and towards their fellow men, by first learning to fulfil their duty towards their God; that religion is the sole durable bond of union, and that one act of worship, performed in common, will be of more avail, in exciting and keeping alive feelings of brotherly love, than fellowship in a thousand floggings; but a community of worship is impossible, until Catholics cease to be Catholics, or Protestants cease to protest.

It is from no desire to give offence to our Protestant brethren, that we contend for separate schools; it is from a conviction of the deep importance of the subject. No system of education can be neutral in its religious results. It must be either, good, or bad, Catholic, or anti-Catholic—religious or irreligious. Its tendency must be, either to direct the soul on its way to heaven, or else to thrust it down on the broad road that leadeth to hell. For a Catholic religious system of education, we have no right to demand the co-operation of Protestants; nor have the latter any right to expect that Catholics shall contribute towards the maintenance of a system, whose end, in their opinion, is destruction. If the State is to continue any support to educational establishments at all, it can only be done, by recognising the right of Catholics and Protestants to have separate schools. That the law, as it at present exists, is susceptible of improvement, is more than probable. Let Catholics and Protestants then, mutually respecting each other's rights, endeavor to effect such amendments as are really practicable, without obtruding their peculiar opinions, upon one another; Catholics managing their schools as the Church thinks fit; Protestants controlling theirs as they choose, and neither presuming to interfere with the other.

## THE PROCESSION OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

Last Sunday being within the octave which the Church sets apart for the especial adoration of the miracle of the Eucharist, was the day on which, according to custom, the solemn procession in honor of the Blessed Sacrament, took place. The morning was unpropitious, and after High Mass, the rain falling in torrents, the ceremony was postponed until after Vespers, when the rain having ceased for a time, it took place, with all its accustomed pomp. The *Dais*, under which the Body of our Lord was borne, by the Rev. M. Billaudel, was preceded by the different orders of religious; and the children of the various educational establishments of the city, bearing appropriate banners. The different societies and confraternities of laymen, with musicians, and an immense number of the citizens besides, made up this grand triumphant pageant.

But beautiful and imposing as this scene was, to the indifferent spectator, it possesses to the Catholic another, and a higher beauty. That object, in whose way, pure infants strewed flowers, and before which bowing acolytes offered up incense, he knows to be no other than that living bread which came down from Heaven, and he reverences it as the Divine Majesty, dwelling in the midst of us, as truly present to us, as it was of old, to the children of Israel, when the glory of the Lord filled the temple, so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the exceeding brightness of that glory. This is, therefore, especially, the public festival of our Incarnate God, and as such, is most appropriately designated the *Fête Dieu*. It is a public occasion for the Catholic, to testify before heretics and unbelievers, his belief in the great mystery of our faith, and is an annual triumph for our holy religion.

We will take the liberty of correcting an error, into which the *Pilot* has fallen, respecting the significance of the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, or *Fête Dieu*, as it is termed in French. The procession is not intended to represent the triumphal entry of Our Saviour into Jerusalem, but as an Act of Faith, or public profession of belief, of the Real Presence, in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar.—The Adoration of the Host is an outward act, inseparably blended with that belief; and the public performance of that act in solemn procession, is to testify to the whole world, in the face of heaven and earth, of God, angels, men, and devils, the immutable belief of the Church in Immanuel, or "God present with us." As by the word Homousion, the Church confounded the errors of Arius, by the word Theotokos, the errors of Nestor; so by this public act of faith does she condemn the errors of Berengarius, and later heretics, who have presumed to deny the mysteries revealed to us by the Word of the living God.

Tuesday last, the nativity of St. John the Baptist, was celebrated with great splendor, as the national *fête* of our French Canadian brethren. The procession formed at an early hour, near the Episcopal Palace, and proceeded by the Rue de la Visitation, through Ste. Marie and Notre Dame Streets, to the Parish Church, where solemn High Mass was sung. The church and the altar were superbly decorated and illuminated, and the Mass, the first of Hadyn, was performed with the aid of a full orchestra, and with beautiful effect. The sermon, by the Rev. M. Larocque, was every way worthy of the preacher and of the occasion. Time will not permit us to give any analysis of his discourse, which was from the prophecy of Balaam, as he unwillingly blessed the people of God. "How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob, and thy tents, O Israel!" Let it suffice to say, that he fully vindicated the claim of every Canadian, to a just pride in this beautiful country, redeemed from barbarism by the toils of his French ancestors, and alike consecrated by religion, and adorned with all these social and moral virtues, which make life desirable.

After the celebration of the divine mysteries, the procession again formed, and passing by St. James and St. Paul Streets, returned to Visitation Street, where it was disbanded. We cannot undertake to give any idea of the fine taste, or the beautiful order displayed in this immense procession, but it was one of which every Franco-Canadian might well be proud.

In the evening, the soirée of the Society of St. Jean Baptiste, was given at the superb saloon of Mr. Hay's new hotel, which was filled at an early hour, by a numerous party, numbering probably not less than 400 or 500. The chair was taken by the patriotic president of the Society, M. Duvernay, and excellent speeches were given by Messrs. Peltier and Loranger, while a number of amateurs favored us with several Canadian songs, first among which was "A la Claire Fontaine," nor in the presence of such an assemblage of beauty, did the gallant minstrels forget "Vive la Canadienne," to which, we are sure, every loyal heart responded. We congratulate our French Canadian friends upon the increasing interest which the recurrence of their national festival excites, and hope that their children's children may celebrate, with still greater pomp, the *fête* of St. Jean Baptiste, under the shadow of their chosen tree.

On Sunday next, the Festival of St. Peter and St. Paul, at half-past four, p. m., will take place the solemn benediction of the corner stone of St. Peter's Church, Quebec Suburbs, now being erected by his Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, on the premises belonging and attached to the provisional Chapel of the Rev. Peres Oblats. His Lordship, the Bishop of Montreal, will preside at the ceremony, and an appropriate discourse will be delivered by the Rev. C. Larocque, Cure of St. John's. His Worship the Mayor is to attend; the Temperance and St. Peter's band have been engaged for the occasion.

## OBITUARY.

The venerable Society of Jesus, and the city of Montreal, have suffered an inexpressible loss, in the death of the Rev. Henry Du Merle, who departed this life on Saturday last, at the age of 35 years. The rev. gentleman was one of the most distinguished members of his Order in Canada, and beloved, respected, and esteemed, by all who had the happiness of his acquaintance. The Rev. H. Du Merle was born on the 5th July, 1815, in Thevray, a department of l'Eure, diocese of d'Evreux, in France. In his early youth, he entered the Seminary of St. Sulpice, where he completed his studies in philosophy, &c., and commenced a course of theology. When in 1836, Monseigneur Bruté, Bishop of Vincennes, U. S., went to France in quest of missionaries for his extensive diocese, Père Du Merle, who was then only in minor orders, became attached to the venerable prelate, and followed him the same year to America, having received the holy Order of Priesthood at Vincennes. In 1839, he obtained permission to join the Order of Jesuits, and performed a novitiate of two years in the College of St. Mary, Kentucky. After having taken the vows, he was successively employed in the colleges of St. Mary, Louisville, and St. John, New York. In 1847, when the typhus fever made such awful havoc in Montreal, his humane and sensitive heart was intensely moved with the liveliest sentiments of Christian charity; on learning the number of unfortunate emigrants that daily fell victims to that awful epidemic, he was the first to solicit permission to fly to the aid of his suffering brethren. He arrived in Montreal, accompanied by five other clergymen of the same Order, and never shall that act of devotion be forgotten in this city. During the sickness, he remained in the Seminary of St. Sulpice, cheerfully partaking of the labor and solicitude of the zealous and venerable Fathers of that establishment, the greater part of whom were then suffering from fatigue and the malignant influence of the destructive disease. Many an Irish heart did the venerable Father solace, and soothe, during the ravages of that awful scourge; and many a weeping father, and wailing mother did he comfort, by the assurance that their friendless, homeless orphans, should not want a parent and protector; and well and truly hath he kept his word. Thus did he pass the period of vacation of St. John's College; in relieving the afflictions of the poor Irish emigrants, and preparing them for that kingdom where bigotry and oppression are unknown; in assuring them that the God into whose hands he was about to consign their souls, commanded them not only to forgive, but to pray for their oppressors and persecutors. Being charged with the entire discipline of the college at New York, he departed thither only to regulate the classes, and returned immediately to Montreal. The following year, he was appointed by the gentlemen of the Seminary, a member of the Presbytery attached to St. Patrick's Church, to assist in the parochial duties of the Irish inhabitants, to whom he was fondly and dearly devoted. Constantly, zealously, indefatigably did he devote his time and talents to the spiritual interests of that congregation; and if the tears which we have seen spontaneously shed at his funeral, be an earnest of Celtic gratitude, the memory of the beloved pastor shall long "remain green in their souls." No duties were for him too laborious or disagreeable; and whether in the pulpit, the confessional, or at the bed of sickness, he uniformly displayed a divine, benevolent devotion, to the welfare of those over whom the Lord had placed him. His sound health and robust constitution, enabled him to meet every call, and encounter every fatigue. During the cholera, he might have been considered ubiquitous; every where might he be seen administering religious assistance to the numerous victims of that terrible scourge. After having escaped two epidemics, he finally contracted the disease that has consigned him to an early grave, whilst visiting the sick of Griffintown, among whom he often performed deeds of charity that shall long be remembered. He fell a victim to a violent attack of typhus fever. Placing all his strength and confidence in Him Who had sustained him in his short but exemplary career, he twice received the Holy Eucharist, in the first days of his illness. On Friday, the 20th instant, the symptoms of his disease having become more and more alarming, in the perfect possession of his senses, he received the last rites of the Church, in presence of his reverend brethren. His malady baffled every remedy. On the morning of the 21st instant, the feast of St. Louis de Gonzague, he breathed his last; and thus the faithful follower of Loyola appeared before the throne of God, while the heavenly choir were singing the praises of another disciple of the same saint. This coincidence should, to the Christian mind, alleviate our sorrows for the loss of our venerated pastor. His remains were "laid out" in St. Patrick's Church, and during the time that intervened from his death to his interment, our Irish citizens, so distinguished for every noble sentiment of gratitude and affection, flocked in thousands to offer up their earnest invocations to the throne of Mercy, for the happy repose of their beloved priest. His obsequies took place on Saturday, at six o'clock p. m., and were attended by a goodly portion of the St. Patrick's congregation; and how eloquently did the feelings they displayed, testify to the worth of their deceased pastor; and how it should put to the blush those maligners of Catholics and Catholicism, men whose demise would cause neither a sigh, nor a tear out of their own family.

The procession was composed of the reverend gentlemen attached to St. Patrick's Church, the Priests of the College, the Fathers of St. Mary's College, the Christian Brothers, the Students of St. Mary's College, followed by a numerous concourse of respectable Irishmen, and proceeded from St. Patrick's Church to the Cathedral. The corpse was removed