

GAVAZZI RIOTS.

OPINIONS OF A PORTION OF THE PROTESTANT PRESS.
(From the Elora Backwoodman.)

The Province has been startled from end to end with a cry of "Blood! Blood!"—Men in the prime of life, have been shot down in the streets of Montreal like dogs. Families have lost members dear to them by home and kindred. Protestant and Catholic have found a grave together. A gloom has been thrown over all ranks of society. Men look each other in the face, and ask, "where is this to end?" A darker day never dawned upon Canada than the 9th of June. It has laid the foundation of a feeling that will not be readily appeased. It has celebrated in crimson life-drops the success of that fanaticism which has within the last two years, formed the stock-in-trade of politicians bankrupt in honest reputation, sound principles and true liberality. It was the carnival of the bigots. It was a fitting close to the blasphemy of a Gavazzi—a grand finale to his mediant and fire spreading career.—We are no followers of Rome. A more sincere admirer of Protestantism does not live than the writer of these words. But we can sympathize with the wretched—we can and will whilst soul clings to the body, defend the slaughtered where and whenever they come within our cognizance. Therefore we shall speak boldly and as we think respecting the massacre in Montreal.

We are not an apologist for the rowdy demonstrations which have blackened the good character of our eastern cities. No intelligent man can find a word in defence of the attacks upon the churches there. Gavazzi (whether truth-teller or liar, whether manly denouncer or cowardly asperser) had full right to speak. His audience had equal right to listen. Legally no man could prefer any claim to interfere with him. Legally no man was justified in raising a finger against him. Legally he was entitled to rant forth his penny-a-line mixture of calumny and truth until doomsday, had breath been vouchsafed him. Free discussion is the basis of liberty. A gagged people are ignorant, slavish and non-progressive. To check the right of speech is to palsify the strongest arm of freedom. But common prudence marks a line where license to speak may be converted into licentiousness of speech—where the most valuable blessings we as a free people enjoy may be turned into an instrument of the grossest tyranny.—Gavazzi overstepped the bounds. He left truth, and wallowed in the vilest misrepresentation—he forgot the mild teachings of the Saviour of mankind, and plunged recklessly into blasphemy,—he threw aside the garb of charity, and assumed the garb of a ferocious man-slayer. Whilst we deprecate violence we say that he neither earned respect nor deserved it. He became a maniac—demented, savage, dangerous. The most charitable view of his conduct is to believe him unconscious of the full purport of his declamation. If he aroused one portion of his hearers to impetuous applause, he lashed another into indignant hostility. He appealed to passion and prejudice; he fired up passion and prejudice in approval and opposition. A man of strong passions himself, he worked upon the worst feelings of those who listened to him. He influenced the bigotry of the Protestant and the Catholic. Worse than this, he did it designedly. In condemning a priest he denounced him as a devil—in praising a Protestant he painted him as an angel. He boasted of his physical strength, his brute courage, his destructive propensities. He acted his speech with all the gesticulations of the tragedian, and insulted his Catholic hearers as much by his movements as his words. Such was Gavazzi, in Toronto, in Quebec, in Montreal. What wonder that a crowd of uneducated men, devoted to their priest, steeped in religious prejudice, and believing firmly in the divine origin of their system of worship, should be driven by this autocrat of their opinions to acts of violence which he seemed to brave and court? Is there need for astonishment at the fact that a mob of Catholics drove him from Catholic Quebec, and insulted him in Catholic Montreal? If Gavazzi suffered, he sought an opportunity to suffer—if a band of rowdies attacked him illegally, he descended to rowdy taunts and sneers to invite them to work. If the poor misguided, half-taught followers of the Pope did wrong, the enlightened intellectual, puffed Gavazzi, with all his superior knowledge of good and evil, did far worse. On the skirts of that flaunting robe of the "remarkable orator" there are blood stains, which years of christian work alone can efface—on that mock cross which he wears there is a tarnish which all his brilliant periods and fine acting will not drive away. Children unborn will curse the name of Gavazzi.

Is this "world renowned" ex-priest alone in his guilt? Are these journalists and politicians free who by their cursed slogan cry have hounded Protestant braves to do battle against Catholic bullies in the streets of one of our chief mercantile cities? Does not that gore reeking on the stones of Montreal stand forth as a witness, against the devilish spirit of ambition which has taught recreant editors to trade politically in the bigotry of their readers. Assuredly it does! He who seeks to array man against man—who draws up rank against rank in sectarian hostility—who plays upon the passions of his fellows—who scatters poison broadcast upon the public mind—who lies, and turns and shuffles—and all that he may prosper—is a fit companion for Gavazzi. Gavazzi has found many such. Brother bigots welcome him, reward, thank him. With them the monk is a martyr.—Let them with him share the criminality of his course, in the presence of high heaven. Let them with him live gaily through their bloody Carnival!

And now the question starts up, wherein does Gavazzi better the world? How many Romanists have been converted through his influence to Protestantism? How many Protestants have determined with greater zeal than before to argue away Popery, and convince its followers of their error? How many have turned to their Bibles in consequence of his orations, to find out the true way to demolish the Babylonish woman? How much has he advanced the cause of Christianity? How often has he faithfully preached the sermon on the Mount? Pause, you mad admirers of the Italian ex-monk, and reply. If Gavazzi has not converted Romanists, awakened the decaying zeal of Protestants to preach down Popery, sent them to their Bibles, advanced Christianity, and cast broadcast the glorious truths of the great teacher, what is the good that he has done? Is it to be seen in the stiffened corpses and mangled limbs in Montreal? Is it discoverable in the fierce hostility of Catholic against Protestant to be found wherever Gavazzi has set his foot? Is it to be detected in the new weapons placed in the hands of the infidel by these unseemly differences between men calling themselves Christian? Is it to be traced

in provoking desecration of houses set apart for Divine worship? Reply again, you worshippers of gesticulations, and inflections of the voice, and theatrical starts, and false statements, and cutting words, and persuasions to violence! Gavazzi blew upon the maple leaf—it turned crimson. God grant that a winter of faction, of bitter feeling, of deadly feud, of differences irreconcilable may not follow? Let Catholic and Protestant join hand in hand for popular good—let religion be no longer mixed up with politics—let "Down with Popery" cease to be the cry of a party seeking to rule the State. If Christianity is to be pushed forward; if Protestantism is to hold its own; if Catholicism is to be decreased—persuasion, toleration, forbearance and liberality must be more observable amongst our public men.

(From the North American.)

The evidence of a number of witnesses examined at the Inquest on the bodies of the victims of the recent religious riot at Montreal, has been published in the papers of that city. We have transferred the greater portion of the evidence to our columns to-day, and shall conclude it in our next. We have so far omitted nothing but the medical testimony descriptive of the wounds of the slaughtered victims. It is sufficient to remark, that the Doctors are unanimous in the opinion that the wounds were all made by musket balls.

As it is evidently the determination of a certain set of religious bigots and political desperadoes to provoke a religious war in Canada; as they boldly announce that their object is to put down by law the church of one-half the population; to rob their neighbors of their church property, and to carry out these persecuting and piratical designs by physical force, and as these attempts will be resisted to the death by that half of the population so to be put down and plundered; and as riots and murders and burnings will thus be multiplied throughout the Province, we think it right to give our readers an opportunity of studying all the frightful details of the opening scenes of this demagogical war. We hope they will read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the causes and the consequences of these tragedies in Lower Canada. While they assign to Popery and its blind followers, their due share in these scenes, let them not forget this fact which appears pretty plain from the evidence—viz., that men calling themselves Protestants excited the riots, and did all the killing that followed!!

The evidence so far shows the following results:—
1st. The first murder was committed in all probability, by those who rushed from the church, and fired upon the people in the street. 2nd. It does not appear that any violence, such as would be a legal justification for shooting down a fellow-creature, was made upon the inmates of the church. 3rd. The firing of pistols which led to, or formed the excuse for the firing of the troops, was, so far as appears, the act of parties coming from the church who, it may be presumed, were Protestants. 4th. It was the volley from the soldiers that killed and wounded the citizens. There is no proof that any Catholic rioters were armed with, or used deadly weapons. 5th. It is the unanimous testimony of the witnesses, that there was no riot, or threatened riot, to justify the fire of the troops. 6th. From the evidence of the officers, it appears that the troops fired without orders. If the Mayor did say, "Fire," or "Fire away," in their hearing, it was no order, as no such word is known in the military vocabulary, and no one could give the order but Colonel Hogarth who was in command. We may add another item for the consideration of Protestants when digesting these melancholy facts. It appears that since these religious riots in Lower Canada, a Catholic Church or place of worship has been burned down in Upper Canada, by an incendiary. We presume this incendiary called himself a Protestant. These are pregnant events.—We may ask again—What is to be the end?

If the reckless language and blood-thirsty spirit exhibited by certain religious newspapers and certain ministers when treating of these events, were sufficient to prove the fact, we should conclude that truth and the spirit of the Gospel had been banished from Canada. The Popish system is blindness and intolerance. All history tells us this. But we know many Protestant systems that are nearly as blind, and equally as intolerant. If the *Globe's* cry, "to arms" is to be answered; if that "bloody monster" Henry the VIII. is to find imitators in Canada, because a few ignorant and fanatical Irish Papists in Lower Canada assaulted the ex-monk Gavazzi and his abettors with sticks and stones, what would Catholics be justified in attempting against Protestants in reprisal for their outrages? What of the assaults committed by orange-men in Upper Canada? What of the burning of Catholic churches? What of those Townships in Upper Canada in which a Catholic is not suffered to live?—Talk of intolerance indeed! Hypocrites, take the beams out of your own eyes! Ye that are without sin cast the first stone.

We treat with the contempt they deserve, those cowardly slanderers who represent us as opposed to "free discussion"—countenancing the rioters, &c.—We are, and always have been, the friend of free discussion, and the enemy of those, whether Protestant or Catholic, who resort to club-law. But we will not allow our prejudice to run away with our reason; we will not "cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war" at the bidding of a satanic press; we will not help to rouse that spirit in Canada which in all ages and in all countries, has gloated in the blood of its victims.

(From the Norfolk Messenger.)

It is no wonder that from the intense feeling excited before, and carried beyond all bounds by the ultra attacks of Gavazzi, that such dreadful results should follow as the people of Montreal and of the province have to lament over. It is only what might be expected when sect is arrayed against sect, and fanaticism in all its hideous forms is held forth to our vision as religious fervor.

Of the Italian who has been the topic of so much editorial comment for the past two weeks we know little; but we do know that however much good he did for his native land, his advent here has been marked by anything but advantage to the province.—Neither are we inclined to regard his bitter invectives as eloquence; and we cannot but remember that the same person who inveighs so loudly against Popery, also exercised his powers in endeavoring to injure Temperance men. In his religious efforts, our prejudices might lead us to hope he had convinced even one Catholic of the errors of his doctrine; but sorer reason teaches us that mildness is the only means that can be successful in so difficult a task. It matters little to the victims whose lives have been sacrificed by the

violence of a guilty mob, who has been the immediately exciting cause of slaughter. We know the circumstances by which it was prefaced, and knowing this should teach many a lesson of the evils of an illiberal Press. It is well where circumstances permit to expose error, but in doing so we should "set down nought in malice," and remember that the most violent partizan is never the most useful to his friends. What a fitting comment upon the result of sectarian crusades is the present state of Montreal. And may we ask some of our contemporaries if this, the result, in a degree, of their writing, is conducive to the good of man or the glory of God? If persons desire to convince others of the truth of their doctrine, and the sincerity of their opinions, they must do so by means of conciliation as well as argument, and above all any display of abusive language must be avoided.

(From the Hamilton Canadian.)

So far as the evidence goes it does not appear that murder was contemplated by the rioters, if we except the band of armed Protestants that rushed from the church. And laying aside the conduct of the troops, the whole affair which the *Globe* thus endeavors to magnify into national convulsion, in which the last vestige of civil and religious liberty had perished, dwindles into a very tame and harmless riot, compared with the appalling anomaly which, in the same city, burned the Parliament buildings in April, 1849. We say, if the firing of the troops is deducted, the riot even with all its tactical elements, will afford no cause of alarm, compared with the riot of 1849. The *Globe* must be perfectly aware of this fact, and yet, if we remember aright he did not sound the tocsin of national convulsion, and the dirge of freedom half so loudly in 1849, as he does on the present occasion. It did not suit his purpose to do so. He was then the organ of the government,—and through the measure which called forth the riot might have been, and was called "papistical," yet the rioters were not said, or supposed to be so.

It is evident that the *Examiner's* meaning of religious freedom, and our meaning, are quite different. The *Examiner* only means freedom from the thumb-screws, the rack or the dungeon—and in addition to this, we mean freedom from insult, slander, and irritating abuse. We deny emphatically that the principle of religious freedom or liberty of conscience was at all involved in Gavazzi's lectures, and the opposition to them. Had Gavazzi gone to Montreal to preach Christ, and had the Papists mobbed or attempted to prevent him, we might then have gone, musket in hand, assisted the *Examiner* to protect him, in the name of religious freedom; but he went to preach the Pope, and we do not think that sensible Christians are called on to risk their lives in defence of such preaching. And as a very sensible Christian remarked to us lately—*if Popery is darkness, preaching Christ would be far more likely to penetrate it than preaching the Pope.* It is a very lame philosophy that can find no recommendation for truth except by contrasting it violently with error, for if my true creed cannot recommend itself without being contrasted with my neighbor's false one, mine can only be valuable just so long as my neighbor remains in error, and no longer. We would therefore advise the *Examiner* just to preach his own creed, and leave the creeds of his neighbors to take care of themselves; for though it may not appear a "mawkish philosophy" to teach that Christianity cannot be illustrated but by a comparison with error, it is at least a dangerous one, and one which is not calculated to promote christian harmony.

We clip the following gem from the *Carlton Place Herald*, and strongly recommend it to the attention of our friend of the *Canada Temperance Advocate*—

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so fondly I tumbled into bed
In the night when I awoke
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it was not brandy I did take
it died the wind it is no mistake
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Montreal, July 6, 1853.

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IN consequence of the extensive repairs which the Montreal College is to undergo, during the present summer, the Annual Vacation of this Institution will commence on TUESDAY, the 19th inst.

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On TUESDAY, the exercises will commence at half-past Twelve o'clock, and will be closed by the distribution of Prizes.

The parents of the students, and the friends of Education, are requested to attend, without further invitation. The College will be re-opened on the 19th of SEPTEMBER, and the Classes will be resumed on the Morning of the 20th.

Montreal, July 5, 1853.

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