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THE TRUE WITNESS
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 8, 1856.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The news brought by the last steamer would seem to indicate a disposition on the part of Russia to treat on the basis proposed by the Allies. That Russia is however sincere in her pacific professions, is still doubted by many; and the ardor of military preparations for the campaign of 1856 has not relaxed. In the dockyards, and arsenals of the Empire the greatest activity still prevails. Perhaps, as nothing can be done during the winter months, either in the Crimea or in the Baltic, Russia is but seeking to throw the Allies off their guard by holding out hopes which it is not her intention to realize.

From the United States we learn that the long contest at Washington has terminated in the election of Mr. Banks as speaker of the House of Representatives. This is hailed as a great triumph, and as the presage of future victories, by the "Free-Soil" party.

FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The adjourned investigation into the disgraceful circumstances of the night of the 27th December, with the view of ascertaining whether they were attributable to malice, or to gross negligence, was resumed on Thursday the 31st ult., at 2 p.m.

Charles Prevost sworn—Deposed that he belonged to the "Vollteur" Company. Knew that his hose burst repeatedly, but saw no one touch them. Thought that the bursting was occasioned by the manner in which the hose were laid down. Borrowed hose from the "Hero," they also burst. Saw no one cut them.

Captain Hayes—of the Police—sworn—Deposed that he saw hose burst, but saw none cut. Attributed the bursting, to ice or other obstructions in the hose. Thought, and still believed, that there were obstructions in the hose; which would account for their un-serviceable state. Saw no want of activity. If there was ice, or, if there were obstructions in the hose, of course there must have been neglect.

Michel Felton sworn—Deposed that he belonged to the "Vollteur" Company. The hose burst repeatedly; and whilst engaged replacing them, he was insulted and impeded by other firemen. Was addressed as "You damned Canuck—you need not work so hard; your church shall burn." From this, and the impediments that were thrown in his way when endeavoring to replace the un-serviceable lengths of hose, firmly believed at the time, and believed then, that the hose were burst maliciously. Knew that the hose he laid down were laid down properly; were not twisted nor in kinks. Knew that the man who addressed him as "chétif Canadien" was a fireman by his belt. Hose may easily be burst by persons maliciously disposed. Never at any previous fire—and he had been at many—knew hose to burst so often. Had never seen anything like it before.

Mr. Hammond, sworn—Deposed that he was captain of the "Protector" engine; but having arrived late, had no personal knowledge of the hose bursting. Had nothing to complain of, in the conduct of his men; thought they were active. As a fireman of 14 years' standing, he would not order his men to "pack up" or his engine to leave a fire, without instructions from the Chief Engineer.

Mr. McNaughton, sworn—Deposed that he was lieutenant of "Neptune" Company—that he saw the hose burst repeatedly, but did not see them cut, and saw no improper conduct. Thought the bursts were accidental. Believed that the hose were the same as those used on the morning of the 25th. Never saw hose burst so frequently at any one fire; could not account for it; though he would attribute it to accumulations of ice in the hose before they were laid down. Saw "Union" engine; it did not begin to play till the fire was nearly over. That engine reeled up, and went away, without any orders, that he knew of, from the Chief Engineer.

Mr. Ruthven, sworn—Deposed that he was lieutenant of the "Union" Company. That he had a cloak on at the fire—that he felt very anxious about his cloak—that he went into Mrs. Mack's hotel and took off his cloak—that he left his cloak there to be taken care of, as he was acquainted there—that after having provided for the safety of his cloak, he put his engine in working order—that he saw no misconduct—saw no hose cut; but knew that, from some cause or other, they were constantly bursting. Backed his engine into St. Lambert street out of the way; there was much confusion. Did not "reel up" or move off the ground during the fire. No rule in his company to exclude Catholics. Reprimanded Williams for saying—"pack up—let it burn away." Thought men worked as actively as usual.

William Ray, sworn—Deposed that he was a branchman of "Protector" Company. Knew of the hose bursting, and attributed it to the way in which they were laid down. Knew of no misconduct. Was very zealous himself, as were also his comrades. Did not pump on "Hero's" men intentionally. Did not see "Union" play on the fire.

Archibald McLachlan, sworn—Deposed that he was Captain of the "Neptune" Company. Thought that

he and his men exerted themselves rather more than usual. Heard "Hero's" men complain of having been pumped upon. His engine did not play upon them intentionally. Believed that the "Union" engine did leave the ground during the fire.

Patrick Nolan, sworn—Deposed that he belonged to Hose Company; and that he was one of the men paid for taking care of the hose. Examined hose after fire of the 27th. Did not find any of them cut, though many of them were burst. In the interval betwixt the fire of the morning of the 25th, and that of the night of the 27th—three days and two nights—the hose that were used on the first named of these occasions, were never cleaned, examined, nor even hung up to dry; though there is a place on purpose for examining and drying the hose after a fire—though stoves and firewood are supplied for that purpose—and though the hose, after every fire, ought to be dried, cleaned, examined, and repaired if anywhere defective, before being allowed to go out again. Not one of these precautions was taken during the three days, and two nights, betwixt the fire of the 25th and that of the 27th. On the night of the 27th, the same hose that had been used on the 25th were sent out again, and precisely in the same condition as that in which they had been brought in on the morning of the 25th. He had been taken from his regular duty by the Chief Engineer, in order to place the engines upon runners; and thus had had no time to clean his hose. Believed that, in consequence, the hose were not in a good state of repair when taken out on the 27th. The Chief Engineer must have been well aware that the hose used on that occasion, had not been cleaned or examined since the last fire. That officer had put no one in his—Nolan's—place to clean the hose, when he took him away from the performance of that duty.

Captain Bertram, Chief Engineer, sworn—Deposed that he was at the fire—at first did not know where it was—thought it was in Holland's—at last found out it was in the Nuns' buildings. Saw no hose cut; thought that, owing to deep snow on the ground, some of them may have been improperly laid down. There was confusion; but thought it proceeded from over eagerness of men. In taking men from the hose department to place engines upon runners, he had, as he thought, chosen the least of two evils. Did not send any men to replace the hose-men, whom he had ordered away from their proper duty of attending to, and cleaning the hose. Being asked—if the hose used on the 27th, were the same as those known as "Fred's Hose," which burst on trial at Quebec, and which were spoken of by Capt. Short as a "disgrace to the Company?"—the witness replied—that, he believed they were; but that if for bursting on trial, he had condemned them, he would have to condemn all the hose in the city.

Here the examination of witnesses closed. But before adjourning, the editor of the TRUE WITNESS—who had received a summons, together with B. Devlin, Esq., to attend the investigation—requested permission to say a few words. He begged leave to assure the Committee that, in giving insertion in his journal to a complaint against the Fire Department, he had been actuated by no motives of hostility towards that Department in general, or towards the Chief Engineer in particular. That what he had done, he had done, impelled by a sense of duty, and with the view of bringing prominently before the public, a subject in which the public were all deeply interested. He added that he had good right to complain of the language, which—if the reports of the public press might be relied on—had been applied to him by a member of the Council on a previous occasion, when the subject of the fire in the Nuns' property was under discussion; and he trusted that they would now see the justice and propriety, for their own sakes as well as his, to reconsider that improper language. It had been said that the author of the complaints against the Fire Department "deserved to be punished." On the contrary, he had done the public a service; and instead of punishment, merited the thanks of the community.

The Committee then adjourned.

THE "SUPERIOR RACE."—We recommend to the notice of our Anglo-Saxon cotemporaries, to whom the "progress" of Upper Canada affords a constant theme for glorification, the following extracts. The first is from the Presentment of the Grand Jury of Toronto; the other from the Toronto Colonist.

After noticing the state of the Toronto Jail, now all too small for the rapidly increasing number of criminals in that section of the Province, this Presentment goes on to remark:—

"The number of criminals—both for the more serious crimes, as well as those for petty misdemeanors—appears to increase yearly, in proportion as the population of those Counties increase; and, although the Jury feel it is almost useless, from the many previous presentments of Grand Juries without effect, they would again earnestly recommend that some steps should at once be taken to enlarge the present building—by at least adding the additional wing which was apparently contemplated by the original plan—in order to enable some sort of classification to be made of the inmates. The main object for imprisonment, as your Lordship observed, is to reform as well as punish criminals; and this object we fear cannot be expected to be gained in a crowded and contracted building such as the Common Jail for those Counties."

We would also recommend the above to the attention of our cotemporary the Montreal Witness—as a better test of "true religion," than wealth, trade, or success in business. Crime is increasing, it would appear, yearly in the Upper Province, and so rapidly—that, in almost the very words of the prophet Isaiah, the Grand Jury cry aloud to the government to enlarge the place of its jails, and to stretch forth the curtains of its Penitentiary. Are these the signs of "true religion?"

The second extract which we lay before our readers refers more particularly to the City of Toronto; but is equally illustrative of the progress of the Holy Protestant or Denying Faith amongst our Upper Canada brethren. We copy from the Toronto Colonist:—

"Have we any police? Where are they to be found?

What are they doing? Who is their chief? These are questions daily asked in our streets. No response to be had save a significant shrug of the shoulders. Should these things be so. We appeal to the citizens of Toronto, the metropolis of Canada. Are our wives and daughters to be grossly insulted in the leading streets of the capital? We appeal to every father and brother amongst our citizens. It is a shame—it is a scandal—it is murder to suffer our lives and property to be at the mercy of rampant rowdies. Is there nothing to be done—can nothing be done—shall nothing be done to clean out the Augean stable? Citizens and strangers are equally interested in the subject matter of these remarks. Parliament is about to meet. People from all parts of the Province will flow in upon us. Temptations to robbery, murder and crime of every sort, will be increased a thousand fold. Will nothing be done to meet the emergency? We are not alarmists; but we feel that the time has come for a change and that change must be effected—and effected promptly.

"Police-men, we are told, obey no orders—recognize no head—do just as they please—and therefore keep out of harm's way. A constable in our streets will be soon as great a wonder as a swallow in January. The laws are openly violated—public morality is shocked—public decency is outraged—why? Because the laws are powerless. Because the executioners of the law are no where to be found. Because the instruments of the law are blunt and weak. Because, in a word, skulking policemen are not the best conservators of the peace. A drunken or unresisting man if "very drunk" is easily apprehended, and therefore at the risk of their lives, a half dozen of policemen may venture to lay hold of him. When arrested they valiantly belabor him with batons, and drag the fallen captive to the dungeon dire. Small children, if very small, or "small sized applewomen" are also hunted down with noble daring. But hardy ruffians who keep sober for a purpose, nightly perambulate the streets insulting all they meet—male or female—especially the latter. Perhaps we wrong the police as individuals—but as a body our remarks cannot be too pungent."

Many of our French Canadian friends doubtless felt a little shocked, as well as surprised, at being taunted publicly with their inferiority to the bold Protestant and Anglo-Saxon rowdies of Upper Canada. But with this evidence of wherein alone, that vaunted "Superiority of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant, over the Catholic Celt" consists, we trust that this feeling of soreness may die away; and may be succeeded by a charitable desire to assist their vain glorious fellow citizens of the Upper Province. As in a vision, a man of Macedon cried out to St. Paul "come and help us"—so do the Protestants of Upper Canada cry aloud for police, and enlarged "jail accommodations." Churches they don't want; for they have more than they know what to do with. But jails, whipping posts, and gibbets, are what the Upper Canadians require, and what it would be an act of charity on the part of the French Canadians to furnish their Protestant fellow citizens with. In return therefore, for the Tracts, corrupt versions of the Bible, &c., which the latter keep forcing upon us, and which we do not want, would it not be a charitable act on our part to send to them a supply of hand cuffs, cat-o-nine tails, and halters, wherewith to keep in order their rapidly increasing crops of criminals? A "Halter Distributing and Gallows Erection Society" is certainly far more needed for the Protestants of Upper Canada, than are any "Bible Auxiliary" or French Canadian Missionary Societies" in the Lower Province.

VALUABLE TESTIMONY.—At a late meeting of the Montreal Temperance Society, the Rev. Mr. McLeod made some important admissions as to the comparative morality of Catholic, and Non-Catholic countries:—

"He had travelled a little lately among Heathen and Mohammedans; but the most intense Heathenism he came across in his journey he saw, not a mile from St. Paul's Church, London."—Montreal Witness, 6th inst.

The Reverend gentleman is, we believe, a member of the French Canadian Missionary Society. Why then does he not use his influence to send his Colporteurs to the Heathenised masses of England, sitting beneath the shadow of a Protestant church? The preacher had travelled amongst Catholics however, as well as amongst Heathens, Protestants and Mohammedans; and this is what he saw:—

"In reference to Italy, he might say he spent some seven or eight weeks there; but did not see a single case of drunkenness, and this, too, in a wine drinking country. While there, he met a Scotchman, who said that if you told an Italian you saw one of his countrymen drunk, he would say it was false; it was an Englishman."—Id.

We would venture to hint to the Reverend speaker, that—as in Italy, there is no "Maine Law"—no legal restrictions upon the use, sale, or manufacture of intoxicating liquors, except for revenue purposes; whilst at the same time drunkenness is a crime almost unknown amongst its Popish population—and as that crime has increased, and is steadily increasing, amongst the Protestant population of America, in spite of "Blue Laws," and stringent Police regulations—something besides legislative enactments, something which Italian Papists have, and which Anglo-Saxon Protestants have not, is wanted to effect a moral reformation amongst our people, and to root out the drinking habits which are the curse and the disgrace of the age. An Italian intoxicated is a sight that the Reverend Mr. McLeod tells us he never met with; yet so common is that vice amongst his own Protestant countrymen—that as he also tells us—even at the late half political, half religious, and altogether ridiculous, jollification in honor of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, some of the guests made beasts of themselves, in their excessive admiration of "civil and religious liberty" as established by whipping Quakers, and hanging Baptists.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS.—The Government it seems are about to make Mr. Thos. Hincks—brother of our late Canadian financier—into a Bishop of Kingston. This appointment does not seem to meet with the approval of the Protestants of Kingston, members of the Anglican sect.

As the Editor of this paper will be absent from town for some days, it is requested, that all communications intended for his eye only, may be marked on the outside "Private."

THE ST. SYLVESTER MURDER.—The trial of the men accused of the murder of Richard Corrigan at a cattle show held at St. Sylvester on the 16th of October last, commenced before the Court of Queen's Bench, Quebec, on Thursday of last week; Mr. Solicitor-General Ross appearing for the prosecution; and Messrs. Allyn, O'Farrell, Stuart, and Chabot for the accused. The names of the latter are—Richard Kelly, Francis Donoghue, Patrick Donoghue, George Monaghan, F. O'Neill, James Haggart, John McCaffrey, and George Bannon.

A Jury having, after repeated challenges, been sworn in, Mr. O'Farrell represented to the Court, that an important witness for the defence—Andrew McKie, sen.,—was absent, and had, perhaps, been sent purposely out of the way; and that Mrs. King, another important witness, refused to attend, unless the sum of \$20 was first paid her.

The Solicitor-General then addressed the jury; dwelling much on the enormity of the crime with which the prisoners were charged, and exhorting them to a faithful and fearless discharge of their duties. Several witnesses were then called and examined.

At this stage of the proceedings, the Court adjourned for about 20 minutes. During the interval, one of the Jurymen "improved the occasion" by walking off to his dinner; so that when the Court reassembled, it was found that the trial would have to commence over again. On Friday the same jury was impanelled; and a fine of five pounds having been imposed upon the hungry jurymen, the same evidence as that adduced on the first occasion was again laid before the Court; and of which we lay a short abstract before our readers.

Edward McKie, farmer, sworn—Deposed that he knew the deceased Corrigan; whom he saw at a cattle show held at St. Sylvester on the 16th October last. That there was a row or "muss;" and that Corrigan was struck, knocked down, and kicked; as was also another man named Peter Stockton. That Corrigan was led out of the row, bleeding profusely from blows from a stick on the head, and taken to witness father's house; where in about an hour he went to bed, complaining of the beating he had got. That the next morning he said he was weak, but in less pain, and that Corrigan died on the 19th. This witness identified some of the prisoners as having taken a part in the row.

Louis Demers, farmer, St. Sylvester, sworn—Deposed that he was at the cattle show; saw the fight; could not say who were fighting; that they appeared all to be fighting amongst themselves; that Corrigan was beaten and kicked; that the whole row lasted some two or three minutes; that he saw Donoghue and John McCaffrey in the crowd.

James McKie, blacksmith, sworn—Deposed that Corrigan died at his father's house on the 19th Oct.; having suffered much from injuries received during the fight on the 16th.

On Saturday the trial was continued.

Mary McKie, sworn—Deposed that she was at the cattle show; that she saw somebody—thought, but was not sure, that it was Donoghue—strike Corrigan; that Corrigan was knocked down, and kicked; that she cried out "murder," and leapt over a fence 3 or 4 feet high; that she saw the prisoner Kelly—as she thought—help Corrigan out of the crowd; that she saw a man named O'Neill knock Peter Stockton down; that she believed Stockton was at present in Wisconsin.

William Woodworth, tinsmith, of St. Sylvester, sworn—Deposed to having seen a fight at the cattle show; that O'Neill struck Stockton; and that he saw Kelly take Corrigan by the arm, and lead him away from the ground; that P. Donoghue challenged any Protestant in the parish to fight him. This witness' depositions at the Coroner's Inquest were then read; and some discrepancies betwixt them, and his present evidence pointed out.

J. B. Napper, farmer, sworn—Deposed that he saw a row; that Mr. Egan told P. Donoghue to begin the row; that Corrigan was examining a sheep; that P. Donoghue came up, when the former cried out to him to "get out of the way;" that Donoghue struck Corrigan with his fist, and a row began; in the course of which Corrigan was knocked down, beaten, and repeatedly kicked; that all the prisoners at the bar were in the row; that he heard Monaghan challenge any one to take Corrigan's part. On his cross-examination, this witness admitted that in his deposition before the Coroner, he had not told all he knew; that his oath obliged him to tell the whole truth; and that he had made oath to reveal all he knew. He also stated that, at St. Sylvester, there was a very bad state of feeling betwixt Catholics and Protestants. This witness identified Kelly as having knocked Corrigan down.

On Monday, the trial was resumed, with the cross-examination of the last witness, Napper.

He admitted that, at the Coroner's Inquest, he was unwell, and intimidated by threats said to have been uttered; that, from those causes, he did not, when upon oath, tell the whole truth; and that sooner than be burned he would not tell the whole truth, even upon oath.

Wm. Lowry, farmer, sworn—Deposed that he knew deceased, Corrigan; saw him at the cattle show knocked down by Donoghue, and kicked by Bannon; that some one cried out—"let us kill him out." After the row, Kelly assisted to carry Corrigan away. The depositions of this witness before the Coroner were read; and it appeared that, in them he had sworn that he first saw Corrigan when being carried off the ground.

The Rev. W. King, sworn—Deposed that he had attended Corrigan during his last sickness; had tried to bleed him, but failed; and had administered strong medicines to him; that he had studied medicine.—That Corrigan had, in the belief of his death being immediately at hand, made a dying deposition, naming the persons who had caused his illness. Could not say whether Corrigan was ruptured; nor was he aware that the medicines he had given deceased had caused vomiting.

The deceased's dying declaration, as taken by the last witness, was then read; and the Court adjourned till the next day, when the Counsel for the defence were to be heard.

The Christian Inquirer, one of the best conducted Protestant journals of the United States, sits in judgement upon Calvinism and condemns it in the following forcible but truthful language:—

"Calvinism is the natural ally and auxiliary of arbitrary power; and it is a significant fact, that Orthodoxy in Germany has of late derived its principal support from state patronage. It is especially acceptable to the King of Prussia and the petty despots of the Empire. The lecture-room of Hengstenberg, the Corypheus of German Orthodoxy, it was said, was almost emptied in a few days after the Revolution of 1848. Hence it is, that Independency or Congregationalism is, in this country, to Calvinism an utter abomination. Calvinism has no reliance on reason, and therefore relies on force. And it is over and over confessed, that the human mind, when left to itself, wanders off into some form of Liberal Christianity."