

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 27, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The mail, per Niagara, did not arrive in town until we were at press; from the Telegraphic report, we gather the following important particulars:—

In England, public feeling is strongly excited against Prince Albert, who is accused of betraying the secrets of the Cabinet to the Continental Governments of Europe. The Prince is said to be the tool of Russia, and Lord Aberdeen is supposed to be entirely subject to the same influences. The public indignation is loudly expressed, and the conduct of the Prince will yet be made the subject of discussion on the meeting of Parliament, which is to take place on the 31st inst.

All hopes of peace seem now to have been abandoned. France is preparing for the struggle, and is said, by a Report from the War Department, to have an available force of 1,500,000 men. It is also hinted that the Emperor ceases not to receive from the Czar the most tempting offers to induce him to abandon the Anglo-Turkish alliance.

No important events have occurred at the seat of war. The allied squadrons were still in the Bosphorus, having been prevented by stress of weather from carrying out their instructions to proceed into the Black Sea. Their orders are, that in the event of meeting any Russian men-of-war, they will request them to return to Sebastopol, and to enforce their request, if necessary. Russia will accept this as a declaration of hostilities, and declares that the entrance of the fleet into the Black Sea will be the signal for simultaneous outbreaks in Turkey and India. In the mean time Russia is increasing her military armaments, and is about to raise her army in the Principalities to 240,000 men. The attitude of Austria is doubtful, and has given rise to some angry remonstrances from the French Government, which has—it is said—threatened to send assistance to Hungary and Lombardy, if Austria should oppose herself to the policy of the Western powers. At Constantinople there have been riots in the streets necessitating the interference of the French and English forces. The Sultan still professes his willingness to negotiate, but insists upon the evacuation of the Principalities. "The hopes of peace," says the London Chronicle, "hang on a slender thread, and the foreign powers have made full preparation for the more probable alternative."

The Protestant press of the United States still continue to circulate their mendacious slanders against Mgr. Bedini. At New York, on the 23rd inst., a Protestant mob assembled near the wharf in the expectation that His Excellency was about to embark for Europe. Fortunately, the ruffians were disappointed on this occasion; but it will not be the fault of the Protestant press, which is ever exciting the rabble to acts of brutality, if Mgr. Bedini escapes with his life from the land of "Civil and Religious Liberty."

Patrick Donohue, the Irish Exile, died at Brooklyn, on the 21st inst., of an attack of dysentery.

PASTORAL OF HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC.

His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec has been pleased to issue a Pastoral against the abuses arising from the "Table Turning" mania, from which we make the following extracts:—

"PIERRE FLAVIEN TURGEON, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FAVOR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC, &c., &c.

"To the Clergy, regular and secular, the Religious Communities, and to all the Faithful of our Diocese. Health and Benediction in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Our Pastoral charge, dearly beloved brethren, compels us to-day to raise our voice to warn you against a novel means of seduction which the spirit of darkness wishes to introduce amongst you, to beguile weak souls, and to lead them into sin. We intend to speak of the criminal abuse that is made of 'Table Turning.'"

"Certainly these table movements, even supposing them not to be the effects of illusion, or roguery, are very surprising. The causes thereof, explain them as we will, are certainly obscure, and have hitherto baffled conjecture; they are therefore naturally looked upon with suspicion by prudent persons.

"Nevertheless, as in the opinion of many, these movements may be referred to physical agencies, and looked upon as the result of mere natural causes, strange and obscure though they may be, in spite of our repugnance to the practice which to us seems attended with danger—had it gone no farther, we should still have been inclined to keep silence, waiting until science and experience should have thrown more light upon the subject, and dissipated the illusion, if there be any.

"But these practices have been pushed further. It is now pretended that these 'Turning Tables' can resolve questions; and resource is had to them, to discover the future, and to pry into the profoundest secrets; the spirits of the dead are evoked, to answer questions put to them; to reveal the mysteries of the other world, and to utter whatsoever it may be desired to make them say. Thus do many give in to the most dangerous illusions, yielding to a superstition whose results are most deplorable. This is the abuse that we would denounce; this the evil which we listen to condemn, and against which we would desire to put you on your guard.

"What object can you have in addressing yourselves to these 'Moving Tables,' and in putting questions to them? Can you bring yourselves to believe that they can hear, and understand you? and that, more enlightened than yourselves, they can read your thoughts; and reveal to you that of which you are in ignorance? No; for you know that they are desti-

tute of all feeling, and void of intelligence. Do you pretend by such means to evoke the spirits of the dead? And what are these spirits with whom you desire to put yourselves in communication, and whom, in your presumption, you would compel to reply to your indiscreet questions? Are they the spirits of the damned? Has not God then placed between you, and these wretched spirits, a great gulf which prevents them from hearing you? Are they not bound with the chains of His divine justice, in the thick darkness where He has plunged them, together with the rebel angels, whilst thus awaiting that great day of judgment?"

"Can they be the Spirits of God's elect? What then—will you have the impious presumption to believe that you can compel these holy spirits to attend at your bidding, and thus dragging them from the bosom of their God, where they repose, make them the sport of your criminal curiosity? No. 'The souls of the just are in the hand of God.'—Sup. iii., 1; and 'no man shall snatch them out of His hand.'—St. John x., 28. Intimately united with God, in Him they see and hear, and act only as He willeth. They are our brethren, true; and God in His mercy has been pleased, for our consolation and welfare, to permit betwixt us and them a holy communion; but this communion with the souls of the just can only be kept up by the means of religion, which teaches us—to praise God in His Saints—to offer up humble but earnest prayer for the rest of those who still suffer—and to seek the assistance of those who have already entered into the Glory.

"What spirits then can these be, which answer you, and attest their presence by rapping, and moving your tables? Are they the unclean spirits, the angels of Satan? We know that these fallen spirits, who were murderers from the beginning, still go to and fro, seeking whom they may devour; that they cease not to spread their snares; that they still, by their tempting, and subtle devices, seek to lure man to his ruin, and to cause him to fall into the abyss. But we have also learnt from Holy Writ, that Jesus Christ, by the victory of His Cross, has triumphed over the prince of this world—that the oracles are dumb before Him who has destroyed the empire of that old serpent, binding him, and casting him into the pit, that he may no more seduce men, as of old. We know then, that the power of the evil one has been mightily rebuked, and that it is but in rare cases that, in the inscrutable dispensations of God's providence, it is permitted to him to exercise, in a sensible manner, over regenerate man, that power which ordinarily is limited to the souls of the wicked, who, by listening to his seductions, and by consenting to sin, which is the work of the devil, become voluntarily his slaves. It is not then in his power to communicate at will with men for the purpose of seducing them; though he rejoices, and triumphs, when he can find any, foolish and depraved enough to put themselves in communication with him. Be not then lightly led to believe, in his presence, or in his manifestations, in the movements of your furniture beneath the pressure of your hands,—do not accept as oracles the answers which you fancy you obtain. You may, and should, fear him; it is but the fitting punishment, to which arrogant men, who seek from the spirits the knowledge of the past and future are exposed; it is but just that God should give those up to the spirit of falsehood who, not content with the lights which He reveals to them through His Church, have the rashness to look for truth elsewhere than in her bosom. But the God of Mercy, who has redeemed man from the power of Satan at so dear a rate, has pity; He desires that all should be saved, and waits patiently for them to do penance. This is why it is that He does not always punish them as they deserve, and but rarely abandons them to the snares and malice of the enemy of souls.

"We must conclude then, that all these answers, oracles, and revelations, which you fancy that you obtain from tables, moving we know not how, come not from the souls of the departed, the angels of God, nor yet from the angels of darkness; but that they are the effects of your own heated imaginations, the reflection, or echo of your own thoughts; and that, consequently, if you really fancy that you hold converse with the spirit world, you fall into a pagan delusion. We add that if you give way to these practices, with the intention of thereby obtaining veritable answers to your questions, you become guilty of a most criminal superstition, called 'Divination.'

"In what does 'Divination' consist? According to all the Doctors of the Church, it consists in having recourse to the devil, in order to discover things hidden, and of which we can obtain no knowledge by natural means. Now to whom, but to the devil, do you address yourselves when you presume to make use of 'Table Turning' for such a purpose? Is it to the angels of God? No—it would be to insult them? To the Saints in heaven, or the souls of the just in Purgatory? No. None but God has dominion over them; and He will not submit them to your criminal and offensive curiosity. The devil alone would consent to gratify your impious desires.

"But to hold intercourse with the devil! to have recourse to that foe of God and man, and thus to render him a kind of worship! The very thought terrifies you, and chills you with horror, we are sure. Nevertheless, it is the crime of those who, no matter by what means, obstinately persist in seeking to pry into those secrets which it has pleased God to conceal from human ken; because there is no spirit but the evil one, who would give you an answer."

His Grace proceeds to point out the threats which God has denounced upon all enchanters, diviners, and who seek truth from the dead; and all superstitious practices, amongst which must be reckoned this abuse of 'Table Turning.' Without condemning all who have yielded to the practice of turning tables—many of whom have done so from mere curiosity, and without any superstitious intent; whilst others who have gone further may have erred from ignorance—still His Grace cannot acquit the latter of blame; for a moment's reflection should have convinced them of the dangers of the course they were pursuing. His Grace's principal object is however to persuade all the Faithful, of the evil results of this absurd, presumptuous, and impious practice; and he proceeds to enumerate the fearful consequences of the 'Table Rapping' mania in the United States, where it has given rise to a new sect whose religion is demon-worship, and has produced most terrible calamities in all classes of society.

"Upon what times have we fallen!"—exclaims the Pastor, alarmed at the progress of this new heresy—"Are we then doomed to see again the abominations of paganism renewed in our midst? Are there in our days men so abandoned as to desire to re-establish

the empire and tyranny of Satan amongst us, which was overthrown by the Cross of Jesus Christ?"

And if they would avoid the punishments with which God chastiseth the impieties of this modern Paganism, let all Catholics avoid its practices.

"Let us tremble, dearly beloved brethren, lest, in imitating their impiety, we draw down upon ourselves those terrible chastisements. Have all superstition in abomination, as a sin against the Holiness of the Lord. Let not even such things be mentioned amongst you, as these consulting of spirits, and invocations of the dead by means of 'Table Turning.' Fear, lest you fall into the snares of Satan, whilst seeking, by such means, to hold such communications, and to enter into such commerce with the angels of darkness.

"Tremble, lest as the penalty of your temerity, God abandon you to the illusions of the devil. And what? this punishment has not already even appeared amongst some of you? Have not blasphemies, and obscenities been heard around these tables of divination? Their pretended answers, have they not outraged the honor of some persons? Is not the hand of the Lord heavy upon some, who, having cast aside reason, have trusted in the answers of the spirits?"

"Beware then, lest you still further provoke the anger of a jealous God by these dangerous practices, which lead directly to a criminal intimacy with His enemy, and your's. Remember that you have renounced Satan, and all his works; that you have abjured all communion with him; that by Baptism you have been made children of God, the children of light, and members of Jesus Christ. There can be no fellowship then, betwixt the children of God, and of Satan—betwixt the children of light, and the children of darkness—there can be no concord betwixt Christ and Belial.—3 Cor., vi., 15.

"But you are God's. He is your Creator, your Redeemer, your Father, your only Lord—your light, and your sovereign good. Let then all your faith, all your hope, all your love, be centred in Him. Adore Him only; seek only Him; to Him only, strive to be united. Jesus Christ is your only Lord, Who has redeemed you at so dear a price, and Who hath called you to His Kingdom. Serve then but Him, and let Satan have no part in you.

"For these reasons, having invoked the Holy Name of God—and having called to mind His ordinances, and the menaces of His holy law against all who give themselves up to superstitions, we have DECREED and ORDAINED, and do DECREE and ORDAIN, as follows:—

"1. We renew the prohibitions of the Church against all superstitious practices.

"2. We forbid, as a superstitious practice, all Table Turning, or Rapping, with the intention of evoking the dead, or spirits, or with the design of holding any manner of communication with them.

"3. We recommend all persons, for the future, to abstain altogether from practising experiments of 'Table Turning,' even in jest, or for amusement, as being not without danger to the weak, who might thus be led into superstition.

"This Pastoral Letter shall be read publicly in all Churches, Chapters, and Religious Communities, on the first Sunday, or Festival, after its reception.

"Given at Quebec, under our Seal, on the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. One thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

"J. F., Archbishop of Quebec.
By His Grace,
EDMOND LANGEVIN, Pr., Sec."

WHERE ARE THE MISSIONARIES WANTED?

There are crimes so brutal, so unnaturally brutal, that from the absence of any legislation upon the subject, we may fairly conclude that they were unknown to, or at all events exceedingly rare, even amongst the heathen nations of old. In the code of the Jewish legislator, we find no provision made for them at all; and yet it is against crimes of this description that the Parliament of Protestant England is now called upon to legislate; so frequent have they become, so generally prevalent are they, and so rapidly increasing in that thoroughly Protestantised nation. Yes, the cry in Protestant England is now for more stringent legislation in order to put a check upon the common practice of fathers and mothers killing their offspring, in order to make a trifling profit out of their funeral expences.

We call the Chinese mother, who exposes her child to certain death, rather than be at the trouble of rearing it, an unnatural monster: we shudder as we read in Holy Writ, how, in the agonies of famine, a mother in Israel "boiled her son and did eat him;" and with loathing we turn from the degraded savages of New Holland with whom infanticide is hardly deemed a crime. But there is a country whose mothers are far more degraded than the Chinese women, more thoroughly brutalised than the *gins* of Australia; and who, without the urgent necessity which drove the woman of Samaria to the perpetration of a deed at which, after the lapse of near 3,000 years humanity still shudders, daily repeat her crime; not indeed to "eat the fruit of their wombs, the flesh of their sons and daughters," but as a matter of business, as a cool and deliberate speculation; who rear children as a profitable investment, and at the proper season kill them off, as they would a litter of pigs, or Spring lamb.

And these women, these mothers, are the women, the mothers of Protestant England—of that highly civilized and thoroughly Protestantised England, whose missionaries are despatched at an enormous expence to Popish Ireland, in order to impart to that benighted region—where an unmarried mother is as rare, as, according to the *Edinburgh Review*, is a chaste woman amongst the evangelical Methodists of Wales—the blessings of that Protestant religion, and Protestant civilisation, which have born such wondrous fruits at home. Is it not as if Sodom and Gomorrah had sent their missionaries to convert Lot and Abraham from the error of their ways?

This is no exaggeration; this is no invention of a Popish calumniator; it is the plain naked truth, attested by the records of England's criminal courts, and the columns of the Protestant periodicals of the British Empire. It is the best commentary upon the blessings of Protestantism, or Denialism, that we know of. After 300 years of Protestantism, the

British Legislature is called upon to enact laws to prevent married mothers from murdering their children. We recommend this simple fact, and the following article from the *London Times*, to the consideration of the editor of the *Quebec Gazette*:—

"The foundation of human society, it is commonly felt, is laid in that deep and almost invincible instinct which leads the mother to watch over the life and wellbeing of her child. Except in those terrible cases where the social existence of the mother is at stake, and, after a frenzied struggle, the fate of the offspring is sealed ere it be born, the spectacle of a parent deliberately allowing, and even compassing, the death of the child, is more unnatural than suicide, more atrocious than murder, more hideous than sacrilege, and more monstrous than any other extravagance of crime. Yet the grand Jury at the Liverpool Assizes, presided over by the enlightened and dispassionate Member for South Lancashire, are unanimously of opinion that the interference of the Legislature is imperatively called on to arrest the frightful progress of this crime—to arrest it by preventing the pecuniary temptation afforded by Burial Clubs. As matters now stand, a parent may insure in one or several of these societies, and by a small weekly subscription secure the payment of several pounds in the event of a child's death, for the vain consolation of a handsome funeral. A payment may be secured far beyond the wants of the occasion, and, in order to procure a few pounds, that must soon be dissipated, as the wages of crime always are, there are found parents who will put a child into several Burial Clubs, carefully pay up for several weeks, and finish this horrible speculation by the murder of the unsuspecting child, and the mockery of a mournful ceremonial. This crime is said to be increasing. The Grand Jury has no doubt that the system of Burial Clubs operates as a direct incentive to murder, and that many of their fellow-beings are year by year hurried into eternity by those most closely united to them by the ties of nature and of blood, if not of affection, for the sake of a few pounds. Such is the state of things, such the tendency, such the new era opening to us in the middle of the nineteenth century, after generations of philanthropy, education, and reform." The worst scandals of barbarism are revived and surpassed by those of civilization. To the brutality of the savage is added the mercenary calculations of a civilized age. The homeless wanderer that deserts the child she can no longer feed or carry, the Spartan parent that sacrifices a maimed and therefore useless progeny, the pagan devotee that offers the blameless victim on the shrine of some hideous deity, and all other forms of infanticide, are surpassed in a new crime, which does all this for the sake of a little money, and the few momentary indulgences it may purchase. In a time of ease, fulness, and security, the worst horror of the besieged city is perpetrated, not to satisfy the ravenous appetite of a delirious mother, but, on a sober calculation, to buy a few days' holiday, a dress or two, and some superfluous comforts. Scores of such cases have been detected and punished; many more are suspected; they are pronounced frequent and increasing; and the Legislature is invoked to withdraw the irresistible pecuniary temptation.

"To stop the practice of Burial Clubs, or to put them under such limitations and rules as shall render the loss of a child no gain to the parent, is a practical measure, which goes to the root of the crime in its actual and developed form. To that there can be no objection, ignominious as it must be to the Senate of this great empire to recognise so hideous a crime, but in a subject tribe, but in its own manufacturing population at home. At the risk of publishing the scandal in the ears of all our enemies and calumniators, this must be done. As to the value of the other suggestion offered by the Grand Jury, there may be different opinions. For our own part, we cannot help fearing that, if Nature proves insufficient to keep the mother from murdering her child, education can do little more. This is not an offence against knowledge, but against instinct, and the first laws of our physical and moral being. Can a mother forget her sucking child? Can she learn more than Nature teaches her? Can she acquire at school a feeling which maternity has failed to generate?"

"But, while the Grand Jury of Liverpool are quietly suggesting legislative remedies, another still more serious comment will suggest itself to many a reflective mind. Such a crime is more than a crime; it is a prodigy—a portent—and has its horrid significance. A deed scarcely more hideous, and substantially the same, but with more temptation, marked the character of an awful siege, and the doom of a protected but then abandoned people. When the mother had forgotten her sucking child, then Heaven forgot its chosen race, and surrendered it to the fury of the nations.—The people whose land was thus first defiled, and then profaned, had left their deliverer and the guide of their youth. The general wreck of natural feeling was consummated and represented in one hideous act. But, when we find among ourselves, not one act alone, but a prevailing and still increasing practice of the character thus denounced, ought we not to draw the most fearful surmises as to the general depravation of domestic feeling? Here are children born, nursed, nonished, fed, clothed, taught to meet the mother's smile, to lip the mother's name, to stand upright, and make their first essays in the world, where they might act so great a part. This, the work of years and of such cost and trouble, is all done, as it seems, with no more heart than a woman would plant a row of cabbages, or let a hen hatch a nestful of eggs. It is simply a crop to be planted, watered, and then gathered in,—a useful animal to be bred, and converted into money in due time—a speculation to be wound up at the earliest opportunity. With what amount of heart are families generally reared? What is the inducement? Whose weal, and what weal, is the object of the long toils and sacrifices? When is it a work of nature, and when a mere pecuniary speculation? When for the child, and when for the parents? Certainly it is one of the scandals of civilization that it sacrifices nature to schemes of ambition and aggrandizement, in which the more substantial interests, because the more vital and eternal, are sacrificed.—Is there not some analogy in these sacrifices, to the portentous deeds now so rife, we are told, in the depraved population of the manufacturing districts?—A reflection so painful, so delicate, and yet so suggestive, we gladly leave in the hands of our readers, with no further remark than that there does seem something hideously significant in so extensive and so increasing a horror."

* The Times might well have added, as the explanation of the phenomenon—and after three centuries of Protestantism!