

THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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WEDNESDAY,.....JUNE 17, 1891

FANATICISM.

The death of Sir John A. Macdonald has caused the dissolution of the Ministry of which he was the premier. The choice of his successor has given rise to a circumstance that will cause every true Canadian to hang his head in shame. Sir John Thompson, Minister of Justice, is intellectually head and shoulders above any man now in the Dominion Parliament. His name was upon every lip as the one man pre-eminently qualified to take the place of the lamented statesman now no longer with us. On all sides it is admitted that Sir John Thompson is gifted with extraordinary ability. He is learned in every branch of the law, eloquent and logical, and beyond all his private life is that of a model Christian gentleman. With all these qualifications and the undoubted confidence of the late chief, it would have been supposed that he was, of all men, the most acceptable for the premiership. Such a thing, however, could not be permitted it appears. The Reverend Doctor Douglas, a Methodist divine, speaking at a grand convention of that body, denounced Sir John Thompson, not because he is not in every way fit to fill the position, but because in the exercise of his own free will and actuated by the dictates of his conscience he saw fit some years ago to forsake Methodism and become a member of the Catholic Church. The demonstration was received, we are informed, with the most enthusiastic applause from the Reverend Brothers of the Reverend Doctor, the gentlemen who prate about liberty of conscience. Doctor Douglas is a Grit in politics, and the Grit free trade Evangelical Daily Witness endorses his sentiments in a leading article, although in another column of the same paper we find the quotation: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for conscience sake." We have said the Doctor is a Grit, but we do not for a moment pretend that his utterances do not find an echo in the breast of many Tories in the land. The bigotry of the Douglasses of all political stripes in Canada is sufficiently strong to prevent our Dominion from having the services of the most able, pure and patriotic statesman at the head of affairs because he is a Catholic. It is time the lodges where the watch-word of the brethren is "civil and religious liberty" met and condemned the doctor and his associates, otherwise let them for ever hold their peace and proclaim that their motto is "No Catholics need apply."

The Catholicity of Sir John Thompson does not appear to have affected the mind of His Excellency the Governor-General, who tendered him the offer of the prime ministership. We are informed that the Minister of Justice, no doubt, apprehending the difficulties that stood in his way, declined the task of forming an administration, and that the Hon. J. J. C. Abbott, a member of the late Government without portfolio, has undertaken the charge. As we go to press the opinion that the personnel of the old Government will not undergo many changes until the close of the present session of Parliament. No doubt when that time arrives there will be a complete remodelling of the Cabinet. It is well known that it was the intention of the late Sir John A. Macdonald, had he lived until the prorogation, to have disposed of many of his ministers and infused new blood into the Cabinet. Our views with regard to the representation in which we are most directly interested are well known, and at the proper time we shall press these views with energy.

The position of Catholics on this continent leaves much to be desired. Mr. Daniel Dougherty, in the great speech delivered by him at the Catholic Congress, pointed out that not a single Irish Catholic holds the position of Senator in the neighboring republic. The Irish Canadian only a few weeks ago called attention to the fact that the so-called Liberal party had not put one Irish Catholic in nomination for the House of Commons in the whole Province of Ontario at the last general election. We have, time and again, shown that since

Confederation no Irish Catholic from the Province of Quebec has had a seat in any Cabinet at Ottawa. It is time that an effort was made to get partial justice. We will take an early opportunity of pointing out some of the grave injustices that have been perpetrated upon our people. Nor shall we forget on every appropriate occasion to let Mr. Premier Mercier know that his promises to Irish Catholics in the Province of Quebec are still awaiting fulfillment.

CABINET RECONSTRUCTION.

The fear, often expressed, that when Sir John Macdonald would pass away the elements of discord which he alone was capable of holding in check broke loose in the Conservative party, and threaten with destruction the work which his genius and life-long labor accomplished.

When Sir John was no more, and the necessity for choosing a leader of the government to take his place arose, the whole country turned instinctively towards Sir John Thompson as the one man who, by his ability, character, attainments and experience, was the most eminently fitted to assume the leadership of the government and of the Conservative party. All admitted Sir Hector Langevin's claims, on account of his seniority in the cabinet and his long occupancy of the position of Sir John Macdonald's first lieutenant. But it was felt that, until the Tarte charges were disposed of, it would be impossible to place Sir Hector at the head of affairs. Sir Charles Tupper was mentioned, but he was not immediately available. Therefore, by common consent, Sir John Thompson was regarded as the coming man. Everybody expected that he would be sent for by the Governor-General, and his colleagues, as well as the party, were prepared to accept his leadership. But just as there was every appearance of by the crisis being tided over in a way which everybody regarded as the best, the demon of religious fanaticism inspired the Rev. Dr. Douglas to sound a blast on the bugle-horn of intolerance and set all the Protestant drums in the country beating the devil's tattoo. Addressing the Niagara conference of the Methodist Church, Dr. Douglas said that he "must protest as well as pray against the appointment of Sir John Thompson to the Premiership, for the reason that Sir John had abandoned the Methodist Church and become a Roman Catholic."

This cry was taken up all along the line, and, although the wiser and more tolerant among Conservatives deprecated it and pointed out that a man's religious views had nothing to do with matters political, the storm of sectarian bigotry was too strong for them to withstand, and Sir John Thompson had to give way and allow an elderly gentleman in the Senate, the color of whose orange coat suited the taste of the bigots, to succeed to the Premiership, a place for which even the Tory Protestant Montreal Star declares him utterly unfitted. But he Mr. Abbott's qualifications whatever they may, for on them we do not at present feel ourselves called upon to pronounce, the spectacle which Catholics have to contemplate is one of profound humiliation. It is that the ablest man in the Conservative party, a man against whose public or private character the tongue of scandal has never dared to wag, a man upon whom a breath of suspicion has never blown, is set aside for no reason in the world save that he is a Catholic.

Those who may seek consolation in the reflection that he was set aside in order that the fanatical element in the Conservative party should not revolt and imperil the stability of the new ministry, must be prepared to accept the tune by which he was drummed out of the Premiership in all its intirety, and march out the tail of the procession, with Dr. Douglas as bugleman and the band playing "Croppies lie down."

The St. John's N. B. Gazette, a Conservative organ, puts the case more mildly, but with a covert sneer which betrays the spirit which inspired it. That paper says:—

"If Sir Hector Langevin had been in a position to take the leadership no one would have objected to him as a 'Roman Catholic,' because he was always of that faith, as were his fathers before him. But, unfortunately for Sir John Thompson, he was born a Methodist and changed his religious views after he reached maturity. A man has a right to leave the Methodist Church and become a Roman Catholic, but he must reckon on the consequences of his own act, and if his change of faith stands in the way of his political advancement he may put it down as one of the gods of his crown of martyrdom."

And so it has come to this, that a man must expect to suffer political martyrdom at the hands of the Conservative party for the crime of being a Catholic. Looking back at the history of this country and of the Conservative party we see the Catholics of Canada on many occasions coming to the rescue of Conservative leaders. They never objected to Sir John Macdonald or refused him their support because he was, as they well know, a Protestant and an Orangeman. They never allowed their religious convictions to stand between them and

their allegiance to their political leader. But now they find that when a Catholic, by the strength of his genius, the brilliancy of his attainments, his unblemished record, rises to the foremost position, and is entitled thereby and with common consent to succeed Sir John Macdonald, the uncompromising fanatic refuse to accept him, and prefer that the party should be led by anybody rather than by a Catholic.

It is plain from this that the situation has radically changed since the wise head and strong hand of the old chieftain have been removed. If a Catholic is not fit to lead, can Catholics be expected to serve? May not the same spirit which caused the exclusion of Sir John Thompson also, emboldened by its success in bringing down the highest game, demand and obtain the exclusion of Catholics all the way down from the front to the rear rank of political preferment?

It is claimed, however, that the Abbott ministry is but a makeshift, a mere temporary arrangement to get over the session with as little friction as possible. We hope it may be so. We hope that a wiser, more tolerant, more common sense view will obtain in the Conservative party. The way before it is full of dangers. Great questions of national magnitude are pressing for solution, and no ministry can dream of governing that country successfully which starts out on its career under the malign influence of the spirit of religious intolerance.

But, whilst we feel thus compelled to sharply rebuke those who have done this great wrong, the fact that Sir John Thompson has consented to remain in the cabinet and act in his old capacity in the House of Commons, leads us to hope that wiser counsels will prevail, and that we may yet be able to congratulate the Conservative party on having risen superior to that spirit. Sir John Thompson, we believe, may be trusted to act sagaciously and in the best interests of the country. In doing so he will have the hearty support of those who admire and trust him. Meantime, however, it cannot be denied or concealed that a most painful and damaging impression has been taken hold of the public mind, and only the clearest proofs of good faith will remove from the Abbott ministry the imputation which now rests upon it.

A CONSTITUTIONAL VIEW.

Canadians are a practical people who, by the circumstances of their lives and the demands which their position on the surface of the earth constantly make upon them, have acquired habits of prudence, forethought and provision. These habits are natural to all northern races and people who inhabit northern countries. On account of them Canadians have been dubbed "slow," whereas they were only properly cautious. Attention is here drawn to these natural characteristics, in order to impress upon our English brethren and American neighbors the desirability of withholding hasty opinions and pronouncing immature judgments on the present political situation in Canada. We are not unaccustomed in this country to study the higher politics, for we are an educated people, slow, perhaps, to arrive at conclusions, but deeply impressed with the necessity of right action. Among those who compose the meager order of politicians, so-called, the idea that "politics is a dirty business" undoubtedly prevails, but there is a vast body of solid thinking men, who when the necessity demands, gives momentum to popular opinion in the right direction. Above all things it must be borne in mind that this body of men instinctively follows British precedent when a political crisis like the present comes upon them. Mr. Villmain, one of the most keen observers of the workings of British institutions, says that great orators, able and eloquent politicians, may disappear from the arena of public life, but in every instance they represent some great question usefully solved, or some great problem left for the future. He who was most eminent by his gifts and his long association with the affairs of the country may pass away, or still living, cease to occupy a foremost position, as was the case with Sir Robert Peel and Earl Grey, yet having directed decisive action, served most efficaciously some great public interest. Their work was done, and those associated with them, or who may come after them, may be trusted to give effect to the popular will as they did. But it should be further observed that this influence in the direction of affairs cannot be obtained but by qualities still higher than talent. It can only be obtained by that character and ascendancy which makes the man respectable to himself and others, and by the strength of the conviction he inspires. But if this conviction and the end which he seeks touches immediately the gravest questions of the future of a people, as now in this Dominion, far-seeing moderation can alone make for him a path to success. Our constitution was as closely modelled on that of England as the circumstances of a new country and the exigencies of the federal principle would allow. Sir John Macdonald at first named the federation "The Kingdom of Canada," but Imperial statesmen changed it to "Dominion of Canada."

But they neglected to alter "House of Commons" in the Act of Confederation. Hence the anomaly of a Commons in a parliamentary system where there are no Lords. But, apart from this historical reminiscence, the immediate question as to who shall be premier will be decided here as in England. Practically, as Mr. Escott has shown, in his "England," the constituencies decide who the premier shall be, and the premier selects his colleagues in accordance with the political exigencies of the time. In this country the Governor-General does not exercise the same power in choosing a premier as the sovereign of England does under like conditions. The one is transient and not intimately associated with the people, while the other is the permanent head of the greatest social as well as political institutions in the world. These considerations should be kept in view by all people just now, whilst all will rest perfectly satisfied that the Governor-General will act strictly within the constitution, and, whatever may be the passing difficulties, the will of the people must in the end prevail.

AN OLD FOE IN A NEW FORM.

Since the anti-Canadian "fakism" of the irresponsible telegraph reporter has been threatened and even brought to the bar of justice, another of his class seems to have increased in numbers and mendacious audacity. This journalistic parasite spreads his false statements through the columns of the so-called "magazines" which for divers trade purposes are published in the United States. We have before this alluded to the readiness with which any matter detrimental to Canada gains admission to American publications, but when we see shallow articles not only belittling this country but misleading and false in statement, there can be but one conclusion arrived at, and that is, their attacks on our national integrity must be prompted and probably paid for by an organized combination. That such a conspiracy exists was proved during the late general election. The snake perhaps has only been scotched and not killed. We are led to make these remarks by the receipt of a circular from an Eastern State publication, heralding a "most important article" on annexation. But we cannot but think that it is a little noteworthy that an American publication should print as authoritative and worthy of consideration as an exposition of Canadian sentiments the theories of a juvenile immigrant to our shores who knows no more of the affairs of this country than such information he has gained during a brief association in subordinate positions upon the press. We beg to inform the magazine in question that the circular in advance it favors us with cannot be published in our columns, and that the writer knows practically nothing about Canada or the sentiments of her people, and has no more right to speak for her than any immigrant who landed at Castle Garden two years ago has to dogmatize on the position of the United States or presume to forecast the future of that country.

Since the above was penned the New York Sun, a paper which uniformly exhibits hostility to Canada, has taken notice of some recent statements of Mr. R. W. Phipps in the columns of that tainted source of editorial comment and alleged political "news," the Toronto Globe. To Canadian readers the statements of Mr. Phipps are well understood and appraised at their proper value. The majority of our people know how, for years past, he has boxed his compass whenever he has thought that his interests would be best served by trimming his sail to the fluctuating wind of profitable politics. For a time it was thought that Mr. Phipps had reached his proper level and in a harmless way was going to serve his province, for a consideration. His pamphlet containing certain rudimentary principles of forestry was calculated to do some good by drawing the attention of our agriculturists to one of the numerous subjects they so persistently neglect to the great detriment of the country generally as well as of their own interests. But when Mr. Phipps ceases to "babble o' green fields" it is evident he may become mischievous. It is true that he has only rehearsed some of the literature published by the opposition during the recent campaign. But this is enough for the Sun which immediately proceeds solemnly to comment on the articles in question with all possible gravity. Of course, in the opinion of the Sun, quoting Mr. Phipps as its authority, Canada is in a deplorable condition, falling backward every day. Mr. Phipps, who was "many years ago" a farmer, has proclaimed it. Therefore it must be true. Proof of the truth of Mr. Mowat's statements, that the Americans are a hostile people, can readily be found in the constant and eager publication in their papers of everything calculated to belittle and injure Canada; while the numerous writings and speeches on the other side of the question, by responsible and representative men, are systematically ignored. But there is one consolation, Canada will not be injured by this narrow-minded and truthless policy. The truth cannot be hidden and is all powerful.

THE DEPOPULATION OF IRELAND.

Balfourism is succeeding in pacifying Ireland by depopulating it. The Chief Secretary's plan of "resolute government" for twenty years" will doubtless achieve its purpose by compelling every man who values personal liberty to leave a country where justice and mercy are withheld from all who will not go on their knees and accept the yoke of coercion.

Thus the Irish question is setting itself after a fashion, as may be seen by the return of the census taken a few weeks ago. At the rate of decrease of population it shows less than ninety years will see the utter extirpation of the Irish race from Irish soil.

The figures just published give a total population in Ireland of 4,706,162, against a total of 5,159,839 in 1881. A loss of 453,677 in ten years. Thus we find the number of inhabitants in Ireland is about the same as it was a century ago, while the loss in the last fifty years has been 3,400,435.

These figures tell a woeful tale, but on the whole it may be said that of the millions who have left Ireland and found homes in America and Australia their descendants are better off to-day than they would have been had their parents and forefathers remained in Ireland.

This, however, is no excuse for British misrule, nor for the immeasurable suffering of the people driven from their native land to seek homes in foreign countries. A reckoning will be had for all that some day. Meantime the Irish race, scattered far and wide over the earth, is everywhere proving itself a great power in the advancement of religion and civilization. South America is alive with men of Irish blood who have risen to the highest positions in every walk of life. Wherever they settle they succeed, and by their natural genius take a leading part in the control of affairs. Unfortunately but few have come to Canada during recent years. They prefer to settle in countries where liberty under a national government is established. Quite naturally they look with disfavor on a colony, and the overflowing fervor of Canadian loyalty finds no response in the heart of the Irish emigrant.

Appreciating the qualities of the Irish race, officials high in the councils of the Czar sought to attract Irish emigration towards Russia, but autocratic government had no charms for the Exiles of Erin. They had had enough of that sort of thing from Dublin Castle and their landlords, not to desire its renewal under Russian auspices. So the attempt failed.

Towards the United States, however, the great flood of Irish emigration continues to pour. There the Irish people were sure of a welcome and there they are an acknowledged power in the State.

It is to be hoped that the last of the squabbling over the seals in Behring's Sea has been heard. The proclamation issued by Sir Julian Pauncefote and Mr. Wharton, the British and American plenipotentiaries, announces the conclusion of an agreement on the subject and joint efforts will be made to stop poaching.

The fact that Protestants in Ontario are commencing to take advantage of Mr. Mowat's statement, that they can have separate schools is not a little significant. The Anglican Synod has almost carried a resolution in favor of the adoption of the system. The failure of purely secular education is becoming more and more apparent. The moral of the agitation is clear enough.

At the convocation of the University of Ottawa held on Tuesday, the 16th instant, His Grace Archbishop Duhamel, Chancellor and the Senate of the Institution, conferred upon Mr. J. J. Curran, Q.C., M.P., the degree of LL.D., *honoris causa*. Mr. Curran is one of the old students of the college, having left the Institution in 1850. He graduated in law at McGill University (B.C.L.) in 1862 and in 1882 was made an LL.D. of Manhattan College, New York, the degrees being conferred by the late Cardinal McClosky. Mr. Curran's friends throughout the Dominion will be glad to learn that new honors have been conferred upon him.

The Canadian Freeman says, editorially that "In Catholic Dublin there never is a question as to a man's religion. There has been fifteen Protestant Mayors in the last forty years, and of \$42,000 paid in salaries, Protestants receive \$20,000. In Catholic Limerick there have been thirteen Protestant Mayors in the last fifty years. In Catholic Waterford there have been twelve Protestant Mayors since 1845. Throughout the whole Catholic portion of Ireland the same liberal spirit is displayed. Any person who reads the past or present history of Ireland must come to the conclusion that there is not much necessity for religious guarantees to the 'minority.'"

To a Canadian editor, this is no doubt a remarkable exhibit. But the conditions are different. Ireland, happily for herself, does not witness the lamentable

exhibition seen in Canada of an eternal creed, and ancient nationality being eternately made, according to momentary value, marketable commodities and many dice in the box of the political gamester. In the old land it is all nationality. Here alas! we know too well what the procedure is.

Mr. Mercier's vanity seems to be leading him into all sorts of difficulties. Thus we read in the New York Catholic Review the following pungent criticism:

The Premier of Quebec must have curious ideas of international courtesy when he permits himself to interfere in the affairs of the Church in the United States as freely as if he were a member of the American hierarchy. He is reported as having said to the Pope at a recent audience: "When I assisted at the Baltimore Centenary, I felt an acute regret on finding that there were no Canadians among the American Catholics, notwithstanding that there are more than a million Canadians in the United States. As the Diocese of Ogdensburg is about to become vacant, I shall pray the Holy See to nominate a Canadian to the vacancy." In an ordinary person such a remark would be an impertinence; from Mr. Mercier it is significant of the general feeling in Quebec that a member of the French-Canadian race should find a place in the American episcopate. To this no one would object if such a candidate came to the people in the ordinary way; but to have a priest selected by the politicians of Quebec and the ecclesiastical powers of the same province; selected primarily because of his blood, and placed in a See on the Canadian borders are circumstances which the ordinary American looks upon with suspicion and contempt. An American prelate of Canadian extraction would be welcome, but for the American side of the Canadian border he would be as much out of place as a British fort.

But Mr. Mercier meets with even a more stinging rebuke from Archbishop Ireland. There has been for some time in the U.S.A. a discussion on "national churches, and it appears that the Quebec Premier has been meddling in the matter, and receives the following excommunication from the Archbishop:—

"So long as the Church in America is fit only to be portioned off to the care of foreign countries, why should not any foreigner, however small he be, ask for a piece? Hence we find Mr. Mercier, the Minister of the Province of Quebec, a mere colony of England, who happened to meet in Rome Herr Cahensley, running to the Vatican and praying, in the name of his little constituency, that a Canadian bishop be named for the see of Ogdensburg, in the State of New York. Mr. Mercier, we must say, is modest. He should, when once started, have aimed at higher game, and asked that the see of Boston or New York be handed over to his patronage."

The following letter, written by the late Premier with reference to Irish Catholic representation in the Senate, will be read with special interest at the present time.

Toronto, May 1, 70,

MY DEAR JOHNSTON,
When Geo. Brown and I contested in order to carry Confederation, it was agreed that of the twenty-four Senators to be selected for Ontario, twelve should be chosen by him and twelve by me from the old Legislative Councilors, and that when vacancies occurred by death or resignation, they should be filled up from the old Legislative Council until the list was exhausted. This was faithfully carried out by the late Government. There was one apparent exception, but it worked no injury to the expectant Legislative Councilors. This was in the appointment of Frank Smith as a Senator. The Irish Catholics naturally complained that there was not a single Catholic senator from Ontario. There was no vacancy at the time, so I created one for the express purpose of appointing a Catholic, by making Senator McCrea a judge. Now as this vacancy would not have been made except for this purpose, the two remaining ex-councilors, Messrs. Bull and Bennett, had no right to complain. When the Conservatives are in power again they must appoint those two gentlemen as vacancies naturally occur. Although Bennett is a Grit, Mackenzie has paid no attention to this agreement and appointed G. Brown himself to the Senate in violation of it.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN A. MACDONALD.

Irish Famine Fund.

The Hon. Senator Morphy, treasurer to the above fund, remitted by last mail to the Most Rev. John McEvilly, D.D., Archbishop of Tuam, the balance on hand of the subscriptions to the Irish Famine Fund, suggested in these columns some months ago, which resulted in sending home in January last \$218 and on the 18th inst. \$123.66—in all \$341.66.

The subscribers to this last remittance were:—

"Astoria" (anon.).....\$4.00
J. Johns.....2.00
John St ong, Matsqui, B.C.....1.00
Patrick Reynolds.....5.00

Sundries.....35
\$123.66

C. M. B. A. Excursion.

St. Ann's Branch, No. 41, C.M.B.A., in ten holding an excursion to Kingston on July 28th, by the C.P.R., to attend the Irish National reunion. It is expected that all Branches and St. Ann's Young Men's Society of this city will attend in a body.

There is only a single Catholic church in Copenhagen. During Lent, this year, it could not contain the crowds who wished to attend the Lenten sermons. The Danish Catholics have resolved to build a second church in the capital, a sign of progress in what was lately an entirely Protestant city. The new church will be dedicated to Our Blessed Lady.