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We have much pleasure in laying before our readers a series of very interesting letters, written by a friend of ours, who visited Belgium and France last winter:—

Paris, 10th March, 1858.

My last letter, dated 25th ult., closed with a short account of my interview with the Rev. M. Picard, of Montreal, at the delightful country seat, near Paris, of the Sulpicians. On taking leave of Mr. P., he advised me to go and see the relics of the martyrs above all things; so I went one afternoon to the *Missions Etrangères*. Applying at the Concierge, I was handed into a garden, where a Priest met me; and on my expressing a desire to see "les reliques des Martyrs," he kindly led me into the room where they are carefully preserved; it was a melancholy spectacle: there were pieces of chain, rope, &c., with which they were tied, and instruments of torture; their clothing, linen, &c., were stained with their blood. Several caskets contained the skulls and bones of those who remain were saved, and sent home to France. On the walls hung pictures, representing the mode of death of many. The Priest explained many circumstances relative to the sufferings of each martyr: it was a melancholy recital. Surely no other men could suffer more than those martyrs of India and China. Adjourning to another apartment, we entered into a conversation about Canada; and he was delighted to hear of our advancement there in everything.

Now, as I have my journal before me, I think I will give you a description of the church of St. Sulpice, as I am sure you will feel as much interest in it as I did. It being the head of our Montreal establishment, we must regard it, I may say, as our *Alma Mater*; and for this reason I visited it several times, and in my notes of it, have gone more into details than usual. Now, let us begin with the Place St. Sulpice, on which it presents its noble front. It is about the size of our Place D'Armes, and is planted with trees. In the centre is a large and magnificent fountain, the top of which is supported by Corinthian pilasters, and between which are niches, containing statues, in sitting postures, of Fenelon, Bossuet, Massillon and Flechier—four men of whom France may be proud; indeed I should rather have said, the world; for they have elevated the whole human family. Large vases and lions in stone grace the corners, and throw jets of water into the basins beneath. On one side of the "Place" is the *Mairie* of the 11th arrondissement; on another the "Séminaire," houses form the third, and the church the fourth. The exterior of the church is imposing; it has two towers, a portico of double rows of doric columns, and above this a gallery and colonnade of Ionic. On entering the interior the very first thing that struck me was the holy water fonts; they are two immense and beautiful shells, measuring very nearly, if not fully, three feet in diameter. Statues of *Faith, Hope and Charity* adorn the Pulpit, which is curiously supported by the stars leading up to it. The organ is richly carved and ornamented with figures in wood, performing on musical instruments, King David and harp forming the centre. There is a singular (at least to me) *meridian line* of brass inlaid in the stone floor, running across the transepts; and for want of sufficient horizontal space, it is continued up a marble obelisk in one of the transepts. On this line the hour is indicated by a ray of light passing through a hole in one of the windows, throwing a spot on the floor; when this spot is divided by the brass line, the sun is in the *meridian*. The old sexton (a gorgeous old chap, dressed in purple, knee-breeches, and cocked hat) was kind enough to explain this to me, and I went up next day a little before noon, and tested it; it is a little strange, but of course very simple. I copied this inscription from the obelisk into my memorandum book, I thought it so appropriate—"C'est ainsi Seigneur que vous avez donné des bornes à nos jours, et toute notre vie est un rien à vos yeux." The church is cruciform, with aisles running all round, and, what is not usual, the High Altar is placed near the entrance of the choir, the chorists and their accompanying organ being behind it.—There are 21 chapels, one facing each arch of the aisles; all filled with admirable frescoes, and many very superior paintings. In one of the chapels, I saw a monument to Laugnet de Gergy; the Prelate is kneeling, and an angel chases death from his side. In another there is a beautiful (new, I think) marble statue, or monument, of St. Vincent de Paul; he is in a sitting position; a little boy on his right gazes wistfully up in his benevolent face, while he is looking down on an infant which is lying in his arms. It is a very pretty group; by whom executed I don't know. The Lady Chapel is very richly adorned: it has a double dome, the lower one having an open top, through which, at some distance above, you see the "Ascension" painted in fresco on the upper. Behind the altar is a deep recess, in which there is a statue of the Virgin and Child,

standing on a globe which rests in clouds; light is admitted from above, (the window is not seen) and the effect falling on the figures, is very pleasing. On the columns of the choir there are large statues of the Apostles and others, resting on brackets. It has a fine range of clerestory windows, but not trifomed. There are no doubt many churches in Paris which surpass St. Sulpice; but some way I like it very much, and frequently ran in if I was any where near it. As I am on the subject, I must tell you of St. Eustache. It is a grand old church; large, very lofty, double aisles, and 25 chapels; all the fronts of which are sumptuously painted in the Byzantine style, and their interiors in frescoes of great merit.—My landlady recommended me to go there to hear good music; so I attended Mass last Sunday; and certainly I was not disappointed.—Things are very different here from what we are accustomed to. The organ and musicians are below in the choir, and the effect, I think, is very much heightened in this way. I noticed several Priests among the instrumental performers; one in particular, a small man, playing an immense double bass with his whole heart and soul. The "Gloria" was executed magnificently, and kept the cold thrills running up and down my spine the whole time. But this was nothing to a duett which was sung at the Elevation! Oh it was the sweetest thing I ever heard. I cannot tell you how I was affected by it; every nerve in my brain seemed to quiver with ecstasy; I was completely lifted out of the world, as it were, for the time. There must be something in music which we do not comprehend; surely it will be one of the pleasures of the next world! I saw by one of the papers that Mgr. (Cardinal) Marlot, Archeveque de Paris, would preach in St. Gervais church that afternoon; so I went. He is a mild looking man, with a good firm head, as if he had a good share of energy and perseverance.—After the sermon there was *le salut salonnal du St. Sacrement*, with a grand procession round the aisles; a fine sight and very impressive. The Vesper chanting here was excellent.

Orsini and Pieri have been executed, poor unfortunate madmen, they deserved their fate.—The action of England in this matter is looked for with much interest. I observed with great pleasure a paragraph in a Paris paper, that the Emperor had sent medals to James Doyle and Robert Byrne of Kingstown, Ireland, for rendering noble assistance to some French vessels in distress.

We saw the Emperor last week; he was in plain clothes, walking in the Tuileries Gardens with some large stout man, quite unattended.—He is low-sized; I think under my height, but broad and muscular looking. He has a game walk, and shows the man of energy even in his step.

Sunday last, we spent the whole day at Versailles. It certainly is the most delightful place that can be imagined. I had not the slightest idea that such perfection could exist in this world; nor need you be alarmed; for I am not going to attempt any description. You have all read of its Palaces, Gardens, Fountains, Jets, Déau, Statues, and Paintings; but they must be seen to comprehend their beauty, number, or extent. I will, however, just mention one thing which I found very interesting. In the Orangery there are a great number of Orange and Pomegranate trees; one of the former is 437 years of age! having been planted in 1421, by Leonora of Castille, Queen of Charles, King of Navarre. It is still in a flourishing condition; and the gardener assured me it bears fruit in abundance.—I could not but think, as I gazed at its venerable branches, of the many mighty events that have convulsed the world since it threw out its first green leaf; and what a host of kings, queens and courtiers have partaken of its delicious fruit, whose names are famous in history as actors in these very events! There is food for months of reflection in that old Orange tree.

Paris, March 25th, 1858.

Last Saturday, I had another great treat at St. Eustache. I heard there was to be a *Grand Messe de Musique* there. It was especially got up for the poor of the Parish—a franc admission. The crowd was very great; but I got a good seat. Mass was sung by Monseigneur Marlot, Archbishop of Paris, assisted by the whole host of Bishops and Priests; besides the usual singers and musicians in the choir. There was a stage at the end of the nave, against the principal entrance, on which there was a powerful and superb orchestra, composed of *Professors and Artistes* of Paris, who had volunteered their services (Mad. Grisi among others.) Above them is the grand organ; one of, if not, the best in Paris; also a smaller organ in the choir. When in one of the transepts was stationed the Band of the *Garde Impériale*; the men, fully 1000, being ranged two deep, completely round the nave; while the sappers and miners formed a crescent from each side of the altar down the choir. You

can imagine what a *coup-d'œil* was presented.—The men with bear-skin caps, blue coats, white breast-pieces, red pants, white gaiters, &c., with the sappers in their great beards and immense axes, and white aprons, on each side of the choir, the Archbishop and his attendants in the centre, sumptuously arrayed. It was a grand sight. I cannot attempt to describe to you the music;—suffice it to say that it far surpassed anything I ever heard before. The Band of the *Garde* would make Dodsworth "pale and tremble;" and the orchestra!—fancy a solo in such a noble lofty building, by Mad. Grisi! There was a symphony on the organ, which lifted me clean out of myself; you can have no idea of it. It was not a "crashing" affair, as we too often hear, but a low, sweet, feeling melody or hymn—the performer changing the key frequently; then dropping into the *Minors*, and again wandering off in variations the most intricate; yet all the while you could detect the *theme* trickling along underneath like the murmur of some forest stream, which hops into a subterranean channel every now and then, but only to dash out again wilder and more beautiful than ever. Oh! it was exquisite. The choir of musicians of this church is celebrated; I wrote to you before of them; they surpassed themselves on this occasion. I noticed my friend, the little stout priest, at his bass viol again, more excited and redder in the face than ever; you could see that his very soul was in it. At the Elevation, during which a hymn was sung, the troops presented arms, and dropped on one knee, holding their pieces as in the salute; then rising, they recoiled and shouldered again. It was the most impressive sight I ever witnessed, and the most cold and unbelieving sinner in the world could not but have felt touched, to see those brave heroes (nearly every man has a medal) prostrate themselves in the presence of the Almighty.—You could have heard a pin drop, such was the silence that prevailed.

Next day, I went out to the Steeple Chases *a la marches*, a village some miles from Paris, by Rail, as far as Ville D'Avray. On the French Railways they have, for pleasure trips, a car which is *two stories*—the upper one being open; it is a pleasant way of travelling, as you see the country better. I, of course, went aloft, and fell in with a couple of nice fellows, who on finding I was a stranger, paid me the greatest attention in pointing out interesting places as we passed, &c. Arriving at Ville D'Avray, we found that the Course was still half-an-hour's ride from us; and every old remise, volante, fiacre, omnibus, and diligence in the place, rubbed up and put into requisition for the occasion; they were swarmed in an instant out by making a rush, I got a seat in the "diligence," the top being filled, or I should have got up as usual; the inside was a perfect jam, and I am sure there was not less than forty in the vehicle; four horses and a jolly crew! away we went merrily, till we came to a hill, the load was too heavy, and we stuck; the Crowd yelled—"Ho! Cochee, en avant!" Cochee whipped accordingly; the horses plunged; something snapped, and we commenced retreating: the pin connecting the pole to the coach had broken, and the horses were free. It was such a hill as Beaver Hall, with a turn in it. On we went, down, down, faster and faster, a crowd watching us, till coming to the turn; we banged through a fence into a garden, where its further progress was arrested to our great joy. Now, during all this time no one attempted to jump out, but remained singing and laughing, as if it was great fun. I was so amused myself that I was in a roar the whole time; truly those Frenchmen are jolly fellows, even under difficulties.—Well, we all turned out, pulled the old "diligence" on the road, tied it up with a rope, and got under weight again. There were great numbers at the races; the sport was good, the running excellent, and the leaps taken well, without any baulking, or botching, excepting two falls; but this was nothing, as there were a great number of leaps, and some of them stiff enough, including a stream 11 feet wide, with a low fence on one side; it was a real jump; yet only one missed it, and he only got a knock on the head, and a good ducking. I was quite surprised at the number of ladies who were there. Spring patterns and fashions are just out, and they look splendid; you have no idea how they *combine colors* here. Hoops and little bonnets are going out at last. I saw a good many English ladies there wearing the "bad-moral" hat, which you know are all the rage now in England—the pun on the name is not a bad one.

I have seen the Emperor and Empress frequently since my last; she improves each time I see her; and he is decidedly a better looking man than I expected to find. I saw him lately with his hat off, as he acknowledged a shout of "Vive l'Empereur," while coming out of the Palace gates; he has a noble forehead indeed. This puts me in mind of a late article in the *Times*, to the effect that the Emperor never goes out now without an armed escort. Now

this is a gross falsehood, as I myself can testify, for I have seen him several times, both walking and driving, and have never yet seen him accompanied by one solitary armed man, much less an escort, and, when not with the Empress, I have always seen him attended by only one gentleman, who sits beside him. This paper also says that the Police here violate the privacy of every family. I have spoken to several on the subject, and they laugh at the idea. Now this is unworthy of the *Times*, and I really cannot see its motive in descending to these *dodges*. You may remember that some time ago it was generally rumored that the Emperor was lying by inches of some horrible malady; again that he was affected in his mind; and at another time that the Imperial Prince was stone blind. Now you may just put down all these reports as bosh! Really one does not know what to believe now-a-days.

REV. DR. CAHILL

ON THE RELIGION OF ENGLAND.

(From the Dublin Catholic Telegraph.)

In studying the character of the English people, drawing just inferences from the experience of residing amongst them, and making a careful examination, as far as we can, of their public and private motives in reference to matters of Religion, the impartial witness must own that the general population are seriously impressed with a deep sense of Christian principles. No doubt the country is divided into what may be termed numberless forms of belief; and they are careless in a remarkable degree about moral proprieties in practice. But on the subject of a Christian faith of some kind; and on the advantages of having their National gospel preached and propagated, there are evidences to be found throughout their entire history, which establish beyond all doubt their inextinguishable belief in the New Law. Besides this palpable public feeling, the entire machinery of the State seems as if constructed to aid the practical development of the general religious sentiment. The system of Education, the learning of the Professors, the Government patronage, and the vast National pecuniary resources, all would seem converging to one common centre of Gospel perfection.

The schoolmaster induces or compels his children pupils to commit to memory the Epistles of Saint Paul: the schoolmistress teaches the Apocalypse to her classes not yet in their teens: the grammar schools make the gospels in Greek and Latin part of the classical course: the village Curate places the New Testament in the hands of his congregation, and he attends monthly meetings with his Clerical brethren, urging the necessity of interweaving the truths of this book of revelation through all the duties of life. The Navy orders this book to be kept under the head of the sailor in his hammock: while the officers in the army, from the General to the Corporal, glory in assuming the office of Preachers from Quebec to Calcutta, from Commenara to Botany Bay.

The Bench delivers its charges in a style formed on the very model of the Acts of the Apostles: the Universities prepare the Graduates more carefully in Luther than Demosthenes: and the Parliament devotes whole sessions to legislative sermons and to polemical discussions. Historians, Novelists, Pamphleteers, Editors, Tourists; Tragedy, Comedy, Sculpture, Painting, Music, are all employed in their varied departments to advance the cause of this English Religion and botanical meetings, bazaar assemblies, railroad reunions; flower-shows, and ten thousand forms of domestic and public contrivance are all enlisted in the furtherance of the one engrossing paramount object, namely, this English Bible Religion. You hear it in the coffee-room; you see it in the steam-carriage; it meets you on board the ship; it is spread like a network through all ranks and conditions of society; and it forms an institution fitted to carry its object (one should suppose) with perfect efficiency, and easy abundant success.

Again, it has all the power of the State in its support; the aristocracy, the throne, its patrons; the laws for its protection: the learning of the empire for its defence: and according to Cobbett's statement, it has the enormous resources, to guarantee its permanent existence, of eight millions and a half of pounds sterling a-year! All these items of aid, support, protection, and power, should according to all human calculation, recommend this religious establishment to universal acceptance: with such important auxiliaries there ought not to be one voice in Great Britain hostile to this religious creed, one heart in all the English dependencies, a rebel to this English faith. And independently of this Imperial arrangement just referred to, there are besides, bye-laws and private exertions in the shape of Bible societies, which extend themselves from a central point like diverging moving columns of preachers, visit every town and village and ham-

let; have the command of hundreds of thousands pounds sterling; and which scour the lanes and the alleys, and the garrets and the cellars, in quest of the starving poor, to draw them to this English belief, to add to their numbers, and to universalize their doctrine. Like Savings Banks which take in, even the pennies of the labourer, and thus collect all the little savings of the poor, these societies have devised minor bye societies, to reach the most remote cabins of the most needy and most unprotected creatures: and by the aid of bonnet-making, and stocking-knitting, and sempstress societies, they carry their bibles and their tracts, and their proselytising zeal through every nook where famine, sickness, and misfortunes could furnish a victim to their hypocrisy, a wretch to their scheme of apostasy.

Having thus taking a cursory view of this system at home, let us glance at its progress in some few of England's dependencies abroad.—In this case I shall make my quotations from an unsuspected source—namely, the *Times*: and my examination of this part of my case (let it be recollected) only extends through the period of two months of the present year, I shall therefore invite particular attention to a small portion of the pecuniary resources of this gospel in India, as taken from the *Times* of the 7th of May, 1858:—

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society was held yesterday in Exeter Hall. The chair was taken by the President, the Earl of Shaftesbury, supported by the Marquis of Cholmondeley, Lord Henry Cholmondeley, Earl Ducie, Lord C. Russell, the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Ripon, the Bishop of Carlisle, the Bishop of Cashel, Canon Stowell, Cairns, and Miller, and several of the leading Dissenting Ministers. Prayer having been offered by Mr. Gergue, one of the secretaries, and a passage of Scripture read, the chairman, in opening the proceedings, referred to the late Indian outbreak as having afforded, in the first instance, a discouraging prospect to the society, but as now presenting an enlarged field for its operations, and urged upon the society's friends the circulation of the Word of God in all parts of India. They should be encouraged in doing this by the fact that the presidencies in which the Bible was circulated were those which had been almost or entirely free from mutiny, while the greatest atrocities were perpetrated in the petty British India Presidency of Bengal, where the circulation of the Scriptures among the native troops was forbidden, and the chaplain debarred from giving Scriptural instruction, and where so much apparent ignorance of Christianity prevailed that a ready ear was lent to the assertion that they were to be converted to it by the diffusion among them of hogs' lard, bears' grease, and other similar condiments. In sending Bibles and Missionaries to India the meeting would be helping, as they were bound to do, such men as Sir John Lawrence, Montgomery, and Edwards, who were the only dependance we had for the prevention of mutiny in the future, as Sir Henry Lawrence and Havelock had been the means of quelling to a great extent that which had so recently occurred. The report was then read, from which it appeared that the receipts of the year had exceeded those of any preceding year, excluding the special funds. The amount applicable to the general purposes of the society was £70,040 16s 2d and the amount received for Bibles and Testaments, £72,261 10s 11d, making the total receipts from the ordinary sources £142,303 7s 1d, being £11,561 22s 2d more than in any former year. There had also been received for the Chinese New Testament Fund, £1370, 13s 7d, and £1,886 2s 10d for the special fund for India, making a grand total of £152,574, 3s 6d. The society had issued during the year from the home depot 976,563, and from the depots abroad 625,424—total, 1,602,187 copies: an increase of 84,329 copies over the issues of any preceding year. The total expenditure, amounting to £153,117 4s 8d, was £136 in excess of the expenditure of previous years. The society was under engagements to the extent of 53,818, 17s 4d. The meeting was then addressed by the Bishops of London and Ripon, Canon Stowell, the Rev. W. Cedman, the Hon. B. W. Noel, Dr. Gannan, and the Rev. W. Brock, who severally endorsed the society's claims.

The next extract is taken from the *Times* of May 8th, 1858:—

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society was held yesterday in Exeter Hall, John Marsham in the chair. After a lengthened address from the chairman, the secretary read the annual report, which stated that during the past year the society had issued 13,018,484 tracts, and that the circulation of the society's periodicals was 10,909,920. The grants made by the society to various libraries at home and abroad amounted to £2,570 4s 3d. Numerous tracts and books had been distributed among the soldiers proceeding to India, and also among the natives of that country in the vernacular tongue, and instances were not uncommon in which the tracts were found to possess a highly beneficial influence on the native mind. The receipts of the year were:—For sales, £75,856; the benevolent fund £11,875; total, £87,731; being a larger amount than any previous year, and exceeding the receipts of last year by £2,854. The total circulation of tracts and books by the society during the 59 years of its existence was no less than 732,000,000. The report was unanimously adopted, and the meeting was addressed by the Rev. Gannon Champneys, the Rev. J. H. Wilson, of Aberdeen; Dr. Lockhart, of Olinia; the Rev. James Smith, of Agra; Mr. R. Baxter, and the Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, of Bombay.

The third extract is taken from the *Times* of May 8th, 1858.

PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS.—The jubilee meeting of the society for this purpose was held yesterday in Exeter Hall, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury. On the platform were the Bishops of London and Carlisle, Dr. McNeill, Canon Stowell, and many other clerical advocates of the society. The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, said he hoped none of the speakers would refer