

REMITTANCES TO ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND SCOTLAND. SHORT-SIGHT BILLS from One Pound upwards, negotiable in any part of the United Kingdom, are drawn on the Union Bank of London, London. Bank of Ireland, Dublin. National Bank of Scotland, Edinburgh. By HENRY CHAPMAN & Co., St. Sacramento Street. Montreal, February 9, 1854.

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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE. MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 30, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The navigation of the Baltic has now been, for some weeks, fairly open; but, as yet, no decisive blow has been struck by the enormous fleet under the command of the gallant Napier. By the last steamer, we have a report that the fleet had exchanged shots with some of the Russian forts; which would, to a certain extent, seem to corroborate the Russian boast, that the British had been foiled in an attempt upon Helsingfors. British expectation is screwed up to the highest pitch, and the people seem to expect to hear tidings of some great naval victory, as in the days of Nelson and Exmouth—as at Aboukir and Algiers. We think they are doomed to disappointment. With one or two exceptions, guns on board ships are no match for guns on shore batteries, when the masonry is in a good state of repair. In the Gulf of Finland, the difficulties with which the fleet has to contend, are increased tenfold, by the intricate navigation—by the narrow channels betwixt shoals and dangers of all kinds—through which the ships would have to advance to the attack, exposed, too, to the raking fire of the enemies' guns. Sir C. Napier, if inclined to err, will not err on the side of prudence; and we may feel confident that if he does not attack the forts in the Gulf of Finland, it is because they are impregnable; and because he is too conscientious an officer to sacrifice the lives of his brave sailors, and the vessels of his noble squadron, when there is not a chance even of success. The British fleet can expect but little important accession to its force after the present month; whilst the enemy are, no doubt, increasing, every day, the strength of their means of resistance. If then, within a month after the opening of the navigation, Sir C. Napier felt it imprudent to hazard an attack against the granite batteries and case-mates of Cronstadt, his position will certainly not have improved in the months of July and August. We may therefore expect, that, for this season at least, or unless a diversion by means of a powerful land force be attempted, the Baltic fleet will limit itself to the strict blockade of the Russian ports; thus inflicting much commercial injury upon the enemy, but at a very considerable expenditure of British treasure. At this game both parties must ultimately be losers; and it is to be feared that Russia will not be the first to give in. Certainly, if, at the commencement of winter, Sir C. Napier returns to Spithead, without prizes, without having filled a *Gazette* with blood and glory, the disappointment of the people will be generally felt, and loudly expressed. We may then expect a strong reaction in public sentiment, and that the war will become as unpopular and universally condemned, as it is now almost unanimously approved of. In the Black Sea, nothing has been done. Sebastopol is as Cronstadt, and, without a land force, is not to be successfully attacked. The Turks are defending Silistria nobly, and, it is hoped, will hold out until relieved by the forces now on the move. Tidings of a decisive battle may shortly be expected.

THE "SCHOOL GRIEVANCE."

The *Canadien* of the 12th inst., requests of us to state precisely the grievances of which the Catholics of Upper Canada complain, in the matter of separate schools; "grievances,"—adds our cotemporary,—"which we confess, we very imperfectly understand." We always believed that the intention of Government and Parliament, was, to give to the Catholics of Upper Canada, the same protection, the same advantages, as are enjoyed by Protestants in Lower Canada. If this intention has not been practically carried out, whether through defects in the law, or the bad intentions of those to whom the execution of the law is entrusted, we believe that a remedy is not impossible—provided always that the demands of the Catholics of Upper Canada are reasonable. And, advertising to the fact that, from the Protestant minority of Lower Canada, we have no complaints as to the operation of the school laws, our cotemporary naively, not to say hypocritically, asks—"Can it be that the Catholic majority of Lower Canada are more just and liberal towards the Protestant minority, than are the Protestant majority of Upper Canada towards the Catholic minority? This is possible, but it should be clearly established." We have ventured to mark one or two passages in Italics; and upon these we have the following remarks to make:— 1. That if, as the *Canadien* now admits, "he but very imperfectly understands the grievances of which the Catholics of Upper Canada complain," it was highly presumptuous on his part, to write as he did,

last year, upon this same question, of which, even now, he knows so little; and on which, by his own showing, he is now, and of course was then, incompetent to offer an opinion.

2. That the insinuation contained in the assurance, that the demands of the Catholics of Upper Canada will be granted, if "reasonable," is, in the highest degree, to the Prelates of Upper Canada; from whom the complaints against the present iniquitous system emanated, and by whom the demands for redress have been framed. These facts, of which we do not believe the *Canadien* to be ignorant—nay, of which, from the proceedings of the Catholic Institute of Toronto, he must be cognizant—should have saved us the impertinent sneer contained in the implied doubt as to the "reasonableness" of the demands proceeding from such a source. Of that "reasonableness," we do not admit the *Canadien*, or his masters, to be competent judges; it is enough that, in the eyes of the highest dignitaries of the Church, they are just and reasonable; it is enough that the Catholics of Upper Canada are determined to enforce them, as the result of the next election will no doubt show. We refer the *Canadien*, for explanation, to the address of His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto to the Catholic Institute, of which he is President—and to his discourse at the laying of the corner stone of the Presbytery of St. Patrick's Church, at Quebec.

The *Canadien* asks us—what are those grievances of which our Upper Canadian brethren complain?—We answer him, in the language of Dr. Ryerson's last "Report" on the School system of Upper Canada—They consist in those "burdens and disadvantages," (p. 22) under which, by the admission of that Report, the supporters of Separate Schools labor, and which have been imposed with the express design, "OF CAUSING THE ULTIMATE DISCONTINUANCE AND ABANDONMENT OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS"—p. 21; to effect which desirable end, Mr. Ryerson candidly admits, "THAT THE MOST, AND, IN HIS OPINION, ONLY EFFECTUAL METHOD IS TO RETAIN THE EXISTING PROVISION OF THE LAW ON THE SUBJECT."—p. 20.

The demands of the Catholics of Upper Canada, again, resolve themselves into these:—1.—That the said "burdens and disadvantages" be at once, and for ever, removed; and 2nd.—that the provisions of a law, whose tendencies are, in the opinion of a judge so competent as the "Chief Superintendent of Education," effectually calculated to "cause the discontinuance and abandonment of separate schools"—or, in other words, to reduce Catholics to the painful alternative, either of depriving their children of the blessings of education, or else of disobeying the express and reiterated injunctions of the Church—be at once, and for ever rescinded. Catholics in Upper Canada, in short, demand that they, being a minority in the Upper Province, be in every respect placed upon as advantageous a footing, with respect to their separate schools, as are the Protestant minority in the Lower section of the Province.

We have nothing to say for, or against, the good intentions of the Ministry and Legislature; further than this, that they forcibly remind us of the gentleman's hair, which, according to the testimony of partial friends, "was inclined to be auburn;" but whose inclinations were, unfortunately, never gratified—as said hair remained, in spite of its inclinations, undeniably, and decidedly, carotty. The intentions of our rulers may, for aught we know to the contrary, be good. Hell, according to the old proverb, is paved with good intentions; we see not why it should not be the same with terrestrial Council Chambers, and Courts of Legislature.

It is by their acts, not by their intentions, that we form our estimate of the Ministry; and truth compels us to admit, that, hitherto, their acts, and especially their "Act Supplementary" of last Session, have not inspired us with any lively confidence in them. At the same time, we freely admit that the Ministry have many difficulties to contend with; that their good intentions are not easily to be carried into practice, exposed as they are to so many hostile influences. We have no desire to embarrass, or offer any factious opposition to the party now in power; on the contrary, we should rejoice, if they would put in our power to tender them our cordial thanks. But for this, acts—good sterling coin—are necessary; good intentions—promissory notes at long date—will not suffice. As yet all that we can say, is, that they have drawn heavily upon the credit of their good intentions, but have most signally failed to meet their engagements when due.

That the demands of the Catholics of Upper Canada are "reasonable," no "reasonable" man will deny. They demand only that which Protestants demand, and enjoy to the fullest extent, in Lower Canada. This surely is "reasonable" enough; unless our cotemporary can show some reason why the interests of Protestants should be more carefully protected by Law, than the interests of Catholics. We assert the equality of all religions, as before the State, when constituted as is ours.

That the Catholics of Upper Canada, being in a minority, do not enjoy the advantages enjoyed by the Protestant minority of the Lower Province, must form the subject of another article upon this same question. At present, in support of the "reasonableness" of the complaints of our Upper Canadian brethren—"that they are not treated as liberally by the Protestant majority of the Western section of the Province, as are the Protestant minority of the Lower, by the Catholic majority"—it is sufficient for us to adduce the following facts:—

1. According to Dr. Ryerson's own showing, the existing provisions of the Upper Canada School Law are admirably adapted "to cause the ultimate discontinuance and abandonment" of Catholic separate schools in Upper Canada.

2. From the absence of all complaints from the Protestant minority of this section of the Province, we may conclude that there is nothing in the existing provisions of the Lower Canada School Law calculated "to cause the ultimate discontinuance and abandonment" of Protestant separate schools in Lower Canada.

3. From these two facts we conclude, 1st.—that it is not only "possible, but clearly established"—"that the Catholic majority of Lower Canada are more just and liberal towards the Protestant minority, than are the Protestant majority of Upper Canada towards the Catholic minority."—*Canadien* 12th inst. 2d.—That the Upper and Lower Canada School Laws, are essentially different: that they differ not only in their details, and in the method of their administration, but that their objects are essentially different—that of the latter being to leave Protestants full liberty to support their separate schools, exempt from all "burdens and disadvantages"—that of the former being to compel Catholics to discontinue and abandon the only schools, which consistently with their duty towards God, and his Church, they can allow their children to attend. But more of this anon.

THE "SECULARISATION" BILL.

Mr. Hincks has announced from his place in Parliament, and the *Toronto Leader* has declared, what are the intentions of the Cabinet with respect to the disposal of the "Clergy Reserves," should the fatal measure of "secularisation" be allowed to pass.

It is intended then, to hand over the funds accruing from the "Reserves" to the Municipal Councils of Upper Canada, in the ratio of their respective populations; to be by them applied to any purpose for which the Councils can, by the provisions of the Municipal Act, raise money.

Catholics would do well to consider what this proposal of the Government means; and how it will affect the interests of their separate schools. Perhaps they will see therein additional reasons for refusing to assist in the "secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves."

The first effect, then, of this measure will be to unite all sections of the Protestant body in Upper Canada in one grand league against the Catholic ecclesiastical endowments of the Lower Province.—Just as the fox, who had lost his tail in a trap, was ever after, urgent beyond measure upon his brother foxes to doff their caudal appendages, so, after "secularisation," will the present holders of the "Clergy Reserves" be the most zealous advocates for curtailing the power and wealth of the Catholic Church.—At present, they have an interest in asserting the integrity of ecclesiastical endowments, and will not therefore join George Brown and the other extreme demagogues, in their assault upon the endowments of Lower Canada. After the passing of the Bill for "secularising" the "Reserves," these prudential motives, which now compel a large section of the Protestant body to act honestly towards us, will no longer exist; they will have no endowments to preserve for themselves, and will therefore recognise no right of property in the ecclesiastical endowments of others. The results of a cordial alliance of the whole mass of Upper Canadian Protestants against the Catholics of the Lower Province, would not long remain doubtful. Setting aside, then, all considerations of principle—waiving all questions of "robbery," and "sacrilege"—Catholics are bound, by every motive of self interest, to oppose, by every means in their power, the "secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves."

The second effect of the Ministerial measure will be the total and irretrievable destruction of the separate school system, for which—headed by their Bishops and Clergy—the Catholics of Upper Canada have so long and gallantly struggled.

By handing over to the Municipal Councils the large sums accruing from the "secularisation" of the "Reserves," an immense fund will be placed at their disposal; which it will be in their power to use, for the exaltation of the State-school system, and the consequent depression of the free, or separate schools. That these funds will be so employed, we may be certain from the fact that, without an exception, the Municipal Councils are Protestant—that is, can always command an overwhelming Protestant majority; and will therefore, when they have the power, use all the influence, and all the means at their command, to effect the "discontinuance and ultimate abandonment of Catholic separate schools."

Hardly can the Catholic population of Upper Canada—deficient as they are in numbers, deficient as they are in wealth, thinly scattered over an immense extent of country, and continually doomed to struggle with the hostile bigotry, and illiberality of their numerous, wealthy, and powerful neighbors—hardly can they manage to support their separate schools, even under the, at present, existing circumstances; hardly, even now, can the Catholic separate schools compete with those of their Protestant opponents.—How then will it be when the strength of the latter shall have been still further increased by the revenues accruing from the "secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves?"—of which revenues Catholic separate schools will not get one penny. What chance will these schools have then?

Let then this ministerial measure pass—let the "Reserves" be "secularised," and the proceeds be distributed, as proposed, amongst the exclusively Protestant Municipal Councils—with power to appropriate them to exclusively Protestant school purposes—and we may well tremble for the security of our ecclesiastical establishments in Lower Canada: we may at once, and for ever, abandon all hopes of obtaining Freedom of Education for the Catholic minority of the Upper Province. Many a candidate for Parliamentary honors, at the approaching contest, will proclaim his conviction of the justice of Catho-

lic claims; and declare his readiness, if returned to enforce them; but by this test shall Catholic voters be able to judge of such a man's sincerity. Let them ask him—does he pledge himself, actively, strenuously, by every legal means in his power, to oppose the "secularisation" of the "Reserves"—and the handing over of the funds thence accruing, to the Municipal Councils? If he does—well, his professions on the score of the school laws may be relied upon; if he does not, it is very certain that his professions of liberality towards Catholic schools are but fustian; worthless chaff, wherewith knaves trust to catch unwary birds. We say it advisedly. He who, pretending to be in favor of Freedom of Education for the Catholics of Upper Canada, and anxious to secure for them the same advantages as are enjoyed by the Protestant minority in the Lower Province, shall nevertheless, be, directly or indirectly, aiding and abetting, in the carrying of the Ministerial measure for settling the Reserves question—or who shall not do his utmost to oppose it—must be either a simpleton, or worse. In neither case worthy of the confidence of Irish Catholic voters.

We object then to "secularisation" (in general) as involving a false, and, to Catholics, an eminently dangerous principle—as asserting the superior excellence of Voluntaryism, and as impugning the propriety of all endowments in aid of religion. We object also (in particular) to the proposed appropriation of the funds—to be derived from a measure which, in the eyes of Catholics, is scarcely, if at all, distinguishable from sacrilege—as threatening destruction to our separate schools. Either the "Clergy Reserves" are public property, or they are not. If they are not—then are they "unsecurable;" if they are, and if they are in whole or in part, to be devoted to educational purposes, then are Catholics entitled to their share of them, in proportion to their numbers. But if handed over to the Municipal Councils, these revenues, in so far as they shall be employed for educational purposes at all, will be devoted to the exclusive support of a Protestant, or Non-Catholic system; and therefore we oppose this plan as unjust. It is an arrangement that would, no doubt, be very convenient for the government, as it would relieve them from the necessity of listening to, and pretending to sympathise with, our complaints.—Their answer would be—"Gentlemen we are very sorry for you, but we cannot help you—we have completely parted with all control over the 'Clergy Reserves' funds, and you must apply to the Municipal Councils of your respective counties." "What redress Catholic suppliants would obtain from these bodies may be easily imagined.

No; if we do not wish to see the "Clergy Reserves" funds employed as powerful, and most effective means for procuring the "discontinuance and abandonment of our separate school system," we must make up our minds to oppose at the hustings, every candidate—no matter how eligible in every other respect—who will not pledge himself to a hearty, constant, and vigorous opposition to Mr. Hincks' plan for the settlement of the "Clergy Reserves" Question. "So mote it be."

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament has been abruptly sent about its business, with as little ceremony as was observed by Old Noll, when he had a trooper "take away the bawble." On the 22nd, the Governor came down, and prorogued the session, after a most stormy discussion in the Lower House. Sir A. McNab, and others, protested against such cavalier treatment, as unconstitutional and unnecessary; they declared their readiness to transact any business that Ministers might please to lay before the House, and above all, to pass the Franchise Bill at once. However, their fate was sealed, and it was in vain for these innocents to attempt escape from the doom passed upon them by the political Herod. With a very bad grace they appeared before His Excellency, who passed sentence upon them in the following speech:—

Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council, Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly,

When I met you at the commencement of the present Session, I expressed the hope that you would proceed without delay to pass such a Law in reference to the period appointed for introducing the Amended Franchise, as would have enabled me to bring at once into operation those important measures affecting the representation of the people in Parliament, which were adopted with such singular unanimity last Session. Having been disappointed in this expectation, I still consider that it is due to the people of the Province, and most respectful to the decision of the Legislature, that I should take such steps as are in my power to give effect to the Law by which the Parliamentary representation of the people is augmented, before calling the attention of Parliament to questions on which the public mind has been long agitated, and the settlement of which it is most desirable to effect in such a manner as will be most likely to secure for it the confidence of the people.

I have come therefore, to meet you on the present occasion for the purpose of proroguing this Parliament, with a view to an immediate dissolution.

Previously however, the Speaker of the Assembly had delivered himself of the following address, between which, and the Governor's speech, there will be found some remarkable discrepancies:—

May it please your Excellency:—

It has been the immemorial custom of the Speaker of the Commons House of Parliament to communicate to the throne the general result of the deliberations of the Assembly, upon the principal objects which employed the attention of Parliament during the period of their labors. It is not now part of my duty to address your Excellency, in as much there has been no Act passed, or judgment of Parliament obtained by your Excellency's announcement of the "cause" for summoning Parliament by your gracious speech from the throne. The passage of an Act through its several stages according to the law, is the custom of Parlia-