

REMITTANCES

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The True Witness.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1857.

HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Over the signature of Thos. M. Taylor, the Montreal Witness of the 11th inst., contains an amusing but very pitiful history of the bursting of a "bubble" Missionary enterprise; undertaken by our evangelical friends more than two years ago, amidst much sounding of trumpets, and getting up of Ebenezers—but which from want, of a "field," and of Missionaries, they have been obliged to abandon. We glean from Mr. Taylor's tragicomic announcement of the ludicrous termination of this great Missionary enterprise, the following particulars:—

The "Canada Foreign Missionary Society" was inaugurated in 1855; and in the month of February of that year its Prospectus was issued. A "Board of Management" was appointed; subscriptions were earnestly invoked; and advertisements were issued and appeared in the public press announcing that the "Board" was anxious to hire smart active men for the "foreign field" and a "travelling agent" to do the canvassing part of the business at home. "Probably" says Mr. Taylor, who also signs himself Secretary—"no announcement of any religious or missionary movement ever had a wider diffusion throughout Canada."

The machinery being thus arranged, it was of course expected that quite a "Pentecostal season" was at hand. Souls were to be saved wholesale; and it was confidently anticipated that the Evil One himself would have to shut up shop and retire from business, so soon as the Missionaries of the "Canada Foreign Missionary Society" made their appearance in the "field." Members paid in their subscriptions; their money fell with a pleasant clink into the coffers of the Society; and the campaign against heathenism, and Romanism, and all the Powers of darkness, in foreign parts, seemed about to be opened in gallant style.

Meantime the "Board" sat patiently, but anxiously waiting for answers to their advertisements for Missionaries. "They waited long for response," says Mr. Taylor—"meanwhile they took no further step." All the long summer months of 1855 they waited with arms folded; but no candidates for salary and martyrdom presented themselves. Though for the "Home Missions," for the conversion of French Canadian Romanists, laborers could be found in abundance, in all Canada not one man was to be found amongst the Protestants, willing to undertake the fatigues and discomforts of the "Foreign Mission."

At last in October a minister of Western Canada offered to take the post of "travelling agent;" but this generous offer the Board had to decline on the ground that it would be unwise to go to the expense of hiring a "home agent" so long as there were no prospects of any others coming forward for the "foreign field." Weeks and months crept on, but still no volunteers made their appearance. About the commencement of last year another Minister of Canada West "asked for information, which might guide himself and two others, in a contemplated offer of themselves for the foreign work." But this also came to naught. "A suitable reply was made," says the Secretary of the Canada Foreign Missionary Society—but the correspondence closed without any offer of service on their part. A ray of hope again dawned upon our forlorn friends in February of the same year, when another respected Minister came forward and to whom "after long and prayerful consideration a call was given." Finally, we are told "upon representations of much force made by this gentleman himself, the call was not carried farther." And so again the heathen and the Romanists in "foreign parts" were left to perish in their gross darkness.

In September, however, of last year, the hopes of the Society revived; for again two Ministers of Western Canada came forward with offers. But alas! for the vanity of human hope. One was a married man with a large family of small children; and the Society would not hire him, wisely judging that the "circumstances of the Society required the sending out of men without families of children," which in "foreign missions" would decidedly be incumbrances. The other volunteer would no doubt have had an offer of engagement made to him "had not the Board at this juncture seen reason to suppose that the region it had announced as the proposed field of operations could not be advantageously entered on, and to think, on various grounds, that their way needed to be more opened up before they

could advance farther." Unfortunate Society! sometimes at a stand-still for want of missionaries for the "field;" at other times at a loss for a "field" for the missionaries; and always unable to take even the first steps towards carrying the bread of life to the myriads of perishing heathens and Romanists in "foreign parts."

Yet was not the Board idle altogether. It—so the Secretary tells us—continued throughout this long agony to give signs of life. It "had many meetings and much correspondence"—also "some sense of responsibility"—and "some spirit of prayer." Upon the strength of these, it still kept its office open, and invited subscribers to take shares in their promising Spiritual Railroad for the other place. At last, as with all other bubble Societies, the day of reckoning came; the farce could be sustained no longer; over the windows of the sanctum wherein the "Board held its meetings, felt sensible of its responsibility, carried on its correspondence, and had its "spirit of prayer," the blinds had to be drawn down; and the Montreal Witness now proclaims to the world that, like the "Royal British Bank," and many other humbug "Joint Stock Companies" of the day, the "Canada Foreign Missionary Society" has had to wind up its affairs, retire from business, and leave the Devil and the Pope masters of that "foreign field" which the saints had marked out as their own.—The firm indeed still nominally exists; but its "present attitude is that of waiting for the indications of Divine Providence"—(for which we fear our friends will have to wait a long time.)—In the mean time, they have very generously proposed to refund the subscribers their money; and hold out a promise that whenever they can find an "open and eligible field within their compass," and "suitable men having a strong-felt call to the field," they will resume business in the evangelical line as before.

Were it not that our friends seem to have set their hearts upon a "foreign field," and that nothing else will content them, we could point out to them a field wherein laborers are much needed, and which is both open, and easy of access.—Amidst their Protestant fellow-countrymen of England, and Scotland, there are thousands and millions as ignorant of the doctrines of Christianity, as any black, or tawny savages in the South Seas. Why not, then, try their hands upon their own Protestant "home heathens" first?—and leave the foreigners and Romanists alone? Is the soul of a Protestant Anglo-Saxon factory operative of less value than that of a wild Indian?—are Papists then fitter objects of compassion, than the miserable wretches who hourly outrage morality and religion in the heart of Protestant England?

The fact is, that it is notoriety for themselves, and not the salvation of souls, not the honor and glory of God, that is the object of these Protestant Missionary Societies; and hence, and hence only, proceeds their incapacity to find an "open and eligible field" for their missions. The fact is, that Protestant Ministers care far more for their own creature comforts, than for the souls of sinners; and are more intent upon the bread that perisheth—silks, bonnets, and ribbons for their wives, and a comfortable provision for their numerous progeny—than upon that bread which cometh down from heaven; hence the impossibility of procuring volunteers for a service of some hardship, which necessarily involves some danger, and imperatively requires some self-sacrifice. For "Home Missions" to Catholics, in which there are neither dangers nor hardships to be braved, in which a reputation for sanctity may be easily acquired at a cheap rate, and which demand only a more than "forty parson power" of cant, and at least a fifty Exeter Hall "power of falsehood"—for these Missions volunteers can always be obtained by hundreds, from the ranks of the evangelical Ministry; and a field can always be found for them in Catholic Ireland, or in Lower Canada. Into this "field," always open, always eligible, the laborers flock by thousands. Broken down tinkers—debauched Methodist preachers—fraudulent bankrupts—knavish traders, who have exchanged their false weights and cheating yard-wands for King James' Word of God, and a "Serious Call to the Unconverted"—with occasionally a lewd disgraced priest, like Achilli or Gavazzi, whose vices have driven him out of the Church, and would have lodged him in the Penitentiary, if he had not found asylum in the conventicle—rush, like vultures to the carion, towards the spot where their services are in request, and will be well paid for. A "Home Missionary Society" for the "Conversion of Romanists," can always get volunteers, can always find a "field;" the official report of the "Canada Foreign Missionary Society, from which we have quoted above, shows that, when Protestants would seek to carry the knowledge of Christianity to the heathen, they can find neither.—Their attitude is "that of waiting the indications of Divine Providence;" and "Divine Providence" shows itself determined to have nothing to do with them. This fully accounts for the greater popularity of the former Missions; and explains the zeal of the saints of Montreal for the poor benighted French Romanists of Lower Canada.

IN SHIPPERY OF THE UNITED STATES A MONTHLY PUBLICATION. The April number of Brownson's Review, of whose contents we gave a list in a late issue, contains a powerful article upon the "Slavery Question;" a question in which great interest is manifested by the people of this country, and on which much misapprehension prevails even amongst Catholics. We think it therefore important that the opinions of such a distinguished public writer as Dr. Brownson upon the subject, should be circulated as widely as possible; the more so, as from his position, the learned gentleman is naturally looked upon as fairly representing the opinion of the great majority of the Catholic public in the United States.

From the general opposition which that body has always offered to the factious, and, we may say, the treasonable designs of the "Abolitionists," the opinion has gone abroad that Catholics are admirers of the peculiar institution of our republican neighbors, known as "Negro Slavery;" and that the true advocates of freedom, and of the dignity of man, whether black or white, are your New England Protestants, of the Beecher and Theodore Parker school. We hear it insinuated that here, as in the "Old World," Popery is in alliance with despotism; and that the Church approves of, and encourages the absolute dominion of the white master over his black brother in America, just as in Spain she sanctioned the punishment and persecution of Godly professors of the Reformed Faith by the Inquisition, or the dragonades of Louis Quatorze, in France, in the XVII. century. It is therefore useful to show, from the injunctions of her Chief Pastors, and the writings of her most eminent children, that the Catholic Church, whilst always and everywhere the steady and consistent upholder of order and legitimate authority, is, and always has been, the best friend of civil and religious liberty—of personal and political freedom; and that her voice has always been raised against the oppressor, and in favor of the oppressed, whether black or white. Of these facts the page of history teems with examples.

It is to the Church, and to the Church alone, that Europe is indebted for the emancipation of its slaves, and the extinction of serfdom. The Popes have ever been foremost in proclaiming the great doctrine of the brotherhood of man, and the natural equality of all men in the eyes of the Creator; and, whilst abhorring the employment of physical force, the Catholic Church has never ceased to exert her moral influence to mitigate the sufferings of the slave, to curb the power of the master, and to inspire both with a proper view of their mutual relations to one another. And thus, without disturbing, or for one moment arresting the progress of society, without violence or bloodshed, she gradually, almost imperceptibly, but surely, succeeded in restoring to the great mass of the population of Eastern Christendom, the enjoyment of those natural rights as freemen, of which heathenism had deprived them; for, with St. Augustine, the Church has always taught that slavery has its origin, not in nature, but in sin—"Prima ergo servitutis causa peccatum est."—De Civ. Dei. lib. XIX., c. 15.

"God, as Pope Gregory VII. has declared, never gave to man dominion over man, nor to one man the right to lord it over another. He has never created men to be kings; and others to be subjects, some to be masters and others to be slaves; but He has created all men equal, and therefore Alexander III. asserts, that by nature all men are free. This is the teaching of Catholic doctors, and of all Christian expounders of the law of nature."—Brownson's Review, p. 256.

But, we shall be asked, how can we reconcile these teachings with the opposition generally offered by the Catholics of the United States to the Abolitionists? Why, if Catholics hold that all men are by nature free, do not Catholics join with the Abolitionists in asserting the right of the negro population of the United States to immediate and entire personal freedom? To these questions the Reviewer gives a concise, and most satisfactory answer:—

"We have, ever since 1838, uniformly opposed—no man more strenuously, whether efficiently or not—the whole abolition movement, on legal, moral, economical, and political grounds. Touching the question of slavery, the several States are, in relation to one another, independent sovereignties, and must be regarded as so many independent foreign nations. New York has the same right to take cognizance of slavery in South Carolina, that she has to take cognizance of any domestic institution of France or Great Britain, and no more; that is to say, no right at all. As a citizen of New York, I am not responsible for the existence of slavery in any other State in the Union; and I cannot, further than the relation existing between the master and his slave, without violating international law, striking at the mutual equality and independence of the States, and sapping the Constitution of the Union.—The whole abolition movement of the non-slave holding States, as it has been carried on for now nearly thirty years, we regard, and for nearly the whole of that time have regarded, as immoral, illegal, and its authors as punishable by our laws"—pp. 249, 250.

That is to say, Catholics oppose the abolition movement, not so much because the end proposed is wrong, as because the movement is itself illegal; and the Christian has no right to seek legal ends, by illegal means. Slavery is not a United States, or Federal institution—but altogether a State institution; which has its origin, not in the law of the Union, but in that of the particular independent State wherein it exists. "It is," as the Reviewer says, "simply in its nature a municipal usage," and therefore beyond the control of the Federal or American Government; which has no legitimate control over the domestic, or

internal pages of the several independent sovereign States of which the Union is composed. Now the undoubted object of the Abolitionists is to put down slavery, if not by exciting to violence and insurrection, at all events, by means of the equally illegal action of the Federal Government. For this reason then, no Catholic can sympathize with, or countenance them in, their agitation; for it is not right to do wrong that good may follow. The Reviewer's personal opinions upon slavery itself—and in those opinions we think that the vast majority of his coreligionists will coincide—are fully set forth in the following extract:—

"Slavery we cannot advocate, for we can see no affinity between slavery and Democracy. We shall undoubtedly speak out unquestioned and unobstructed, in favor of universal freedom to universal man. You must not think that we advocate slavery on principle, that we love the institution. There is not a Democrat north of Mason's and Dixon's line that does not loathe it, and believe it a crime against humanity. We refrain from meddling with it, simply because it is a matter which concerns States of which we are not citizens, because we can reach it by no constitutional action, and because we believe liberty is more interested in preserving the Constitution, in maintaining State Rights, than in attempting the doubtful feat of emancipating the slave without making any provision for him after his fetters are knocked off"—p. 249.

Of course the Reviewer does not mean to imply that the mere act of holding a slave is a sin—for this is one of the dogmas of the Abolitionists against which he protests; but the above extract will suffice to show that, as a body, Catholics are far from approving of slavery, and would be heartily glad to get rid of it, if its abolition could be effected by peaceable and legitimate means.

Upon the question of the extension of the "particular institution" to these Territories where it does not exist, the Reviewer takes the view that to us seems most in accordance with the fundamental principles of the American Union or Federation. These Territories, until erected into States are under the dominion of the Federal Government, which cannot introduce, or legalize slavery in a Territory. But slavery can exist only in virtue of a positive law, for it is a state or condition unknown to and abhorred by, both the Natural and Common Law. Therefore as slavery cannot by Congress be legislated into a Territory, and as it cannot exist therein by virtue either of the Natural or Common Law, it cannot be a legal institution in any Territory, whilst merely a Territory.

Neither can Congress prescribe the terms on which the said Territory, when erected into a State, shall be admitted into the Union. "It has no right to say the State must come with or without slaves"—for this would be to interfere with the independence, or autonomy of the State. The Federal government might indeed refuse admittance to a new Slave State as a member of the Union; but the consequence would be that it would still remain a free and independent State outside of the Union, with all the rights and capacities of any other foreign and independent State. Thus then, the Reviewer concludes that Congress, as representing the Federal Government, has no power to legalize Slavery in a Territory, or to prohibit it in the New State to be formed out of that Territory, and which has the right to demand admission into the Union, if it has adopted a republican form of government.

The Reviewer notices also at some length, and dissents from the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Dred Scott case—to the effect that persons with a taint of negro blood in their veins cannot be citizens of the United States; although they may be citizens of, and enjoy all political rights in, many of the particular States whereof the Union is made up. From that decision the Reviewer, whose opinion is of great weight, dissents; regretting it as likely to add fuel to the flames wherein the Abolitionists seek to envelop the country, and as causing him almost to fear for the permanence of the Union.

Upon such an intricate question, it would be presumptuous for a stranger to American Law to hazard an opinion; there can be no doubt however that on this Continent the "Slavery Question" is the most important social question of the day; and one in which from our geographical and political position we in Canada are deeply interested. To all who would desire to obtain a clear understanding of that great question in all its bearings, and how it is treated by the Catholic press, we would recommend an attentive perusal of the article on the "Slavery Question" in the April number of Brownson's Review.

THE MONTREAL WITNESS AND NORMAL SCHOOLS.—A Bill having been introduced into Parliament during the present Session, with the object of "Preventing Cruelty to Animals," we are reminded that, for the future, we must be very careful and gentle in our treatment of the editor of the Montreal Witness. At the same time we trust, that without rendering ourselves liable to the penalties provided in the measure above alluded to, we may when necessary, be permitted to inflict a moderate chastisement upon our evangelical cotemporary. Not that we would assert the cotemporary's privilege of walloping our donkey ad libitum. We contend only for a moderate application of the lash to the long

ears of inmates of the conventicle, when they become restive, or unusually troublesome.

For these reasons, even whilst occasionally administering a little wholesome correction to the Montreal Witness, we will handle the poor creature gently—and as honest Isaac recommends the angler when impaling a frog upon his hook—as if we loved him. Perhaps, after all, he is more dull than vicious, and more deserving of our pity or our mirth, than of our anger; and with all his faults, in spite of his cacophonous brayings, and his uncouth kickings and plungings, he is but a very harmless sort of creature, and very easily subdued, even in his most excited moods. We cannot find it in our heart therefore to be very severe with him.

And so—when the poor creature becomes furious at the sight of a Catholic Normal school in Lower Canada, or flies into a rage with the Christian Brothers, and with the Bishop of Bytown, for expressing a wish that—"since Government has established a Normal school in Lower Canada for the special use of Protestants, and of those speaking the English language, it will also feel the necessity of showing itself equally just towards the French Canadians and Catholics residing in the Upper Province," by the establishment of a Normal school for the use of the Catholic minority—we feel more inclined to laugh at its folly, and stupidity, than to flog it for its malice. Indeed, in sober earnest, we think that the Montreal Witness does us far more good than harm by its public exhibition of the dishonesty and inconsistency of our opponents. All respectable Protestants must indeed feel ashamed of such a champion as the Montreal Witness; and every intelligent Non-Catholic must repudiate the logic wherewith it attempts to defend its position. We will give a specimen of our cotemporary's dishonesty and stupidity, whilst attempting to refute the Bishop of Bytown's plea for a Normal school for the special use of the Catholic minority of Upper Canada.

This plea His Lordship bases upon the fact, that Government has, out of respect for the religious scruples and conscientious objections of the Non-Catholic minority of Lower Canada against Catholic schools and Catholic education, established a Normal school in Lower Canada for their special use. Therefore, argues the Bishop, out of respect for the religious scruples and conscientious objections of the Catholic minority of the Upper Province against Non-Catholic schools and Non-Catholic education, should the Canadian Government accord to the Catholic minority of one section of the Province, that which it has fully accorded to the Non-Catholic minority in the other. This argument, which is unanswerable, and in which no honest or intelligent man can detect a flaw, is met by our cotemporary with the following string of false statements, and absurd deductions therefrom.

The Protestant, or Non-Catholic minority of Lower Canada are—argues the Montreal Witness—entitled to the special use of Protestant Normal schools, and Protestant Denominational schools generally—because there are "no other allowed by the Catholic majority"—while in Upper Canada the schools are "open to all." To this it suffices to reply that the schools of the Catholic majority of Lower Canada are as much "open to all," and therefore to the Protestant minority, as are the schools approved of, and allowed by, the Protestant majority of the Upper Province. The Protestant in Lower Canada is as much at liberty to send his children to the schools of the Catholic majority, as is the Catholic of the Upper Province to send his children to the schools allowed by the Protestant majority; and if in one section of the Province the Protestant, or in the other, the Catholic, declines to avail himself of this right, it is for the same identical reason; because he has conscientious objections to the education given in the schools of the majority, and because he fears that the faith of his children will be therein tampered with. Whether in either case these objections are reasonable, and these fears well founded, are matters altogether beyond the cognizance of the State; because the State has no authority in the domain of conscience, and is therefore incompetent to decide upon the reasonableness or unreasonableness of conscientious objections and religious scruples. Having simply ascertained the fact of the existence of these objections and scruples, the State is bound to respect them equally, whether they be the scruples of Non-Catholics against Catholic schools, or the conscientious objections of Catholics against Non-Catholic schools; but in neither case is it competent to test their validity.

Again, argues our honest cotemporary—although it is very right and proper that the English speaking Protestants of Lower Canada should have a Protestant and English Normal school at Montreal for the training of their teachers, as well as another at Toronto—yet it would be preposterous to grant to the French speaking Catholics of Upper Canada an analogous privilege, by establishing a Catholic Normal school at Toronto as well as at Montreal—"inasmuch," says the Witness, as "Romish and French Canadian pupils, could, without any difficulty, be sent for tuition to the Jacques Cartier school in Montreal, and the expense of supporting a Romish Corporation in Upper Canada, under the plea of a Romish Normal school, be saved to the public chest."

To this admirable logic we would reply by pointing out to the Witness, that it is exactly as far from Montreal to Toronto, as it is from Toronto to Montreal; and that if there would be no hardship in compelling French Catholics to come from Upper Canada to the Montreal Catholic Normal School, so there would be as little hardship or injustice inflicted upon English Protestants in Lower Canada, if they were in like manner compelled to send their teachers for tuition to the Protestant Normal School in Toronto—and that "thus the expense of supporting