

The True Witness

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 15, 1869.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

JANUARY—1869.

Friday, 15.—St. Paul, First Hermit, C. Saturday, 16.—St. Marcellus, P. M. Sunday, 17.—Second after Epiphany.

Monday, 18.—Chair of St. Peter at Rome. Tuesday, 19.—St. Onofre, M. Wednesday, 20.—SS. Fabian and Sebastian, M. M. Thursday, 21.—St. Agnes, 7. M.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

PARIS, Jan. 8.—A rumor is current here that an insurrection has broken out in Milan.

Despatches from Madrid report that much agitation prevails in all parts of Spain.

LONDON, Jan. 11.—The indications of the first day's session of the Conference on the Eastern Question leaves little, if any, doubt of its ultimate success. The Turkish Government, through its representative, consented to maintain the present status till the close of the Conference. It is the general impression that but one more session will be held, and that war between Turkey and Greece will be obviated.

LONDON, Jan. 9.—The brig Hannibal, which arrived here yesterday, reports having passed the Ocean Spray, bound to New York, with 39 of the missing passengers and crew of the Anchor Lane's steamer Hibernia, which foundered in November last. She would land them at Madeira.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Jan. 11.—The Sublime Porte has officially congratulated the people of the Danubian Principalities on their loyalty during the recent crisis.

CHICAGO, Jan. 10.—The dwelling house of Mr. Hess, at the railroad bridge over Au Sable river, caught fire this morning, and was entirely destroyed. Mrs. Hess, and her son, seven years old, perished in the flames.

AUGUSTA, Ga., Jan. 10.—Anderson Upton and three negroes were taken from the gaol at Appling, and hung yesterday, for the murder of a man named Martin, and his two sisters.

NEW YORK, Jan. 10.—The steamers 'Etna' and 'China,' from Liverpool, have arrived.

It is now argued that President Johnson's Amnesty Proclamation is null and void.

The Seminary of St. Sulpice is to the Montreal Witness its piece de resistance, its round of beef, from which it can always cut, and come again, and of which—so the caterer to the morbid appetites of a Protestant public flatters himself—the customers of the evangelical eating-house can never tire. Still, lest it should pall upon their palates, lest its constant appearance at the daily banquet, should provoke weariness and disgust, he is careful to season it with a spice of falsehood, with the gall of bitterness, and a somewhat piquant sauce composed in equal parts of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, for the concoction of which the evangelical cuisine has long enjoyed a well merited reputation. Indeed there are many gourmets of the highest order who insist that, but for this sauce, the dishes of the said cuisine would be intolerable from their insipidity; and if they are relished by the public, or rather by a section thereof, in the words of Sam Weller, "it is the seasoning as does it."

The other day the seasoning was to the effect that, whereas the Seminary of St. Sulpice was founded expressly for the maintenance of the indigent inhabiting the island of Montreal, the Sulpicians fail to employ their revenues for that purpose, and neglect their legal and thus their moral obligations towards the poor. To day our evangelical cook serves up the same dish—i.e. the Seminary—to his customers, flavored, or seasoned, as Mr. Weller said of the catpiss, even more highly than usual.

For it seems, according to the artist of the Witness, that, not only does the Seminary withhold from the indigent of the island the assistance which by the conditions of its foundation it is bound to furnish; but it has robbed, by some mysterious legendum not explained, the Indians of the Lake of Two Mountains of a property which legally belongs, not to the Seminary, but to the aforesaid Indians. More than a hundred years ago—such is the wondrous tale the Witness now tells—a Superintendent of

Indian affairs gave the Indians of the Lake of Two Mountains "a patent to prove that the said seignior was an Indian reserve"—and that the Sulpicians have no rights therein; save to administer the property for the Indians, who are petitioning Government to restore to them their rights to the Seignior of Two Mountains, of which they have been defrauded by the Seminary, or rather the Church of Rome. Such is the marvellous tale, founded on a document which the editor of the Witness admits that he has never seen, and of whose contents he also admits, knows nothing except through "the recollections of an intelligent Indian."—Witness, 8th inst. Rather a slender basis on which to erect so stupendous a fabric, one would think.

But there is another document besides that which the editor of the Witness has never seen, and of which he knows nothing except through the little tattle of an elderly, and very probably an intoxicated Indian. This document which is of easy access, would, had he consulted it, have given him every information on the question as to whom legally, the Seignior of the Lake of Two Mountains, belongs: for it is a well known judicial decision, or Ordinance of the Queen in Council passed in 1840, and giving final judgment on the long vexed question as to the validity of the titles of the Seminary to the property by them acquired by purchase before the cession of Canada to the British Crown. Now this document which is something more substantial than the hazy "recollections of an intelligent Indian," is most explicit upon the point in dispute:—

Preamble. "Whereas the Ecclesiastics of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, established at Montreal in this Province, have since the Capitulation which was in the year of Our Lord 1760, held, possessed, and enjoyed, and do still hold, possess, and enjoy, the Fief and Seignior of the Island of Montreal, and its dependencies, the Fief and Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains, . . . and whereas doubts and controversies have arisen touching the right and title of the said Ecclesiastics of the said Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Montreal in and to the several Fiefs, and Seigniories, and their dependencies of which they have, as aforesaid, been in possession since the Capitulation. . . .

Be it Ordained and Enacted:— Sect. 2. "That the right and title of the said Ecclesiastics of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Montreal, in and to, all and singular, the Fiefs and Seigniories of the Island of Montreal, of the Lake of the Two Mountains . . .

"Shall be, and they are hereby confirmed and declared good, valid, and effectual in the law, and the Corporation hereby constituted shall, and may have, hold and possess the same as proprietor thereof as fully, in the same manner, and to the same extent as the Ecclesiastics of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of the Faubourg of Saint Germain Lez Paris, or the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Montreal according to its constitution before the eighteenth day of September which was in the year 1760, or either or both of the said Seminaries might or could have done or had a right to do, or might, or could have held, enjoyed or applied the same or any part thereof previously to the last mentioned period.

Sect. 3. "And be it further Ordained and Enacted that all and singular the said Fiefs and Seigniories of the Island of Montreal, of the Lake of the Two Mountains . . . shall be, and the same are hereby vested in the said Corporation of the Ecclesiastics of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Montreal hereby constituted, and their successors, to be had, held, possessed, and enjoyed by the said Ecclesiastics of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice of Montreal, and their successors, as the true and lawful owners and proprietors of the same, and of every part and parcel thereof, to the only use, benefit, and behoof of the said Seminary, or Corporation and their successors for ever"—

subject to the terms and conditions which we published in our last.

This is the case for the Seminary; and we think that most intelligent persons will admit that its claim is somewhat better than that on which the Witness founds his claim that the Indians be recognised as legal owners of the Seignior of the Lake of the Two Mountains. Again we challenge the Witness to lay before his readers the title of the Seminary by us quoted from the judgment of the Queen in Council, Vict. III., C. 30.

We quoted in our last the English text of the Ordinance of 1840 to show that two classes of "indigent" persons—"the poor invalids and orphans"—were particularised as objects upon whom the Seminary was at liberty to bestow, if it so pleased, its bounty. The Witness of the 9th inst. rejoins as follows:—

"The whole of the above argument turns upon the want of a comma, and we cannot help thinking it exceedingly disingenuous in our contemporary to make such large consequences dependent on so small an omission—if omission there be. In the document from which he quotes, more especially, as the wording of the sentence shows indisputably that it is merely an omission.

"The sentence . . . on which the whole article turns should evidently be printed 'the support of the Poor, Invalids, and Orphans'; but by the omission of a capital letter and a comma, the meaning is ingeniously changed. It is evident, however, that three classes and not two, were meant."—Witness, 9th inst.

When the meaning of an important and carefully compiled official document published in two languages, both equally official and authoritative, is, in one of these languages ambiguous, or susceptible of two different interpretations, the canons of a sound criticism require that we should

explain or interpret one version by means of the other; and should we find that the passage in dispute is, though ambiguous or susceptible of two interpretations in one language, susceptible of but one interpretation in the other—then it is universally admitted that the latter is the true interpretation of the disputed passage.

Now the Ordinance is published in both English and French, the two languages standing side by side in the original document, and both being equally the official language of the Province. In the English text the sentence in dispute stands thus:—

"the support of the poor Invalids and Orphans;"

This may be, perhaps, susceptible of two interpretations, and as including either two, or three classes. To ascertain the true intent thereof, let us turn to the French text. In French then it stands thus:—

"le soutien des pauvres invalides et des orphelins"

Any one acquainted with French will perceive that the above sentence includes only two classes of indigent persons; for had it been intended to include three, it would necessarily have stood thus:—

"le soutien des pauvres des invalides et des orphelins."

Therefore, applying the canon of criticism above alluded to, to the matter in controversy betwixt us and the Witness, the ambiguity of the English text is dissipated, and its strict grammatical purport is made clear.

We cannot presume to take the liberties with the text that the Witness indulges in. We content ourselves with what it actually, and according to the laws of grammar, does say; and trouble not ourselves with what, according to our preconceived notions or prejudices, it ought to say; and therefore interpreting the ambiguous English text by the unambiguous French text, we contend that in the sentence by us quoted from the Ordinance two only, and not three, classes of indigent are specified. This is a question of French grammar, and we beg of the Witness to refer it to any one conversant with the grammatical construction of that language. In short we call upon the Witness to favor us with the translation of the following French phrase:—

"le soutien des pauvres invalides et des orphelins"—a sentence which we contend is incompatible with his theory that "three classes, and not two, were meant."

The Montreal Witness, true to its vocation, comes forward as the apologist of the two ruffians whom, at the rate of a trifle over two dollars per head, the Italian Liberals hired to blow up the Zouaves barracks, and thereby murder as many as possible of its sleeping inmates. We compared this crime with that of which Whelan was convicted—with the Camberwell atrocity, and the murder of Mr. Lincoln, but the Witness protests against this estimate of his special pets, the hired murderers of the Papal soldiers. To compare the assassination of Mr. McGee to the blowing up of foreign mercenaries "is surely," says the Witness "to confound things that are entirely different."

Now the assassination of Mr. McGee was murder—the Witness will admit: but if the crime of blowing up, and thereby killing some score of sleeping soldiers, and causing the mutilation of many others—be a thing "entirely different" from the crime of which Whelan has been found guilty, it must be in the eyes of the Witness, and according to its peculiar code of morality, something "entirely different" from murder. What then is it? Under what category of crime shall we class it? For mark! The Witness is not content with arguing that the crime of the hired Roman assassins differed in degree from that of the Ottawa assassin: he contends that it was "entirely different," that is to say different in kind.

The moral sense of the Witness is so obtuse, his notions of what the usages and customs of war sanction and tolerate—are so confused that he is in need of being taught the very elements of morality as applicable to the subject. We tell him then, and in this we are sure that the majority of Protestants will agree with us, that even in actual war, acts such as these for which the Roman assassins were beheaded, would be branded as cowardly murder and as inflicting indelible stigma on the combatants who had ordered them, or who had even connived at them. The officers or soldiers who should steal upon a detachment of the enemy, and should kill them in their sleep, would even according to the laws of war, which sanction the destruction of life in certain cases, be treated as the vilest of murderers, as sneaks and cowards who disgraced not only themselves, but the flag beneath which they served.

But in Rome, when the crime of which we are talking occurred, there was no war. The Pope who was at peace with all the legal governments of the world was the legal sovereign with just as good a title to reign over the Pontifical States, as has Queen Victoria to rule over Ireland. Does the dissolution of a large portion of the Irish invalids, the Queen's title? No—the Witness will reply. Neither then can the dis-

affection of a small minority of the Pope's subjects invalidate his title: and we have the testimony of the very leaders of the Garibaldian raid of 1867, and published in the London Times, to this effect: That they and their followers were so unpopular that they were received by the Roman people, not as deliverers from a hated yoke, but as enemies. The very women and children cursed them as they passed along, refused them even a drop of water to quench their thirst, and cast stones at them. This is the published testimony of an officer of the Garibaldian expedition: and it is therefore false to pretend as does the Witness that the murder of the Papal Zouaves was perpetrated in the interest of the Roman people. The actual condition of the Papal States, when the crime was committed was as was that of Canada when on one fine morning in June 1866, a band of Yankee raiders crossed over from the United States upon the pretence that they were fighting for the liberties of Ireland. Now if under these circumstances some Fenians in Toronto had blown up the barracks of one of the regiments there lying, and had thereby killed some score, and mutilated others of H. M. troops, would not the Witness have contended that the crime was not only murder, but murder of the most brutal and cowardly description?

But the Zouaves were foreigners and mercenaries, therefore, argues the Witness, the killing of them was "entirely different" from murder. It is true that many of the Zouaves are not Romans by birth: but mercenaries they are not, any more than the crusaders were mercenaries. In their ranks are the names of members of families the most illustrious in Europe, to whom the pay of a soldier in the Papal army is certainly no inducement: and there is not one who has not, by therein taking service, voluntarily made great personal and pecuniary sacrifices. Fanatical these men may be called by their enemies: but "mercenaries," that is to say men who sell their blood for so many cents per diem, they are not.

The Witness does not know the meaning of the words he uses. We will tell him who were "mercenaries"—"foreign mercenaries" in the fullest acceptation of the terms. The fellows, French Canadians and others, whom the Northern Government hired during the late war to put down the Southerners in their war for independence; these were "foreign mercenaries." For these hirelings of the North, for these foreign mercenaries fighting for their daily pay and rations, the Witness never had a word of reprobation. We should like to know, however, why it should be lawful for the Northern States to hire "foreign mercenaries," to aid in putting down what they called rebellion? and why it should be wrong for the Sovereign Pontiff to accept the freely proffered services of Catholics to defend him against the Italian Fenians whom the Government of Victor Emmanuel encourages? In short, if we analyze carefully the moral thesis of the Witness, we obtain the following extraordinary results.

(1) That—though there is nothing reprehensible in the conduct of a non Catholic government, in employing its agents all over the world, to pick up all the loafers, escaped jail birds, and off-scourings of society generally, to enable it to put down a rebellion: and though the foreign mercenaries so hired are entitled to be treated with all the courtesies of civilized warfare:—

(2) —it is a high crime and misdemeanor for a Catholic Sovereign to accept the freely proffered services of his co religionists: and that men who fight, not for pay, but for an idea to use a French expression—who abandon home, and wealth, and ease, and social position, to lay down their lives for a principle, for what even if in error they firmly believe to be the cause of religion and liberty, are wretches fit only to be denounced as "foreign mercenaries" who have forfeited all right to the treatment and usages of civilized warfare: who are to be exterminated like vermin, and whom, to blow up in their sleep, is, if not a meritorious action, at all events a mode of proceeding "entirely different" from murder, and therefore not condemned as such by either human law, or divine law.

And indirectly we deduce also the following corollary. That whilst misguided but brave men who, as did Allen and Larren in fair and open fight to rescue a fellow countryman from jail, kill a constable, are murderers, and are properly made to undergo the ignominious doom of murderers and to expiate their crime on the scaffold; the beheading of Monti and Tognetti, who stealthily blew up the barracks where the Zouaves lay sleeping, and thereby caused the death of many a poor helpless fellow was a "ferocious act," and one which justly exposes the Government that sanctioned it to the righteous reprobation of the world. Such is the morality of the Witness, such the equal manner in which it deals its justice to friends and foes.

The Director of the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum begs to acknowledge, with many thanks, the receipt of \$2.50 from D. McB. and C.B.

The Report of the St. Bridget's Asylum Association, Quebec, received too late for this issue, shall appear in our next.

On Wednesday, the Feast of the Epiphany, Pontifical High Mass was celebrated at the Church of the Gesu, by Mgr. de Montreal. His Lordship will leave for Europe on Tuesday next, the 20th inst. His intention is to assist at the General Council to be held at Rome towards the close of the year. His absence will therefore be prolonged. The prayers of his flock for his prosperous voyage, and safe return to his native land and his diocese, will accompany him.

THE PONTIFICAL ZOUVES.—It is generally known among our fellow-citizens that His Lordship Monseigneur Bourget will leave Montreal for Rome on the 20th of the present month. On the evening of his departure, a solemn demonstration will take place in the magnificent church of the Gesu. Thanks to the zeal and ingenuity of many good wishers, this demonstration will be made highly useful to the Pontifical Zouaves. A Sacred Concert will be given for their benefit, and whatever is realized will be sent on to Rome for their support.

Admission can be obtained on purchasing a ticket. The money realized on one hundred tickets will support a Zouave during an entire year, and as each ticket will be numbered according to a particular series, every subscriber or purchaser will know the courageous Canadian youth whose military renown per chance he has more closely watched, and at the same time will give to our brave and devoted representatives in Rome, the name of one of those who, by their generous concurrence, enable our noble Zouaves to continue in behalf of our dearly loved Holy Father, an assistance which reflects so much honor on our country.

This arrangement is extremely ingenious, and will add new interest to this demonstration.—More complete details will be given in a day or two.

Let the Church be crowded on the 19th.

A BOY'S COLLECTION.—The scholars of the Friars schools waited on Monseigneur Bourget on Monday afternoon, to the number of about 3,500 and presented him with an address upon the occasion of his departure for Rome on the 20th instant, as also with a purse of \$300 for presentation to the Pope, intended for the support of a Papal Zouave. The Bishop was visibly affected, and replied he would be most happy to lay their offering at the feet of the Holy Father.

A great loss has fallen upon the Community of the Sisters of the Congregation of Montreal. They have to mourn the death of one of their most venerable members in the person of Mere Catherine Huot, in religion Sister St. Madeleine, who full of years, and ripe in virtue fell asleep in Jesus on the night of the 6th inst.

Sister St. Madeleine had been a member of the Congregation for more than 61 years, having entered the Community at the age of sixteen, and being in her seventy-eighth year at the time of her death. During her long and useful life, she rendered important services to the Community, as directress of novices, and on many occasions as Superior. As we learn from the Nouveau Monde, she was present at the receptions of all, except five, of the Sisters, 410 in number, of whom at this date the Congregation is composed.

Not only by her Sisters of the Congregation will the loss of the deceased be deplored, but by numbers of the poor to whom she ever approved herself a tender and affectionate mother, and by the little children in whom she ever took a lively interest, and for whose wants she was a careful purveyor. Their prayers will follow her, and by them her name will long be held in honor.

The funeral service of the deceased took place on Saturday last, 9th inst., in the Chapel of Notre Dame de Pitie. His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal officiated.—R.I.P.

ENTERTAINMENT AT THE CONGREGATIONAL CONVENT, KINGSTON, ONT.

On the evening of the 27th December, the Feast of St. John, one of those pleasing evening entertainments, which the Ladies of the Congregation of Notre Dame appear to have a peculiar talent in making successful, was given in St. Joseph's School-house, Kingston. The exhibition was complimentary to His Lordship the Bishop of Kingston, who was present on the occasion. The Hall was decorated in the most tasty manner; beautiful paintings, drawings, and pieces of work, the fruits of the pupils' industry, being suspended all around the walls of the apartment. The entertainment consisted of some few very beautiful dramas, inculcating the practice of virtue, interspersed with music of a most pleasing nature, in which the young ladies acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of a select and highly appreciative audience. I would wish to know the names; but again, methinks, it might be invidious to particularize, and I am sure my fair young friends would not desire me to do so. But this I will say with the greatest sincerity, and I am sure that all those present there on that evening, will agree with me on this point: that the entertainment given on that night of the Feast of St. John, was one