

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE

FRANCE.—The Congress continues to labor at its task. The Congress consists of all the second plenipotentiaries. The treaty of peace, it was confidently rumored, would be signed on Saturday, the 29th. March.

The Correspondence of the London *News* says that the plenipotentiaries of the Court have been ordered to prepare illuminations definitely. Other papers say Sunday, the 29th, or one day next week, but all agree it will be early.

Previous intelligence from Paris had stated a diplomatic difficulty is on point of being settled. The delay was caused by Prussia claiming to sign the treaty on equal terms with other powers. Lord Clarendon having earnestly resisted; Prussia claimed and insisted that she should only adhere to the treaty in the same manner as France did in 1840, which was signed without participation in making it.

The Paris *Patrie*, Government paper, now says: "without infringing necessarily on reserve, we can announce that the difficulties have not been attended with any important consequences."

A review of 100,000 troops will take place, to celebrate the signing of peace. The review is intended as a compliment to Count Orléans—the only soldier of the plenipotentiaries.

Among the rumors prevailing are, that the Emperors of Russia and Austria have respectively promised to visit Paris after the conclusion of peace.

6000 French have embarked at Marseilles for the Crimea, probably to supply sick vacancies.

Napoleon determines to send an extensive expedition and colonization to Madagascar. England does not oppose.

AMNESTY TO POLITICAL EXILES IN FRANCE.

—The Emperor (says the *Moniteur*) has caused an account to be given to him of the number and the situation of the individuals still kept in Algeria, or abroad, in consequence of political measures. After the events of June, 1848, 11,000 persons were condemned under the Republic to transportation to Algeria; through the clemency of the President, there no longer remain in Algeria more than 306. In December, 1851, 11,200 were either transported or expelled; the pardons since granted by the Emperor have reduced that number to 1,058. On the birth of the Prince Imperial, his Majesty has decided that the authorization to return to France shall be granted to all who declare that they submit loyally to the Government which the nation has given itself, and pledge their honor that they will respect the laws. At the time of the inauguration of the Empire a similar generous offer was made; and the Emperor has now ordered it to be repeated. There will henceforth remain out of the country only such persons who shall obstinately persist in setting at naught the national will and the monarchy which it has founded.

Such an immense number of presents for the Empress and the imperial infant have lately been sent to Paris that it has been found absolutely necessary to send orders to all the railway stations and diligence offices in the country not to receive any parcel for such a destination. The money spent in paying for the carriage has been enormous. Of course very few could be accepted, and the greatest part were returned to the senders with thanks for their offer. The carriage of all these returned parcels was paid by her Majesty. Many of the presents were of a very odd character. Among the gifts for the infant was an enormous case of honey, the carriage of which came to twenty francs. The Empress received from a woman in the south of France an extremely dirty girdle, which the donor said she had worn for seven confinements; as she had had only boys she thought the Empress would be glad to wear it for luck.

ITALY.

The State of Parma had been again laid under siege owing to frequent disturbances and assassinations. The Government had also become greatly alarmed. Cattle murrain is said to be spreading all over the continent.

A letter from Rome, in the *Piemonte* of Turin, says:—

"The King of Naples has come to a definite understanding with the Holy See. His Majesty consents that the celebrated privileges of the Sicilian monarchy shall be nearly all abolished; and has accepted the brief in virtue of which the Holy Father destroys the secular prerogatives of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of Sicily."

The *Amico Cattolico* announces the conversion of the Baroness d'Hugel, an English lady, wife of the Austrian Minister to the Court of Tuscany, and also of a young Protestant female, and a native of Switzerland. They were both received into the Church by the Archbishop of Florence, who administered the Sacraments, and addressed them on the happy occasion.

GERMANY.

The *Moniteur* publishes the following communication, dated Vienna, March 28th:—

"The *Vienna Gazette* has just published a circular addressed by the Minister of Public Instruction and Worship to the Bishops, for the purpose of inducing them to lend their aid to the government, in order to insure the full carrying out of the new administrative system founded by the Concordat. For this purpose all the Archbishops and Bishops of the empire are invited to assemble at Vienna on the second Sunday after Easter (April 6th), and there to open conferences, at which the imperial government will be represented by his Eminence the Cardinal von Rauscher, Archbishop of Vienna. In desiring this meeting, the ministerial circular in question observes, the Austrian government proposes to itself, above all, to hasten the execution of the Concordat, to render its application uniform in its various parts

of the empire—in short, to realize a complete harmony between the Church and the state on questions of detail left in suspense by the Concordat, and to do so either by means of a direct understanding with the Bishops, or, in case that should be impossible, by preparing the ground for those negotiations which the court of Austria would then have to open on this subject with the Holy See itself."

Very bad feeling is exhibited by Russia and Prussia towards Austria.

STARTLING REVELATIONS.

Were any apology for the action of the Buffalo Convention required, it would be found in the pages of the "Official Report" of the Special Committee appointed by the Legislature of the State of New York to enquire into the condition of the tenement houses in New York and Brooklyn; which, as the reader may easily imagine, are tenanted almost exclusively by the poorer class of immigrants from the old world. Of these the Yankee *patron* speculators make their profits; and hence the opposition amongst a certain clique, to any movement likely, by depriving them of their wretched tenants, to diminish the annual amount that they extort from these poor creatures.

The "Report," to which we refer, is given in full by the *American Celt*; and amply confirms the assertions of the Buffalo Convention—to the effect, that hitherto the Irish immigrant in the large cities of the Eastern States of the Union, has improved neither his material, nor his moral condition by emigrating to the Great Republic of the West. Though our space will not allow of our publishing this "Report" at length, some details may prove interesting to the general reader; and certainly, if in one single instance, they should have the effect of convincing the intending emigrant of the unsuitableness of the large cities of the United States for his future home, then will their publication not have been in vain.

The Committee, after regretting that the limited time at its disposal had prevented it from pushing its researches so far as it would otherwise have done, proceeds to give the following harrowing details of the physical and moral depravity which, even a partial, and quite superficial inspection, divulges to the horrified spectator. We copy from the *American Celt*:—

Partial returns, made up hurriedly by the captains of police for the use of the committee, show that in twenty-two districts there are over one thousand two hundred tenement houses, of the lowest description, occupied by not less than ten families each, in some of these as many as seventy different families reside, and into a few over one hundred families are crowded. A number of these dwellings were visited by your committee. In one building one hundred and twelve families are gathered, some of them numbering eight or ten members, occupying one close apartment, and others huddled indiscriminately in damp, foul cellars, to breathe the air of which is to inhale disease. Here, in their very worst aspect, are to be seen the horrors of such a mode of living. Here are to be found drunken and diseased adults of both sexes lying in the midst of their filth; idiotic and crippled children suffering from neglect and ill-treatment; girls, just springing into womanhood living indiscriminately in the same apartment with men of all ages and of all colors; babes left so destitute of care and nourishment as to be fitted only for a jail or hospital in after years, if they escape the blessing of an early grave. Indeed, no language could faithfully depict the suffering and misery witnessed even in the hurried visits paid by the committee to these hothouses of immorality, drunkenness, debauchery and disease.

In the Ninth District, out of seventy houses reported by the Captain of Police as being let in tenements to not less than ten families, forty are designated as in a very filthy condition, unfit for human habitation, and all of these are occupied by from sixteen to thirty-five families each. In the Tenth District, out of seventy-six houses, several are occupied by as many as seventy distinct families, and are reported as in a filthy condition, without ventilation, and destitute of the accommodations necessary for the use of civilized beings. In the Eleventh District, in which are some seventy houses of a like description, the report says:—"Of all the tenement houses in the district, Folsom Barracks and the Cottages are the most wretched and filthy—like disgraceful to the owners of the property and the city that tolerates such nuisances. It could not fail to be a matter of surprise to any one who would go through and examine them, that the occupants did not all die of pestilence generated by their unspeakable filth and dissolute habits of living."

In the Thirteenth Ward, in a building known as Manhattan place there are ninety-six separate apartments. These are inhabited by one hundred and forty-six families—or more than one family and a half to each room—numbering in all five hundred and fifty-seven persons—or about six individuals to each single room. The report of the Health Warden, setting forth these facts, says:—"These premises are three stories high, the cellars are in a bad condition, the sinks filthy, and the ventilation poor. In the summer season these premises are known to be very filthy, and not the least attention is paid to them whatever by either owner or agent—their sole aim apparently being to make money, exhibiting in the same an entire disregard to all law whatever."

In the houses visited by your committee sights were presented to them alike startling and painful to behold. In many, whites and blacks were living indiscriminately together, negro men with white women, and white men with negro women. Young faces, haggard with want, and bearing that peculiar look of premature age imparted by early sin, peered at them from every corner; misery and vice in their most repulsive features, met them at every step. Scarcely an apartment was free from sickness and disease, and the blighting curse of drunkenness had fallen upon almost every family. Here and there might be found, it is true, some attempt at cleanliness, some display of a love of home, some evidence of industry and sobriety; with their internal accompaniments, cheerfulness and good health. But these, your committee found, were in most instances families that had not been long inhabitants of the neighborhood in which they lived. The demoralization and ruin apparent all around had not had time to do their

work on them. It is to be feared that too soon the miasma will creep into their system, undermining the sturdy constitution, and prostrating its victims on a bed of sickness. Health failing them, want will follow; and then must come crowding rapidly upon them, the terrors of poverty, the lack of food, cleanliness, dress, and shelter. This is no fancy sketch—no picture of the imagination. It is a stern reality—enacted every day in the midst of luxury and wealth—the natural and fearful result of the rapacity of landlords in an overcrowded city, unrestrained by conscience, and wholly unchecked by legislation.

Many of the buildings that are thus rented to the poor realize for their owners larger annual incomes than do the first class dwelling houses in the best parts of the city. And yet they are estimated by the assessors as almost valueless, and escape anything like a fair taxation, notwithstanding they are the principal causes of the heavy burdens imposed upon the citizens of New York for the support of the criminal and the poor. This is of itself a forcible argument in favor of some active legislation upon the subject.

In these buildings, thus crowded with human beings, there is, with scarcely an exception, but one narrow stairway, and egress to the multitude inside, in case of fire, is an impossibility. Common humanity demands some law against this evil.

Every underground cellar in these tenement buildings, that is not absolutely flooded by water and filth, is made a lodging room for one or more wretched families. All of these are destitute of any species of ventilation; in most of them the floors are thick with putrid mud, and the pipes and sinks communicating with them from the upper apartments give out their offensive and deadly gas, and pollute the air of the whole neighborhood. One of the provisions of a law regulating these matters should be directed against permitting an underground apartment of any description to be rented or used as a tenement.

It would be an unnecessary encroachment upon your time to present in detail the numerous suggestions made by practical builders, and by the police and health officers of New York, who appeared before your committee, in reference to the best mode of effecting the much desired reform in the construction and management of tenement houses, with a view to removing the evils resulting from their present filthy and dangerous condition.

Indeed, no expenditure that could be incurred, in securing the removal of the evils complained of could be at all commensurate with the benefits and the saving that would result therefrom. To the wretched condition of the dwellings of the poor of New York can be traced an enormous proportion of the burdens imposed upon the property holders of the city, and upon the State at large, for the support of paupers and criminals. From the foul atmosphere of the tenement houses spring the infectious diseases that so frequently spread through the city, sweeping away thousands and not confining the depredations to the class with which they originate, but penetrating into the localities occupied by the wealthy, and rendering desolate many a happy household. Hundreds upon hundreds of paupers point into the hospitals, stricken by disease contracted in these hothouses of pestilence. From them drunkenness mainly receives its victims; for what will sooner drive man to the intoxicating cup than an absence of all attraction and all comfort from his home? From them the brothels of the city are peopled, for there the female is early taught to forget all womanly feeling and inured to a life of shame. From them the jails are supplied for they are the natural haunts of felons. It is no idle assertions to state that a reform by which the condition of the homes of the poor could be improved would remove a large proportion of the criminals from our prisons, and the paupers from our almshouses. In London, since the model lodging houses have been in existence, together with baths and wash-houses for the poor, the mortality has decreased 31 per cent., and pauperism 39 per cent. A similar result would attend a similar reform in New York.

The practical results which your committee will endeavor to secure through legislative action, and to which their inquiries will be directed, are—

Ventilation and cleanliness in the tenement houses, so that the public health may be protected, the spread of infectious diseases checked, and the expenses of public hospitals and almshouses decreased.

An enactment against permitting the renting of underground apartments or cellars as tenements. Regulations as to the building of halls and stairways in houses occupied by more than three families, so as to ensure easy egress in case of fire.

The prevention of prostitution and incest, by providing that only a sufficient number of rooms, or a room properly divided in separate departments, shall be rented to families, and by prohibiting sub-letting.

The prevention of drunkenness, by providing to every man a clean and comfortable home.

In conclusion, your committee would state that as they are all residents of New York or its immediate neighborhood, the expenses attending their labors would be comparatively trifling, and they therefore beg respectfully to submit for the consideration of the House the following resolution:—

Resolved, That the Special Committee appointed to examine into the condition of the tenement houses in New York and Brooklyn have power to extend their operations during the recess of the Legislature, so far as is necessary to enable them to perfect some plan of reform, and to prepare a bill for the consideration of the next House of Assembly; and that they be required to present their report and bill to the next Legislature some time during the first week of January, 1857.

JOHN M. REED, Clk.

A. J. H. DURAN, Secy.

WILLIAM J. SHEA, Committee.

ED. CURTIS,

SAMUEL BUCKVOORT.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS—A WORD TO OUR LEGISLATORS.

To the Editor of the Toronto Mirror.

Toronto, March 31st.

The question now before the Legislative Assembly is one of vital importance, and which Legislators cannot trifle with without trenching upon a forbidden ground. Shall the dearest rights of Catholics be respected? Shall liberty of Religion and liberty of conscience be a reality, or a mockery? Such is the grand question of the day, now submitted to the united wisdom of the Canadian Senate. That they will decide in the affirmative, we have some reason to conclude when we bear in mind the ground on which these inalienable rights rest as upon an immo-

veable basis. Those unalienable rights have been secured to them on the faith of the most solemn treaties. The privilege of educating their children in the manner the most congenial to their own views, and in the tenets of their own faith, is guaranteed to them by the Act of Capitation, which is a solemn pledge to the attainment of no object so dear to their heart, for the preservation of which even the sacrifice of life becomes a duty. Catholics will have and must have schools where religion will be the basis of education, schools where, besides the elements and principles of a secular education, children will be taught the doctrines of their Church, and where that Church will not be turned into ridicule, as it has been too frequently and still lately the case. For the maintenance of their schools conducted on their own principles, Catholics do not ask for the money of Protestants, as has been most falsely asserted by those who ought to have known better; they do not solicit the aid of those who differ from them in faith; they do not even petition for a compensation for the large amounts contributed by them, for years back, towards raising these huge buildings where they cannot send their children, and supporting public libraries teeming with the vilest scurrility against the Catholic Church and its Ministers. So far as they are concerned, they have never ceased to protest against the grand imposition of the Common School system, because they derive and can derive no benefit therefrom; either for themselves or their children. They do not wish, however, for the discontinuance of what others may choose to avail themselves of. If some Protestants are satisfied with the working and fruits of the Common Schools, let them have them to their hearts' content. If some Protestants can conscientiously approve a system of education which in the neighboring Republic is producing a generation of infidels, Catholics will have none of it. They ask for no favor or partially. What they petition for, is simply the right of using their own School taxes for the maintenance of their own schools, the right of applying to the education of their children what little means they can dispose of. Such are our claims and the object of our petitions since the unjust system of Common Schools was forced upon the people of Canada.

The narrow minded bigots who propose to repeal the Act authorizing the establishment of Separate Schools, with a view of forcing Catholics to send their children into the Common Schools, betray the greatest ignorance of Catholic feelings and Catholic principles. Catholics can no more send their children to Protestant or Common Schools, than to Protestant places of worship. Both are alike, according to their own convictions—places of perversion. Were they unable to establish and support Separate Schools they would be in duty bound to keep their children at home, rather than send them where religion is excluded, or at least passed by silently, and where they will learn what, without religious principles can make them, at most—learned atheists. Ignorance and irreligion are the greatest evils which may befall the human race. A rational being who, in all things, is taught to choose always the least of two evils, will not hesitate to give the preference to the former as less prejudicial to his welfare on the other side of the grave, than the latter.

To compel Catholics, (as has been for many years past their unhappy lot,) to contribute their share of school taxes towards the maintenance of a system of education which they regard as the high road to infidelity, and from which they can derive no advantage, is a direct violation of that liberty of conscience guaranteed to them by the most solemn compact, and secured by both human and divine laws. The system of Common School education, as it is attempted to force upon the neck of a mixed population differing as they do in religious belief, is an act of tyranny, an outrage to the pure rights of conscience against which every man who values the blessings of civil and religious liberty, will never cease to raise his voice. Should any measure be passed by the Legislative Assembly to apply the school taxes of Catholics to the support of the Common School system, they (Catholics) would look upon it as null and void a principle, as oppressive and tyrannical, and consequently as failing to bind men's conscience. If I may be allowed to express my candid opinion on the subject in reference to myself personally, I will not hesitate to say that were I liable to be taxed I would fearlessly refuse to bear a burden which no power on earth can impose on me. Neither physical nor moral compulsion would force me to yield submission to what I consider to be a penal and unjust enactment. I would rather allow every object of taxable property to be sold off, under the hammer, and my person to be confined in a dungeon, than even to contribute a cent towards upholding the grandest imposition ever palmed upon a civilized nation. Such are my principles and determination; and such, I believe, is the sincere and honest conviction of every Catholic, clerical or lay, of this Province.

Whether blind bigots and narrow minded politicians will succeed or not in bringing about their illiberal and unchristian schemes, and deprive us of our inalienable rights and privileges, Separate Schools we will have, and are bound to have, say what they will, enact what they may. Poor as Catholics individually are, their collective body is possessed of resources which persecution and tyranny are sure to call forth on every great emergency. Confident in the justice of their cause, and firmly relying on the protection of Heaven, they are determined not to be imposed upon any longer, and maintain their rights and privileges, cost what it may. Catholic Schools are already more numerous all over Upper Canada than at any former period. At the voice of religion they are daily springing up throughout the length and breadth of the land. Whenever a Catholic settlement has been effected, whether on the green hill or in the smiling valley, the Church and the School, surmounted with the emblem of man's salvation, proclaim to the rising generation that religion and science linked together with the indissoluble ties of sisterhood, are ever to walk hand in hand, in the path marked out for them by the Author of both.

Hoping that true wisdom and Christian charity may ever prevail in the councils of our Provincial Government, I beg to subscribe myself,

Yours Most Obedient Servant,

J. M. BRUYER.

The *Barbadoes Liberal* of 29th says: Governor Hincks attended Divine Service at the Cathedral Church of England, in that Island, in Canada. Governor Hincks was supposed to have been an Unitarian. Perhaps he has been converted.