

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1859.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

By the Canada we are in possession of European news to the 7th inst. The Austrians had, it would seem, met with a check in their attempt to cross the Po; and the advantages which at the outset of the campaign they seemed to possess, have by their dilatoriness been lost to them, probably for ever. Up to the latest dates there had been no general engagement; and as the French troops were rapidly arriving in Piedmont, the prospects of Austria seem by no means bright.

From Great Britain we learn that the General Election has given a gain of 25 to Ministers.—In Ireland there had been a fearful calamity, and loss of life; in consequence of the wreck of the emigrant ship *Pomona*, bound from Liverpool to New York, who was driven on shore in a heavy gale of wind on the night of the 27th ult., off a place named Ballycongar. The captain, most of the officers, crew and passengers, perished; only the third mate with eighteen of the crew, and three passengers, having been saved.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

There is a trifling formality connected with the publishing business, to which we would respectfully invite our subscribers' immediate attention.—So trivial apparently, in their eyes, is this formality, that we should hardly venture to allude to it, were it not that, to the printer and publisher of the newspaper, it is of considerable, indeed of vital importance. This formality, of whose existence, even, the great majority of our subscribers do not seem to have the least suspicion, consists in an occasional remittance by them of a stipulated amount of the current coin of the realm, to the printer or publisher, in return for the journal by the latter periodically issued. Our subscribers will hope, pardon us for reminding them of such a trifle, which they have evidently either entirely forgotten, or look upon as utterly beneath their notice; because, for many months, we have scarcely seen symptom amongst them of the remotest suspicion on their part, that it was incumbent upon them to discharge a portion at least, of their long-accumulating arrears of debt to this office.

We take therefore this opportunity of delicately hinting to our friends, that paper, compositor's wages, and the expenses of issuing a paper, involve a considerable outlay of money; that we have for months, we may almost say for years, furnished to our subscribers, at our own cost, the copy of the TRUE WITNESS that is laid before them every week; and that however well we may feel disposed to continue this process of always publishing, and of never receiving, it is not in our power to do so much longer. Such an arrangement might be a very convenient one for the receivers of the paper; but in the long run it must inevitably prove ruinous to the printer and publisher. As the frogs said to the boys amusing themselves with pelting the former with stones—"what is sport to you, is death to us;" so say we to our subscribers—"The non-payment system, which is the system you pertinaciously adhere to, may be most convenient to you; but to us it is certain ruin, if longer continued."

There are numbers too of our subscribers who think that they have amply and most honorably discharged all their obligations, if—after having for some two or three years taken the paper without paying one cent, and being then respectfully invited to pay up their arrears—they accompany a positive refusal to comply with such (in their eyes) an exorbitant demand, with an intimation to "Stop their Paper." They seem to labor under the inexplicable, but by no means uncommon delusion that, by taking a paper for a number of years, without paying for it, they in some mysterious manner or another, have "encouraged its circulation;" that they have thereby established a claim upon the gratitude and affection of the printer and publisher for ever; and that in being called upon by the latter to pay for the paper which they have received, an intolerable outrage is offered to their purse, and to their high feelings. "Base is the slave that pays"—is their motto; and in this particular, we must admit that the constant practice of a large portion of our subscribers is in perfect harmony with the great principle embodied in that famous aphorism.

Of course there are some, indeed many, honorable exceptions.

Now we do not wish to dissipate any pleasing, harmless, and time-honored illusion; nor would we in this instance disturb the mental repose of our subscribers—who for the most part appear to be under the strong and almost invincible impression that the payment of arrears due to the printer is, if not a vain and idle superstition, at all events superfluous, or what the professors of justification by faith "alone" would call "a work of supererogation"—were it not for the heavy pressure upon our pecuniary resources; which compels us to give our friends this gentle hint of the existence of the formality alluded to by us above. Were we rich enough to continue to furnish our readers with a weekly paper gratis—or at our own cost—as for months, and indeed years we have done, we should still be most happy to do so; but though our heart is large, our means are small; and excellent as may be our intentions, the condition of our funds does not enable us to carry them into practice.

From our friends of Kingston and of Montreal we have received so many expressions of hearty good will—which we are always happy cheerfully to acknowledge—that our remarks will, of course, be understood not to apply to them; and, therefore, whilst to those of our subscribers who have punctually remitted to us the amount of their several subscriptions, our best thanks are hereby tendered, we would at the same time urge upon the far more numerous body of defaulters in this respect, the propriety, indeed the duty, of immediately discharging their pecuniary obligations towards this office. We would also take this opportunity of mentioning that our City Collector is about to wait on our Montreal friends; by whom, we are confident, he will be well received, and from whom we will obtain a prompt settlement of their small accounts.

On the evening of Monday last, a meeting of Mr. McGee's friends was held in the Victoria Hall, for the purpose of presenting him with an address, complimenting him upon his conduct as a Member of Parliament. The Chair was taken by Mr. McCambridge; and the Address, which was moved by Capt. McGrath, and seconded by Mr. Thos. McCready, was passed unanimously. Mr. Donnelly acted as Secretary.

A few facts, given by us as we find them reported in the *Montreal Herald*, will suffice to mark the character of this meeting; and to indicate its value as an exponent of the sentiments of the Irish Catholic electors of Montreal.

In the first place, as occupying a prominent place on its platform; as taking an active part in the proceedings of the meeting; and as addressed by Mr. McGee as his "honorable and honored friend"—we must make mention of M. Dorion; the "honorable and honored" representative of a constituency mainly composed of Catholics; one too who in a great measure owes the seat in Parliament which he holds, to the Irish-Catholic vote; and who, on a late occasion, spoke strongly, and voted, in favor of introducing that infamous, insulting and restrictive clause into Acts of Incorporation, which was only three weeks ago publicly denounced by the St. Patrick's Literary Association of Montreal; and on account of which, the members of that Society unanimously, with honorable indignation, and every expression of scorn against its authors and supporters, hurled back the Bill passed by the Legislative Council for their incorporation.

Incredible and disreputable as this assertion must appear to our readers at a distance, we assure them that it is strictly true. Yes! that same M. Dorion, who has so insulted us, our clergy, our religious, had the unparalleled boldness to present himself before a meeting called in the name of Irish Catholics! and still more incredible, M. Dorion, instead of being received with every mark of dislike and indignation, was treated as an "honorable and honored" guest, by the men, who only on Easter Sunday last held a meeting to denounce as "iniquitous and insulting," the measure which he—M. Dorion—actively supported. God forbid that we should seem to inculcate principles of vengeance! but—we say it without hesitation—there are some insults, some outrages which, neither as men of honor, nor as Christians, should we either forgive or forget, until they have been atoned for by an ample and public apology. Such an outrage, such an insult, has M. Dorion offered to the entire Catholic body; that atonement he has not yet made; and it is, therefore, with shame as well as surprise, that we admit the fact that, on Monday evening last there were to be found amongst our Catholic community, any number of men, so oblivious of what they owed to themselves and to their Church, as to have given publicly their political countenance and approbation to the man who had so wantonly and so recently insulted them, and the Church of which they call themselves children, as had Mr. McGee's "honorable and honored friend," M. Dorion.

Another fact worthy of special notice, is to be found in the *Montreal Herald's* report of Mr. McGee's speech, in reply to the address presented to him. In that speech, Mr. McGee strongly and unequivocally declared himself in favor of

the "principle" of "Representation by Population." Accepting as a fact that the population of Upper exceeds that of Lower Canada, by some 230,000 souls, Mr. McGee said:—

"I have said it on the floor of the House, and I say it here—that it is wrong in principle, that a population which numbers a quarter of a million more, than a population with a quarter of a million less, should for all times, and under all circumstances, have an equally invariable representation.—Such a state of things cannot be defended in these days in any constitutional country."—*Montreal Herald.*

And we say—that, as Catholics, we can, and that, as Catholics, we will—so help us God—defend this "state of things" with our last breath; that—seeing that, when the population of Lower Canada was far greater, and its finances were in a more flourishing condition, than the population and finances of Upper Canada, the former was allowed by the Act of Union, a number of representatives only equal to that of the representatives of the less populous and poorer section of the Province—it would be a most monstrous iniquity if, now that the relative conditions of Upper and Lower Canada have changed, the arrangement should be disturbed; and again to the disadvantage of the latter, and the profit of the former. And we reply too, that we look upon every man as the enemy of Catholic Lower Canada, and therefore as our political enemy, who gives, in appearance even, the slightest encouragement to the agitation in favor of "Representation by Population," or who does not condemn that measure as "unjust in principle;" and that we denounce him especially, who, calling himself a Catholic, countenances a political change which would, by increasing the number of Protestants in the Legislature, without, at the same time, and to the same extent, increasing the number of Catholic members, be speedily and inevitably followed by the full establishment of Protestant Ascendancy; and would reduce the Catholic, and French Canadian section of the Province, to the same state of miserable subjection to Protestant and Anglo-Saxon Upper Canada, as that in which Catholic Ireland is by the Union, placed with reference to Protestant Great Britain. As Catholics, we will tolerate no compromise on this—to the interests of our religion, as well as Canadian nationality—vital question—"Equality of Representation," or "Repeal of the Union;" these are our last words; and we do hope that no Irish Catholic will ever be so false to the dearest interests of his Church, and so unjust towards his fellow-Catholics of French origin, as to give his support to any man, or to any party, who will not solemnly pledge himself, or themselves, to oppose by all means, and at all hazards, every attempt that may be made to increase the representation of the almost exclusively Protestant section of the Province, at the expence of the other and Catholic section. This has ever been, and to the last hour of its existence shall be, the openly avowed policy of the TRUE WITNESS.

Lastly, we would notice as a significant fact, that, at the close of the meeting, according to the *Herald's* report, "Cheers" were given for Mr. McGee and Mr. George Brown. Strange collocation of names this! marvelous the change that must have occurred in the political atmosphere of Montreal since the last election! when the Irish Catholic electors of that City, by dint of great exertions returned Mr. McGee to Parliament, in order that he might have "his half hour on the floor of the House with George Brown." Almost would it seem as if we had fallen upon the halcyon days, spoken of by Isaiahs the prophet—when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the lion shall eat straw like an ox.—c. xi. 6, 7. Or rather, is it not with us, as of old, with the son of Sennacherib?—and with our representative, as with Balaam the son of Beor?—We sent him—Mr. McGee, not Balaam—to Parliament that we might be avenged of our adversary; and lo! on the contrary, "he has blessed him these three times." Yet Balaam deceived not Balac; for when sent for, he warned the King of Moab that he would speak no other thing but that which God should put in his mouth; whilst when we sent Mr. McGee to Parliament, it was with the express understanding that he would take up his parable against our enemy;—and that he might have his ardently-longed-for half hour on the floor of the House with George Brown."

This much we have felt it incumbent upon us to say, with reference to the late meeting; because, if allowed to pass unnoticed, it might give a very false opinion of the feelings and policy of the Irish Catholic electors of this city. We state, therefore, clearly and openly, that, though all admit Mr. McGee's talents, and admire his eloquence, and though his votes for the most part merit their approval, a great, a very great, portion of the Irish Catholic electors of Montreal; a portion of that body eminently respectable in point of numbers, and still more respectable from their intelligence, their social position, and moral character; do not approve of all his political conduct since he has been their representative.—They do not approve of his intimacy with Mr. George Brown, the reviler of their race and their religion; they condemn, as unworthy of a Catholic gentleman, his connection with M. Dorion, who has offered, at least by his vote, public and wanton in-

sult to them, to their Clergy, and their religious institutions; and they heartily repudiate, as unjust towards Lower Canada, and as fraught with peril to their Church, the doctrine of "Representation by Population" of which Mr. McGee avows himself the advocate. We tell Mr. McGee therefore frankly, that if he desires the confidence and support of the entire Catholic body, he can have it—but only upon these conditions. That he detach himself politically from all those who by their votes, endorse the worst slanders of the *Witness* against our ecclesiastics; and that he at once, and for ever, declare himself determined to maintain "Equality of Representation," with respect to the two sections of the Province, so long as the Legislative Union betwixt them continues.

CONCLUDING LECTURE ON THE IRISH CHURCH.

(Reported for the *True Witness*.)

On Thursday week, in the City Concert Hall, the Rev. Mr. O'Farrell delivered, before a very large and respectable audience, the following concluding lecture on the Irish Church.

The Reverend Mr. O'Farrell said—They had met, once more, to consider the fortunes of the Irish Church. They had followed her so long in her sorrows and sufferings, that they could not now think of abandoning her, till they saw her, at last, arrive in a haven of safety. (Applause.) In his last lecture, he had brought down the history of the Irish Church till the time of Charles the Second. She was then in a most distressing condition; for her pastors had been slain, or driven into exile; and thus she was deprived of all her natural guides. In the year 1652, the most severe laws were enacted against the Catholic priests; and, in fact, the Irish Church never seemed so tormented, or so helpless as at this melancholy period of her history. But St. Patrick was still mindful of the Church he had planted; and in that hour of gloom and desolation she received succor from above, and new energy to meet the trials yet in store. (Applause.) As soon as the news of the death of the Primate reached Rome, in 1669, Clement the Ninth selected for the Primate's Chair, tho' no longer a place of splendor, Oliver Plunkett. He was born in 1631, at Loughbrooke, County Meath; and, in 1649, left Ireland for the Irish College at Rome. After a brilliant course, he won one of the highest honors of the Propaganda; and with all these attainments he was sent to Ireland, to take charge of the interests of the Church in that distracted country. When he reached Ireland, he found the fortunes of the Church at the lowest ebb. But, with a high and holy zeal, he undertook to raise the Irish Church to her ancient elevated position. He first endeavored to supply the necessity there existed for Priests; and so energetic was he in this respect that, in 1672, only three years after his nomination, the number of secular clergy was doubled, and the greater part of the vacant Sees were filled. Thus, the Irish Church had breathing time to recover her strength and gather fresh energy for coming trials. The Primate made frequent visitations, in order to encourage his people, and infuse hope into their spirits. His own life, indeed, was a painful one; in fact, he declared, on his trial, that he had lived in no other residence than a little thatched house, with but one room for a library, and that one not seven feet high; that he had only one servant, though scarcely able to support himself, having but £60 a-year, which was all he had ever received. In 1677, a terrible storm broke over the Irish Church; for Titus Oates had just invented his infamous Popish Plot, which convulsed England for three years, and caused some of the best Catholic blood to flow on the scaffold. In 1678, Lord Ormonde, then Viceroy, was informed by the English Parliament, that Peter Talbot, Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, was concerned in this plot. The Viceroy knew the suspicion to be absurd; but the Prelate was arrested, however, and in 1681, died a martyr for the faith.—To go back:—on the 16th of October, 1678, a new order was issued, commanding the banishment of all Popish Archbishops, Bishops, Deacons, &c., exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction by authority of the See of Rome; it was also made imperative that they should all depart the kingdom by the 20th of November; and Mass was ordered to be suppressed in the city and suburbs of Dublin, and other principal places in Ireland. Finally, before the end of the year, a new order was issued, to remove all Popish inhabitants from Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel, Killenny, and Drogheda, except a few artisans and others necessary for the towns and garrisons.—It would seem, from the conduct of the Parliament, that they again wished to drive the Irish into rebellion; be this as it may, however, Plunkett was accused of being implicated in the plot which Oates had invented; and, on the 6th Dec., 1679, he was arrested and committed to Newgate. Infamous men were procured, and swore that he was guilty of high treason, though, in reality, his crime was being a Papist. It was sworn (though he had but £60 a-year) that he had been negotiating to bring over an army of French and Spanish, and support them at his own expense; and that he designed, by their assistance, to dethrone the King of England.—In Ireland, however, though the juries there were bad enough in all conscience, he was not convicted on such evidence, and his trial was, therefore, transferred to England—a country where his character was unknown, and where there was a prejudice against everything Irish. Here he was arraigned on a charge of encompassing the King's death; he was not permitted to bring witnesses from Ireland, and was of course found guilty. The Prelate was calm, and yet he was resolute; he showed no affected indifference; he displayed no burst of indignation; but, in his demeanour was exemplified, the noble simplicity with all the firmness of the martyr.—(Applause.)—The contrast between the language of the Judge, and that of Plunkett was remarkable. "Look you here, Mr. Plunkett," said the Judge; "you have been

indicted for the great and heinous crime of high treason; besides, you have done as much as you could to dishonor God, by setting up your false religion, than which there is nothing so displeasing to God; and so great a crime as yours—is being both against God and the King—it is impossible to conceive." At the end of this insulting tirade, the Primate answered, meekly:—"May it please your Lordship to give me leave to speak one word. If I were a man who had no care of my conscience, or Almighty God, or Heaven or hell, I might have saved my life, if I would only consider my own good and accuse the innocent; but I would rather die ten thousand deaths than wrongfully accuse others. The time will come when you will know the character of the witness who have appeared against me; but again I would say, that I would rather meet ten thousand deaths, than take any man's goods, or a day off his liberty, or a moment of his life."—(Applause.)—The Primate, having lain six months in jail before his trial, was now sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; and this was carried into effect, at Tyburn, on the 1st of July, 1681.—(Sensation.)—The enemies of Plunkett's faith were well aware of his innocence; in fact, the Earl of Essex applied to the King for a pardon, stating it was impossible that the matters sworn could be true; but the Monarch answered, in a passion: "Why did you not declare that at the trial? It then might have done good; but now I can pardon nobody." Thus died Oliver Plunkett; and who could say that his death was not a martyrdom? He himself felt it to be so; for as he wrote a little before his death, he said he felt rejoiced on account of his Church, his country, and himself, that in this manner he was about to end his days. (Applause.) But another storm was about to burst over the Irish Church. The Penal Laws—promulgated in spite of the faith which was pledged in the treaty of Limerick. Having given a sketch of the penal code, the Rev. lecturer proceeded to say, that under these laws the high spirit of the nation seemed to be broken. Yet it was in this down-trodden condition that the first rays of light began to dawn upon the Irish Church. It might, at this period of Ireland's history, well be asked how was education preserved in these dark times? Principally on the Continent, by the charity and forethought of some benevolent Irish, and the kindness of some foreign Catholics, houses had been established in all the large cities for the Irish youth wishing to consecrate themselves to ecclesiastical study. The principal Colleges were in Louvain, Rome, Lisbon, and Paris, and there were produced such men as Colgan, O'Leary, and Peter Walsh; and, in some of these establishments also, there were books published in the Irish language for the instruction of the Irish Catholics at home. Thus the nations which formerly reaped benefits from the labours of the Irish Missionaries, paid back, in the days of Ireland's distress, the blessings with which she had enriched them in the days of her prosperity.—Another way in which education was preserved was in the Hedge Schools; and, though at present time some might be disposed to throw ridicule upon those schools, it ought to be remembered that when education was prohibited, it was here the spark was kept alive during long years of persecution. (Applause.) Such were the means by which the Irish Catholics endeavoured to counteract the evil influences of the Penal laws. There was yet another way, which he was happy in mentioning, because the agents were some of their Protestant fellow-countrymen. It was this—as many of the Catholics could not purchase land in their own name they often found many of their Protestant neighbors willing to do so for them; and it often happened that Catholics publicly made over their estates to Protestants, but with the secret understanding that the lands should only thus be kept till it was in the interest of the real proprietors again to claim them. By this charitable fraud many a valuable estate was preserved; and in no case did any Protestant ever break the trust which had been reposed in him. During the time of the two Georges, there was a slight relaxation in favor of the Catholics, except, however, when there was any fear of a French invasion. In the meantime, the Catholic people had been silently progressing, and their numbers were increasing; and this was the case when, in 1746, permission was granted to the Catholics for the celebration of worship. In 1778, the English Government, wearied with the contest with the American Colonies, and the seven years' war, began to think that there were such men in existence as the Irish Catholics. (Applause.)—The Relief Bill was now passed, by which Catholics were allowed to purchase property, but only in fee simple. After this period came that brilliant epoch—conspicuous amid the gloom of ages—the appearance of the Irish Volunteers. (Applause.) On the 15th September, 1782, came the Dungannon resolutions. On the 30th of February following, a bill was introduced into the Irish Parliament for the removal of the burdens then pressing upon the nation; and on the 16th April, of the same year, Grattan rose to congratulate the Irish Parliament on its newly acquired independence; but, alas! 18 years after, that same Parliament was dissolved. In the year 1793, a bill was passed granting to the Catholics the elective franchise, and the right to carry arms in their own defence: also the right to serve on petty juries—to enter the navy, army, colleges, &c. But they were still excluded from Parliament, and from some of the highest places of trust; still these concessions were very valuable, and gave to the Catholics a desire to acquire complete independence. In 1794, Maynooth was founded; and, at the suggestion of Burke, a grant of £8,000 a-year was given; and, in 1846, it was at length raised to £30,000 by the late Sir Robert Peel. At the time of the French Revolution, a great many priests, who were banished, found refuge in Maynooth, and added much to its reputation. Whilst the Irish Catholics were thus endeavoring to recover their liberties, the rebellion of 1798 broke out; but it was crushed; and by force, fraud and cruelty, the Legislative union was accomplished. But, thank God, the Irish Catholics had nothing to do with that iniquitous measure. (Applause.) For some years the spirit of the nation was