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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 1, 1856.

Up to the time of going to press, the steamer of the 19th had not been telegraphed.

"DICTATION IN MATTERS POLITICAL OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF TORONTO."—Under this caption, the *Montreal Herald* of yesterday reproduces an article of the *Toronto Leader*, reflecting severely upon the Pastoral Letter of His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto—wherein that Prelate plainly tells the people committed to his charge, that it is their duty, as Catholics and Christians, so to exercise their political privileges as citizens, as to secure to their children the advantages of a sound Catholic religious education; and that, if they neglect to do this, or encourage the present anti-Catholic school system, by sending their children to Non-Catholic schools, they will be guilty of mortal sin. "This," says the *Leader*, "is trenching on political grounds, and we cannot afford to allow his dictation to pass unchallenged."

We would suggest, however, to the *Leader* and the *Herald* that, in arrogating to itself the right to control the education of the child, the State—whose legitimate functions are confined to the material order—has first of all been guilty of "trenching" upon the domain of the moral and spiritual; and that in opposing this tyrannical interference of the civil power with the rights of the Church, the Bishop of Toronto has but fulfilled a duty, forced upon him by the previous "dictation of the State in matters moral and spiritual." "No sutor"—our cotemporary no doubt knows the proverb: and may perhaps see its application. Let the State confine itself within its own province, and mind its own business; let it repair our roads, make bridges, regulate tariffs, inspect our drains and backyards. These things it has the right to do; nor is there any fear that, whilst engaged in the performance of these, its sole legitimate functions, it will encounter any interference or dictation from the spiritual authority. But let it also abstain from meddling where it has no right to meddle; where it can do no good; and where, if it interferes at all, it can interfere only for evil. Let it abstain from dictating to Catholics how, or by whom, their children shall be educated; for the children are theirs, not the State's; and it is to God and His Church alone, and not to the State, that they are responsible for the manner in which they educate them.

No. It is not the Church in Canada that interferes with the State, and dictates in matters political, or apportioning of right to the State; but it is the State that interferes with the Church; and that presumes to "dictate in matters moral and spiritual"—in matters that affect man, as an immortal and responsible being; in matters, therefore, that appertain of right solely to the Church. It is against this interference that the Bishop of Toronto protests; it is this attempted "dictation" to the Church that he resists, and calls upon all faithful Catholics to resist—as, please God, they will resist; it is this tyrannical encroachment upon the rights of Catholics, that he condemns, and calls upon his faithful people to oppose by the legitimate exercise of their political privileges. We thank God that we have such a Bishop—so mindful of his duty—so watchful over the spiritual interests of his flock—so zealous to remind them of their duties—and so faithful in giving them a warning of impending dangers. Our hope is that the Catholic laity of Upper Canada may approve themselves worthy of such a Pastor.

The *Leader* also gravely tells us—poor man—that this spirited action of His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto, "is clearly an attempt to call in question the right of Catholics, on pain of incurring the censure of the Church, to send their children to any common school, no matter how inaccessible any other means of instruction may be." This we deny; for we altogether deny the right of Catholics—as Catholics—to send their children to schools condemned by the Church as "altogether dangerous." As against the Church, Catholics can have no such right: and the Bishop of Toronto is not so destitute of common sense as to call in question that which does not exist. Would the physician be justly obnoxious to the reproach of disregard for the physical well-being of his patient, should he advise him to abstain altogether from poisoned food—even if no other nourishment were within the sick man's reach? Assuredly not. And it is thus that the Bishop deals with the flock whose immortal interests have been committed to his keeping; and for whose souls he will one day have to answer—not to a newspaper editor, nor to a member of Parliament, but—to that Great God Himself, to Whom, rather than to man, though

he wear a wig, and be called Attorney-General, our first allegiance is due.

The sum of the matter is this. The Protestant majority of Upper Canada have no more right to tax the Catholic minority for the support of Non-Catholic schools, than have the Catholic majority of the Lower Province to tithe the Non-Catholic minority in favor of the Catholic Church. The "concessions" to which the *Leader* alludes, we scorn. We accept them, not as "concessions," but as instalments of a debt long due, long unjustly withheld, but which must be paid at last, and in full. The Irish Catholics of Upper Canada, have too long groaned under the curse of "State Churchism" in Ireland, to submit patiently to the equally degrading and slavish yoke of State Schoolism in the land of their adoption. To a fair and equitable arrangement we are willing, nay anxious, to accede; to an arrangement which shall exempt all Catholics from paying for the support of a Non-Catholic school, or school to which they are conscientiously opposed; and which shall secure to them a fair share of all public funds devoted by the State to educational purposes. If to this honest arrangement Protestants will not consent—then will we be compelled to adopt the Voluntary system in education as in religion, as the only means left us of securing for ourselves and children, "Freedom of Education" and "Freedom of Religion."

The accounts that we continually receive of the progress of Catholicity in the Upper Province, of the zeal of the people, and of their anxiety and heroic sacrifices to secure to their children the blessing of a sound Catholic education, are most encouraging. Scotchmen and Irishmen vie with one another, as to who shall do most for the good cause; and in this noble strife both show themselves equally worthy of the victor's crown.

One great difficulty which our Upper Canadian Catholics have to contend with is, the want of duly qualified teachers for their schools. Our friends labor under many other disadvantages besides, from which we in the Lower Province are free. They are surrounded by a numerous, wealthy, and intensely anti-Catholic population, from whom it is in vain to expect justice; and who scruple not to avail themselves of their numbers, and their political influence, to oppress their Catholic fellow-citizens. The "Freedom of Education" which the Protestant minority of the Lower Province enjoy to the fullest extent, and upon which no Catholic wishes to encroach, is always grudged, and too often entirely denied, to the Catholic minority of the Upper, where the administration and interpretation of a very defective School Law are entrusted to a very smart, but very bigoted and unscrupulous Anti-Catholic Chief Superintendent. Under these adverse circumstances great efforts must be made, and many sacrifices undergone, by the Catholics minority who wish to avail themselves of the imperfect provisions of the existing Laws upon education; and it is no less our interest than our duty to hasten to the aid of our ill-treated brethren of Upper Canada; and by every lawful means within our reach, to secure for them those inestimable blessings of "Freedom of Religion" and "Freedom of Education" which we here so abundantly possess. Neither for ourselves, nor for our co-religionists, do we ask any special privileges; we deprecate all ascendancy of one party over another—we desire neither Protestant nor Catholic ascendancy in Canada; we demand only equal rights for both; and that the Catholic minority of the Upper Province be in all respects, as liberally dealt with as are the Protestant minority in the Lower.

But if we wish to extort justice from our opponents, we must show ourselves in earnest in demanding it; we must convince them that nothing less will satisfy us, and that we will use every means within our reach, to carry out the teachings of the Catholic Church upon the all important topic of education.—It is therefore with no ordinary feelings of satisfaction that we this day beg to call the attention of our readers to the generous efforts of the Catholics of Alexandria in this matter; recommending their conduct to the imitation of the Catholics of the Upper Province, of all origins.

Alexandria is but a small village, whose population is, for the most part, made up of Scotch Catholics; men who reflect honor upon their country, and of whom their Church may be justly proud. They had long felt and lamented the want amongst them of good Catholic schools, presided over by duly qualified teachers. This want has at last been fully supplied. First—schools for boys under the charge of the "Brothers of St. Joseph" have been established in their village; and from the following letter it will be seen that the good work has been still further carried out, by the opening of female schools, under the auspices of the "Sisters" of the same Order. A correspondent writes under date of 27th ult.:

"DEAR SIR—You will be delighted to learn that the long expected Sisters of St. Joseph arrived here, to the number of five, on Friday last, from St. Lawrence. Three of them are to remain here permanently, and will open their schools on Friday next, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin.

"The arrival of the Sisters was announced by the joyful pealing of the bells from our Church, and of those of the Brothers' Schools. Our citizens had made abundant preparations for the reception of their anxiously looked for guests; and although they are not, generally speaking, wealthy, they on this occasion approved themselves by their liberality, an honor to their country and their creed.
"For the present, the 'Sisters' have taken up their abode at the old Presbytery, which has been fitted up by the liberal donations of our people as well as circumstances would admit, for their reception. But it is intended soon to set about building suitable school houses for both the 'Sisters' and the 'Brothers of St. Joseph' who have so kindly given their services to us. To enable us to carry out these designs, any donations from the many Scotch Catholics scattered over this continent, or from any other charitable persons, well wishers to the cause of Catholic education, will be thankfully received by our inde-

fatigable pastor, the Reverend Mr. MacLachlan of Alexandria; to whose exertions we are indebted for the establishment in our midst of these religious communities, and for the proud distinction of being the first place in the Upper Province where the "Sisters" and "Brothers of St. Joseph" have been established.

"From this Sir you will see that our Scotch Catholics of Glengarry have not degenerated, and are the worthy descendants of brave forefathers. Nowhere in Canada—I may safely say nowhere in America—is there a people more devotedly attached to their religion, more obedient to its precepts, or more ready to make sacrifices in its behalf, than the Scotch Catholics of Glengarry. One thing only do we want; and that, is more laborers in this portion of the Lord's vineyard. It were indeed much to be desired that a few priests from Scotland well acquainted with the Gaelic language, could be sent amongst us; for amongst our people there are many unable to speak any other language.

"I remain yours sincerely,
"A SCOTCH CATHOLIC."

All honor to the brave Catholics of Glengarry! We fear however, that at the present time, poor Scotland has not many priests to spare. In that land, now for nigh three centuries abandoned to the gloomy and degrading superstition of Calvinism, so long a prey to Protestantism in its most loathsome form—given over to drunkenness, and all uncleanness—and alas! only too justly obnoxious to the reproach of being "the most drunken and immoral" country in Europe—the priest of the Catholic Church, the presence of the Christian Missionary, is more needed, than amongst the most brutalised savages of the South Pacific. To preach Christianity in the fetid dens of Glasgow—to inculcate the first precepts of morality, chastity, and temperance, upon the debauched and thoroughly depraved inhabitants of the large cities of Scotland—will be no easy task; and will require the unremitting energy of every man whom the Church can spare. Scotland is herself a Missionary country. She needs help from, but can send none to other and more favored lands; and so far from being desirous of seeing one Catholic priest sent from Scotland, we hope and trust that the day may yet come, when, mindful of the worse than heathen darkness of their countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, the Scotch Catholics of Glengarry shall send their missionary priests to bring back their long erring, yet fondly remembered, fellow-countrymen to the truth—to give light to them that now sit in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Pursuant to notice, the investigation into the circumstances connected with the fire in the property of the Congregational Nunnery, on the night of the 27th December last, commenced on Friday of last week at 2. P.M. We give a condensed report of the proceedings.

His Honor the Mayor opened the investigation by propounding three questions, upon which the Committee were to pronounce their opinion:—

1. "Were the hose cut?"
2. "If not cut, why were they unserviceable?"
3. "Did the firemen, or any portion of them, neglect their duty?"

The following witnesses were then examined upon oath.

The Mayor, deposed—That on the evening in question, he was early at the fire. That his attention was called to the constant bursting of the hose as fast as they were laid down. That at first the fire was thought to be in Mr. Holland's buildings; and that the hose being carried in, burst and damaged many of the goods. At last the fire was discovered to be in the Nun's property. Heard rumors that the hose were being cut. Saw two men doing something to the hose under the gateway. Ran to the spot; men ran away; and upon examining, found the hose had burst, or had been cut. Two policemen came up to him, and reported that the hose had been cut. Asked—"why they had not arrested the scoundrels?" Did not take names or numbers of the policemen. Was much excited, and said openly that hose had been cut, and with key pipes. Afterwards, from what he saw and heard, was induced to believe that bursting was accidental. Did not think that much reliance was to be placed on report of the policemen, seeing that they did not arrest the men whom they saw cutting the hose. Was much surprised however at what he saw; and agreed with M. Valois, who was on the ground, that there was something extraordinary about it. Never saw the like before at any fire, though he had attended many. Saw men of the "Volligeur"—a French Canadian company—work hard. Heard jokes passing amongst the men about bursting of hose; and reproved them for their ill-timed levity. Being distinctly asked, whether—if the hose were not maliciously cut—there must not have been great negligence?—His Honor replied—"Yes, there must have been great negligence."

Dr. Trudel sworn—deposed to the fact of the hose becoming unserviceable every moment; but had no personal knowledge of the cause.

Mr. Beaudry, sworn—deposed to the same effect. Hose always bursting; engines in consequence useless—but had no personal knowledge of cause of hose bursting. After the fire, French Canadian firemen lodged complaint with him of having been pumped upon maliciously by the other fire companies. Never saw anything like the constant bursting of the hose at any previous fire.

M. La Brèche, Branchman of "Hero," sworn—deposed that he was early on the ground. "Volligeur's" hose having become unserviceable, prevailed upon that company to supply him with water, whilst the "Hero" played upon fire. Effected an entrance into building on fire, with some of his comrades, and commenced playing on the fire. Immediately, the "Neptune" and "Protector," at a distance of about ten or fifteen feet, directed their stream full upon him and his comrades, so as to render their position almost untenable—although there was no fire in the immediate direction in which these engines were throwing their water. Begged and prayed of them to desist, in vain; his remonstrances were disregarded, though they must have been heard. At last went to Captain of "Neptune," and remonstrated with him upon such infamous treatment. Got laughed at for his pains, and was told that it was not done intentionally. Replied "If you want to be respected, you must not speak that way to men who speak to you respectfully." Believes that

the "Neptune" and "Protector" pumped upon him intentionally. Does not think that the Firemen, generally, were active to extinguish the fire; for had they been so, they would have pumped on the fire, and not upon him and his comrades, who were hard at work.

This witness was then asked, if at a meeting of firemen he had not professed himself satisfied with the excuses offered by the men of the "Neptune" and "Protector" engines. He replied that, at the meeting referred to, he had done so, and, as a Christian, for the sake of peace. But that before the Committee he was upon oath; and as a Christian must tell the plain truth, and the whole truth. He therefore must state that, to the best of his belief, he was pumped upon purposely, and to prevent him from extinguishing the fire in the Nun's building; as the men who so ill-treated him were near enough to distinguish him, or at all events to hear his cries to them to desist.

Francis Farrell sworn—deposed—that he was at the fire. Saw hose burst repeatedly. Never saw such bursting before at any one fire. Saw "Volligeur" and "Hero" companies—French Canadians—playing on fire. Knew that the men at the "Neptune" were pumping; but did not see where the branchmen of that engine were directing their stream of water.—This witness, after much delay, admitted that he had stated at a meeting held for the purpose of organizing an Irish Catholic Fire Company—that he had found great difficulty in getting five men to work together on the night of the fire in question.

Patrick Cassidy, of the Hose Company, sworn—deposed that he was at the fire, and saw hose incessantly bursting. Heard one man of the "Union" say to the others—"Come, boys—pack up—let the place burn away—we can get no water." At the same time there was water in abundance; and he pointed out to a man named Pheby, a plug from which a stream of water was running to waste. [This last named man is, so it is said, insane.] Did not think that the firemen, generally, showed their usual zeal. Did not see any hose cut; but if they were not cut, they must have been in an insufficient state. Believes that the "Queen" engine did nothing. No obstructions ought to be allowed in the hose.

The investigation was then adjourned till Monday, at 2 P.M.; on which day the members of the Committee having assembled:

John Gallagher of the Hose Company was sworn—deposed that he was unable to assign any reason for the extraordinary and constant bursting of the hose; heard that they were cut, but had no personal knowledge of the fact. Men of the "Queen" engine refused to take a run of water which he offered them, and their engine did nothing. At the time the "Queen" refused to work, the fire was raging strongest. It seemed to him that there was a want of zeal amongst some of the Fire Companies—the "Union" amongst others. That engine—the witness added—was generally the first to go to work; but on this occasion kept fumbling about, lost time, and did little or nothing.—Men of the Hose Companies were not unwilling to work. Saw water running in all directions; the yard was flooded with water. There seemed to be neglect; Firemen did not exert themselves as usual; saw a want of exertion, which he had never witnessed before. The "Queen" engine did not work at all; though there was nothing to prevent it. If "Queen" and "Union" had worked, the fire would have been extinguished sooner. If the hose were not cut, they must have been in a bad state of repair.

Mr. Short, Captain of "Montreal" engine, sworn—deposed that he was early on the ground. The Captain of the "Neptune" told him not to work—an order which he disregarded. Got his engine to work, and played away on the fire which was blazing; though he did not commence so soon as he would have done, had it not been for the orders given him by the Captain of the "Neptune." Believes that the hose were the same as those which burst when on trial at Quebec, to the disgrace of the Fire Company. They were called "Fred's Hose." Would not, if Chief Engineer, use a hose that was a disgrace to him. Counted five bursts on the hose leading to his engine.—Could not say from his personal knowledge how they occurred. Some said hose were blocked up with ice; others said with charcoal. It is the duty of the Chief Engineer to see how kept in a state of efficiency.

M. Le Blanc—Advocate—sworn—deposed that he saw hose constantly bursting; and was much alarmed in consequence; but had no personal knowledge of their being cut. Men of Canadian Companies told him they could do nothing, as their hose were cut.—Remarked that there ought to be an investigation.—Heard Canadian firemen complain that they were prevented from working by the other Companies pumping upon them. Saw the men; their clothes were frozen on their bodies, and they seemed almost exhausted. Saw none of the men of the English Companies in a similar exhausted state.

B. Devlin, Esq., sworn—deposed to the constant and disgraceful bursting of the hose. Saw several engines doing nothing, but standing perfectly useless. This was the first thing that struck him with surprise. Heard that hose had been cut; spoke to the Mayor, who said that they had been cut. From what he saw, was led to make a communication to the *True Witness*; in order that such disgraceful circumstances might be investigated, and measures taken to prevent their repetition. When the fire was raging, saw engines standing idle—the men laughing and joking.

Marcus Doherty, Esq., sworn—deposed to having heard the witness Farrell complain of the conduct of the men at the fire in question.

Benoit Bastien—"Hook and Ladder Company"—sworn—deposed that he could say nothing as to the cause—but that the hose were constantly becoming unserviceable. Got into the burning building, and endeavored to rescue some valuable objects, belonging to the Nuns, from the flames. Was threatened with personal violence for so doing, by some of the other men; and whilst endeavoring to make his escape with the pictures, crucifixes, &c., that he had collected, was pumped upon, by—to the best of his belief—the "Protector." Knows that it was not any of the French Canadian engines that pumped upon him. There was no fire in the direction in which he was, when he was pumped upon; and therefore believes that he was so treated, in order to compel him to abandon the Nun's property that he had in his arms, and which he was endeavoring to rescue from the flames.

Robert Varnor, sworn—deposed that he was a branchman of the "Queen"—that that engine did nothing—did not think it was wanted. Thought the men were too eager and that if one or two of the engines had been out of the way, the fire would have