

The True Witness

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, AUG. 16, 1861.

TO OUR READERS.

We commence to-day, and with the present number, the Twelfth volume of the TRUE WITNESS; and we trust that we may be permitted, without exposing ourselves to the charge of egotism, again to avail ourselves of the occasion to say a few words about the TRUE WITNESS and its principles. The subject is not one which we would select in preference to others; but we wish to address a few words to our readers on a matter in which their honor, and our interests, are concerned.

We have the satisfaction of knowing that we have acted honestly as towards our readers, and we therefore pretend that we have the right to demand that they shall act honestly as towards us. We boast—and in this matter we fearlessly challenge contradiction—that we have faithfully and constantly, under all circumstances, and to the best of our abilities, redeemed the pledges by us given in our Prospectus published eleven years ago. We then promised that the TRUE WITNESS should be exclusively a Catholic paper, and, therefore, perfectly independent of all political parties, or persons; that it should on matters purely secular, observe a strict neutrality, but that it should freely, and from a Catholic point of view, discuss all political questions in which, directly or indirectly, the interests of the Church were involved; that it should call no man master, should follow the banner of no party or person, should treat with perfect indifference the pretensions of "Ins" and "Ours" to the spoils of office, and should be amenable to no influences, save those of the duly appointed pastors of God's Holy Church. That, in short, the TRUE WITNESS should be, not a partisan paper, or the advocate of any man's claims to public favor; but simply the faithful and humble exponent of Catholic policy, and Catholic interests.

We defy any one to indicate wherein we have by a hair's breadth deviated from the course which we pledged ourselves to follow; and indeed the substance of all reproaches that have been urged against us is—that we have been too faithful to our pledged word; that we have been too consistent; that we have steadily refused to identify ourselves with any political party; that we have scorned to acknowledge either of the pretenders to office and the distribution of patronage, as "our natural allies," or to make the honor of our religion subservient to the promotion of personal interests; that, in short, we have adhered too rigidly to principle, and that without regard to the schemes of party, or the intrigues of political adventurers, we have insisted upon the duty of making the good of the Church our sole rule of action.

If then we have dealt fairly with our readers, we have the right to demand that they shall deal fairly with us in return, that they also shall fulfill their part of the understood contract, by the punctual payment of their stipulated annual subscription. This, we must respectfully observe, a large number of our subscribers have not done; and this, apparently, they do not deem it incumbent upon themselves to do. We therefore take this opportunity of explaining our intention towards them.

With the commencement of the present volume, we will stop sending the paper to a large number of our subscribers who are in arrears, and will hand their accounts over—without further notice—to a lawyer for collection; and in future we will send the paper to no new subscriber who shall not have paid for six months, that is to say the sum of one dollar, in advance. Should therefore any of our subscribers after this date fail to receive their papers as usual, they may attribute the circumstance to their having failed to pay their debts to this office; and they will have no cause to complain if by legal process they are compelled to discharge those pecuniary obligations, which all honest men cheerfully discharge without compulsion.

To our numerous subscribers by whose punctuality alone the TRUE WITNESS has been enabled to hold its ground, in spite of the dishonesty of others, we return our best thanks; and we assure them that, on our parts, no efforts shall be spared to make the TRUE WITNESS in some measure worthy of their continued support and confidence. What it has been, that shall

the TRUE WITNESS continue to be, a Catholic, non-partisan paper. It will not cease to insist upon justice to the Catholics of Upper Canada on the School Question, and upon justice to the Catholics of the Lower Province upon the Representation Question. It will ally itself with no man, and with no party; but it will treat every man, every party as its enemy, as the enemy of the Church, who, or which, opposes the full development of the Separate School principle, or gives any semblance even of countenance to the agitation for Representation by Population. Upon the Catholics of both sections of the Province, it will continue to urge the duty, the imperative necessity, of close and cordial union; and to denounce as the worst enemy to both, as a traitor to Catholicity, the man who directly or indirectly, upon any pretence whatsoever, seeks to create, or perpetuate discord betwixt French and Irish Catholics; and whilst still steadily refusing to identify religion and politics, it will still insist upon the intimate connection betwixt Catholicity and Conservatism, betwixt fidelity to the Church and loyalty to our legitimate sovereign. The Catholic, it is true, is not, as such, committed to any particular line of secular policy; but, strange though it may sound in the ears of many, we will still repeat, that the true Papist cannot be a Clear-Grit or demagogue; and that obedience to all lawfully constituted authority in the civil order, is a duty which the Catholic owes to God, and which he cannot violate without thereby incurring the penalty of disobedience to the laws of the supreme law-giver.

And in this happy country, in this Canada, thank God! the true Catholic can find no difficulty in reconciling his duty with his interests. In no country in the world, in no nominally Catholic country in Europe, not in France, not in Spain, is the Church so free and untrammelled by State fetters as she is in Canada; and this freedom, this exemption from arbitrary interference, we owe, under God, to our political accidents, to our happy connection with the British Empire, and to what remains of the monarchical element in our Constitution. These then it is our interest, as it is our duty, to preserve; and whilst many Protestants are "looking to Washington," hoping thence to evoke the demon of "Protestant Ascendancy," and in despair of otherwise accomplishing the spoliation of our religious institutions, the subversion of our educational establishments, and the humiliation of our Church—be it ours to show to our enemies that we can appreciate, and that we therefore deserve, the blessings of a just and liberal Government; and that, whilst Papists in the strictest sense of the word, we know how to reconcile our duty to the head upon earth of our Church, with that allegiance which we owe to our temporal sovereign and to all who are in authority under her. Yes! though no partisans, we are Conservatives, and are not ashamed to own it. We are loyalists, and we glory in the title. Conservative and loyal, because Catholics and Papists; Monarchists in the civil order; Papists, thorough Papists, in the religious order.

Thus far, but no farther, do we pretend that there is any necessary connection betwixt Catholicity and politics. And this will explain to our readers why, whilst we deplore and condemn many acts of the British Government; why, whilst we hold in abhorrence its present foreign policy as towards Italy, and its domestic policy as towards Ireland, we will not allow the TRUE WITNESS to become the medium for preaching treason, and disloyalty to the Queen, as the first duty which the Catholic owes to God. Our sentiments may be unpopular; and in the ears of some may sound strange and novel, accustomed as they have been to bear a very different doctrine from their lay teachers; but as they are the sentiments which we honestly entertain, and which we have learnt from the lips of our Spiritual Mother, so we cannot if we would, and would not even if we could, attempt to conceal them, or to explain them away. From this confession of faith then our readers will easily deduce that the TRUE WITNESS, though utterly unconnected with political party of any kind, is and ever will be, the uncompromising enemy of the Clear-Grits, and "Protestant Reformers;" the enemy of the Rouges, of all democrats, and of all who are "looking to Washington." The enemy of the former, because they are the enemies of our Church, and are intent upon her subjection by means of organic constitutional changes, such as Representation by Population; the enemy of the latter, because their principles are irreconcilable with the teachings of the Catholic Church, who has ever approved herself the friend of liberty and order; and whose idea of liberty is—loyalty, and obedience to all duly constituted authority, whether in the spiritual or in the temporal order.

DRUNKENNESS IN GASPE.—This vice is rapidly increasing in this district, and the Catholic clergy call loudly for the imposition of a duty upon intoxicating liquors; attributing the rapidly spreading evil to the facilities afforded under the present "tree-port" system for obtaining spirits.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THERE is an invincible antipathy betwixt the peoples of the North and of the South of Italy, we are now told by the British press, in explanation of the fact which can no longer be concealed that the Neapolitans are, en masse, up in arms against their Piedmontese oppressors.—What will the Montreal Witness say to this?

The time for evasion and falsehood is past; the truth, in spite of the efforts of the revolutionary and liberal organs of opinion to support it, must leak out; and even the correspondent of the London Times, the most hardened and unscrupulous perverter of truth, is by the sheer force of facts compelled to acknowledge that were universal suffrage, or the general vote of the people of the Two Sicilies, to be again appealed to, as betwixt Victor Emmanuel and Francis II., the verdict would not be in favor of the former. Brute force may for a season triumph over right; a military despotism may for a time trample under foot the nationality and liberties of the Neapolitans; but the sacred fire of freedom will not be altogether quenched in the blood of the patriots and of the priests whom, under Cialdini's orders, the foreign mercenaries of Piedmont are shooting down. The glorious struggle for freedom in which the Neapolitans are now engaged, deserves, and receives, the sympathies of every one who can appreciate courage, and loyalty, and patriotism; and though deceived by the false reports of a lying press, and blinded by their absurd anti-Catholic prejudices, the people of England still shout and bellow for Victor Emmanuel, the cruelties and atrocious massacres daily perpetrated by his order will open their eyes, and enlist their feelings for a brave and generous people, whose only crime is that they do not see fit to merge their distinctive nationality in that of an alien and hated race; and who claim in their own behalf the right which Lord John Russell challenged for revolutionists in general—that of deposing a Government which they detest, and of establishing a form of government of which they approve. Even the most inconsistent liberal who ever uttered balderdash at Exeter Hall must be ashamed to refuse to the Neapolitans in arms against an alien monarch, that which they proclaim as the inherent, inalienable right of every people against their native born, domestic, and legitimate rulers. Tested even by the code of revolutionary ethics of which Lord John Russell is the prophet, the Neapolitans have an indisputable right to throw off, or reject the rule of the Piedmontese; and if they have that right, surely no honest man can condemn them for exercising it.

But then they practice such cruelties! that they have justly forfeited the sympathies of the civilized world. Violence no doubt can be imputed to the insurgents; they have actually attacked, and fired upon the troops of Victor Emmanuel, and have faintly retaliated upon the foreign hirelings of the latter, some of the cruelties of which their friends have been the victims.—The reproach of cruelty is however strange in the mouths of the revolutionists, who shoot in cold blood, and make no secret of their determination so to shoot, all prisoners by them taken with arms in their hands, and who practice every kind of brutality against those suspected even of loyalty to the Bourbon dynasty. Here is what the Naples correspondent of the London Times says on the subject. After mentioning that the adherents of the usurper display their affected zeal for Victor Emmanuel by ill treating and robbing all whom they can lay hold of, the same authority, writing under date of the 24th ult., continues:—

"I can guarantee it to you that on one morning 13 persons brutally treated, under the excuse of being disaffected to the Government, were brought into the Questura, and on the following morning, six; one of the unhappy victims has since died of his wounds."

No wonder that men thus brutally treated should sometimes brutally retaliate, and that they should put in practise the teachings of their alien rulers. The Spaniards, when they rose against the French in their war of independence, were guilty of like excesses; and yet for that reason the sympathies and armed assistance of the British people were not withheld from them.—The Piedmontese, by their unprovoked and unjustifiable invasion of the Neapolitan soil, were the aggressors, and must bear the penalties of that wicked and wanton act of aggression. Till they withdraw, there cannot be peace or order; and in the opinion of most writers upon international law, the invaded have the right to employ every means at their command to purge their native land of its alien invaders.

The report of the arrest of the Cardinal Archbishop of Naples is contradicted.

The report that Louis Napoleon is about to hand over Rome to Piedmontese mercenaries, and to sell the Holy Father to Victor Emmanuel, is again circulated with confidence, and may very probably be true. What is certain is, that the health of the Sovereign Pontiff is fully re-established. The other European political news are void of interest.

From the United States we have the news—through a Northern Channel—of another battle on Saturday last betwixt the Southerners, and the Northerners under General Lyons. It would appear from their own version, that the

latter, some 8,000, commenced the battle; that their opponents numbered 23,000, and that the assailants were routed, with the loss of General Lyons killed, 800 killed and wounded, and some at least of their guns. After the death of Gen. Lyons, the command of the Northerners devolved on General Segel, who continued the retreat, and rescued the remnant of his force from destruction. Upon the whole, it would appear, even from the one-sided reports that have reached us, that the Southerners, rebels, or confederates, as they are indifferently called—have another victory to boast of. A Southern version of the affair would, no doubt, give a very different aspect to it, and would show us the Northerners routed with great slaughter, and driven from the field, by the irresistible heroes of the South.

THE ORPHANS IN ST. PATRICK'S ASYLUM—THEIR PIC-NIC

Unnecessary as we believe it is to remind our readers in Montreal that this great Pic-Nic will take place in Guilbault's Garden on Wednesday next, the 21st inst., we are nevertheless impelled, by a feeling of sympathy for the helpless little ones upon whose behalf it is to be given, not to pass it over in silence.

Yes: we desire to say that of all other objects that commend themselves to the attention and liberality of the Irish Catholic, there is none more deserving of his support than the poor orphan, whose home is in the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum. The children of expatriated parents, now no more, they are bequeathed to us by God as a heavenly trust; and we, in so far as it lies in our power, are bound to supply the places of those who are no longer here to afford them that protection which their innocence and tender years require.

Let us then, one and all, prepare to meet each other at the Orphans' Pic-Nic. From house to house let the word be passed, that Wednesday next is set apart for the relief of the Irish Orphan. In a pecuniary point of view, the expense is as nothing; while the amusements will be not only numerous, but exceedingly pleasant and interesting. But of these we do not desire to speak, for we believe that a loftier feeling than recreation can inspire, will animate those who attend the Pic-Nic; and that fathers and mothers will feel but too happy in embracing the opportunity of acknowledging their gratitude to the Divine Giver of all gifts, that their children are not, like the Orphans in the St. Patrick's Asylum, dependent upon the charity of the benevolent for the means of subsistence.

Again we say, remember Wednesday next, and that it is an imperative obligation, specially devolving upon the Irish Catholic—upon the old as well as the young—to visit the Orphan's Pic-Nic, and there, by his presence and encouragement, cheer the hearts of those helpless children who, being united to us by the ties of religion, of nationality, of charity, aye, and of misfortune, naturally turn to us for a Parent's care which, so long as an Irish heart beats, shall never be denied them.

REMAINS OF THE LATE BISHOP MACDONALD OF KINGSTON.—The remains of this venerable Prelate, which have been brought from Europe by the exertions of His Lordship Mgr. Horan, Bishop of Kingston, arrived in Montreal on Saturday last, and were temporarily deposited in the vaults of the Parish Church. In the course of the ensuing month they will be removed to Kingston, and will there most appropriately find their final resting place in the Cathedral of the Diocese of which the late Dr. Macdonald was the first Bishop.

SAVE US FROM OUR FRIENDS.—With the most perfect good faith, or with the most consummate impudence—the reader is at liberty to adopt which hypothesis he pleases—the Montreal Witness of Saturday last assures us—that "there is no truer friend of Roman Catholics in Canada than the Witness, which would save them from the ruin wrought by priestly domination in other countries;" and yet—such is the hard heartedness, not to say blindness of Roman Catholics—"many of them do not think so." Also our evangelical cotemporary claims credit for his love of truth and fair play; and believes, that "no paper in Canada acknowledges mistakes, or inserts corrections more willingly."—Montreal Witness.

It is amusing to note the similarity betwixt the jargon of the Witness wherein it professes "friendship" to Catholics, and the objects it has in view, and the cant of more advanced Protestants, such as Voltaire and the illustrious Tom Paine. These all profess to love us, and if they abuse us, it is out of pure friendship that they do so; if they libel our clergy, circulate obscene slanders against our Religion, and hold our religion up to mockery, it is by the warmth of their affection that they are prompted so to deal with us, and by their anxious disinterested desire to deliver us from the trammels of priest-craft, and from "priestly domination." The Witness when assaulting Popery, employs the very weapons of the avowed Atheist, and the professed object of both is to deliver us—save the mark—from "priestly domination!"

This too, was the object of the promoters of the French Revolution, and in this object they,

for a time, only too well, succeeded. The Witness would do well to notice the results, ere attempting the same process in Canada—amongst the French Canadians. Granted that the Witness should succeed by falsehood, by calumny, and such slender stock of humor as he has at his command, in persuading them to throw off "priestly domination" and to emancipate themselves from the yoke of priest-craft—what then? Has he well considered the inevitable consequences of such an emancipation, of such a deliverance? Has history no lessons for him? have the teachings of the past all been thrown away?

The French are a logical people, and the Witness may be sure that, when they throw off "priestly domination," it will not be with the design of bowing beneath any other yoke; that if they emancipate themselves from Popish, it will not be to submit themselves to Calvinistic, priest-craft; that if they reject the Church, they will at the same time, and by the same process of reasoning, reject the Bible, the entire Christian revelation, and all authority that pretends to impose any restraints upon their passions and the lusts of the flesh. If they refuse to hearken to their priests, and revolt against their Bishops, the Witness need not flatter himself that the French Canadians will settle quietly down under the spiritual dominion of any greasy-faced sensual "man of God" whom the Conventicle holds in honor, or that they will transfer their allegiance from the Romish Prelate to the Genevan divine.

But leaving out of sight the hypocrisy of the Witness' professions of friendship, and the absurdity of the motives which he assigns, what shall we say of his impudence in talking of "priestly domination" to Catholics. If ever there was a miserable abject truckling to that domination, it was by those Protestant sects of which he professes himself the admirer and disciple; if ever a people were plunged to the lips in the lowest form of degrading superstition, it was through listening to the teachings, and obeying the precepts of those ministers of the Gospel whom the Witness holds up to the Papists of Canada as their redeemers and benefactors.—Read your Buckle—a Protestant historian, and therefore an unexceptionable witness against Protestantism—would we say to our Montreal cotemporary; see the picture, the but too faithful picture, of the moral, and intellectual degradation to which the Calvinistic clergy of Scotland have reduced the people; look for a moment at the grovelling superstitions of the Sabbatarians, and listen to the maudlin drivellings of the evangelicals at a Revival—and then, if you dare, lecture Catholics upon their submission to "priestly domination." Physician heal thyself.

The hypocrisy of the Witness is exceeded only by its marvellous powers of mendacity.—The Witness, of all papers the most reckless and unscrupulous in making, or insinuating, the most unfounded charges against all its opponents, but against Catholics especially, and which though constantly detected and exposed, has never once retracted a falsehood, or expressed contrition for the most malicious of its slanders, claims credit for its readiness in acknowledging mistakes, and for inserting corrections! This is impudence raised to its very highest power.

But a few weeks ago, the columns of the Witness were filled with a false and scandalous attack upon the Jesuits of Montreal, whom, by implication, he accused of having deceived, decoyed into their premises, and held in confinement, an interesting young Frenchman, a convert from Romanism to the Holy Protestant Faith.—Whether in this case the Witness was a fool or a dupe, the deceived or the deceiver—whether he was the originator of the cowardly slander, or whether he and a Dr. Hellmouth of Quebec, concocted it betwixt them—we will not pause to enquire, for it does not in the slightest degree affect our position, which is this—Either the story as told by the Witness, was true, or a lie; either the Jesuits were guilty, or were innocent, of that which the Witness imputed to them. If guilty, we call upon him to prove their guilt; if unable to prove their guilt, we tell him that, by every code of honor and of morality, he was bound to abstain from circulating reports injurious to the good name of his neighbors without strong proof of their truth; and that if these reports be false, or unsustained by evidence, then is the Witness, by the same code, bound to disabuse its readers of the false impressions which its first articles respecting the "interesting Young Frenchman" have naturally created in their minds. We are aware that, amongst the saints the laws of honor are unknown, and that the frequenter of the conventicle is more familiar with the tricks of trade, and the art of cheating a customer, than with the manners and habits of gentlemen; but—and in this every man, not a saint, will agree with us—no one has the right, upon any pretence whatsoever, to publish anything which he is not prepared either to prove, or to retract, if called upon to do so. We call therefore upon the Witness to give either the sequel of its, or Dr. Hellmouth's, story; or else to publish a retraction, and a confession of its regret for having, upon insufficient data, given circulation to a report injurious to the Jesuits, and their College.