

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 18, 1861

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

MONUMENT TO MGR. LARTIGUE.—We are requested to state that subscriptions to this work are thankfully received at the Bishop's Palace by the Rev. M. Pare, Chanoine, and Secretary to His Lordship. The names of all subscribers will appear in due time, according to the dates of their several subscriptions. No sum larger than a dollar is received.

RUMORS, not facts, are all that we have to report as the contents of the latest European dates. The rumor that Austria is to be compelled to part with Venetia gains consistency; the military preparations of France are on a gigantic scale; every effort is being made to stir up another Hungarian rebellion; and "sell or fight" are the last words of the diplomatists to Austria, on the subject of the latter's remaining domains in Italy.

Francis II still bravely holds out at Gaeta, provoking the admiration even of his enemies, by his indomitable pluck. The Pope also remains at Rome, but how long it will be before both the one and the other are exiles, it is impossible to say. In the South of Italy the hatred of the Neapolitans to the rule of the Piedmontese and Victor Emmanuel becomes every day more intense, more generally diffused, and more apparent to the eyes of the world. If delivered from the "foreign mercenaries" who pollute their soil, the Neapolitans would at once restore Francis II to his throne, and send back the intruder to his northern home.

The peace with China is now accomplished, and will be respected no doubt so long as a powerful British force remains in the East, to enforce compliance with its terms. For the present, the Indian insurrection has been suppressed.

The crisis in the United States becomes daily more serious, and all hopes of an amicable and honorable compromise between the North and South, seem now dispelled. Civil war has been commenced by the people of Charleston, in firing upon a steamer under United States' colors, bringing reinforcements to the Federal troops in garrison. The steamer was compelled to retreat, her purpose unaccomplished, but it is not certain what steps the Federal Government will take to vindicate the outraged honor of its flag. To compel by force of arms the seceding Slave States to become the willing members of the Confederation will be an arduous task; and the attempt to hold possession of those States by military occupation, or as conquered Provinces, must prove fatal to the entire theory of the United States' Constitution.

The Reverend writer of the subjoined having been grossly attacked by the lay editor of the Canadian Freeman, replies to his assailant under his own name.

TRENTON, C.W., Friday, Jan. 11, 1861.

An unprincipled disputant, when he finds himself harassed by his antagonist, is wont to have recourse to side issues, in order, if possible, to draw off attention from the main question.—This has been Mr. Moylan's unworthy subterfuge in his reply to "Sacerdos" of the TRUE WITNESS. It may be convenient, but is scarcely honest.—It may blind the ignorant, but will scarcely impose upon the moderately intelligent. It is a matter of small importance, in so grave an affair, how the charge was worded (of which more anon); the main question, unfortunately for Mr. Moylan, and in spite of all dishonest subterfuge, stands out in disgraceful prominence. Did Mr. M. bring a charge against the editor of the TRUE WITNESS of having been "bought editorially for a consideration?"—and when called upon for his proofs, DID HE REFUSE TO GIVE THEM? If he did, let him be prepared to face the contempt of all good and honest men for such "dishonorable, disgraceful, and unmanly conduct" unless he is able to prove, that the code of morality and honor in these our days is changed, and that the moral assassin is henceforth to be honored, like Milano, with flowers and a tomb. A hundred years ago, the amenities of society would have visited the slanderer—(for though a priest, and in spite of the Freeman's objections, we must persist in calling things by their proper names)—with the horse whip, the ducking stool, and the horse pond; but although not approving altogether of such summary justice, still, considering the disgraceful nature of the crime, we cannot deem the punishment altogether inappropriate. But be all this as it may, the main question is still the same—

Has Mr. M. been guilty of the dishonorable, disgraceful, and unmanly conduct of retailing slander, and then refusing to give up his authorities? We leave the verdict in the hands of the Canadian public. So much for the main question; now for the side issues. In his editorial, headed "A Palpable Forgery," Mr. M. accuses us of a violent attack upon his personal character. Here "he varies from the truth" (we would call it by its proper name, but that we understand through the editor of the Freeman, that in Toronto it is deemed unpriestly to denounce vices, except in the politest terms.)—When we attacked Mr. Moylan, it was as editor, for an editorial act; it is therefore incorrect to say that we attacked his personal character. Of Mr. Moylan we know nothing personally, except by hearsay, and that only to the extent of his being "an amiable man." His editorial acts are, we believe, open to the criticism equally of Priest, as of layman; and he must excuse us, if, as a priest, when we find vice rampant, whether in the Toronto Freeman, or out of the Toronto Freeman, we denounce it in no very measured terms. When "his Satanic Majesty" is proved to be a gentleman, we will expostulate with him in the politest periods. Mr. Moylan reminds us of those Congregationalists who, when they hire their preacher, stipulate that certain pet vices shall not be mentioned from the pulpit. In another particular the editor "varies from the truth." Mr. M. knows "Sacerdos" as intimately as "Sacerdos" knows Mr. Moylan.—He did not therefore state the truth, when he designated the article, signed "Sacerdos," "A Palpable Forgery." His whole article was written in bad faith. Like the rest of our countrymen, we are somewhat antiquated in our notions, and with difficulty restrain ourselves from using Anglo-Saxon terms to express Anglo-Saxon ideas. Our forefathers, in their blunt, unpolished state, called all those liars who varied from the truth, whether by palpable falsehood, the suppression of the truth, or the suggesting of what is false.

Mr. Moylan accuses us of shielding ourselves under our ecclesiastical cloak. If "Sacerdos" is "so palpable a forgery," where is the cloak? They say liars should have long memories; Mr. Moylan's does not carry him the length of a short editorial.

Mr. Moylan objects to our language. It certainly has the fault of being plain and easily understood. With regard to its force, we shall always deem it our duty—Priest though we be—to denounce the dishonest, the slanderer, and the liar, in the most unmeasured terms, and shall consider our doing so as only the fulfillment of our sacred mission. The thief must excuse us if we call him a thief; and so of the slanderer and the liar. We are not of the smooth-tongued, oily-polite synonym school; and the Freeman must excuse us accordingly. If slander is slander, we call it so; and if lying is lying, we call it by no other name. We have yet to learn—the editor of the Freeman to the contrary notwithstanding—that it is contrary to Gospel charity to call "the midnight assassin, the priest and most execrable of villains" or to assert that it is "the remark of moralists that when a Catholic commits a crime he does so in earnest." He is the most dishonest of thieves—the most unscrupulous of robbers—the bloodiest of murderers—the most foul-mouthed of calumniators. Mr. M. must compile a new dictionary and promulgate a new gospel, if midnight assassins, or for the matter of that, moral assassins too, are to be deemed amiable gentlemen; and if dishonorable conduct is to be lauded by priests as praiseworthy and commendable. With regard to the attempted witicism "in extremis" we fear an itch to appear witty has tempted Mr. Moylan, like many other vain people to become simply profane.

SACERDOS.

N.B.—If Mr. Moylan has any rejoinder to make, let him do so fearlessly and openly, in spite of his so recent discovery that Sacerdos is genuine. There is no need of any dishonest subterfuge of pretended ignorance. We always admire an open antagonist, as we despise a concealed enemy. We desire no shield; in fact the retention of our well known "nom de plume" was in order that we might not be supposed to wish any concealment in the matter. We knew authoritatively that we should be better known to Mr. Moylan under the name of Sacerdos, than if we had subscribed ourself,

H. BRETARGH, Priest.

THE "CROSS" AND THE "GALLOW."—A short time ago we provoked the wrath of the Montreal Herald by insisting upon the importance of the "Gallows" as the chief factor in all Protestant civilization; in other words, we insisted that when men have thrown off the gentle yoke of the Cross, they can only be kept in order, and their brutal passions held in subjection, by the dread of the Gallows or other temporal punishment. Here is what we said:—

"Let us maintain the gallows free even from the slightest taint of suspicion, as it is the last plank of salvation left to those who have rejected the Cross. Exeter Hall may rant about an 'open bible,' and only gray-headed women, with or without white chokers, may re-echo the foolish cry: but for what of civilization, social order, and decency, Protestant communities still enjoy, they are indebted, not to an 'open bible,' but to a standing gallows. The gallows tree, with its fruit—hideous though that fruit may be—is the tree of life of Protestant society, by whose sheltering boughs that society is alone protected from the fury of the anarchic storm. All civilization in short, as we have before remarked, must needs spring up, either in the shelter of the Cross, or beneath the shade of the Gallows. But Protestant communities having rejected the former, are reduced to the necessity of putting their trust in the latter."—True Witness, Nov. 2.

In other words, we insisted—and not having the fear of the Montreal Herald before our eyes—still insist that the hangman, or minister of human justice, occupies the same important place in Protestant society, as that which, in Catholic

society, is assigned to the priest, or minister of God's justice. This thesis, however unpleasant it may be to our Protestant cotemporary, is nevertheless argued out with admirable force of logic in his own columns, to which he must permit us to refer our readers:—

"LAWLESSNESS IN WESTERN CANADA.—We felt called upon, some short time ago, to invite the attention of the public to the growing demoralization of society in Upper Canada, arising, as was too apparent, from the prevalent carelessness, incapacity, and, in some instances, culpable partiality of the local magistracy. Crimes of the gravest character—murders by violence and by poison, burglaries, incendiarisms—it appeared had been committed and little or no pains taken to discover and bring their perpetrators to justice; while, on the other hand, mob-law was being administered by Judge Lynch to an extent that would disgrace the wildest and most recently settled frontier districts of the United States Territories. That there must be 'something rotten' in the administration of justice in Upper Canada cannot, we think, admit of doubt, at least if we are to judge of the tree by its fruits. The root of the evil, however, as in all self-governing communities, must be sought for in the lawless proclivities (to use an Americanism) of the people themselves; of which we have lately had abundant evidence in the notorious law-breakers selected by their fellow-citizens of Toronto and London for the highest municipal honor in their gift. One result of such a state of public demoralization will be found narrated in another column, from the London Free Press of Friday last. What must be the state of society, in which such unmitigated ruffianism can be committed by men having even the slightest claim to respectability of position, we leave the reader to decide.—Montreal Herald.

But whence the "lawless proclivities" of the people of Upper Canada? What is there in their political institutions, or physical conditions, that can account for the, by the Herald admitted, lawlessness of the Upper Canadians? Must not this peculiar trait of Upper Canada character be attributed to moral, rather than to physical causes, to some supernatural, rather than to any natural deficiency? This last question we, who recognise in the people of Upper Canada the equals, in the natural order, of the Lower Canadians, answer at once in the affirmative;—and the supernatural deficiency which we recognise, and to which we attribute the "lawless proclivities" of the former, is the want of the Cross, which they have discarded in discarding Catholicity. This, at all events, is our hypothesis; and until the Montreal Herald shall have adduced a better, or more plausible hypothesis, he has no right to complain of us, if the TRUE WITNESS adheres to its own.

The "crimes of the gravest character"—the "murders by violence and by poison"—the "burglaries and incendiarisms," which, according to the Herald, are rife in Upper Canada, and which constitute the peculiar characteristic which distinguishes the people of that section of Province from the people of Lower Canada, are by the Herald attributed to the "carelessness, incapacity, and in some instances, culpable partiality of the local magistracy." It is in a reform of this body, the ministers of mere human justice, and of which body the hangman may be taken as the symbol, that the Montreal Herald places his hopes of a reform in the people themselves. But is not this the very thesis of the TRUE WITNESS expressed only in different terms? The Catholic would place his sole hopes of diminishing crime amongst any society, in the labors of the priest, or minister of God's justice—in the salutary influences of religion upon the heart, and not in the effects of the "cat-o-nine-tails" upon the cuticle. In a word, the one appeals to God, and to His law, the other to man, and to man's law; the one, as a Catholic, puts his trust in the Cross, the other, as a Protestant, takes refuge beneath the shade of the Gallows, which is the "tree of life" of all Protestant or Non-Catholic society.

We would also request the Herald to consider what part the Common Schools of Upper Canada may have played in producing the "lawless proclivities" of the people subject to the influences of those Protestant institutions.

We may congratulate ourselves in that our recent articles upon Representation by Population have elicited strong and clear condemnation of that measure, from the greater part of our French Canadian cotemporaries. The Minerve, L'Ordre, the Courrier du Canada, and Le Canadien have all expressed themselves clearly and in the same sense as opposed to any such changes in the Act of Union, as should give a legislative preponderance to the Upper Province, in case the present Census should show a considerable excess of population in that section of the Province over the population of Lower Canada. So far therefore we have every reason to be content with the result of our agitation of this question.

To the Canadien however we would offer a rejoinder to some of his strictures upon our comments and upon the position of the Ministry on the Representation Question. We will not admit that we have been guilty of any injustice towards them collectively. We are willing to believe in the good intentions of the French Canadian section of that Ministry, because their particular organs of the French press may be supposed fairly to represent French Canadian Ministerial views. But, on the other hand, the fact that the recognised organs of the English speaking portion of the Ministry, such as the Montreal Pilot in particular, speak pretty plainly in favor of Representation by Population—is

calculated to inspire us with distrust of the good intentions of the Ministry collectively, or as a body. If in this we err, we err in good company, for certainly it is the general opinion that journals, patronised by the Ministry, do also reflect the opinions of their Ministerial patrons.

Le Canadien wrongs us also if he interprets our articles as sanctioning, in general terms, appeals to force, and armed resistance, to oppression. As Catholics, we lay down and defend no such doctrine; but it is one thing to deny the right of a people to take up arms to overthrow the existing political order, and another thing to assert their right to take up arms in self-defence, and in support of their existing political institutions. The moral condition of the Italian insurgents may be very doubtful; but not so that of him who is in arms in defence of his legitimate sovereign.

Now to apply this, we would remind Le Canadien that all that we meant by allusion to "civil war" was this: that even the armed violence apparently meditated by the people of Upper Canada against French Canadians, was an evil less to be dreaded by the true patriot and the true Catholic, than a tame submission to the exorbitant demands of the Clear-Grits. Better for French Canadians to die gloriously in defence of their laws, language and religion, than to submit "to be improved off the face of the earth" by their Protestant enemies of Upper Canada.—(God forbid that we should be suspected even of desiring to appeal to force for purposes of aggression; but we do maintain the right of the people of Lower Canada to repel force by force, if force is attempted to be employed in order to compel them to submit to Upper Canadian domination. That this application of force is contemplated, is looked forward to by the Protestant Reformers of Upper Canada as a probable contingency, will we think appear from the following passage, which we extract from the Toronto Globe:—

"If Upper Canada pretends to have an Upper Canadian policy? Why, who has driven her,—after years of remonstrance, of protest, of submission to insult and wrong, and outrage, which no other people on this continent would have borne,—to assert her rights, to proclaim a sectional policy in pure self-defence? Who but Mr. Sciotte and his late colleagues? Who but those Lower Canada leaders and their sectional majority are to blame for that feeling of 'antagonism' that now swells the breast of every freeman in every township and in every hamlet in Upper Canada, and provokes thousands to declare that the musket and the sword would be the most welcome instruments to procure redress?"—(The Italics are our own.)

The pith of our article therefore was this—That, if the Upper Canadians proposed to meet us with "sword and musket," we of Lower Canada would be morally justified in retorting with similar arguments. A purely defensive civil war may be justified, without any general proclamation of the right of armed resistance to tyranny and oppression. We will pass on to another topic.

The Canadien says: "The True Witness concludes its article thus:—'Equality of Representation, or Repeal of the Union pur et simple; to no other conceivable alternative should Lower Canadian Catholics vouchsafe a moment's hearing.' But what of Confederation then. . . . Will not our cotemporary allow us, and those who with us believe that this would be the best means for settling the difficulties between upper and Lower Canada, to lend an ear to this scheme? Confederation of the Provinces is, we know, not more acceptable to the True Witness than it is to many other Catholic journals of Lower Canada."

What do we think of Confederation? The Canadien asks. Why This—that it is a humbug, as great a humbug as Mr. George Brown's farcical "joint authority." A Confederation of Colonies is, in the first place, simply an absurdity, seeing that their Federal Government would be incompetent to perform any one of the functions which belong essentially to such a Government. Those functions are exclusively, to conclude treaties with Foreign Powers, to make war and to declare peace, to levy armies and to equip navies for the defence of its territories and of its commerce, and, internally, to raise a revenue from the several members of the Confederation, sufficient to enable it to perform these its sole legitimate functions. But all these things are done for all its Colonies by the Imperial Government. As it is, all the British dependencies—Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Cape of Good Hope, New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, Swao River, New Zealand—are all members of one great Confederation, whose Federal Government is located at Westminster; and so long as they remain Colonies or dependencies of the Imperial Government, no other Confederation is possible or desirable.

But as it is a necessity that every Government should do something, and exercise some functions, and as a Federal Government of British North American Colonies could have no external affairs to manage, therefore no legitimate functions to exercise—it would necessarily interfere with the internal affairs of the several members of the Confederation of which it was the head. Such an order of things would be more immediately fatal to the autonomy of Lower Canada than would be the present legislative Union with Representation by Population. Besides, for Upper Canada and Lower Canada to enter into that Confederation, as distinct and separate

States, it would be first necessary that the existing legislative Union should be repealed; and thus, repeal pur et simple must, logically, precede the Canadien's plan of Confederation, unless our cotemporary contemplates Upper and Lower Canada becoming members thereof as only one State. But such a proposition no Canadian could seriously entertain for one moment, neither could a Confederation, based upon such a principle, have any effect whatever upon the questions now in dispute between the two sections of the Province, seeing that their cause would still subsist in all its force, so long as the two Canadas were treated as one and not as two.

We have given our opinion as to the Confederation scheme frankly, and are willing to discuss the subject amicably with Le Canadien upon one condition. That condition is, that he shall define sharply and clearly what he means by Confederation, and a Federal Government. Without clear definitions, it is impossible to argue. Before discussing the properties of a triangle, we must know clearly what a triangle is, and whether such a thing is conceivable or possible in rerum natura, or in the actual order of things. So in like manner, before discussing the merits of a Confederation of the British North American Provinces, we must know previously, how and in what manner that Confederation is to be composed; of whom, and of what the Federal Government is to consist; what are to be its functions; and what the means to prevent all interference with the internal affairs of its several subject Provinces. All these questions, and many more of a similar nature must be fully and unambiguously answered before it is possible even to discuss the question—whether a Confederation would be beneficial to the natural and Catholic interests of Lower Canada? and when Le Canadien shall have given answers to the above questions, then, and not before, will we have the right to ask us what we think of Confederation? To this question as at present propounded by Le Canadien, we respond by the demand for a definition of Confederation. Define, Define, Define; and remember that he who cannot, or will not, define the meaning of the terms by him employed, is one who is either morally or intellectually incapable of argument.

The Montreal Herald severely comments upon the bad management of the Isle-aux-Noix Reformatory prison, as evidenced by the late unsuccessful out-break of organised mutiny.—The simple fact, that the prisoners are allowed to hold such communication with one another as to be enabled to organise, is a conclusive proof as to the radically defective principles upon which the Isle-aux-Noix institution is conducted. So far then we fully agree with the Montreal Herald.

We differ with him wherein he attributes to the individual officer in command of the institution, the results of an essentially vicious system. The system itself is essentially and radically bad, founded on false principles, and, under the best management, can lead only to the most pernicious results.

The fundamental error is this—that in our secondary system of punishments we have compounded two things which should ever be kept distinct—the Penal and the Reformatory. It is not in the power of the State to effect—it may be questioned how far it is a legitimate function of the civil magistrate to undertake—the moral reform of the criminal, old or young; the magistrate may punish the body and so deter from crime; but God has not endowed him with the means of controlling the heart of the criminal, and it is from the heart of man that all moral disease proceeds.

The attempt to reform criminals by means of Reformatory Prisons under the control of the State, has often been made, and has invariably resulted in disastrous failure—may, worse than failure; for it has multiplied and intensified the evils which it was designed to diminish. He who has once been an inmate of a State-Reformatory Prison may ever after be looked upon as a hopeless and irreclaimable scoundrel; if he went into that institution merely a man's sujet, he comes out an incarnate devil and an accomplished hypocrite; for it is a fact known to all who have studied the question of the treatment of criminals, that the well-behaved prisoner, and he who gives the strongest consolations to his keepers, is invariably the most hardened reprobate of the lot. We remember when the reformed criminals from the Reformatory establishment at Pentonville used to be sent out to New South Wales, and the honor with which they were looked upon even by the courtier population of that Penal settlement. The term Penton-villain was a term of reproach applied to those "babes of grace," even by fellows who had stood upon the scaffold and had felt the pressure of the noose upon their necks; and we have no reason to expect better things from Isle-aux-Noix than from Pentonville.

It is not so much a change in the personnel of the first-named of these Reformatory Institutions that is needed, as a thorough radical change in the institution itself, and in our whole system of secondary punishments, which is based—not upon principles of sound political economy, or of true Christianity—but which is the mongrel offspring of a spurious liberalism, allied with a maudlin philanthropy.

FRENCH TREATY WITH CHINA.—The London Times, like a true Protestant, complains bitterly of the terms of this Treaty. Whilst the Great Briton has devoted his energies to the laudable object of procuring a fresh market for his cotton, and his woollen goods, the miserable French Papist has been intent rather upon obtaining for the Catholic Missionary, free access to the heathen populations of Eastern Asia.