

REMITTANCES

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THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 23, 1856.

TO OUR DELINQUENT SUBSCRIBERS.—We again find ourselves compelled to call upon our friends to pay up, without delay, the arrears by them due to this office. The amount of these arrears is very large; and in consequence, we are often put to considerable inconvenience. We trust this announcement will suffice, and that we may not be again forced to address our readers upon this subject. We are preparing a list of delinquent subscribers, which we intend, when completed, to hand over to a lawyer with instructions to take immediate steps to enforce the payment of all arrears.

The steamship *Canadian* arrived at Quebec on Wednesday morning. She brings no news of importance.

CONSECRATION OF HIS LORDSHIP THE BISHOP OF LONDON, C.W.

Beautiful and impressive as are all the ceremonies of the Catholic Church, none are more so, none more deeply significative of her divine origin, and of the divine wisdom which directs her, than those solemn rites which she has established for the consecration of her Pastors and Prelates. It is upon these occasions that the Church puts forth all her magnificence, and in her every action proclaims her consciousness of the plenitude of that authority with which she has been invested by Her Divine Founder. From her lips we hear no doubtful or hesitating words, there drop no ambiguous formularies. But confident in her right, and well assured that what she does in time will be ratified in eternity, she speaks, not with the stammering accents of the self-condemned impostor, but as the only legitimate Spouse of Him, to Whom belongeth all dominion, both in the heavens, and upon earth.

Such was the universal impression produced upon the witnesses of the solemn rites of Sunday last, the 18th inst., in the Cathedral of Montreal; wherewith, in obedience to the terms of the "Letters Apostolic" of the Sovereign Pontiff, the office of Bishop in the Church of Christ was conferred upon His Lordship Mgr. Pinsonneault—whom the unanimous voice of the Prelates of Canada had declared to be fully worthy of bearing rule over the newly erected Diocese of London. May this excellent Prelate belong preserved to the flock which he has thus been appointed to tend—is the fervent prayer of all who know him, of all who have at heart the interests of the Catholic Church in Canada.

Upon this auspicious occasion, Montreal was honored with the largest concourse of Prelates, that ever met together in any city of this country. There were present—the Bishops of Toronto—of Bytown—the Coadjutor of Montreal—the Bishops of St. Hyacinthe—of Three Rivers—the Bishop Coadjutor of Quebec—the Bishop of Portland in the U. States—the Bishop of Arichat, N.S.—and the newly consecrated Bishop of Hamilton. In all, nine Bishops, besides him whose elevation to the Episcopacy they had met together to celebrate. A large number of Clergy from the different dioceses of Canada were also present, assisting at the ceremony.

The Consecrating Bishop was His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto, assisted by their Lordships, the Bishop of Cydonia, Coadjutor of Montreal, and the Bishop of Portland. A most eloquent and impressive discourse was delivered by the Rev. P. Vignon, of the Society of Jesus; in which the learned preacher forcibly insisted upon the many blessings which the Catholics of Canada enjoy. In Canada the Church is free; free to pursue her own policy; free to elect her own ministers; above all, free to obey the Pontiff who from the Chair of Peter watches like a wise and faithful shepherd over the flock committed to his charge, ever mindful of Christ's last commands—"Feed my lambs."

In the evening, His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto preached, selecting for his subject the virtue of humility, as exemplified in the person of Mary; whom he especially proposed as a model to all Prelates and Pastors. The sermon was followed by the solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, at which His Lordship the Bishop of London officiated; and thus closed the sacred offices of a day which will be long memorable in the annals of the Church in Canada.

"God defend me from my friends; I can defend myself from my enemies"—is an old proverb, to which Mr. Drummond has just given a modern application. God defend His Church—say we against such friends as Mr. Drummond; we care but little

for aught that the Spooners, and the Browns can do against her.

Mr. Drummond, as our readers of course are aware, has introduced a Bill for the general Incorporation of Religious Houses, under the pretext of thereby putting an end for the future to the numerous particular Bills for a similar purpose that are annually brought before the Legislature. In this there is nothing objectionable; for Catholics ask nothing for themselves, or their institutions, but what they are perfectly willing to see accorded to all their Non-Catholic fellow citizens of all denominations. Catholics ask no special privileges or favors of the Legislature.

But Mr. Drummond, finding that his Bill was likely to meet with a strong Protestant opposition—because Protestants are less anxious to secure religious freedom for themselves, than to impose trammels upon Papists—and, we suppose, dreading lest a defeat in the House of Assembly should have the disagreeable consequences of depriving the country of his very valuable services, and himself, of a very valuable situation—has, as we mentioned in our last introduced several important amendments to his Bill, in the hopes of thereby disarming the fury of his political opponents. He has, in fact, adopted their anti-Catholic policy, whilst still professing respect for the Catholic Church and a regard for her institutions. Alas! Mr. Drummond is not the first statesman, who, in his own person, has shown the impossibility of serving both God and Mammon. The following is the scope of Mr. Drummond's amendments:—

The first provides, that all bequests to Religious or Charitable institutions made by persons having families, and exceeding in value 25 per cent of their property, shall be null and void; and that all bequests to such institutions, if not made at least six months before the testator's death, shall be null and void. It will thus be seen that Mr. Drummond has merely torn a leaf out of the great Protestant statute book—or as *Punch* facetiously observed of the Peelites when they adopted the old Free Trade policy of the Whigs—that he has stolen Mr. G. Brown's coat and trousers whilst the latter gentleman was bathing. We cannot so far flatter Mr. Drummond as to tell him that his new Protestant suit of clothes improves his appearance. On the contrary, they sit as ungracefully upon him as a purser's shirt upon a hand-spike, as they say in the navy.

That in introducing the above amendments, Mr. Drummond was giving expression to his own convictions—that he believed that such amendments were necessary or just—we do not suppose. He has, we have no doubt, yielded to the pressure from without; and rather than risk the loss of office, he has preferred to commit a gross outrage upon the rights of property, and to offer a gratuitous and unmerited insult to the Church of which he professes himself a member. We say this, because these amendments formed no part of his original Bill; and because it is not likely that, in the short interval that has elapsed since he first introduced it, any new light can have been vouchsafed to him upon the subject.

These amendments constitute in the first place a gross outrage upon individual liberty, and the rights of property. The right of every man, being of sane mind, to give of his own, to whom, and as much as he will, is a right which he holds independent of any Legislature; one of which therefore no Legislature has the right to deprive him; and every man has the right to be considered as of sane mind until such time at least, as the contrary shall have been legally proved. To limit therefore man's natural right to dispose as he will of his own, or to attribute to him insanity, because the disposition he makes of his property is more favorable to the interests of the Church, and the poor, than to those of the members of his own family—is an outrage upon the rights of the individual, as gross as any that we read of in the records of Oriental Despotism.

And here we may be permitted to ask—what is the object of, what is the end proposed by, this amendment? Is it merely to prevent Religious Houses from receiving?—or is it to compel the parent to make a suitable provision for his family? Mr. Smith, or Mr. Jones, or Mr. Brown, having a family, is to be prohibited from leaving more than 25 per cent. of his property for any religious, educational or charitable purpose—is he to be compelled to leave the other 75 per cent. to his family? or will he be at liberty to bequeath all, or a portion of it, to some other purpose, provided only it be not for the honor and glory of God, and the good of the poor? If Protestant legislators dared to be consistent, they would of course feel themselves compelled—upon the same principles as those which prompt them to limit the right of the individual to leave his property to whom he will—to make it obligatory upon parents, under all circumstances, to leave 75 per cent. of their property to their families. If they do not do this, it is evident, that their legislation is dictated, not by regard for the children, but by hatred of the Church; and that it is as absurd and illogical as it is destructive of all rights of property, and of individual liberty.

But it is more than an absurdity; more than an outrage upon property, and the natural inherent rights of the individual. It is an insult of the grossest kind to the Church and her ministers; and doubly insulting when the blow is dealt by one who calls himself a Catholic, as does Mr. Drummond. For what do his amendments imply?—what is the construction put upon them by the enemies of our religion, and the calumniators of those Pastors and Prelates whom Mr. Drummond professes to revere?

They imply that, Bishops, Priests, and Nuns, are such a set of sordid, mercenary and dishonest knaves, that a special legislation is necessary to "check their mal-practices;" that, the ministers of religion, the Pastors of the Catholic Church, not only do not inculcate upon their penitents, the duty of making, in so far as their means will honestly allow, a decent and

honorable provision for their children and families, but that the said Pastors avail themselves of their spiritual authority to persuade those over whom they have influence, to defraud their nearest of kin, their own flesh and blood; that Bishops, Priests, and Nuns are sordid hypocrites, ever hovering like vultures round the bed sides of the sick and dying, and with the name of Christ upon their lips, intent only upon increasing their wealth, and securing to themselves a more than fair share of the good things of this world. These are the calumnies which the mendacious enemies of the Catholic Church have never failed to assert; and in which Mr. Drummond, by his amendments to his "Religious Incorporation Bill," now professes himself to believe. And Mr. Drummond calls himself a Catholic! and it is, and it is only, because he calls himself so, that he is dangerous.—"See"—Protestants will now triumphantly exclaim, pointing to Mr. Drummond's amendments—"see;" even your own co-religionists, your own children, are obliged to acknowledge your covetous, grasping, dishonest propensities; are obliged to provide legislative barriers for the objects of your priestly tyranny, to protect them against your knavish designs!" And the insulted, maligned, calumniated Church, thus addressed, what answer can she make to this logic?—Ah! if an enemy had done this, she could have borne it! As it is, she can but commend herself to Him Who judgeth righteously, and implore His protection against her friends.

Mr. Drummond's amendments involve also a fallacy; for they suppose that a man at the hour of death, is less likely to act honestly, is more apt to be swayed by improper motives, than he is when the prospects of death are far removed. Now Mr. Drummond is a lawyer, and he must know that the law which he administers gives no countenance whatever to this fallacy. On the contrary, it generally assumes that, with the prospects of death immediately before him, and when hovering on the brink of immortality, man, if in the possession of his mental faculties, is more likely, than at any other time, to act honestly. The law will attach far more importance to a bare statement made in *articulo mortis* than it would have done to a similar statement made by the same person when in perfect bodily health, and six months before his death. This too is in accordance with the common sense of mankind; which always attributes a certain amount of credibility to the last words, even of the dying criminal—or reputed criminal—who dies with protestations of innocence upon his lips. But to conciliate the irreconcilable enemies of his Church, Mr. Drummond hesitates not to outrage common sense, law, equity, and religion. When dealing with the Church, he assumes as incontestable, the principle that a man is never so untrustworthy, never so likely to act improperly and dishonestly, as at the hour of death; as when he knows that yet a few minutes, and time for him will be no more—that the world with all the vanities and the glories and the riches thereof shall have passed away; and he himself shall stand before the Judgment Seat of the Judge of the living and the dead, to answer for the deeds done in the body. The fundamental principle of Mr. Drummond's legislation is as absurd, as the amendments themselves are unjust and anti-Catholic.

We may be permitted to express a hope however that the Catholic public—that portion of them at least who love and revere the Church, who have nothing to hope, nothing to fear, from Ministerial favor or Ministerial displeasure—will not fail to mark their sense of Mr. Drummond's unworthy conduct; that they will give him plainly to understand that, in their eyes, the interests of religion, and the honor of their Pastors, are of more importance than the smiles or patronage of an Attorney-General; and that at the next election they will bear in mind that no honest Catholic should be accessory to placing again in a situation of trust, one who has already proved himself so untrustworthy. Better, a hundred times better, for us that George Brown should rule over us; for he is an enemy, and we can defend ourselves against our enemies. But God alone can defend us against such friends as Mr. Drummond. With our whole heart we say it—"From all such friends—*Libera nos Domine.*"

We would not intentionally wrong, or misrepresent any one, not even the *Commercial Advertiser*; and since our cotemporary emphatically disclaims any latent design of recommending the spoliation or suppression of "the Religious Houses" as a cure or preventive of pauperism, idleness, and mendicancy, we are compelled in courtesy to give him the benefit of that disavowal. At the same time we must confess that we have failed in seizing the meaning of his previous article upon the same subject: and we may be permitted to say that the interpretation we put upon his language was not only not "forced," but was the only one that it seemed to us to be at all calculated to bear.

After stating that "there was nothing to show that any large body of the poor are now supported by Religious Houses in Catholic countries"—(a statement which from the statistics of Montreal alone we have shown to be erroneous)—our cotemporary, in his issue of the 23d ult. went on to say:—

"There is far more reason to believe that the existence of the Religious Houses encouraged idleness and mendicancy, than that they prevented it. Those acquainted with the state of pauperism in Continental and South American cities, where the Roman Catholic Religion is paramount will need no argument on this head."

Now it certainly seemed to us—that if, in the opinion of our cotemporary it be desirable to suppress "idleness and mendicancy"—and if in his opinion, Religious Houses "encourage idleness and mendicancy" in all countries where "the Roman Catholic Religion is paramount"—in his opinion it must be desirable to suppress the said Religious Houses, as the encouragers of "idleness and mendicancy." In

this conclusion there is assuredly no "forcing;" nothing but what flows naturally and as an inevitable logical sequence from the premises by the *Commercial Advertiser* laid down: nothing certainly to warrant the language on the part of our cotemporary, to the effect that the TRUE WITNESS, in alleging that the *Commercial Advertiser* recommended the suppression or spoliation of Catholic Religious Houses as a cure for pauperism, idleness and mendicancy, had been guilty of "unmitigated falsehood," because he—the *Commercial Advertiser*—"had never written one line that such an interpretation could be forced upon." We still contend that the only logical interpretation of which his unfounded assertion of the 23d ult.—to the effect that the Religious Houses of Catholic countries did, and do "encourage idleness and mendicancy"—is susceptible, is the one we put upon it—viz., that in the opinion of the *Commercial Advertiser*, the suppression, or spoliation, of the Religious Houses is desirable, as a cure for idleness, mendicancy, and pauperism. If this be not the opinion of the *Commercial Advertiser*, then of two things, one. Either he does not believe that it is desirable to suppress "idleness and mendicancy"; or he does not believe that "idleness and mendicancy" are encouraged by the Religious Houses of Catholicity. Our cotemporary is welcome to accept which horn of this dilemma he pleases.

It is all very well for our Protestant cotemporary to make bold assertions about the evil consequences of the Religious Houses "in Continental and South American cities where the Roman Catholic religion is paramount;" but he would do well to remember that he is not "Sir Oracle;" and that others, as well informed as he is, and with fully as much experience of the effects of the said Religious Houses as he has, will require something more than his assertions, or even Protestant Statistics, to believe that these effects are anything but beneficial in the highest degree, and under every point of view,—religious—and social—and political. That there are, have been, and may be again, abuses in such Houses no one will deny. That all nuns are always angels, that all monks are always Saints, no one will pretend; but no one save a very bigoted Protestant, or a very "intelligent Great Briton," doing his Italy or his Spain, as the case may be, will deny that the advantages of Conventual establishments far more than counterbalance their disadvantages; and that in spite of those imperfections which are inseparable from all the works of man, the services which they have rendered, and every day render, to the cause of intelligence, industry, charity and religion, are such as to deserve for them the thanks of every honest man, the earnest prayers of every sincere Christian—whatever the Great Protestant Tradition may assert to the contrary.

It is a necessity of Protestantism to malign and misrepresent these institutions; for only by so doing can it palliate its conduct towards them. It is but reasonable therefore, seeing how deeply interested Protestantism is in making out a good case against the Religious Houses, that we should receive its evidence with great caution, as that of one who is an interested party, and who therefore cannot be an impartial or credible witness. When on the contrary, Protestant writers testify in their favor, we may be sure that that testimony is wrung from them by the force of truth; and on it we may therefore place implicit reliance. Thus for instance, when a Protestant writer in Lower Canada—"where the Roman Catholic religion is paramount"—is unable to point to any single instance in Canada where the Religious Houses "encourage idleness and mendicancy;" when he is obliged to refer his readers to remote South America, or the Continent of Europe for proofs of the evil results of conventual establishments—when he refuses to take note of that which is passing under his very nose, and persists in straining his eyes after that which is thousands of miles away—we may easily draw two conclusions. 1st. That he can find no evil in our Religious Houses in Canada—2nd. that he is mindful of the custom of old nurses—when telling wonderful stories to their infantile charges—of prefacing their marvellous, and otherwise incredible legends, with a—"long-way-off"—and a—"long long time ago." Thus by drawing largely on time and space, do these ancient dames get credit for their drafts upon the credulity of their tender hearers; who would at once reject as lies, monstrous as Satan, the self same stories, if told them as having occurred, yesterday, or in the next street. It is upon this principle that the *Commercial Advertiser* seeks for proofs of the pauperizing influences of Religious Houses—not in Canada or at the present day—but in the distant cities of South America, and the days of the Plantagenet and Tudor Kings. We admit the prudence of this policy on his part; though we can neither praise its honesty, nor esteem highly the intelligence of those upon whom it takes effect.

We happen however to know, at the least as much as, in all probability a great deal more, about the working of the "Religious Houses" on the Continent of Europe and in the cities of South America, than does our cotemporary; and we have therefore no hesitation in saying that his insinuation, that they "encourage idleness and mendicancy" is, in his own elegant language, "an unmitigated falsehood." What the "Religious Houses" are in Canada, in Montreal, Quebec, and the other cities of this Province, that are they in France, Italy, and Spain; in Valparaiso, in Rio Janeiro and in the cities of South America, where the Catholic Religion is paramount. The Religious Houses there, are of the same Orders, and governed by the same rules as are the Religious Houses here; in support of which it is only necessary

* The Talmud gives this advice, apparently especially designed for "intelligent Protestants." "When you would tell a lie, locate the particulars at a distance."