

The True Witness

AND

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

MAY.—1871.

Friday, 19.—St. Peter Celestine, P. C.
Saturday, 20.—St. Bernardine of Siena, C.
Sunday, 21.—Sunday after Ascension.
Monday, 22.—St. Venantius, M.
Tuesday, 23.—Of the Octave.
Wednesday, 24.—B. V. M. Help of Christians.
Thursday, 25.—Octave of Ascension.

CHANGE OF OFFICE.—The office of the TRUE WITNESS has been removed to No. 210, St. James Street.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Still the old story from Paris. Incessant cannonading, and the slow but steady advance of the Versailles troops upon the doomed City. At any moment we may expect to hear of an assault having been delivered, and of a fearful shedding of blood; but it is not impossible that discouragement may set in amongst the ranks of the Communists, and that the more prudent amongst them, may seek to avert a hopeless hand to hand fight in the streets.

Communist principles are making progress everywhere in Europe. Spain is infected, Belgium is said to be rotten with the disease. We do not therefore anticipate that the fall of Paris will be the fall of the cause; and indeed in the moral order as in the physical, disease when it once gets hold of the system, whether we call it *Communism* or small-pox, must run its allotted course.

The Washington Treaty has been published in full by the *N. Y. Tribune*. The following Rules are therein laid down, and mutually agreed to, with respect to such cases as that of the *Alabama*:

RULES.—A neutral Government is bound—First: To use due diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to war-like use. Secondly: Not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly: To exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.

These rules, except in so far as they may imply censure of the British Government are of little value; for the question will always arise, what is "due diligence?" This in short is the entire question all along at issue between the United States and Great Britain in the *Alabama* case. The British Government contends that it did use all "due" diligence to prevent the *Alabama* from leaving its shores; and that therefore it was not bound to do more than it actually did. This first rule therefore leaves the case, in so far as it may serve as a precedent, precisely where it was a year ago. What "diligence" is "due?" That is the question.

The second rule in like manner provides for nothing. It is not we suppose thereby intended to oblige neutrals to close their ports to belligerents, or to refuse them the ordinary rites of maritime hospitality, such as leave to take in water, or receive provisions. But if it does not imply this, then it has no meaning in the *Alabama* case. The *Alabama* was either a lawful belligerent, or a pirate. If a belligerent, she was by the laws of nations entitled to the same hospitable reception in a British port, as were the armed vessels of the other belligerent, and she could not therefore have been detained. If not a lawful belligerent, then was the *Alabama* a pirate, and liable by the laws of nations, not only to be detained in any neutral port into which she might have put for water or provisions, but liable to be seized on the high seas,

and dealt with as a pirate. Piracy is a crime with which, not only the nation, whose ships have been piratically captured, has the right to deal, but with which every nation is bound to deal. The pirate is the enemy of all nations, of the human race, who may be captured, brought to trial, and hung, by any one into whose hands he may happen to fall. If therefore Great Britain was bound to refuse the ordinary hospitality of her ports to the *Alabama*, she was bound to do much more; she was bound to take possession of her, to try, and on conviction of their having committed acts of hostility on the high seas, to hang her crew and captain.—There was no third course open; for the *Alabama* was either a lawful man of war, the cruiser of a belligerent State, and entitled to be treated as such in all British ports; or she was a pirate, which all British cruisers were therefore bound to search after, hunt down and destroy.

The third rule is worthless for the same reason as is the first—since everything again depends upon the word *due*. "Who is to determine what diligence is *due*?" This however is of less consequence, since from past experience, there can be no one so sanguine or so foolish as to believe, that, were Great Britain involved in war, the United States Government would exert any diligence at all, to prevent the violation of treaty obligations by any body of its citizens whose vote, at the then next coming election, it would be expedient to propitiate.

If the Prussians did not distinguish themselves, or greatly add to their military reputation, by their siege of Paris, it is much the same with the French generals on whom has devolved the task of reducing the rebellious City to subjection to the authorities at Versailles. We do not say that these generals are making no progress: but their advance is very slow. Whether it be owing to the military difficulty, to the material obstacles which the insurgents oppose to the advance of the Versailles troops—or whether it be owing to the political exigencies of the situation, to the moral obstacles in their way, and to the natural repugnance of Thiers to push matters to extremities, thereby risking the destruction of the fair capital of France—the glory of modern civilisation—we cannot tell; all we can make out is, that the attack is not pushed with vigor, and that after a series of desultory combats the relative positions of the contending parties do not as yet seem greatly altered. To be sure the attacking army can make good its losses, and recruit its ranks depleted by shells and mitrailleuses: this the insurgents cannot do, for outside of Paris they have no strong party in France; and therefore the final result is but a question of time, since the assailants of Paris can better afford to lose five thousand men, than the *Reds* can afford to lose one hundred.

Some successes too, though not decisive, have been obtained by the Versailles army during the week. The *Reds* have been worsted on several occasions, and driven from important parts of their line of defence. Moreover, as is usually the case when things go wrong, the *Reds* are fighting amongst themselves, mutually bandying accusations of treachery and venality. Perhaps the policy of allowing them to "stew in their own gravy" may, under such circumstances be the very best that M. Thiers could have adopted. By latest accounts it would appear as if the Free Mason societies were taking an active part in the business; for we read in telegrams under date, 12th inst., that at a meeting of these gentry in the *Cirque National*, it was resolved to confiscate the property of persons absent from Paris, and not returning within eight days. The Commune we are told has made another demand on the Bank of France of Ten millions of francs; the famous column in the Place Vendôme, commemorative of so many victories, was to have been destroyed on Monday.

The London *Times* speaks well of the Treaty adopted by the High Joint Commission; it looks upon it as the fruit of mutual concessions—though it would be hard to say where in the concessions of the U. States Government consists; and it finds therein nothing inconsistent with national honor. Perhaps not; but—and this is a question which naturally suggests itself—is it probable that Great Britain would have acceded to such a Treaty, or have made such concessions as are therein involved—if the Confederate States had come out victors from the late contest between North and South? If any can seriously believe that she would have done so, then may they also believe that, in signing the Washington Treaty, Great Britain sacrifices no honor, eats no humble pie.

In the U. States the Treaty is well received. The Senate it is expected will ratify by it the required majority, when it will become an accomplished fact.

From Nova Scotia we learn that the elections were exciting much interest, and that the *Anti's* as they are called, are likely to get a small majority. Their press is very bitter against

the High Commission which, so they contend, has battered away the Nova Scotia Fisheries. The Colonists in Australia are also much excited by the report of the fitting out of a filibustering expedition in some U. States port; precautionary measures were being taken.

The Montreal *Witness* settles it, to his own satisfaction, if not to the satisfaction of Catholics—that it is quite right and proper to tax the latter for the support of non-Catholic schools, whilst it would be a crying injustice to reverse the process, and to tax non-Catholics for the support of Catholic schools. Thus he argues:—

"It cannot be too often shown that assessing Roman Catholics for unsectarian Common schools, is quite a different thing from assessing Protestants for Roman Catholic schools. In the one case, there can be no conscientious objection, for reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, &c., &c., are neither denominational nor atheistical."

Granted that the three *Rs*, reading, writing, and arithmetic, can be taught to children without provoking any allusions to points in controversy between Catholics, and Protestants, how is it if we advance beyond these? and what—should much like to know—are the contents of the "*ecetera ecetera*" clause in the *Witness*' educational programme? It is just in these *eceteras* that the danger lies. For instance:—

It is almost impossible to teach geography without making some allusions to the moral conditions of the people of the country, of which the geography is being taught, as well as to its physical condition. No geography books that we have yet seen, limit themselves to matters of latitude and longitude, bays, capes, and isothermal lines: they all more or less, treat of the moral, as well as of the physical aspects of the country under review; and, if Protestant, they always draw invidious comparisons between Catholic and Protestant countries.

And then the unknown *eceteras* of the *Witness*! Shall the study of history, either secular or ecclesiastical, be included amongst them? and if so, how is it possible for a Catholic teacher to teach history as seen from a Catholic standpoint, or for a Protestant teacher to teach history as seen from a Protestant standpoint, without intruding upon religious ground, and introducing the so-called "*sectarian*" element to the notice of the pupils? Would the *Witness* consent to have geography and history—to say nothing of the other "*eceteras*" which he includes in the common school course of studies—taught to Protestant children by a Catholic teacher? Would a British father wish his child to draw his first lessons in the history of England from school books drawn up for use in the United States schools? Certainly he would not: much more then would the Catholic father be justified in refusing to allow his child to gather its first knowledge of history from a Protestant teacher.

Go one single step beyond the three *Rs*, and you find yourself, whether you will or no, trenching upon "sectarian" ground. You cannot avoid it; you cannot, for instance, eliminate the so-called sectarian element, either from geography, or history—and how would it be with the other branches comprehended within the very indefinite, but very accommodating, *ecetera* clauses of our contemporary? Now the *Witness* does not propose that the Common schools should be limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic; he expressly includes geography, as one of the branches of a Common school education; and by his string of *eceteras*, anything and everything that a fanatical anti-Catholic school board might please to graft thereon.

We say nothing of the indirect influence either for or against Catholicity, which a teacher must exercise upon the minds of his pupils. Protestants are so conscious of the existence of this indirect influence, of its power for good or evil, that in advertising for their domestic servants, for a cook, or maid-of-all-work, they often take care to add,—"None but Protestants need apply." We do not blame them for that, thinking as they think of Catholicity, they are careful to avoid exposing their young children to the dangers of contact, even, with Catholics; but we do blame them for not recognizing the validity of the same conscientious scruples, which forbid the Catholic father to entrust, even for a moment, the education of his young child, to a Protestant teacher; even though it may be no more the business of the latter to inculcate a holy horror of Popery, than it is part and parcel of poor Bridget's domestic functions, to insinuate a belief in the Real Presence with the maternal coffee, or to encourage love and devotion to the Blessed Mother whilst sweeping out the parlor, or arranging the beds. Here then the Catholic parent can take his stand as on firm ground. No matter what the laws and regulations of your common schools,—I, as responsible to God, and as a free man, will not confide the education of my child—no, not for one instant—to a Protestant teacher; therefore I object to being taxed for the support of the school over which he presides.

MEAT INSPECTION.—The question of the inspection of meat, exposed for sale, has again come up in the City Council; and the appointment of Inspectors is by many insisted upon as an important measure for the preservation of the public health.

The appointment of Inspectors is no doubt a very good step to take, but it is not the only step, nor is it the first step that it is necessary to take if we would really inaugurate an effectual sanitary reform. To appoint Inspectors, before drawing out for their guidance an exhaustive, and stringent code, or set of regulations, would be as useless as it would be to appoint judges, whose function is to administer law, without having first taken the obvious precaution of providing them with a body of laws, or code, to administer; it would be a putting of the cart before the horse.

Before appointing Meat Inspectors we must first determine what constitutes unhealthiness in meat, what renders it unfit for human food, and what are the signs by which that state of unhealthiness may be determined. This having been done, the Inspector's duty will be simple; that of determining a simple matter of fact—to wit, the presence, or the non-presence, of certain conditions. To name Inspectors, and then to leave it to their caprice to say whether meat submitted to their inspection were fit or unfit for human food, would not only be to incur unnecessary expence, but would if possible make matters worse than they are at present.

What is it that makes meat unfit for food? and how is the presence of that disqualifying condition to be determined? Of course every body will admit that meat is unfit for food when in so advanced a stage of decomposition as to be palpably offensive to the organs of smell; but even as to this question of smell there are wide differences of opinion—some contending that the odor of putrid human remains is, if not pleasant, innocuous, and perfectly harmless, even if not actively salubrious. This is a mere matter of opinion, or of taste, which is the same thing; and it will therefore be useless to appoint Inspectors, if they are to have nothing better than their private opinions or tastes, to guide them in the discharge of their functions.

Others will say the flesh of diseased animals is unfit for food. But again, does all disease disqualify for food the flesh of the animal afflicted? If not all, but only certain diseases so disqualify, what are those disqualifying diseases, and how is their presence to be determined? by what outward and visible signs can it be detected?

These are not unimportant questions, and must needs be fully answered before it will be possible to have a satisfactory system of "Meat Inspection." Neither are they questions which can be answered off-hand, as if the answer to them were obvious. There are who contend that diseased meat is not necessarily injurious when taken into the stomach, though its juices, if absorbed directly by the blood-vessels, would be fatal; and they point to the case of snake-poisons, and allege that crocalus poison, or the venom of the rattlesnake, so fatal when taken into the veins, is an inert substance when taken into the stomach—a fact that we may be permitted to doubt, however, if it be true, as we have heard it asserted, that *crocalus* is used with great success by homoeopathic practitioners in their treatment of the vomito in the semi-tropical portions of this Continent.

We have but barely glanced at some few of the questions which naturally present themselves when the question of Meat Inspection is mooted, and which must be answered before any real good effects can be expected from the appointment of Meat Inspectors. We must first draw out for their guidance a code of instructions, so as to leave nothing, or as little as possible, to individual caprice, opinions, or tastes. We want, like Mr. Gradind, "*facts*," and nothing else.

The Jews, whose sanitary system is so admirable, have such a code, and we perhaps might borrow from it with advantage. They have fixed rules by which their inspector is enabled to determine—constatly the French would say—the presence of certain conditions which render the flesh of the animal thereunto subjected, unclean, unfit for human food; and they in consequence have an effective system of meat inspection, so effective that the purchaser who purchases meat with the clean ticket attached to his meat, has a certain guarantee that he may eat it without fear of any injurious results to his health.

THE MOUNTAIN PARK.—The long-talked of scheme of purchasing the mountain for a park hangs fire. The price asked for the land is enormous; and what with the fencing, road-making, and other contingent expences, the cost to the city, if the proposed scheme be carried out, will be not less than a Million of Dollars; it may well be more.

Whether it would be right to incur such an enormous expence, is a very serious question. Who will be the gainers by the transaction?—

The landowners, of course, will have a fine chance of selling their property at a great profit over the price it cost them, and may be supposed to be in favor of the scheme; but how are the mass of the people, out of whose pockets the purchase money will have to come, interested in the matter? Here is another question to be considered.

For what object is the park wanted? Is it for the benefit of the laboring classes, or for the advantage of the rich? Is it to furnish the latter with an elegant drive, and to give shoddy the means of glorifying itself, by a display of carriages, horses, and servants in livery! that it is proposed to make a park? or is it for the sake of furnishing the poor, the artisans, who through all the long week are shut up in their workshops and factories, with an easily accessible spot to which on Sundays and other holidays they, together with their families, may escape from the stinks and beastliness of a town, to breathe the pure air, and enjoy themselves? If the latter be the object—then, though price should be a secondary question, it is doubtful whether the proposed site is adapted for the end in view. It is not easily accessible to the residents of the Quebec suburbs and of Griffintown, for whom and for whose sake a park is chiefly to be desired.

We suppose the citizens generally will be consulted on the matter, before the final steps are taken; and it will be for them to determine whether it be prudent to incur an expence of One Million Dollars for the sake of making an elegant drive and lounge for the richer members of the City population; for, after all, it will, we fear, be of but little benefit to the poor, and to those who stand most in need of a public park.

DEPARTURE OF HIS GRACE, THE ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC, DELEGATE APOSTOLIC.—On Saturday, after a sojourn in Montreal of eleven days, and after having visited most of our religious, charitable, and educational institutions, Mgr. Taschereau took steamboat for Quebec. He was driven to the wharf in the carriage of His Honor the Mayor, and was attended by a large concourse of the clergy and citizens, anxious to testify their respect for the illustrious dignitary of the Church whom we have had the honor of receiving.

SEANCE DRAMATIQUE.—On Friday evening His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec, accompanied by a large body of the clergy, assisted at the representation, by the pupils of St. Mary's College, of the drama of *Polyvictor*. The large Hall was densely crowded, and the numerous audience were highly delighted with the performance. The music was also very good. An Address was presented to the guest of the evening by M. E. Rottot; and at the close of the performance one of the younger pupils made to His Grace the offering of a nosegay, accompanied with a request for a holiday, which was graciously acceded to.

If it be the case—as the *Globe* itself admits that it is—that the respect entertained by any community for the marriage tie, is the surest measure of its morality, what must be the moral state of a people of whom the following can be published with any semblance of truth?—

"It is useless to deny, that, to a large number of people in the States, the venerated idea of the insolubility of the marriage tie is, as they are pleased to term it 'bosh.'"*Globe, May 10th.*

But what does the *Globe* mean by its twaddling about "the venerated idea of the insolubility of the marriage tie?" Where, by whom is that "*idea venerated*" except in strictly Catholic communities, and by Papists? Is not the idea scouted, and formally repudiated, by the legislation of every Protestant community on the face of the earth? Are not Divorce Courts, and Divorce Bills passed by the Legislature, solemn national protests against "*the idea of the insolubility of the marriage tie*?" The people of the U. States may have carried out a little more logically their protest; but they have, in principle, done no more than what has been done by the people of England, and of all other non-Catholic countries. What a farce then, what rank hypocrisy on the part of the *Globe*, for it to prate about "*the venerated idea of the insolubility of the marriage tie*!" Oh Mr. Pecksniff, Mr. Pecksniff, Oh!

The French papers do not appear to be pleased with the terms of the Washington Treaty, in so far as our Canadian interests are concerned therein. The *Journal de Quebec* says:—

"We are entirely and absolutely sacrificed therein to British policy, which at all costs is desirous of peace with the United States. For the United States it is Annexation with all its advantages; for us, sequestration, and ruinous conditions—exclusion from the American market, and enormous tariffs."

The *Evenement* writes in the same spirit—"They have, in short," says *L'Evenement*, "covered up the immense concessions made to the United States with imaginary compensations, the mere semblances of advantages, and shadowy fictitious equivalents." The Americans, it argues, have got all they could ask; and we have had to yield at every point, and have had certain illusory advantages accorded to us in order to cover our retreat. "The treaty in itself is altogether an American treaty and may well be called 'the treaty of Washington.'"*L'Evenement* concludes in the following terms:—