

The True Witness.

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 14, 1859.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE tragedy that apparently menaced Ireland but a few days ago, turns out upon further acquaintance, to be only a farce, and a very ludicrous farce to boot. The Government commenced by making itself odious to the Irish, and it is fast becoming merely ridiculous in their eyes.

The last arrest of which we read is that of a very young lady accused or suspected of writing seditious letters, exhorting the troops to mutiny and rebel. This patriot in crinoline having been committed to prison as a traitor, it was shortly discovered that she was a little touched in her head; and the absurd position of the authorities may be conceived, but cannot easily be described. An examination of the other prisoners charged with conspiring to overthrow the British Empire, had taken place before the magistrates, and they had been committed for trial. The European and Indian news are of little importance.

We regret sincerely that our previous articles, addressed to the *Courrier du Canada*, should have been misunderstood by him; and should have been interpreted by our respected cotemporary in a manner totally at variance with the intentions of the writer. We copy from the *Courrier* of the 3d inst. in reply to ours of the 31st ult.; he writes in answer to us:—

"We have to-day the sorrow to be obliged to say to our esteemed cotemporary that we must suspend our intercourse; till such time at least as he shall have retracted the most extraordinary statement that concludes his last article, of Friday, 31st December. We translate the paragraph to which we allude."

"And this brings us to the real point at issue between the *True Witness* and the *Courrier du Canada*. The ends we both aim at, are, we believe, the same; and the question between us may be thus stated: 'Whether is an alliance of the Catholics of French origin with their Irish coreligionists, or one with the Orangemen of Canada, the more likely to lead to the attainment of those ends, and to redound to the honor and interest of our common Church? Without a moment's hesitation we pronounce in favor of the former alliance, and against the latter, as both dangerous and dishonorable.'—*True Witness*, Dec. 31st.

"How has the *True Witness* dared to state this question, which has never been a question for any one, and which is ridiculous in itself? It is truly impossible for us to imagine it."

"We make no distinction between Irish and French Catholics. We have assumed as admitted and indisputable the necessity for all Catholics to be united, and it is just with the object of putting a stop to the political schism which has caused a portion of Irish Catholics under the standard of Mr. McGee to cross over to the ranks of the *Brunettes* and the democracy, that we have undertaken this discussion. We have stated the question in the clearest manner; placing all Catholics united together in the presence of two enemies, Orangism on the one side, and the phalanx of *Clear Grit* democracy on the other, we asked—of these two camps, which is the less dangerous for the Church at the present moment?"

"And now the *True Witness* tells the Irish Catholics of America that the *Courrier du Canada*, a French Canadian Catholic journal, asks whether the union of its compatriots with the Orangists, is preferable to their union with the Catholics of another origin. But this is frightful! Where are we then? We call upon the *True Witness* for a REPARATION to which we have a right, before continuing a discussion which without that would be as painful to us, as it would be unprofitable to the public."—*Courrier du Canada*, Jan. 9th.

We have in the above, to the best of our abilities, reproduced the words of our Quebec cotemporary; and in reply, have to assure him that we have no "REPARATION" to offer him, for three reasons—1st—We intended no wrong towards him; 2nd—no wrong or injury whatever has been done him, by us at all events; and 3rd—what we have said we have said, and are prepared to prove. On the other hand, it is clear that our cotemporary has perfectly misunderstood us. We owe him therefore, not a "REPARATION," but an EXPLANATION; and that explanation we at once, and most cheerfully offer him.

If our cotemporary will refer to, and carefully read over, the obnoxious paragraph by him quoted from the *True Witness* of the 31st ult., he will find that we have no where pretended that the question as stated by us, was entertained by the *Courrier*. On the contrary, we merely affirmed, as the result of our analysis of the relative position of parties in Canada at the present moment, that the question between the *True Witness* and the *Courrier* might be stated in a particular manner; or that it resolved itself into the question as proposed by us. But we nowhere pretended that it was so stated by the *Courrier*, or was by him viewed in the light in which we,

from our stand-point, viewed it. And to do the *Courrier* full justice, we here declare our frank opinion to be this—that, if he viewed that question as we view it—and that if he believed that he and his compatriots had to choose between a political alliance with the Orangemen, or one with their Irish coreligionists—he and they would without a moment's hesitation reject the former, and declare themselves altogether in favor of the latter.

And it was just because our cotemporary did not seem to see—what to us is plain as the sun at noon day—that a hearty union between French and Irish Catholics, however desirable, is utterly impossible, so long as the former entertain, or seem even to entertain, the slightest semblance of a political alliance with the Orangemen; or so long as they do not insist upon the withdrawal of all official sanction of, or encouragement to, Orangism, or any other secret "politico-religious" society; it is, we say, because the *Courrier* did not seem to be alive to this self evident truth, that we addressed to him the series of articles to which he has done us the honor to reply. Our thesis was simply this—Since Irish Catholics will not, and indeed cannot, so far degrade themselves as directly or indirectly to enter into any semblance of a political alliance with Orangemen, the inveterate, and the most dangerous enemies of their Church—it is impossible that there can be any good understanding between Irish Catholics and French Canadian Catholics, until the latter formally renounce all political connection with Orangism; and join with the former in denouncing it as the most formidable of the enemies which menace our civil and religious liberties. As the corollary of this our proposition—but not as the proposition of the *Courrier*—we resolved the question at issue between us into the formula which has so much offended the *Courrier*; but which is nevertheless a perfectly true statement of the question itself, though our cotemporary, viewing it from another stand-point, does not even yet perceive its relevancy.

Yet we see not how our cotemporary can contest the truth of our conclusions, unless he first impugns our premises. And that we may the more clearly expose those premises, it is necessary that we should refer to his previous articles upon the same subject, under dates 24th and 29th of November, and 3rd December.

In those articles, our cotemporary laid down, or seemed to us to lay down, the following propositions—1st—That the Catholics of Canada were under the necessity of contracting a political alliance with some one of the different parties into which their enemies were divided; and that it was necessary therefore to contract an alliance with that party which at the present moment was the least dangerous or hostile. And 2nd—That of the three great parties into which our enemies were, according to him, divided—viz.,—the "*Clear Grits*," the "*Orangemen*," and the "*Free Thinkers*"—the Orangemen were the least dangerous; in that they made no proselytes, and that after all, their brutalities were exclusively directed against Irish Catholics—"never to our knowledge have the Orangemen attacked any Catholics except their own countrymen."—*Courrier du Canada*, 3rd Dec.

From these premises, or propositions, laid down by our cotemporary—the truth of which we utterly deny—it seemed to us that he was in favor of contracting a political alliance with the Orangemen, not indeed of choice, but from an assumed necessity. We replied, therefore, by showing—or endeavoring to show—that an intimate union of Catholics of all origins with one another, was of far more importance, and should be of far more value in the eyes of Catholics, than any political alliance between one section of the Catholic body, and Orangism; and 2d—that such a Catholic union was impossible, so long as one section of the Catholic body maintained any semblance even of a political alliance with Orangism or Orangemen. Therefore we concluded, that the first and indispensable preliminary to that union—which the *Courrier* also desires we have no doubt—was a formal renunciation on the part of the *Courrier* and its Catholic fellow-countrymen, of all semblance even of connection or political alliance with the Orangemen; who, as the enemies of the Church, are, because organised, well disciplined, and under the command of skillful leaders, incomparably more dangerous foes to the Church, than are the unorganised, undisciplined, accephalous rabble of *Insidels*, and *Clear Grits*; with whom, we also, from our hearts, repudiate any semblance even of alliance, or exchange of political courtesies. And, therefore, as the last result of our analysis of parties, and their relative position, we—not the *Courrier du Canada*—stated the question of our political alliances in the manner at which our cotemporary has taken such deep offence.

We cannot pursue the subject further this week; yet we cannot conclude without exhorting our esteemed friend of Quebec—if he will per-

*His cotemporary forgot the outrages committed upon French Canadians, when a brutal band of Orange ruffians burnt our Houses of Parliament, and attacked the persons and property of our most illustrious French Canadian citizens?

†There is no real distinction between Orangemen and *Clear Grits*. The Orangemen are merely organised *Clear Grits*.

mit us so to address him—to banish all thoughts of a union between French and Irish Catholics in Canada, unless the former renounce utterly all connection, or semblance even of political connection, with Orangism and Orangemen; whilst on the other hand we would earnestly, even if ineffectually, warn our Irish readers against the blandishments of the "*Clear Grit*" Syren, whose song lures only to destruction. Probably we raise our voice in vain; and Cassandra-like, it may still be our fate to be believed of none, even when like the ill-fated daughter of Priam, we speak the words of truth and common sense. Yet at the risk of offending both parties, we still reiterate our exhortations to mutual union; and again state the sole terms upon which that union is possible.—It is impossible, we say it adversely, impossible that the "*schism*" which our friend of the *Courrier du Canada* sees and deplors, can be healed, so long as French Canadian Ministers tolerate, or give the sanction of their countenance to, such infamous displays of Orange insolence, and Executive imbecility as those that occurred at Government House on the 12th of July 1856; or so long as French Canadian Members of Parliament, seem even, upon any pretence whatsoever, to give a Legislative recognition to Orangism; neither can French Canadian Catholics, naturally and laudably jealous of any designs upon their laws, their language and their religion, feel otherwise than suspicious of those whom they believe to be on terms of intimacy with George Brown and his democratic colleagues. What then shall we do? Shall the French and Irish Catholics forever stand aloof? or rather, should they not seek to draw closer together; and addressing one another in the words of the daughter-in-law of Naomi, exclaim!—"Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. *Hec mihi faciat Dominus, et hæc addat, si non sola mors me et te separaverit.*" RUTH. I. 16, 17.

"LES SALLES D'ASILE."—To some of our Catholic readers these eminently Catholic institutions may be unknown. We propose therefore to say a few words upon the subject, in the hopes of calling their attention to one of the most important works of charity, and one which we are happy to say has taken firm root in our City of Montreal. God grant that it may thrive prosperously, and bring forth fruit abundantly!

To Catholic France belongs the honor of having first established the "*Salles D'Asile*," which though in existence only for 25 years, now number in France alone, some three thousand; and are deemed of such importance to society that an annual sum is granted for their support by several Continental Governments; whilst in France especially, by a particular decree of the present Emperor, they have been placed under the especial patronage of the amiable lady who shares his throne. In Italy, the "*Salles*" have also called forth the warmest recommendations from the Pope himself.

But what are these "*Salles D'Asile*," and what their objects? We shall be asked. We reply in the words of the illustrious Cardinal P. Giraud, Archbishop of Cambrai, in a Pastoral Letter of November 1856:—

"The '*Salles D'Asile*,' in the idea of its founders, is not exactly education itself, but is its vestibule.—It is as it were a point or station intermediate between the cradle and the school. . . . Its object is to gather, and preserve the youngest age from the dangers of solitude, to obtain possession of its faculties as they dawn, of its memory, its imagination, its intelligence, its entire soul, in order to stamp upon them holy impressions, edifying tales, moral ideas, virtuous sentiments, pure and tender affections. In them, instruction is imparted drop by drop, under the patronage of Christian ladies, and the direction of pious Virgins, whom evangelical devotion has attracted to this pious work. There, in lessons adapted to the tenderness of youth, and varied with singing and exercises which excite but fatigue not its attention, the child learns, unconsciously almost, and as it were in amusement, the elements of its religion, of language, the first notions of history, geography, and arithmetic; and thanks to the vigilance which presides over these tender infants, you see in the aspect of health and happiness that illuminates their frank and laughing cheeks, the reflection of the innocence and joy of their souls."

This then is the object of the "*Salles D'Asile*." To receive, take care of, preserve from physical danger, and from moral contamination, the bodies and souls of the children of the poorer classes of society; of those particularly, who, to earn their daily bread are obliged to leave their homes throughout the day; and whose children, too young to go to school, are left exposed to all manner of risks, and to the influence of bad example, and evil communications. It is to this class that the "*Salles D'Asile*" offers its aid.—It receives their children in the early morning; watches over them with a mother's care throughout the day; furnishes them with all that is requisite for their young intelligences, and caters to all the wants of their souls and bodies, restoring them in the evening to the parents as they return from their daily work. The rooms where the children are kept are spacious, well warmed and lighted, thoroughly ventilated, and kept scrupulously clean. The children are incessantly under the eyes of the Sister of Charity in charge of the "*Salles*" and of her assistants. Every hour has its allotted function. There is a time for study, another for eating; one for exercise and recreation—for the wants of the body are not neglected; and in the case of the younger ones, there is an allotted period for sleeping.—

The methods of instruction employed by the Sisters are novel, ingenious, and peculiar. It is indeed marvellous to witness the rapid progress made in the acquisition of the first elements of education by the youngest children, by mere infants scarce able to speak distinctly; whilst still more beautiful is it to witness the sincere piety with which they and their kind guardians are animated; and to listen to the simple but touching petitions which from pure infant lips are offered up to Him Who was Himself once a little child, and Whose especial charge it was that little children should be brought to Him. This is the work of the "*Salles D'Asile*." They bring little children to Christ; and surely He will bless them, and prosper them in their good work.

So important is this work deemed on the Continent of Europe, that the writer by us quoted above, hesitates not to speak of the "*Salles D'Asile*" as of more vital importance to the interests of Christian society than the School.

"We esteem the School," says the Cardinal Archbishop of Cambrai, "but we prefer the '*Salles D'Asile*,' and had we to make our choice, for want of sufficient funds for both, we would not hesitate to pronounce in favor of the '*Salles D'Asile*,' whilst waiting for the School, just as one lays the cornerstone before building the superstructure. We esteem the School; but the School without the '*Asile*' which serves as a preparation for, and is the porch of, the School, would but imperfectly fulfil its destination."

This is the opinion as to the importance of the work to which we would call our readers' attention, expressed by an eminent dignitary of the Church in France; and they will therefore surely rejoice to learn that already, here in Montreal, a "*Salles D'Asile*" has been opened in the vicinity of the St. Joseph's Convent, in the St. Antoine suburbs, and under the charge of the Grey Nuns. The Rev. M. Rousselot of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, to whom Montreal is chiefly indebted for this valuable addition to its already numerous and noble works of charity, relies with confidence upon the generosity of its citizens to enable him to continue, and bring to a happy issue, that which he has so well commenced; and it is in the hopes that his charitable aspirations may be realized, that we to-day devote these lines to the subject of "*Les Salles D'Asile*."

MARRIAGE, A CIVIL CONTRACT.—That the Christian institution of matrimony could not long be recognised by a Legislature on whose Statute Book was registered the principle "*that it is desirable to abolish all semblance even of connection between Church and State*"—is a truth so self-evident, that we will not insult the intelligence of our Catholic representatives who voted for the Clergy Reserves Secularisation Bill, by supposing that they were so stupid as not to perceive the inevitable consequences of the false principle to which they gave their sanction in 1854; neither can we suppose—unless we do them the injustice of taking them for imbeciles—that they they will feel much surprised at seeing in 1859, in the leading Ministerial organ of Upper Canada, the preparations that are being made by the Ministry for altering the Marriage Law of Canada; and for giving relief to the tender consciences of those who believe that marriage is a mere civil contract, in which religious ceremonies, and the intercession of the Church, are as impertinent as they would be in any other civil contract,—as for instance—a contract for the delivery of so many barrels of Flour (superfine) or Prime Mess Pork.

That the present Ministry have it in contemplation to introduce some measure for altering the existing Marriage Laws, we are assured from the appearance of an article in the Toronto *Leader* of the 10th inst, under the caption "*Marriage Laws*;" in which the writer, evidently writing under Ministerial inspirations, and with the object of preparing the public mind for a new matrimonial system, discourses as follows.—One or two passages, we have ventured to mark in Italics:—

"There are persons who hold that marriage is a religious ordinance; and there are others who hold that it is merely a civil contract. The law, while it meets the views of only one of these parties, can never be popular, and by many it will not be deemed just. It has more than once been proposed that it should be so altered that those who regard marriage as a religious ordinance could have the advantage of a religious ceremony; while those who, viewing it only in the light of a civil contract—the most sacred of all contracts, indeed—could be allowed to dispense with what they, however erroneously, regard as verging upon blasphemy. But these proposals have never become law, in Upper Canada. Such a measure naturally encounters strong opposition from various quarters. With the Clergy of all denominations it is unpopular. Proposals far short of this have been rejected by the Legislature; proposals which would do away with the existing requirement for Clergymen to show that they have been regularly ordained, before they can perform the marriage ceremony."

"But it does not follow that what has not yet been done, may not be done hereafter. Beyond imposing a religious ceremony, the state now treats marriage solely as a civil act; and what is really necessary is that some evidence should exist of its having been legally performed. For all purposes relating to property or maintenance, this is sufficient. Most persons, there can be no doubt, think it a beautiful and touching thing that a religious ceremony should form part of the legal act of marriage; but there are others who think all religious ceremony out of place, on such an occasion; and it is clear that such persons cannot be benefited by it. Why, then, force a religious ceremony upon them? By doing so, we may irritate them, but we shall hardly produce on them the effect we desire. Would it not be wise to content ourselves with obtaining legal proofs of every marriage performed, through means of registration; and leave the parties concerned to choose the kind of ceremony which they may prefer, whether secular or religious?"

Whether the proposition of the *Leader* be wise or not, we have little doubt, but that it will

be laid before the House, warmly supported by the present Ministry, and their *Kaatholic* friends of good principles—"bons principes;" and that it will ultimately become embodied in the laws of the land. We shall then have, besides our licensed taverns and drinking saloons, another class of buildings springing up in every direction, in the shape of licensed marriage shops; wherein, without regard to the precepts of religion, or the dictates of morality and modesty, the love-sick youth of both sexes shall be able, under the sanction of an Act of Parliament, to gratify their animal lusts, and set the antiquated doctrines of the Church, and the admonitions of Bishops and Priests at defiance. The golden age shall again revisit the earth; and the last traces of the antiquated Nazarene superstition shall be swept away by the Legislative besom of a free and enlightened people. Such are the blessings held out in tempting prospect before our eyes by the Ministerial press of Upper Canada—the associates and political allies of our Lower Canadian friends of "order and '*bons principes*'!"

Nor is this all; for—given marriage as a civil contract, or mere secular arrangement—and the right of divorce flows as a natural, indeed as the necessary consequence. Whom God hath joined together, of course God only can put asunder; but whom the Police Magistrate, or his clerk, has joined, the Police Magistrate, or his clerk, may put asunder. We may therefore rest assured that, as in obedience to the spirit of "*Protestant Ascendancy*,"—to whose yoke, degrading though it be, our Lower Canadian friends of "*bons principes*" so docilely submit themselves—we shall ere long enjoy the blessings of "*Civil Marriage*," so also the right of divorce will also soon be established in Canada; when men and women of strong passions, and lax principles, shall swap wives and husbands with one another as cheerfully and unconcernedly as they now swap horses, or any articles of agricultural produce.

This is we fear the fate that is in store for us: for from the men who traitor-like voted for the infamous clauses of Mr. Drummond's Religious Incorporations Bill; who have always steadily opposed justice to the Catholics of Upper Canada on the School Question; who voted for the Incorporation of the odious secret society of Orangemen; and who have ever approved themselves the servile tools of the Ministry of the day, ever ready to sacrifice—we do not say their honor, for God knows that is a commodity of which they have but little to spare—but the honor of the Church, and the interests of their religion to the political exigencies of the moment—what have we to expect, but that to save their places and salaries, they shall again do as they have done in times past? At all events, when Catholics were to be found base enough to sanction the principle that it "*was desirable to abolish all semblance even of connection between Church and State*" it was evident to every one, not a fool, that "*Civil Marriage*" and the "*right of divorce*" were inevitable at no very distant period; and as the fear of the inevitable consequences did not prevent Catholics from asserting the premises, we have no reason to hope that they will oppose any very formidable opposition to the measures with which the Ministry menaces us through the columns of its organ the *Leader*.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORMAL, MODEL, GRAMMAR, AND COMMON SCHOOLS IN UPPER CANADA.—For the year 1857, with an Appendix.—By the Chief Superintendent of Education.

That the Rev. Mr. Ryerson is a clever, or rather a very "smart" man, as our Yankee neighbors would say, no one will deny. In money matters he is "smart;" he is "smart" at repartee; and he is above all amazingly "smart" in his Annual Reports of the workings of the system which furnishes him with his daily bread and butter. Yet with all possible respect for the man's "smartness," we should be better pleased with him if he had a little more honesty in his composition; for "smartness," though invaluable in a Yankee pedlar, is not the only qualification that we look for in the well paid Government official.

We have already mentioned that in his last Report, the Chief Superintendent of Education has adopted the role of defender of the Separate School law of Upper Canada, "*as it is*," and by this "*smart*" trick he has it seems succeeded in deluding a few simple-minded persons into the belief that the Rev. Mr. Ryerson is more liberally disposed towards Catholics than he was wont to be; that he is no longer the enemy of Freedom of Education, and the uncompromising champion of State-Schoolism; and that his eyes have at last been opened to the injustice of compelling the Catholic parent to contribute towards the support of a school, of which the latter cannot avail himself, because of his conscientious scruples; and to which therefore, he, in the exercise of his parental discretion, and parental authority, does not see fit to send his children. This is a mistake. The Rev. Mr. Ryerson, in spite of a few ambiguous phrases, and the cant of a feigned liberality, is as much, the enemy of Separate Schools, as he was in days gone by; and, indeed, as compared with Mr. George Brown, we look upon him as by far the more dangerous