

The True Witness.

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY At No. 696 Craig Street, by J. GILLIES. G. E. OLBERG, Editor.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JAN. 1, 1869.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

JANUARY—1869.

Friday, 1—Circumcision. Obl. Saturday, 2—Octave of St. Stephen. Sunday, 3—Octave of St. John, Ap. Monday, 4—Octave of Holy Innocents Tuesday, 5—Vigil of the Epiphany. Wednesday, 6—Epiphany, Obl. Thursday, 7—Of the Octave.

THE NEW YEAR.

We avail ourselves of the usual privilege at the beginning of the year to address a few words to our readers. First—to all we wish a Happy New Year and many pleasant returns of the season: and would they reciprocate our good wishes, if they would really wish a Happy New Year to the printer, we would remind them that they can best evince the sincerity of their benevolence by a prompt remittance to the office of all arrears due.

A Western editor lately struck the names of two of his delinquent subscribers who had been hung, off his list, because, as he observed, he did not know their actual address. Were we to deal in like manner with all who are in arrears, but of whom the address is still well known to us, we should, we suspect, make a pretty large gap in our subscription list; and we shall therefore adopt in their behalf another course of action. We propose to address them through a medium: that is to say a practitioner of the black art of the law, to whose tender mercies we will consign them should they, the delinquents in question, continue obdurate, and refuse to take the polite hint which we throw out to them to pay the printer.

But we also avail ourselves of the season to return our best thanks to our very numerous friends who not only punctually discharge their pecuniary obligations, but who by their kind approval of our humble services cheer us on, and encourage us to bear the burden of journalism. For their often too flattering recognition of our services, we feel deeply grateful; and we have the testimony within us, that in so far as the desire for their best interests, that is to say the interests of our Church, is concerned, though they might find many a more able advocate, they will find none more sincere. We have in good repute, and in bad repute, pursued one straightforward course, deflecting therefrom neither to the right hand, nor to the left. We have kept clear of all political parties; and we have faithfully endeavored in all things to submit ourselves implicitly to the teachings of our Church. If then the Catholics of Canada deem an independent Catholic paper, one owing no allegiance to any party, and calling no man master, worthy of encouragement, we request of them for the coming year to support the TRUE WITNESS.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

A Conference of the Great Powers is to be held in Paris about the beginning of the present month, in order to bring about an amicable arrangement betwixt Greece and Turkey. It is said that Russia has proposed that the United States Government should be invited to take part therein.

From Spain there is nothing new to report. In Italy, Mazzini is again endeavoring to arouse the spirit of the cohorts of rascaldom that was crushed by the fire of the brave Zouaves at Mentana; and the Piedmontese Legislature has openly proclaimed itself the favor of assassins, and the patron of cut-throats by entertaining a proposition for pensioning the widows and families of the criminals lately executed at Rome for murder.

The President has issued a Proclamation of general amnesty to all persons engaged in the late war betwixt the Southern and Northern States. Had he thus acted at the commencement of his official career; and had he refused to recognize as a Congress of the United States, any body from which the representatives of any of the States were excluded, that career might have been more useful to the nation, and more glorious for himself. As it is he retires from office unwept, and unobeyed.

Whelan has again been respited to the 11th

of February in order that his Appeal may be duly considered. It is the opinion of many well qualified to judge, that the Court before which he was tried and convicted, in refusing to allow his challenge of one of the jurors "for cause" before all his "peremptory" challenges were exhausted, was guilty of error, and that thereby its proceedings were vitiated. Whatever the issue of these long protracted proceedings, the British subject may point to them with legitimate pride, as a proof of the protection which British law extends to all, and of the care with which that law deals even with those of whose guilt, no moral doubt exists. How great the contrast, for instance, betwixt the treatment in the U. States of the alleged murderers of Mr. Lincoln, and that in Canada of the murderer of Mr. McGee.— Let us be thankful that we are British subjects, and governed by British law, which deals so scrupulously not to say tenderly, with the worst of criminals.

A PLEA FOR WHELAN.—Unconsciously, perhaps, certainly unintentionally, the Liberal press in Europe and America is warmly pleading the cause of Whelan, the convict now under sentence of death in Upper Canada for the murder of Mr. McGee.

Divested of all its useless appendages, and reduced to its simplest form of expression, the plea amounts to this:—That political crimes, or crimes committed from political motives, and with a political object, should not be visited with death.

The theory is by no means new. It is older than the guillotine; it was in vogue amongst French Terrorists before the Terror; and it has been in the mouths of Liberals—when out of power bien entendu—ever since. To-day, it is brought forward with greater zest, and with more parade than ever, in order under its shelter the more conveniently to denounce the late action of the Papal Government, in allowing sentence of death to be carried into execution against the two assassins who by blowing up the Zouave barracks in the autumn of 1867, killed and mutilated a number of the Papal soldiery. This outrage was the counterpart of the Camberwell explosion.

We could fill our columns with quasi apologies from Liberal Protestant papers for the act for which Monti and Tognetti lately suffered death at Rome; and with denunciations from the same source of the cruelty and blood thirstiness of the Papal authorities who inflicted the penalty of death upon these glorious martyrs for the cause of Liberalism. We will, upon the principle that enough is as good as a feast, content ourselves with making extracts from two journals. One the N.Y. Sun; the other the Montreal Daily News.

The first, the N. Y. Sun, broadly lays down the proposition that political crimes should not be punished with death.

"The sentiment of the Christian religion as well as the judgments of the most profound legists of the world, would seem to be opposed to the infliction of the pain of death for crimes merely political."—N. Y. Sun.

If so—the execution of the men and woman hung for complicity in the murder of President Lincoln—a "crime merely political"—must have been repugnant to the sentiment of the Christian religion, and to the judgments of the most profound legists of the world. For assuredly, foul as was the murder of President Lincoln, it was the murder of but one man; whilst the crime for which the assassins at Rome—the pets and martyrs of Liberalism, and the worthy representatives of that cause—suffered, entailed the cruel deaths of more than twenty. If there be shades of guilt even in murder, the crime of the Roman assassins was of more than ten fold deeper dye than that for which, regardless of sex—not to say of guilt or innocence—a woman as well as a man suffered on the scaffold of the United States.

The extract from the Montreal Daily News is from the Paris correspondence of that journal; for the sentiments of which, until disavowed by the publisher, we cannot but hold our Montreal contemporary responsible:—

"Two political criminals in the Eternal City have been 'butchered to make a Roman holiday' It was a useless shedding of blood"

But if the execution of the assassins of some score of their fellow creatures be a "butchery," what would be the execution of Whelan, who slew but one man? Or how, if we are to join in the execration of the Papal Government for inflicting capital punishment upon the fellows who caused the explosion at the Zouaves barracks, are we to refrain from joining in the outcry against the government which hung three men at Manchester, for shooting a policeman to the attempt to rescue an untried political prisoner from the hands of justice? and which hung another for a crime, the Camberwell explosion, identical in its main features with that for which the Roman "martyrs of liberty" suffered on the scaffold? And yet the Camberwell explosion was not, after all, foul as it was, so foul and dastardly a crime as was that for whose perpetrators the correspondent of the Daily News expresses such warm sympathy.

Let the Daily News think well of it, and ask himself this question—Whether by his denunciation of the Papal Government for executing "the

political criminals" who blew up the Zouaves barracks, he does not by anticipation, condemn the Government of Canada, should it in pursuance of the law allow the death penalty to be inflicted upon Whelan? That the latter's crime was a most atrocious crime, abhorrent to all honest men of all creeds, of all shades of political opinion, no one can deny. But no less certain is it that it was a political crime: that is to say, a crime which had its source in political motives, and for its object the destruction of one whom the criminal regarded as an enemy of Fenianism. If therefore the shedding of the blood of the political criminals at Rome was a useless crime—the shedding of the blood of Whelan would be, to say the least as bad, and as worthy of reprobation.

The Daily News knows not what it is about; or in its eagerness to pander to the morbid Liberalism, and anti Papal bigotry of some of its readers, it overlooks the evil consequences which its doctrines with regard to the duties of governments towards political criminals, will inevitably generate amongst another class. It will we fear teach them to look upon Whelan, if he be hung, not as a murderer who justly expiated his offences against God and man on the scaffold, but as a martyr: it will teach them, not to respect the law, but to abhor it: and it will inspire them with a feeling of hatred and detestation towards a Government which hung Allen and Larkin, political criminals, and put the author of the Camberwell atrocity to death, in order to give its subjects a bloody holiday. This is what the Daily News will do, by its wicked, or if not wicked, thoughtless, denunciations of the Papal Government.

Better by far, even though it might be unpopular, would it be for the Daily News to tell its readers the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: to tell them that God's laws makes no allowance for political murders, and has created no exception in favor of the political criminal.

But our contemporary may be sure that what he lays down as the rule to be followed with regard to political murderers in the Papal States will be accepted by many who read him, as the rule to be followed in Ireland and in Canada; and thus if he will but consider, he will see that in his anxiety to condemn the Pope, he is virtually pleading the cause of the convict Whelan.

Most cheerfully do we accept the call of our contemporary, the Montreal Gazette, to do justice, by reproducing his emphatic disclaimer of the policy which we thought his language indicated—and which we attributed to him—to wit, the design of so working the Constitution under which we live, as to eliminate therefrom what it contains of the Federal principle: and so as to transfer all powers to the Central Government, even in matters relating to particular Provincial interests.

This policy, these designs our contemporary disclaims, and we believe that he does so honestly. But he will allow us to make these remarks—That whilst we give him credit for the intent to keep strictly within the limits of the Constitution, we look upon him as one who will always, when two views may honestly be taken of the true intent of that document, advocate the views of those who seek to minimize what we may call "State Rights," and to maximize the rights or powers of the Central Government. We think also that, since in every controversy there must be a Judge; and since in every controversy betwixt State and Federal Rights that may arise, the Central Government in the absence of any Supreme Court, will have to be that Judge—the result of the policy openly avowed by the Gazette, would be virtually to transfer all power to the said Judge, or Central Government. Had the Congress of the U. States for instance, been virtually endowed with the power of adjudicating upon all matters in dispute betwixt the State and the Federal Governments, all power would virtually have been transferred to the hands of the latter; and the governments of the former would indeed have been "mere municipalities," as the Evening Telegraph thinks that our Provincial governments actually are.

The Gazette also vindicates his loyalty, which we thought somewhat tarnished by a letter of a decided Annexation complexion published by the Gazette without a word of censure. The Gazette disclaims all community of sentiment with his correspondent, and then proceeds to define the nature and extent of his own loyalty:—

"To satisfy any scruples or doubts of our contemporary we will say here that so long as the British flag floats over us, we shall adhere to it loyally; we shall neither aid directly nor indirectly in pulling that flag down.—Montreal Gazette 29th Dec.

We congratulate the Gazette upon the possession of such a prudent, quiet loyalty—a loyalty which will never lead its possessor into danger, or impose on him the necessity of any sacrifice. It is not a high or noble quality indeed; not the kind of loyalty which makes nations great and renowned, which prompts to noble and heroic deeds, which embalms the names of its possessors in the pages of history, but a useful property nevertheless. It was the loyalty of the cannie calculating Scotchman who when pressed in 1745

to declare for King James, or for King George, preferred to wait before declaring and committing himself; till he saw which side the hangman would take; and such as it is, we suppose, all the loyalty that many in Canada are capable of. The Gazette will, however, pardon our bad taste, if we assure him that we like such insipid lukewarm loyalty as his, no better than we do the red-hottest treason.

The Toronto Globe publishes the clauses of the new School Bill for Upper Canada, which, under the dictation of the Rev. Mr. Ryerson, his tools, the members of the local legislature, propose imposing upon the minister-ridden people of that Province. The main feature of this edict is the proposed compulsory clause which it contains; and in virtue of which it is provided that any parent or guardian who does not send every child, from the age of seven to twelve years inclusive, under his care, to attend some school for six months in each year, shall, upon conviction before a Magistrate, be punished by fine, and imprisonment until the fine be paid—the penalty to be doubled upon every subsequent conviction.

Now as it so happens that, in many parts of Upper Canada, the Catholics are too few in number, and too poor to be able to maintain a school of their own, it follows that, if the proposed law be carried, Catholics will be forced, under ruinous pains and penalties, to send their children to the Protestant school of the district—in which as we know from Protestant testimony, no adequate provision for the moral training of the pupils, exists; and will thus be obliged to choose betwixt spoliation of this world's goods, and violation of their duties towards God. Fashions, and modes of persecution have altered no doubt; but in substance there is no difference betwixt the atrocious law now proposed to be enacted in Upper Canada, and the edicts of Pagan Emperors enjoining upon all their subjects the burning of incense before their own images. To take up betwixt finger and thumb a grain of powder, and to throw it on the fire, seemed but a small matter to the heathen magistrates; whilst to the Christian, whom the informer had dragged before his chair, the alternative of disobedience was the dungeon, torture, and the lingering death of the vilest slave. Yet, as the burning of a grain of incense involved the sin of apostasy, as it implied the denial of Him Who had bought them with His precious blood, thousands of all ages, and of all conditions, old men and young children, tender virgins, and high-born matrons preferred disobedience with all its consequences, to servile compliance with the laws of the Pagan Emperors.

And thus, too, we trust, will it be with the Catholics of Ontario, should the infamous edict now in contemplation be published by a tyrannical majority. Let it be understood clearly, from the first, that the Catholics of Upper Canada will never, at any cost, yield respect or obedience to any such law; that if called upon to choose betwixt loss of world's goods, and exposing their children to the risk of losing their immortal souls, betwixt obedience to man's, or rather the devil's law, and obedience to God's law, they will obey God rather than man.

Fortunately many means will always present themselves for evading such a law as that which we have under discussion; and of which means Catholics will in good conscience be able to avail themselves. Though the law may ordain the attendance of the child at school, it cannot ordain how the child shall conduct himself when at school; and to a school teacher imposed, not by the parent, but by the State, the child would owe neither respect nor obedience—for it is only in virtue of a delegated parental authority, that children are bound to respect and obey their teachers. Now thousands of means will always present themselves to the quick-witted child, taught by the parent that he is at liberty to treat with contempt, and to annoy by every means in his power, the State-imposed teacher, whereby he may make his presence in the school intolerable, and so incompatible with any of the objects for which schools are established, as to procure his expulsion. This would be fine fun for the boys compelled against the wish of the parents to attend such a school; and would, from what we know of boys, and remember of school-boy days, find plenty of skilful imitators and able supporters, even amongst those whose parents were consenting to the attendance of their children at the State-school. By means simple as these—by giving a hint to their children to make themselves a nuisance in the State-school; and to the State-imposed teacher, a reminder of how Nicholas Nickleby treated Squeers, the Yorkshire schoolmaster, in re Smke—we are sure that Catholic parents and guardians might, in a short time, be able to evade the tyrannical provisions of the infamous law with which their persecutors menace them.

And so, if it be impossible for them to prevent the enacting of the law, they should even now organize amongst themselves, and devise schemes for rendering the law inoperative, and for frustrating the design of its framers. Indeed we think that merely by carefully and constantly

impressing on the minds of their children the truth, that no semblance even of respect, no obedience is from them due to the teachers of schools to which by law, but not by their parents, they are sent, our Catholic friends can render the whole scheme of compulsory education nugatory, and indeed ridiculous.

As a case in point, and illustrative of our meaning, we may allude to the means by which a low-church Anglican congregation managed quite legally to put a stop to the periodic recitation by their high-church parson of the Athanasian Creed. The rubric enjoins that this Creed "shall be sung or said," but does not prescribe to what tune it shall be sung. Consequently, when the parson, on one of the occasions indicated by the Rubric, stood up to recite the obnoxious Creed, the congregation struck up with a will, and sang the whole of it from the "Who-soever will be saved" to the Amen, to the air of a rollicking hunting song, with a stentorian chorus. The rubric had not provided for this, and so the parson had to abandon the Athanasian Creed. We cite this as an instance how easy it is to evade or neutralize an obnoxious law; and in illustration of the truth of the Persian proverb, "that there are many ways of killing a cat besides choking it in fresh butter."

THE RYERSON FRAUDS.—We invite attention to an article from the Toronto Telegraph on the alleged pecuniary eccentricities of the Rev. Mr. Ryerson. If it be true, as the Telegraph asserts, that Mr. Ryerson has, as a government official, appropriated to his own use sums of money "to which he had no more right than he has to Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's homestead dairy farm in the township of Cornwall," it is evident that the Provincial Penitentiary, not the Education Office, is the proper sphere for the reverend delinquent's labors. The matter ought to be investigated: for it argues a very low moral standard indeed amongst the members of the Ontario government, and the people of the Province generally, if they allow such grave charges as those explicitly made by the Toronto Telegraph against the Chief of the Education Office, to pass unventilated. Of two things one. Either the Telegraph is guilty of foul defamation of character, for which Mr. Ryerson will seek reparation before the Courts of Law: or the Reverend official himself is on better than a thief. From this dilemma there is no possible, no conceivable means of escape: and we shall therefore watch the clearing up of the alleged "Ryerson Frauds" with no small anxiety, as it would be a disgrace to L. Canada to be politically united to a Province in which such charges should be allowed to pass unnoticed. The Rev. Mr. Ryerson may be a much injured and very innocent man: but if so the Telegraph has been guilty of a most foul libel. In justice then to the Superintendent of Education for Ontario, in justice to the tax payers of that Province, in justice to the entire Dominion of Canada, the matter should be thoroughly ventilated, so that the whole truth may be made known.

"The Side-Walk Nuisance" is a text upon which many of our contemporaries hold forth, but all in vain. Until the side walks are cleaned by the Corporation, a special tax on property being levied for that purpose—they never will be cleaned at all. The law defective as it is, is never rigidly enforced: and the fronts of vacant lots are never cleared at all, but the snow is there allowed to accumulate from the beginning of winter, to the month of March. All that is obtained by the present silly regulations is, that here and there proprietors dig holes in front of their doors, which, when thaw comes, are converted into small lakes which have to be bridged over. It is in short the height of absurdity to suppose that the public thoroughfares can be kept in order by the isolated, unconnected, and ill regulated action of private individuals.

We learn from the Montreal Witness that our separated brethren have determined to found a Protestant Institution for the instruction of Deaf-Mutes amongst their people. We wish them every success: and we think we can promise them that their philanthropic labor will not be made by Catholics, the subject of hostile criticisms.

The Almoner of the Irish poor acknowledges with thanks the receipt of \$248.65 from the St. Patrick's congregation. \$86.87 from St. Ann's Congregation; and \$14 from the St. Bridgets Congregation; making in all the handsome sum of \$349.52, as their Christmas collection in aid of the suffering poor.

We understand that arrangements are already being made for the Annual Concert of the St. Patrick's Society, to come on or about the 27th inst. As the proceeds will be for the poor, we feel assured that it will be a success. Of course the Society will have the powerful assistance of the Ladies on this, as on former occasions.

Mr. David Walker, has kindly consented to act as our Agent, for the County of Victoria.