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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1853.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The proceedings in the Imperial Parliament have been chiefly confined to the adjourned debates upon the Budget, in the Commons, and the Canada "Clergy Reserves" Bill, in the Lords. The latter have also distinguished themselves by rejecting the Bill for the repeal of Jewish Disabilities. The second reading was moved on the 29th ult., by Lord Aberdeen, and was supported by the Earl of Albemarle, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, and the Bishop of St. David's. The Earl of Shaftesbury opposed the Bill, and moved that it be read that day six months: he trembled at the consequences to Christianity of admitting Jews to Parliament, and putting them on a civil equality with Christians: such measures would be fatal to Christianity in Great Britain, even if they did not expell it from the world. In these apprehensions a majority of the Lords shared, and on a division, the Bill was thrown out by a majority of 164 to 119. Christianity must be in a very unhealthy condition in Great Britain, a wretched bantling indeed, if putting Jews on a civil equality with Christians, and admitting two or three of the children of Israel into the House of Commons, would have the effect so much dreaded by Lord Shaftesbury; such a sickly religion can hardly be worth preserving.

The debates in committee upon the "Clergy Reserves," have been marked by an unusual degree of warmth. The Government Bishop of Oxford, a supporter of the measure, and Philipotts of Exeter, began the fray: the latter insinuating that his right rev. opponent "did not reflect much honor upon a name venerated throughout Christendom." To this Oxford replied by asserting that he meant no offence, and appealed, in proof of his innocent intentions, to his "smiling face." The following scene occurred:

The Earl of Derby—My Lords, I accept the explanation of the right reverend prelate; but when he tells me that it is impossible for him, with his smiling face, to say anything offensive, he will forgive me, if I quote in his presence from a well known author, without intending to apply the words to him—

"A man may smile, and smile and be a villain."

(cheers, laughter, and interruption from the ministerial benches.) "I am at a loss," continued the noble lord, "to conceive to whom what I say can be offensive."

The Earl of Clarendon, starting up from his seat, and advancing in a very excited manner to the table, exclaimed, in an indignant tone—"It is to me" (cheers)—"I say, my lords it is to me—(loud and prolonged cheering)—I, and my noble friends near me, were offended by that expression. We are not accustomed to hear such expressions in this House (renewed cheering.) We are not accustomed, even in the language of poetry, to hear such a word as, villain, applied to any of your lordships"—(vehement cheering.)

The Earl of Derby having explained that he used the word "villain" in a Parliamentary sense, without any intention of applying it to any one in particular, order was restored, and his proposed amendment, limiting the powers of the Canadian Legislature, to legislating for "all appropriations of the Clergy Reserves not hitherto appropriated, or set apart for the benefit of the clergy of the Protestant churches of England and Scotland"—was negatived by a majority of 117 to 78. On the 28th ult., the Bill was read a third time, the Duke of Newcastle explaining, in reply to questions from the Earl of Wicklow and Lord Redesdale, that, according to the opinion of the law officers of the crown, if the Reserves were secularised, the guarantee would fall with the condition on which it rested, and that the Imperial government would not, in that event, be answerable, as had been anticipated.

The time of the House of Commons had been chiefly occupied in the discussion of the several items of the Budget. On a motion for discontinuing the Income Tax, ministers were enabled to command a majority of 71. The debate still continued, but it was generally expected that the issue would be favorable to government. On the 26th ult., Mr. Hamilton brought forward his motion for a select committee to inquire into the working of the National System of Education in Ireland; he complained that the present system was too favorable by far, to Catholicity. Mr. Lucas, though jealous of the present system, and unwilling to uphold it without alteration, was opposed to Mr. Hamilton's motion. He observed that "the national system of education in Ireland was, in substance, a separate system of education. If by any calamity it should become a united system, it would either, fall in pieces, or be productive of the greatest evil to the people of Ireland." The hon. gentleman read extracts from letters of Lord Clancarty, to show the unceasing efforts of the Protestant landlords of Ireland to employ the national system

of education as an engine for proselytism. In these letters, the landlord gives his tenants to understand that, unless they would consent to send their Catholic children to schools of which he—the Protestant landlord—approved, "a favor or indulgence would not be shown them"—and he significantly hints that "many to whom his advice was addressed, have the accommodation of holding in hand the hanging gale of rent." The majority of the Irish members voted against Mr. Hamilton's motion, and it was lost on the division by a majority of 179 to 109. The Times of the 28th ult., does justice to this attempt of the Protestant minority to get the education of the Catholic children of Ireland into their own hands:—

"The Protestants of Ireland, as represented on Tuesday night, do not allege that the Roman Catholic children are not educated; on the contrary, they mention with concern and dismay the immense proportion of national scholars from that communion. They do not allege that these Roman Catholics are not taught their own religion; on the contrary, the complaint is that they are taught it too thoroughly. They do not allege that the Protestant children have ceased to be educated; on the contrary, they confess to some sixty or seventy thousand children, national scholars, from their own communions, and boast of the vast numbers that flock to the schools of their own new and more exclusive societies. They do not allege that the knowledge and use of the Scriptures have declined in Ireland during the last twenty-two years; on the contrary, they proclaim from the house-tops the increased diffusion of the Scriptures, and the spread of true religion. They cannot, and do not complain that Protestant parents are at a disadvantage, compared with others, in having to pay for secular education, which others get gratis; for there is the National School open to receive their children. As little can they, or do they, complain that they cannot procure religious instruction for their children; for they possess, in proportion to their numbers, the wealthiest church establishment in the world, and that maintained chiefly by a poor population which abhors it as heretical. The grievance, as it is currently stated, and as Mr. Napier stated it for the ten-thousandth time on Tuesday night, is wholly unreal and factious. The Protestants of Ireland wish to know why, for maintaining the principles maintained by every Protestant in this country, they are to be debarred from their share of the public grant out of the Consolidated fund for the purposes of education? Now, the Protestants of Ireland do not, in fact, demand that share for themselves, or for any Protestant principle whatever. They demand the assistance of the public money for the utterly un-Protestant and highly Popish principle of educating the children of one communion, by force, in the doctrines and practice of another. They demand to have mixed schools, in which the children of all communions shall hear the scriptures read, and be examined therein."

To the complaint made by the Protestant ministers that, in the schools as at present conducted, they are not allowed to give religious instruction from the Protestant Bible, without first giving warning of their intentions. The Times very properly replies:—

"Now, it may not be very pleasant to a clergyman, just as he has opened the Bible and given the text, to see part of the assembly put on their hats and walk out of the room; but it may be much more unpleasant to them to stay, and seeing that in this case they are not members of his congregation, but children taught to regard him as a wolf in the fold, he ought to consider their feelings as well as his own. He would not like to be obliged to assist at Mass, and by the same rule should not insist on Roman Catholics listening to the Bible. But here is the whole of the grievance very fairly stated:—The Irish clergyman is entirely relieved of all that secular teaching, all spelling, writing, slates, copies, arithmetic, geography, needlework, &c., so troublesome and so costly to most village clergymen in this country. He need have nothing to do with them. But for an hour a day he may have all the Protestant children of the school, in the school itself if he likes, to read the Bible, say the Catechism, answer questions, repeat hymns, or whatever else he pleases. If they are too many for one class he can have them in as many detachments as he finds convenient. Only he is not allowed to compel the attendance of those children who believe him a heretic. Now, what is there really un-Protestant in this? What is there at variance with the great rule of toleration? The ordination vow no more requires a rector to kidnap a number of young Papists, and make them read the Bible, and listen to his exposition, than it requires him to break into the house of the neighboring Popish priest, and subject him to the same involuntary exercises. But that is the whole point at issue in Ireland, and the whole point at issue in the debate of Tuesday night. Mr. Hamilton and his friends maintain that the rector shall be allowed to walk into the national school, open his Bible, hold forth, and strike from the school list the names of the children who will not stay to hear him. Government maintains that the rector shall give notice before he begins, by sticking up a card, and that thereupon the little Papists may walk off to their Priest, or to their houses. That is all. It is not enough, in our humble and perhaps profane judgment, to distract a legislature, to divide a nation, and lay the seeds of incurable animosities, that may ripen in other continents and in future times."

It will thus be seen that the question raised by Mr. Hamilton is akin to that upon which so much excitement prevails in Upper Canada. Under the pretence of a tender regard for the interests of the rising generation, the adversaries of what they call sectarianism, strive in vain to conceal their real object, which is proselytism. The designs of these canting gentry have been defeated in Ireland, and with firmness on the part of Catholics, they will ultimately be defeated here.

The European Times publishes the evidence given before the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the malpractices of the Board of Admiralty during the Derby-D'Israeliite administration. The disclosures are any thing but flattering to the integrity of the Derby-ites; and this publication is most opportune at this juncture, when they are about to make another bid for place and power.

The Government Education Bill is likely to encounter considerable opposition from the Dissenters who, in England, whatever they may do here, place State-Schoolism and State-Churchism on a par, and profess to discountenance the dangerous,

heathenish, and slavish maxim that—education is a legitimate function of civil government. A great meeting of the general body of Protestant Dissenters, of the three denominations, was held on the 19th ult., at Finsbury, at which the following resolution, as expressive of the views of the Dissenters upon the question of Education, was agreed to:—

"That, in the judgment of this body, no evidence has been afforded that it is just, or wise, to invest government with authority to regulate or control the education of the people; while the facts which have been elicited by the Census of 1851, and admitted on the part of the Ministry, in the House of Commons, prove that the mass of the people, aided by the friends of education, are both willing and competent adequately to provide for their own instruction."

On the 2nd inst., Lord Palmerston denied, in the House of Commons, that any directions had been given to the Post Master-General, authorising him to open the letters of foreign refugees. This denial is supposed to have been elicited by the complaints of the notorious Kossuth, Robert, and William Harc, charged with preparing rockets and other munitions of war, at Rotherhithe, have been committed to take their trial at the next Surrey Sessions: as the prisoners refused to offer bail, they were sent to Horsemonger gaol.

The news from the Continent is of little interest. There have been a few political arrests in Paris, but France is generally tranquil. The Assembly has almost unanimously rejected M. Montalembert's motion, asserting the illegitimacy of appropriating the receipts of the sale of the Orleans' property. The Empress is said to have miscarried on the 29th ult., being then two months *en route*; this may very likely be but a malicious rumor started by the Emperor's political opponents. The object of Prince Menschikoff's mission to Constantinople is still enveloped in much obscurity.

The anti-Papal aggression agitation is waxing stronger and stronger amongst the good Dutch Protestants; under the pretence of "Religious Liberty" they desire to prohibit the exercise of the Catholic religion, and advocate persecution of Papists as the only means for securing "Freedom of Conscience." The Catholic Standard gives the following particulars:—

"As might have been expected the rage of the Intolerants is fiercest in the district of Utrecht, the old head-quarters of Jansenism, and in those parts of Holland that come most within the pernicious influence of the Belgian "liberals." The conduct of the King in this critical moment, does not falsify our preconceived opinion of his character. He has proved himself to be even more perfidious than we had anticipated.—There is no question as to his having been an assenting party to the Act of the Holy See. He was fully informed by the Dutch Minister at Rome of the Pope's purpose to restore the Hierarchy in Holland; and considering the numerical preponderance of the Catholics over either of the Protestant sections of his subjects, it is not surprising that he should have acquiesced in an ecclesiastical arrangement which neither trench on the Royal prerogatives, nor affected the civil rights or the religious opinions of Protestantism. But true to his antecedents, the instant the howl of bigotry was raised, he withdrew his confidence from his discreet advisers and flung himself boldly into the arms of those persecuting heretics who impudently and mendaciously inscribe "Freedom of Conscience" upon their banner. The new cabinet have dissolved the second Chamber of the States General; and unless wiser and calmer counsels than have hitherto directed the proceedings of Messrs. Van Hall and Duncker Curtius, speedily intervene, it is too probable that Holland will be plunged by her fanatical "No-Popery" emissaries into the horrors of civil war."

THE CLERGY RESERVES.

The TRUE WITNESS cannot be accused of ever having advocated, or said one word in favor of, the proposal to deprive the Protestant sects of Upper Canada of their share of the revenues accruing from the sale of the waste lands of the Province. It has certainly refused to see in the grant made by the Legislature of these revenues, for religious purposes, anything more sacred than in the analogous grant by the Legislature of a part of the public revenues to the Catholic college of Maynooth. The two endowments are precisely similar in every respect—with this exception—that the grant to Maynooth was but a tardy and imperfect compensation to the Catholics of Ireland, for the previous spoliation of their Church property. That the power which granted the Maynooth endowment has, legally, the right to annul it, we do not deny, and is almost universally admitted by Protestants in Great Britain; and if the Professors of that College were to begin talking about their "vested rights," we suspect that they would soon be silenced by one universal shout of derision. But it by no means follow that, because the Imperial Parliament has the right to annul its grant, it would be wise or just for it to exercise that right: even rights may be unjustly and oppressively exercised.

Just so with the Protestant endowment in Canada, called the "Clergy Reserves." This grant of a portion of the revenues accruing from the sale of the waste lands of the Province to certain Protestant religious sects, stands upon precisely the same footing as does the Maynooth grant. In neither case has the grantee given any consideration—either in money, or in services worth money—for the thing granted: in neither case has the grantee, by his labor, or the expenditure of capital, imparted any additional value to the grant; in both cases, therefore, if in either, the grantor has the strict legal right to resume his grant; but in neither, do we believe that it would be wise or just, on the part of the State, to do so. We may therefore admit, as an abstract proposition, that, to the Colonial Legislature belongs the right of disposing of the revenues accruing from the sale of the waste lands of the Province, without exposing ourselves to the reproach of abetting "sacrilege," or being justly chargeable with a desire to

deprive the clergymen of the different Protestant denominations of Upper Canada, of their means of subsistence. There may be difference of opinion amongst Catholics in Canada upon this point, but, in common, we think, with the majority of the Catholics of the British empire, would we deprecate the imprudent, and the unjust, step of depriving the Anglican establishment in Canada of any portion of the revenues hitherto granted to it by the State. It may have been a mistake, in the first instance, to have made that grant; but it has been made, and in good faith acted upon: it should therefore be respected.

Were we disposed however, to join in the cry for the secularisation of these revenues, we could find ample cause of justification in the conduct pursued, and language held, by some of the most prominent amongst those who denounce secularisation as "sacrilege," and have the impudence to hold out threats against the Catholic ecclesiastical property of Lower Canada, if these revenues are interfered with; forgetting, or wilfully ignoring, the fact that, there is no analogy betwixt these two kinds of property—the one being an unconditional grant from the State—the other, either the gift of private individuals, or acquired by purchase. Were the Maynooth grant held upon the same tenure as are, for the most part, the revenues of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada—were it, like the latter, principally derived from the voluntary contributions of private individuals—even Mr. Spooner would hardly dare to stand up in the House of Commons, and assert the right of the Legislature to appropriate it to its own use. Whether the State has the right to resume what it has unconditionally given, is a question upon which jurists may differ—but there can be no doubt that the State has not the right to seize upon that which it has not given.

No man has battled more stoutly for the "Clergy Reserves" than Dr. Strachan, who, signing himself "John Toronto," periodically gives vent to his "anguish of spirit" in long letters addressed to the Minister of the day. Two years ago he hurled one of these missiles at the head of Lord John Russell; to-day, he inflicts another upon the Duke of Newcastle; but whether writing to Lord John Russell or to the Duke of Newcastle, "John of Toronto" has but one argument, which he produces in the same identical words; and alas! for "John," this argument, such as it is, is based upon a falsehood so glaring, that it provokes the contemptuous mirth even of his correspondents. "I have read the letter in question," said the Duke of Newcastle in his place in the House of Lords, upon the "Clergy Reserves" debate—"but have been struck with astonishment to find that, however able it may be in many respects, there is throughout the whole of it an absence of that continuity of argument, and that logical sequence, which he had never seen wanting in any other productions of the right rev. prelate's pen. There was hardly one sentence which did not contradict that which preceded it." And here the assembled Lords laughed—yea, irreverently laughed at—"John of Toronto's" self contradicting letter; perhaps, after all, their Lordships' treated "John's" windy effusion with as much consideration as it deserved.

In this letter "John of Toronto" has the effrontery to call the attention of the Imperial government to the abundant resources that the Catholic Church in Lower Canada has at her command, for purposes of education; and with a cool contempt for truth, quite refreshing to witness, reiterates, word for word, line for line, and paragraph for paragraph, the statements as to these resources which appeared in a letter upon the same subject, addressed, about two years ago, to Lord John Russell. "John's" invention most really be at a low ebb when he can only serve his grace of Newcastle to such a miserable *reclausé*; "John of Toronto," must suppose his correspondent to be very ill-informed upon Canadian matters, or he would never venture upon the assertion that, amongst the means "at the disposal" of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada, and for purposes of education, are:—

	Acres of Land.
Jesuits,	891,845
General Hospital, Quebec,	28,497
Hotel Dieu, Quebec,	14,112
Sœurs Grises,	42,336

"John's" spirit must have been in great anguish when he penned the above. Charity bids us hope that it was owing to this "anguish" that he so far forgot what was due to himself, and to the Inerative government situation of Protestant bishop which he holds, as to append his signature to a series of statements which every man, woman, and child, in the country knows to be false; John's "spirit" must indeed have been fearfully perturbed when he ventured to indulge the hope that he could persuade a British statesman that, 891,845 acres of land, the property of the Jesuits, were at the disposal of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada, or that the funds of General Hospitals, and charitable asylums for the aged and infirm, were available for "purposes of education."

It is painful to us to write in this strain of one occupying the position of Dr. Strachan. We would believe, if we could, that he erred through ignorance of the facts, and not from any desire to misrepresent them. But this is impossible. We know that Dr. Strachan knew, when he wrote—that the property of the Jesuits was not at the disposal of the Roman Catholic Church at all; and that the revenues derived from the landed property belonging to the General Hospital, and the Sisters of Charity, are as little available for purposes of education as are the revenues belonging to the Protestant Hospital of this city; or as the funds contributed for the support of any other charitable institution in Canada. A person holding a situation under the government, like Dr. Strachan, cannot be ignorant of these things.

We regret the course adopted by Dr. Strachan the more, because we should regret to witness the secularisation of the "Clergy Reserves," and because