

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MARCH 11.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

Having been compelled to abandon the line of the Dannewerk, from want of a sufficient number of troops to man that work, the Danes took up their position at Duppel, which, with the Island of Alsen, is all that remains to them of Schleswig. From this position it will be no easy work for the Russians and Austrians to dislodge them, and in the meantime diplomacy will do its utmost to extinguish the flames of war, which if allowed to spread, menace Europe with a general conflagration. If, however, the invaders carry out their threats of advancing, and of establishing themselves in North Jutland, or Denmark proper, it is not easy to see how either France or England can avoid becoming parties to the strife.

And yet, menaced as she is, both by an insurrection in Hungary, and by an attack upon Venetia, it seems almost incredible that Austria should provoke the active hostility of the great Western Powers of Europe. She will in all probability have Victor Emmanuel upon her hands before the Spring ripens into Summer; and her military resources, great though these may be, will be sufficiently taxed to preserve order at home, and to maintain possession of her Italian Provinces. It is therefore so obviously her interest to keep on good terms with France and England, that we hope that this Danish difficulty may yet be smoothed over. In Piedmont, the Government of Victor Emmanuel is making its preparations as if war were determined upon. War has become in short a financial as well as a political necessity to the Piedmontese, since the expense of keeping on foot their immense army is greater than the resources of the so-called Kingdom of Italy can much longer bear. A successful attack upon Austria would postpone, even if it would not altogether avert the impending bankruptcy, and would at the same time serve to divert the attention of the people of the annexed provinces from the grievous despotism to which they are at present subjected by the Piedmontese.

The trial of Greco and the other assassins whom Mazzini sent to Paris to cut Louis Napoleon's throat, had not come off, but was expected to take place during the course of the month of February. Some important revelations as to the means and objects of Italian Liberals may be expected; for it can hardly be doubted that the attack upon the French Emperor's life was a measure concocted by the leaders of that party, and formed a part of the revolutionary programme of 1864.

There have been long and animated debates in both Houses of the British Parliament upon the conduct of the Ministry, as towards the Northern States. The cowardly murder of the mate of the British ship *Saxon*, by an officer of the *Vanderbilt* was warmly insisted upon, and Lord Russell was directly asked what steps he had taken to procure redress for this outrage upon a British subject. Hard pressed by the Earl of Carnarvon upon the subject, His Lordship replied that he had written a dispatch; that the reply thereto was to the effect that the Captain of the *Vanderbilt* did not order his lieutenant to murder the mate of the *Saxon*; and that he—the Captain—had expressed himself very sorry for what had occurred. Further questioned as to whether the murderer had been put under arrest, Lord Russell replied that he did not know, and that he did not know what more he could do. We suspect that the people of England, however, have a shrewd guess as to what he could have done, and should have done, and that ere many weeks shall have passed his little Lordship will be himself wonderfully enlightened upon the subject. Had the officer of a Brazilian man-of-war acted as did the lieutenant of the *Vanderbilt*; had the mate of the *Saxon* been cruelly murdered by an officer in the Papal service—we cannot but suspect that our Liberal rulers would have exacted something more than a mere expression of regret for the dastardly outrage.

Since the defeat of the Federals in Florida there have been no engagements of any great importance. There have been two expeditions

under the Federal Generals Kilpatrick and Sherman. The first marched close to Richmond and then marched back again; whilst the other was an admitted failure. General Meade has been recalled from the command of the army of the Potomac, which, it is said, is to be placed under the orders of General Thomas, a brave and skilful officer who honorably distinguished himself at Chickamauga, and saved the discomfited fragments of Rosecrantz's army from utter destruction.

The steamer *City of New York* brings us dates to the 25th ult. Chief in importance amongst the items of news is the renewal of the report that France had proposed to the British Government to recognise the Confederate Government, and that if this proposal be declined, France will act alone in the matter. This is only a report; but it is one that is highly probable seeing that it is manifestly the interest of France to interpose an independent and friendly government between the Northern States, and the newly created Empire of Mexico. It would also be strictly in accordance with precedent, seeing that upon far slier grounds than those that now exist for recognising the Confederate Government, the European Powers recognised the independence of the several Spanish colonies on this Continent that had revolted against their mother country.

An important debate in the House of Commons on the American policy of the Ministry terminated in a division, in which the Opposition were very nearly triumphant—the numbers being 178 to 153. Though they have escaped defeat for the moment, the result of this division shows how generally the Palmerston Cabinet is condemned for its abject truckling to Federal bullying. A dissolution, or a change of Ministry, may therefore shortly be expected.

The Danish question had undergone no great change. The Prussians had failed in an attempt to dislodge the Danes from their strong position at Duppel. A conference had been proposed by England to settle the question on a new basis, and to this it is said that France and Russia had given their adhesion. A meeting held in Dublin to protest against the erection of a monument to the late Prince Consort on College Green had been the occasion of a serious riot, in which the Fenian Brotherhood took a prominent part. Details are not given, but it is said that several of the combatants were dressed in Yankee uniform.

There are reports in circulation that General Sherman was defeated on the 13th ult. by the Confederates, and that he was forced to retreat after having lost 15,000 men, or nearly half his entire command. This report is scouted by the Federal press as a *canard*. General Meade has been sent back to the army of the Potomac.—Gold at New York was quoted at 62 premium.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.—After nearly a fortnight's wrangling the debates on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Governor General, have worn themselves out. There was no division, no amendments having been proposed by the Opposition, and as yet there has been no trial of strength between the two rival claimants for the spoils of office. Mr. Foley has introduced a Bill for amending the Representation; he does not propose to change the system of equality as between the two sections of the Province, but limits himself to the re-adjustment of the representation in Upper Canada.

It is certainly as amusing as it is instructive to find in the columns of that staunch Protestant journal, the *Toronto Globe*, the principle of "private judgment" upon matters of revealed, or supernatural teaching, condemned; and that of submission to Church authority insisted upon in language as strong as any that a mere Romanist would upon a similar topic, employ. Such is actually the case. The gentlemen who hold Her Majesty's appointments as Protestant Bishops in the Upper Province have lately been called upon to pronounce judgment upon certain teachings of Trinity College, which by the more zealous of Upper Canada Protestants had been denounced as savouring of Romanism. The Protestant Bishops thus appealed to, have by a majority decided in favor of the College Professors; and on one point, that of the "intercession of saints," a doctrine which it appears that one of the said Professors encourages—"the highest dignity of the Church in Canada has"—so says a writer in the *Globe*—"on his judgment declared it to be a mere private opinion, and therefore not contrary to the Church's teachings." Hereupon the censor of the Bishops and of "the highest dignity of the Church in Canada," breaks out against this principle of private opinion, or private judgment, when exercised in opposition to the dogmatic teachings of the Church. The passage is curious, as a Protestant's protest against Protestantism, and will therefore bear transcribing:—

I would not be understood to deny the right of private judgment, or what is the same thing, private opinion; but an eminent writer observes, private opinions are our own, and we may extend them, we may complicate them, or corrupt them; but doctrines are positive and complete things, coming to us direct out of the hand of God. And then, after being em-

bodied in the articles and formularies of the Reformed Church, we, who subscribe our assent to these formularies, and continue in communion with the Church, have no right to contravene them, or corrupt them by substituting our own private opinions. St. Paul, who was entrusted with truths by the author of all truth, tells us that he had kept nothing back that was profitable, but had declared all the counsel of God. Can we in any part of that inspired Apostle's writings detect a single expression affording a shadow of apology for the Professor's opinions respecting the intercession of departed saints, or of the Virgin Mary.

The most ultra of Romanists could not assert more strongly the principle of authority, as against private judgment, in matters of doctrine, or the subject of divine revelation, than does this ultra-Protestant writer in the *Globe*. All that the Catholic or Romanist asserts on this point, is this—"That we have no right 'to contravene them'—the dogmatic teachings of the Church"—or corrupt them by substituting our own private opinions." With the ultra-Protestant of the *Globe*, the ultra-Romanist contends that "doctrines are positive and complete things coming direct to us out of the hand of God," and that therefore "doctrines" can never be legitimately subjected to the "private judgment" or private opinion of men. Formally then there is on this question of the right of "private judgment," no difference whatever between the Romanist, and the evangelical *Clericus* who so strongly and illogically asserts the principle of "Church authority" in the *Toronto Globe*. On all questions or matters not connected with revelation, not directly or indirectly the subject of doctrines coming to us from God, we assert in the broadest sense our right of private judgment; we deny that right only when it is exercised upon doctrine in the supernatural order, and on the subject matter of divine revelation—and on this point the ultra-Romanist and the ultra-Protestant are at one.

But how are we to ascertain what are the "doctrines coming to us direct out of the hand of God?" Our Protestant friend shall tell us:—

"And these latter being embodied in the articles and formularies of the Reformed Church."

Here then the limits of the right of private judgment are clearly laid down; these limits being "the doctrines"—embodied in the articles and formularies of the Reformed Church—and which are "positive and complete things coming direct to us from the hand of God." Substitute the words "*Catholic Church*" for those of "*Reformed Church*," and there is nothing in the law as to private judgment, and how far it may be exercised, to which either Pope, or Romish layman would object. We contend that the revealed doctrines or dogmas of the Christian religion, as lying within the supernatural plane, are altogether beyond the ken or reach of man's private judgment, whose sphere of vision is limited to the natural plane; and so in substance asserts the ultra-Protestant censor of the Protestant Bishops, and of the "highest dignity of the Church in Canada," who betwixt them have sanctioned the quasi-Romish teachings of Trinity College on the question of the "intercession of saints."

But do the articles and formularies of the Anglican Church—which is we suppose the body designated by the words "*Reformed Church*"—do they indeed condemn the doctrine of the intercession of saints? do they deny that the spirits of the blessed in heaven do actively minister to the wants of man upon earth? The Collect appointed by the Anglican Church to be used on the festival of St. Michael, and which is therefore a part of that Church's formularies to which every one of the recipients of Anglican Orders subscribes, and which contains therefore the teachings of the said Church upon this topic, runs as follows:—

"O Everlasting God who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant that as Thy holy Angels always do these services in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen."

Unless then it be urged that it is right and proper to pray God that His holy Angels "may succour and defend us on earth," but that is sinful and superstitious to believe that they really do so in any manner "succour or defend us"—we see not how it can be pretended, even by *Clericus*, that the formularies of the Anglican Church repudiate the Romish doctrine respecting either the intercession of Angels, or of the saints who are as the angels in heaven; since the latter asserts that these do assist, do succour and defend us on earth by their prayers, and that therefore it is a good and useful thing—*bonum atque utile*—to invoke those prayers in our behalf.

The ultra-Protestant of the *Globe* has his fashion of interpreting the articles and formularies of what he calls the "*Reformed Church*"; the peccant Professor of Trinity College, who holds to the opinion that we on earth are succoured and defended by the saints in heaven, interprets those articles and formularies after his fashion. The results obtained are not only different, but contradictory—and who shall presume to adjudicate betwixt them? It is so with every other point raised by *Clericus* of the *Globe*, "priestly absolution, efficacy of sacraments, *et cetera*," and on which he contests the soundness of Trinity College teachings, and the judgment of the Protestant Bishops thereupon.

The Romanising Professors of Trinity College can with a good grace, and with perfect truth, retort upon their critic *Clericus* that it is he who is justly obnoxious to the reproach of contravening the formularies of the Church to which he has subscribed; and of corrupting, by the substitution of his own private opinion, the dogmas which are embodied in the Anglican Liturgy, and which he has solemnly before man, and in the name of Almighty God, pledged himself to maintain.

It does not become those who live in glass houses to throw stones; it is not meet that the low churchman or evangelical, should upbraid his high-church brother with Popish proclivities or crypto-Romanism. If the 39 articles appear to favor the one, the Liturgy and its rubrics in the plainest language absolve the other. It is morally impossible that any man should accept both, for it he holds to the one, he must of necessity deny the other; and every man being an Anglican is at liberty to choose whom he will serve. To do this he must exercise his "private judgment;" and he cannot recognise any authority in a church which speaks with such stammering accents, in such a double sense, and which so tampers with truth, as does the body of which *Clericus* speaks as "*the Reformed Church*."

LOWER CANADA SCHOOL LAWS.—We have received a communication from a Catholic, residing in the Parish of St. Patrick of Rawdon, of which the intention is to show the *Montreal Witness* that, where Catholics are in the minority—the actual School Law for Lower Canada is as oppressive to them, as it is to Protestants, there where Protestants happen to be in the minority. We think that our correspondent has made out his case: but remembering that two wrongs do not make one right—we do not cite his letter as an argument in favor of the existing School Laws, any more than we recognise in the complaints of the *Montreal Witness* a proof of their injustice. These laws, as of human origin are no doubt liable to many imperfections, and are susceptible of reform. Without therefore joining in the outcry raised by our evangelical contemporary against them, we would by no means oppose any well considered scheme that may be proposed for giving relief to an oppressed minority, whether Catholic or Protestant. The greatest fault in our opinion in the Lower Canadian School system is, that it puts a great deal too much power into the hands of the State, that it gives the latter a by far too great control over the education of the people. This is a serious danger; for though as yet the system may have been administered in no unfriendly or anti-Catholic spirit, yet the day may come when, through a change of Ministry, its administration may be confided to foes of the Church, who will assuredly not hesitate to avail themselves to the utmost of its provisions, to the detriment of Catholic education. In view of this danger which menaces us, and is perhaps not very far off, we should regard with great jealousy all State interference with education, and should always be careful to assert the great principle that Education is the legitimate function, not of the State but of the Family. We have no objections to State subsidies for the School, provided the State hampers them with no degrading restrictions; but "Freedom of Education," that is to say Education emancipated from all State control is the one thing needful—for, sooner or later all influence over the School conceded to the State, will by the latter be employed to the detriment of the Church, and in violation of the right divine of the Family. With these general remarks we will return to our Rawdon correspondent—and his illustrations of the working of the Lower Canadian School system in particular. He says:—

"SIR—Seeing that the *Witness* insinuates partiality in the administration of the School Law, and infers that it confers unfair advantages upon Catholics, imposing iniquitous restrictions upon Protestants when in a minority—I will take the liberty of pointing out how the same law operates as towards Catholics, resident in districts where Protestants form the majority of the population.

"Such, since the separation of two ranges from this Parish, and their annexation to that of St. Jovanni is the case in this district: and directly that as the consequence of this arrangement, which took place about four years ago—the Protestants found they were in the majority—they appointed Protestant School Commissioners, to the exclusion of all Papists, and in a short time managed to get rid of every Catholic teacher in our schools, imposing upon us Protestant teachers in every respect inferior to their displaced predecessors. In view of our humble remonstrances. Even in School No. 1 which comprises the village of Rawdon, in which village Catholics are in the majority, the prayers of the petitioners were acceded to; and a mere boy, one every way unfit for the post, was simply because he was a Protestant, thrust upon us as our School teacher, and was sustained in that post through the influence of the ministers of the several sects.

"Under these circumstances we were compelled to set up a Separate School, which I may inform you en passant is, in spite of much opposition, in a thriving state thanks to its teacher, and our Separate School Trustees. The School was established in July last: but since then the Commissioners being Protestant have striven every nerve to crush it by their vexations. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Law they sue us, Discontinue, for the payment of school rates, and contrive to get the matter adjudicated upon by an exclusively Protestant bench of magistrates, who of course decide against Papists. They have unjustly burdened us with the payment of head-money and school rates up to the first of July next, and saddled us with a special tax for repairing their Protestant school house, which tax was imposed two months after the establishment of our dissentient school. Nor is this all. The Protestant School Commissioners, having abruptly dismissed from the post of Secretary Treasurer, a most compe-

tent and respectable gentleman, for the sole cause that he was a Catholic, and having replaced him with one of their own persuasion, how coolly tell us, that they will not give us our rightful apportionment of the monies in their hands, and that we are still liable to pay the Protestant teacher whom they had forced upon us against our will. In all this the Commissioners may be acting legally, and conscientiously, for I mean not to impugn their integrity, but only the School Law as it at present stands.

"We have therefore no alternative but to sue these Protestant Commissioners for an apportionment, and thus bring the question of legality to an issue, unless we are anticipated by the interference, and by the impartial judgment of the Superintendent of Education. The *Witness* will thus see that, if Protestant have grievances to complain of, Catholics are in a similar predicament—and will we trust moderate for the future the rancor of his tongue. At all events—we are certain that he cannot produce a parallel case of hardship and oppression against Protestants, in any Catholic district of Lower Canada.

"Yours respectfully, "A DISSENTIENT."

"Rawdon, 22nd February, 1864."

We neither endorse nor deny the allegations of our respected correspondent. As in the case of the complaints urged in behalf of Protestants by the *Witness*, we simply say that the truth of the allegation should be inquired into; and that, if substantiated, the law should be so modified—as to prevent the recurrence of similar injustice whether to Protestant or Catholic.

THE REFORMATION IN IRELAND.—This is the title of a lecture lately delivered in town by the Rev. Mr. Irwin, an Anglican minister, and reported by our contemporaries. Unlike the generality of lectures on similar topics, it is remarkably free from all offensive or insulting remarks, and is couched in temperate and gentlemanly language; but some of the statements therein contained are so contrary to well established facts, that we cannot allow them to pass without notice.

The Rev. Mr. Irwin indignantly repudiated the taunt of a "*proselytising by bribery*" so often urged against the Protestant Missions to Irish Catholics; and boasted that "there was not one single valid case of it adduced in answer to the challenge of the late Archbishop of Dublin." That the lecturer was sincere when he made this assertion we do not doubt, for he is a gentleman whom we cannot suspect of knowingly uttering an untruth; but that he must have been very ignorant of the late disclosures respecting "Irish Missions," and that he is but very imperfectly acquainted with the working of that system which he calls "*The Reformation in Ireland*," the following facts, which cannot be controverted, abundantly prove; because their truth is publicly attested to by no less a person than the Rev. George Webster, Protestant Chancellor of Cork—a witness who cannot have been himself deceived as to the facts to which he testifies, and who, as a Protestant clergyman, cannot be suspected of bearing false witness against his Church and his own order. Now what says this Protestant clergyman with reference to the proselytising of Catholics in Ireland by means of bribery?

In his first letter to the Rev. H. C. Eade, Secretary of the Board of Irish Missions to Roman Catholics, the Rev. Mr. Webster makes the following charges, of his own personal knowledge, against the system pursued by the said "Irish Missions."

He asserts, in the first place, that temporal relief is given to Irish Catholics on the express condition that they declare themselves Protestants, and send their children to Protestant schools. Nor is this all.

He asserts, in the second place, that to his own personal knowledge, "*the ordained agents of the Irish Church Missions paid Protestants to pretend they were Roman Catholics at controversial meetings, and at those meetings to call those very ordained agents the hardest names.*" He asserts, still of his own knowledge, that the reports of conversions of Papists to Protestantism are for the most part false, or exaggerated: that he knows a school of which it was reported that it was attended by eighty Catholic children, "*when the fact was a single Roman Catholic never entered the School, except five or six wretched children who were sent from Dublin by the Irish Church Mission Society.*" He asserts that he has himself seen, "*large quantities of bread given to Roman Catholics of a Sunday morning for learning a verse of Holy Scripture, and when these same people, in my presence, went away cursing the Protestants, and cursing the very persons who gave them the bread and taught them the verse.*" He tells us how one of the agents of the Society made a Report that he had "*made fourteen converts from Romanism in a certain locality, and who had to acknowledge*" that his Report was a lie; and finally he concludes his letter with the reiteration of the charge of "*proselytising by bribery*" against the Society, which, he adds, has to his belief "*done irreparable mischief to the Church in Ireland.*"

Here then are specific allegations of bribery and falsehood made against the *Irish Missions Society* by a prominent dignitary of the Church of England; and the truth of these allegations being impugned, and he himself challenged to give further particulars so that his statements might, if true, be verified, or, if false, exposed, the Rev. Mr. Webster did not shrink from that challenge, or endeavor to evade the responsibility