

The True Witness.

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY
At No. 663 Craig Street, by
J. GILLIES.
G. E. CLERK, Editor.

TERMS YEARLY IN ADVANCE:
To all country Subscribers Two Dollars. If the subscription is not renewed at the expiration of the year then, in case the paper be continued, the terms shall be Two Dollars and a half.
To all subscribers whose papers are delivered by carriers, Two Dollars and a half, in advance; and if not renewed at the end of the year, then, if we continue sending the paper, the subscription shall be Three Dollars.
The True Witness can be had at the News Depot. Single copies 3d.
The figures after each Subscriber's Address every week shows the date to which he has paid up. Thus "John Jones, August '63," shows that he has paid up to August '63, and owes his subscription from that date.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, OCT. 8, 1869.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

OCTOBER—1869.

Friday, 8—St. Bridget, W.
Saturday, 9—St. Dionysius and Comp., MM.
Sunday, 10—Twenty-first after Pentecost.
Monday, 11—St. Francis of Borgia, O.
Tuesday, 12—Of the Feria.
Wednesday, 13—St. Edward, O.
Thursday, 14—St. Callistus, P. M.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

LONDON, Oct. 2.—The Saturday Review has an article on the subject of the relations between Spain and the United States on the Cuban question. The writer says the announcement that the Washington Government approves the communication of Mr. Sickles, the American Minister, to the Spanish Government is only partially intelligible so long as the terms of that despatch are unknown. So also is the announcement that America had no intention to intervene, and was only prompted by humanity. It is certain that the Spaniards consider that the subject concerns themselves alone, and if the Government prosecutes the contest with energy and success, no faction will openly oppose its measures. The potato crop of England will not be up to the average. It is estimated that half of the crop of Cumberland is diseased. Colonel Hill has been appointed Governor of Newfoundland.

LONDON, Oct. 4.—Telegrams from Dresden report that the small town of Franstein, the seat of an extensive linen manufactory and dye works, about twenty miles from the capital, was totally destroyed by fire last night.

PARIS, Oct. 2.—Despatches received here today announce the arrival of the Empress Eugenie at Venice. The Ministers have decided to convoke the Chambers on the first of November next. It is said that four Ministers will convoke, and that Oliver, Segris, Talhouet and Schneider will succeed them. The estimated total loss by fire among shipping at Bordeaux will reach 10,000,000 francs.

VIENNA, Oct. 4.—The Vienna Presse, which is generally recognised as an official organ by the Austrian Government, publishes in its issue this morning advices from Paris to the effect that the Emperor Napoleon hopes to open the coming session of the legislative body of France by announcing to the members, among other matters, the fact that an agreement has been arrived at between the European powers for a general simultaneous disarmament.

MADRID, Sept. 4.—The republican volunteer forces collected in the cities of Madrid, Barcelona, and other places, with the view of receiving the prisoners taken by the military during the late engagements at the Barricades, have cut the telegraph wires and stopped the mail trains conveying the government despatches.

Very considerable excitement still prevails at Begar, where the populace remains excited and in a very unruly condition.

OTTAWA, Oct. 2.—Reifenstein still lies in gaol under the strictest surveillance. His family are permitted to visit him only once a week, and then in the presence of the Governor of the gaol.

The Toronto Globe has really droll ideas on the Irish Land Question. Only listen to him:—"The true remedy for the evils of the Irish land tenure is to let land be free, and treated exactly like houses or dry goods, and the process of redistribution will immediately commence, so that if a man be shifty and improvident, he will freckon it as a matter of course that he must give place to some one else more provident, and more industrious."—Toronto Globe, 30th Aug.

The above paragraph is almost sublime in the ignorance that it displays of the real state of the Irish Land question; of what it is that the Irish condemn; of what it is that they hope to wring from the British Parliament. Or can it be that the Globe is joking, and poking fun at its readers.

"The real remedy," for the Irish land difficulty, "is to let land be free and treated exactly like houses or dry goods"—foresooth! What! does not the Globe know that the very essence of the complaint urged against the existing land tenure in Ireland is that it does treat land "like houses and dry goods?" that the very head and front of

the offending of the British government in the matter of the Irish land tenure is, in the eyes of the Irish, this?—That it leaves the owner of land free, too free, to do what he wills with his own; that it allows him to ask what rent he pleases for it, to raise his price for it from time to time when the state of the market appears to warrant him in so doing; and to enforce payment from the defaulting tenant, or tenant whose term of lease has expired, by the process of distraint and eviction, just as if the land belonged to him (the landlord) in the same sense, and to the same extent, as a bale of dry goods belongs to the merchant who has imported and paid for it, or as the house belongs to the city proprietor. It is just because land is free in Ireland, because it actually is, in so far as tenants and would-be tenants are concerned, "treated too much like houses or dry goods," that the cry for a thorough, immediate reform of the Irish Land tenure is so urgently insisted upon by one party, and so deprecated by others as implying a complete social revolution.

The Irish protest against the application to land of the fundamental principles of so-called political economy; and the Globe refers them to those laws for a remedy! They cry out for bread and it offers them a stone, for a fish and it tenders them a serpent? And the Globe professes certainly either to direct or to reflect the public sentiment in matters of politics of Upper Canada! A blind leader indeed is it of the blind.

Had the Globe ever read with attention one line of the writings of the Irish popular party, either in Europe or in America, he could not have fallen into the strange error of believing that the application to land in Ireland of the principles of political economy would solve the Irish difficulty. Easy indeed would be the task of Mr. Gladstone were it really so: if he had but to follow in the lead of the political economists to give satisfaction to Ireland, to allay the bitterness of party strife, and to bind up the wounds caused by centuries of religious and national antipathies.—What makes the task of dealing with the Irish Land question so difficult is, that the only solution thereof, which the Irish Celt will ever accept, is irreconcilable with, is the direct contradictory of, these free trade principles in land which are actually in force, and which the Globe proposes as the remedy for the evils of the Irish land tenure.

What the Irish demand is this:—That Ireland be legislated for in accordance with Irish ideas. What is the prevalent Irish idea, with respect to land, and the tenure of land, in harmony with which it is demanded that the British Parliament shall legislate!

The first, the fundamental Irish idea as to land, as expressed by the leading popular organs of the Irish, whether in Europe or in America, is this:—That the individual can have no rights of property in land: that it belongs to the community; and that the claims put forward by the so-called land owners are a usurpation, an outrage upon the rights of the people. We copy for instance from the Dublin Irishman of the 14th August last; and the Irishman is well known as one of the ablest and most faithful exponents of the Irish idea upon the Irish land question. We invite the Globe to listen to him:—

"Whether the landlords hold the soil by descent or by purchase they hold that which is not theirs. The man who buys a stolen ring knowing it to have been stolen, is as bad, and legally as punishable, as the actual thief. And the man who buys land, knowing it to have been stolen from the people, is as bad, and morally as amenable to popular justice, as the actual stealers of the land. This is the best plea that can be put forward for the best landlord in Ireland. He has purchased stolen goods, or inherited stolen property. For every acre of Irish land has been stolen from the Irish people, and is unjustly, if not unlawfully withheld from them."—Dublin Irishman, Aug. 14, 1869.

And in the same number we are assured that nothing will ever satisfy or pacify the Irish till the Government "restore to the people the soil which former English Governments stole from them." Nothing short of this, no conceivable compromise of any kind will be accepted. Absolute, unconditional restoration to the people of Ireland of the lands which are now, with the connivance of the British Government, wrongfully claimed, and held iniquitously by individuals, called landlords, is the only settlement of the Irish land question which the popular party, as represented in the national press, will so much as listen to.

Another influential Irish journal, though bitterly opposed to the Dublin Irishman, with whom it wages incessant war, is the Dublin Nation. But on the question of property in land both reflect the "Irish idea." Here is what, in a late issue, the Dublin Nation says on this topic:—

"No half measures will do. It will be necessary that in the settlement of the Land Question, certain principles be admitted, upon which alone a satisfactory measure can be framed. Above all, the principle with regard to land which the Irish landlords are so much in the habit of enunciating as just—that 'every man can and ought to be allowed to do what he will with his own'—(i. e. the free trade principle)—must be abandoned and thrown aside as untenable and immoral; and that other, 'the soil belongs to the whole people, and not to a few alone,' must be substituted for it."—Dublin Nation.

We might multiply quotations from the Irish press, both in Ireland and the United States to any extent; but we should but weary our

readers, since they all breathe one spirit, and all, though differing in many other respects, agree in this:—That the Irish idea of land is that it does not, and cannot, become the property of the individual, in the sense in which a house, or a bale of dry goods, is, or may be, a man's property to do with as he pleases; to let or keep in his own hands; to sell in the dearest market, or not to sell at all, just as he pleases. In a word, the Irish agitation on the Land Question is, in its very essence, a vigorous, almost an armed, certainly a menacing protest against free trade in land, against the idea that land should be treated like any other commodity. And yet in legislation in harmony with this essentially anti-Irish idea, does the Globe fondly hope that the true remedy for Irish disaffection is to be found!—And the great cry from Ireland is,—"We desire to be legislated for, not according to English ideas, not according to what are called the ideas of the political economist, but according to the Irish idea!"

Mr. Bright, who is looked upon by many as the regenerator of Ireland, well knows that any free trade principles applied to the land of Ireland, if proposed by him, would be received with a general shout of execration. These principles he, therefore, in his role of an Irish Reformer, casts to the winds; and in his scheme for the settlement of the Irish Land Question, of which he has given the public a rough outline, free trade principles have no place. His scheme is this:—That the Government buy up from the absentee landlord willing to sell lands, which it shall re-sell to the tenants wishing to purchase. Now, leaving out of sight the fact that when a Government assumes the role of buyer and seller, there is an end to free trade; and that if the Globe's theory be true, the British Government cannot, without exceeding its legitimate functions, buy up either land in Ireland, or cotton goods at Liverpool, with the intention of re-selling them in small parcels, and on long credits, to a humble class of purchasers—we have this fact staring us in the face:—That Mr. Bright's scheme necessarily implies, not an open market, and free competition—(essentials of free trade)—for the lands which it is proposed that the Government shall sell on favorable conditions to the Irish tenant farmers: but a close or restricted market, from which, with the exception of the tenants aforesaid, the public must be excluded. For it is evident that, if the public indiscriminately, were to be allowed to compete, or bid for, the lands which the Government, according to Mr. Bright's scheme, is to buy from the absentee landlords with the object of reselling them in small lots to suit would-be purchasers, the capitalists would be able to outbid the tenants; and the land would fall again into the hands of a few wealthy individuals, to be dealt with as they pleased, just as if it were so much cotton, or so many bales of dry goods. Thus we say, this every man must see, would be the only result of Mr. Bright's Irish Land scheme, if therein he adhered to the fundamental or essential principles of free trade. That is to say an open market free to all comers, and one in which unlimited competition should be allowed. And if, on the other hand, he restrict access to the market to Irish tenant farmers, and exclude the public: if he make it a condition that no single purchaser shall be allowed to purchase more than a limited number of acres of land, so as to keep the soil for the use and behoof of those whom his scheme is intended to benefit, then he will not be acting on free trade principles: he will not be treating the land, as the Globe proposes it should be treated, "exactly like houses, or dry goods," of which any man may buy as much as he can afford to buy. In a word, if Mr. Bright's scheme is in any manner to benefit the tenant farmers of Ireland, and to put the poorer classes of the population in possession of the soil, it must violate all the essential principles of free trade; and it must deal with land as an altogether exceptional commodity, differing essentially from dry goods, and all other things over which man claims the absolute rights of property. This fact should be patent even to the Toronto Globe: and it is in this, we repeat, that lies the difficulty of the Irish Land question—the most difficult question that ever British statesman had to deal with.

To the Editor of the True Witness.

DEAR SIR,—I appreciate your reticence on the internal affairs of our Protestant fellow-citizens in general, and particularly of our fellow-citizens, Protestants of the Anglican denomination. These rarely are offensive to Catholics: they keep themselves a good deal to themselves, and, minding their own business, they leave us Catholics to do the same, and to go to heaven, or to hell, as the case may be, pretty much our own way. This is no doubt owing to the higher intellectual and social culture of the Anglican ministers, and more especially to the truly admirable and courteous precepts of the late Protestant bishop, Dr. Fulford—a gentleman respected by all, and not least by those who, as Catholics, ignored his spiritual authority. I think, Sir, that, as a general rule, you do well in not in any manner interfering with the internal

affairs of our Anglican fellow-citizens: but there is scarce any rule that has not its exceptions; and I think that I can point out to you a case in which, without giving any just grounds of offence to those with whom it is as much our interest, as it is our duty as Christians, to live as good neighbors, your rule may be deviated from.

This case I find in a sermon reported in our City papers as having been delivered by the lately arrived Protestant bishop, Dr. Oxenden—a clergyman of deservedly high literary reputation in England, an accomplished scholar, and a courteous gentleman. I claim the right to offer a few remarks upon this sermon, which, having been published in the City papers, has in a manner become public property, and may be commented upon surely without disrespect to its author. I shall copy from a report of the sermon published in the Montreal Daily News of the 7th of the last month. I have marked one or two passages in Italics:—

"God has given us His own word to be our direction, to be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. In that blessed book we have guidance for every step we need to take; but we must remember this, that God's own word is only darkness unless the Spirit of God sheds His own blessed light upon its pages. What a different book it becomes the moment it is lighted up to us by God's Almighty Spirit! When God says, Let there be light, then there will be light to guide us. But you may say how is it that we find persons differing as to God's word. Two persons equally in earnest, equally prayerful, sit down to examine God's word in a humble spirit, and yet they rise from the reading of that word perhaps with very different views of the truth. How is that? Brethren, God not only gives us His word as our guide, but He gives us other means to show us the way. Has He not given you kind and wise friends? Are there not Christian brethren who are ready to lead aright and show you the way? Have you not ministers who are your spiritual guides? Now if you neglect these, then we cannot be justified in taking up God's word and supposing that that word will guide us.

Considering that these are words of a Protestant divine, holding high position in the Protestant community, and delivered as part of an inaugural address to those to whom he has just come across the ocean to minister, I submit that they are worthy of the serious consideration of the Catholic as well as of the Protestant. For to what do they amount, and what do they signify?

They are, I contend, Sir, a formal and deliberate repudiation of three fundamental Protestant principles.—1. The right of private judgment; 2nd. The all sufficiency of the Bible alone, to guide men's feet in the way of salvation; and 3rd. That the Bible interprets itself, and needs neither notes nor comments from man. If we would become wise unto salvation—so at least I understand the learned preacher to teach—we must not only read the Bible in a spirit of prayer and humility, but we must also consult those friends, and those ministers whom God has appointed to be our "spiritual guides." Not the "Bible alone" has God given us; but, according to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Oxenden, "He gives us other means to show us the way." In this, Sir, and so far, you and I, as Catholics, will cordially agree with the Protestant divine.

But what are those "other means" which God has given us? who are our spiritual guides, and by what tokens are we to recognise them? There are many who profess to be these guides—and indeed their name is legion—but they all contradict one another. One says, "Lo here:" another "Lo there:" whilst a third complacently assures us that both are wrong, and that he alone can furnish us with the information so essential to our salvation. Now, by what marks am I, a humble searcher after truth, to distinguish the God-appointed guides from the mere man-appointed, or self appointed guides? Scarcely if God has given us such guides, He, if wise and just, has given us also the means of knowing them; of distinguishing them from the hordes of impostors who swarm around us. This is an important question, on the right answer to which depends our eternal salvation. It is to be regretted that the learned preacher did not deem it worth his while to answer it, for I cannot suppose that the question did not suggest itself to him, and to his hearers.

This is indeed the question of questions. We must remember that the Bible itself, even though it may be God's own word, is, as Dr. Oxenden says, "only darkness," unless it be lighted up for us in a special and supernatural manner, by the Holy Ghost. Now—as certainly this grace is not accorded to all who read the Bible, or else all would read it in the same light, and understand it in the same sense—he must be a presumptuous man indeed who presumes that he has been made the recipient of such a peculiar grace, withheld from the many who differ from him, although perhaps quite as sincere and diligent in the pursuit of truth as himself. The modest man, every man, conscious of his own unworthiness, must therefore have recourse to those "other means" given by God, and indicated by Dr. Oxenden. He will seek the direction of the "spiritual guides" whom God has appointed to show the way, if he can find them, or determine amongst the multitude of rival claimants who are really those guides to whom he must submit himself.

By the accident of birth one man is an Anglican, another, let us say, a Unitarian: of course in all probability the kind and wise friends of the first, as well as the clergyman, are Trinitarians:

whilst the minister, and the kind and wise friends of the other deny that Christ was God, and therefore the legitimate object of man's worship. Doubts spring up in the minds of both as to the soundness of their respective religious opinions. What are they to do? whom are they to consult? who is to solve their religious doubts? Their respective friends and ministers? If so, then the Anglican will remain an Anglican, and the Unitarian a Unitarian, to the end of the chapter—and that by divine appointment. But this solution is absurd.

It is evident therefore that it by no means follows that a man's "spiritual guides," whom he is bound to follow, whom he is bound not to neglect—since were he so to act, he would not "be justified in taking up God's word, and supposing that that word will guide him"—are necessarily those friends, those ministers whom the accidents of birth, education, and social belongings may have given him. The Anglican enquirer after truth has no better reason for following the guidance of his clergyman than has the Baptist or the Unitarian minister, if our "spiritual guides" are to be determined for us by the mere accidents of birth and education. How then are they to be determined? How shall we know, for instance, to whom amongst the many who call themselves "ministers," we are bound by God's law to address ourselves as the "spiritual guides" whom He has appointed to solve all our religious perplexities? This cannot be determined either from their teachings or from their conduct: for there are moral men in all denominations; and if we could distinguish for ourselves, and from their teachings, the teachers of truth from the teachers of error, we should be able to determine for ourselves the question "what is truth?" and should therefore have no need of "spiritual guides" at all. One thing indeed we may determine for ourselves with infallible certainty:—That the ministers of any church, sect, or denomination of Christians who give contradictory answers to a question addressed to them in which the fundamentals of Christianity are involved, are not the "spiritual guides" whom God has appointed to lead His flock to the pastures.

For instance: There are, I doubt not, Sir, many Protestants at this moment in this City of Montreal who wish to know how, and in what sense, they are to understand the words of Our Lord "this is my body?" whether these words are to be taken literally, or figuratively? if figuratively, what it is they figure? and whether the eucharistic celebration is indeed a sacrifice, the great central act of the Christian religion; or whether it be a mere symbolic commemorative rite, such as was the eating of calf's head by the English puritans and their descendants on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I.?

Now, these are certainly questions which lie at the very roots of Christian worship: and were a Protestant to propose them to the ministers of the Anglican Church, what answers would he receive? The High Church minister would give him one answer: the Low Church minister another, and contradictory answer; whilst the intermediate or broad church minister, would try to put him off with ambiguous phrases and unintelligible drivel. What is the logical conclusion? This:—That the ministers of such a church are not the "spiritual guides" whom God Himself has appointed to direct man's steps in the way of salvation.

I might give other instances, but I fear I have already encroached too much on your columns.

Yours, respectfully,

A PAPIST.

In the last number of that excellent monthly, the Catholic World we find a notice of a cock and a bull kind of story that for some time been doing duty in the Protestant press as an instance of the tyranny that Rome exercises over the human mind. According to the story—it is a very old one, brought out however as span new for the occasion—Pius IX. has just issued a decree prohibiting any physician at Rome from attending on, or prescribing for any sick person who after three days medical attendance, shall persist in his refusal to accept the sacraments of the Church.

The Catholic World is at the trouble to ferret out the origin of this absurd story, and shows that it owes its being to a decree not of Pius IX. but of Sixtus V., to the effect that under pain of excommunication all doctors give warning to the parish priest of their patient's danger if after three days he should appear to be in peril of his life: "but," as the Catholic World points out "beyond that the doctor cannot act, and continues his attendance to the last, irrespective of the patient's religious state or dispositions."

PROTESTANT PROGRESS.—A new paper has lately been started in London under the title of Latest News. In a description given therein of the moral aspect of Protestant England we see the worth of an "open bible":—

"It is the age of dirty speech and of unclean writing. Walk the streets of London by night or day, and the oaths and obscenity will sicken you; while the doubtful double entendre provokes silvery laughter in many a drawing room. As to dirty writing, no journal now, no work of fiction, no drama, plays, unless it contains allusions to sinful passions, unless