

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.
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 We beg to remind our Correspondents that no letters will be taken out of the Post-Office, unless prepaid.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

FEBRUARY—1865.
 Friday, 10—St. Scholastique, V.
 Saturday, 11—Of Imm. Conc.
 Sunday, 12—SPTUAGESIMA.
 Monday, 13—Of the Feria.
 Tuesday, 14—Prayer of Our Lord.
 Wednesday, 15—SS. Faustin and Jovitus, MM.
 Thursday, 16—Of the B. Sacrament.
 The "Forty Hours" Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will commence as follows:—
 Saturday, 11—Convent of St. Eustache.
 Monday, 13—St. Valentine.
 Wednesday, 15—St. Thomas.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

The French Imperial Government is now fully committed to a war with the Church. The French Episcopate en masse has risen up to protest against the tyranny of the State; of its members several have coolly set the edict of *Jack in-Office* at defiance, reading the forbidden Encyclical from the pulpit, to the horror and indignation of *Jack aforesaid*, who has summoned the contumacious Prelates to appear before the Council of State. This is not the first time, even during the present century, that French sovereigns have adopted this system of politics towards the Church. Charles the Tenth in an evil moment for himself and his family was persuaded to adopt it: and presently all of the elder branch of the Bourbons were in exile. Louis Philippe followed suit, and shortly with his umbrella under his arm, the *bourgeois* King had to look out for new lodgings. These warnings seem to have been thrown away on the present ruler of France, whose fate however may yet afford another example that it is dangerous for princes to set themselves up against the Lord's Anointed.

Of course the excommunicated King of Sardinia has imitated the despotic conduct of the French Government. As his whole career has been one of wrong, of fraud attended with violence, it is but natural that he should see in the condemnation of error, the condemnation of his Kingdom of Italy, and hear in the solemn words of warning addressed by God's Vicar, the justly deserved sentence upon his life of crime.
 The peace negotiations from which so much was expected, have failed; and what is most singular is, that the overtures for peace appear to have come from the North. At all events, Mr. Lincoln in person has had an interview with the Confederate delegates; but the latter insisting upon the recognition of the independence of the South as an essential preliminary, the negotiations were broken off, and Mr. Lincoln had to return without having effected his object. A new draft is spoken of, and its enforcement will very likely lead to trouble.

By latest telegrams the army of the Potomac was in movement, and a great battle may be expected.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.—The Ministry have at last brought their scheme for a union of all the British Provinces of North America before the Legislature in the shape of a Motion for an Address to the Imperial Government, praying the latter to pass an Act in conformity with the Resolutions agreed to by the Quebec delegates. The business is to be pushed through the Canadian Legislature as rapidly as possible, so as to give no time for discussion or deliberation; and it is pretty plainly hinted that the Ministry will accept of no amendments to their scheme, but that it must be adopted in its integrity by the Legislature, or rejected altogether. This is a somewhat high handed proceeding; for there are some—amongst them the *Canadiens* of Quebec—who would submit to a Union as a now inevitable evil, but who look upon many of the details of the Union actually propounded to us, as highly objectionable. There is to be no appeal to the people lest perchance the latter might be found refractory; and if possible the whole affair is to be settled during the course of the present year.

As from many years close study, we are thoroughly acquainted with the stuff out of which our Provincial legislators and statesmen are manufactured, and intimately conversant with their thoughts and modes of action, we have many reasons to fear that the Resolutions of the Quebec delegates will be voted for by a large

majority of the Legislature, in spite of "Marriage and Divorce" clauses, which one would think were a tough morsel for Catholic stomachs. These stomachs, however, are strong, even as the hard guts of the reapers, and can take in and digest ailment, the very sight of which would produce nausea in bowels more delicately organized. "Tis the seasoning as does it," as Sam Weller remarked in the case of the *pseudo-veal* pies whereof the flesh of the domestic Puss formed the principal ingredient: "'Tis the seasoning as does it;" and if the morsel be well seasoned to the legislative palate, no doubt it will go down with a relish.

Now the Union of the British North American Provinces is a highly seasoned dish, and is served up with the very best of sauce for a certain kind of appetite, or hunger, known as the *aur sacra fames*, with which even men of the best of principles are often keenly exercised.—In other words, all public functionaries will ameliorate their pecuniary condition by means of the proposed "Constitutional Changes;" and herein lies an unanswerable argument why they should be adopted by those to whom they promise increase of pickings, and on whom it rests to accept or to reject them. For instance, the argument *par excellence*, for Union, though of course not expressed in debate, resolves itself into a simple arithmetical problem, in the "Rule of Three"—as thus:—

"If A receives from a country grateful for his services the sum of \$600 per annum, (to say nothing of travelling expenses and perquisites) as an M.P. in a Provincial Legislature, what will be his salary, what his pickings and his perquisites, as Member of a Federal Legislature?"

We need not follow out this little calculation through all its ramifications, or insist upon its applicability to all executive, as well as to all legislative salaries. It is enough to state it to show its importance. In short we may sum up the argument in favor of Confederation in the form of a syllogism, of which we give the major and the minor premise, but leave the reader to deduce the conclusion:—

- (1.) The Federal Official, the Federal Legislator will receive higher pay, enjoy more perquisites and have a greater amount of patronage and influence, than does or has the mere Provincial Official or Provincial Legislator.
- (2.) Provincial Officials and existing Provincial Legislators expect, and with reason, in case Confederation should become *un fait accompli*, to be transformed into Federal Officials and Federal Legislators.
- (3.) Therefore

Our readers will now see what we mean by the seasoning to the "Marriage and Divorce" clause of the Resolutions: but we will still hope, we will still pray at least, that when the decisive moment arrives; that when the Catholic shall be called upon to vote either *Yea*, or *Nay* upon the proposal to present an Address to the Imperial Government praying the latter to establish in these Colonies a novel civil tribunal with authority explicitly given to it to adjudicate upon Marriage, and to legalize Divorce, his stomach, or conscience, may be stronger than his appetite, and that he will spurn the proffered morsel with disdain and loathing. At all events, if Catholics directly or indirectly sanction such a proposal, if they do not oppose to it a vigorous resistance—of this they may be sure; that they will earn as well as richly deserve, the scorn of Protestants, whom they will also scandalize by an exhibition of cowardice and dereliction of principle without a parallel in the annals of Canada—where so many very disreputable things have been done by our *Katholic politicians*." We trust in God however that our Catholic representatives will be wise in time, and will bear in mind that no material advantage however great can compensate for the loss of honor: no danger however imminent can justify or even palliate the sacrifice, even in appearance, of a Catholic principle.

Incidentally the School Question has come before the Legislative Assembly, and the Catholics of Upper Canada will be able to judge from what therein has transpired how vain a thing it is for them to expect a favorable hearing from a Ministry of which, to our disgrace and misfortune, Mr. George Brown is a member. Questioned as to their intentions with respect to the demands of the Protestant minority of Lower Canada, the Ministry replied that it was their intention to introduce a Bill for giving full relief to the petitioners. Interrogated as to their intentions towards the Catholic minority of Upper Canada, whose causes of complaint in the matter of education are far more numerous, and better founded than are those of the Protestant minority of Lower Canada, Mr. J. A. Macdonald made reply to the effect that he and his colleagues intended to do nothing, as Ministers were quite content with the Upper Canadian School Law as it is. We do not blame Mr. J. A. Macdonald personally for this, for we believe him to be at heart a just, amiable, and well-disposed man; but it shows the Catholics of Upper Canada that they have nothing to hope for from the present Ministry, and that Mr. J. A. Macdonald having entered into a compact with the " " that is to say with Mr. George Brown, must just do as the latter bids him. It

is not for us to advise our Upper Canadian friends how to act, so as to counteract the hostility of the Ministry to Catholic education; but it seems to us that they should lose no time in embodying their requests in a Bill, to be laid before Parliament, together with that which Ministers propose to introduce for the benefit of the Protestants of Lower Canada. We of this section of the Province should then impress upon our representatives the necessity of supporting both Bills; so that they should advance always at precisely the same pace; and that the success of the one might be conditional on the success of the other. If there were but one honest, independent Catholic member of the legislature to take up and advocate the cause of the slighted Catholics of the West, they might hope at least to obtain a respectful hearing for their claims. As it is, Mr. J. A. Macdonald tells them to "shut up" and be off about their business, for that he and his Ministerial colleagues intend to do nothing for them.

On the motion of Mr. Wallbridge some ugly revelations were made as to the means by which the Ministry have contrived to procure so general an adherence to their policy on the Confederation question from the press. These revelations are anything but creditable to Canadian journalism; and though they have surprised no one, they cannot but inspire strong doubts as to the future of a people whose public writers are so thoroughly corrupt, and so unblushingly venal.

The *Alien Bill* was passed in a great, almost indecent hurry. Its provisions may be necessary, and Ministers may be in possession of information showing that necessity;—we do not therefore express any very positive opinion on the matter. But it seems to us that when the tidings and the details reach England, the general impression will be that we have acted more from fear, than from love of justice.

"NON POSSUMUS."

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.—When in treating of the great Constitutional changes now before the country, and for or against which Catholic legislators are called upon to declare themselves—we discuss the question of the creation of a new civil tribunal, and of the expressly giving to that civil tribunal the right of legislating upon Marriage and of legalising Divorce—we leave the region of secular politics altogether, and enter upon that of "Faith and Morals," the exclusive domain of the Church. We must tread warily therefore, for the spot whereon we stand is holy ground; not to be approached in an irreverent or secular spirit, but in the fear of the Lord, and consequently with a perfect disregard of all human considerations, or what the French call "*respect humain*."

Or, if at all we think of man, and of his judgment upon the decision which on the all important questions now forced upon us, we shall pronounce—let it be our great object not to give scandal to our separated brethren, not to furnish occasion to our adversaries to blaspheme. We may be assured that in the present crisis, and on the question of "Marriage and Divorce" now before the Canadian Legislature, every word, every act of the Catholic publicist will be keenly watched, noted down, and sharply criticised by our Protestant neighbors. Keen-sighted are they, and ever on the look out to detect us in some fault; and if they, with their lynx-eyes, detect, or fancy even that they can detect any inconsistency in our conduct, any incoherency betwixt our professions as Catholics and our practice as politicians—betwixt the positive dogmas of our Church, and our votes as legislators—great will be the rejoicings in the anti-Catholic camp, loud their shouts of derision, and incalculable the disgrace and injury to the cause of our religion. We know how Protestants think and talk amongst themselves on such occasions; we know that though they will gladly avail themselves of the services of the timorous time-serving *Katholic* to promote their objects—they despise the coward and the traitor, more even than they dislike the stern uncompromising, bigoted, if you will, upholder of Catholic truth. We know well what effect amongst Protestants honestly searching after truth, and ready to embrace that truth wherever found, has that sad indifference to, or laxity of principle which Catholic "*politicians*" so often manifest in the pursuit of personal or party ends; and knowing how Protestants feel, think and argue, and how apt they are to transfer to the Church, the reproach which should rest upon the timorous time-serving individual alone, we say it advisedly, that one Catholic vote cast for the measure which expressly gives to a civil tribunal the right to legislate upon Marriage, and to legalize Divorce, will do more to bring Catholicity itself into contempt amongst intelligent and honest Protestants, than all the obscene calumnies that Mr. George Brown has uttered against the Church during his career—than all the diatribes of all the Swaddling Societies in Canada, during the course of the XIX. century.

The palmary charge of Protestants against the Romish Church is that she encourages, or at all events, tolerates a tampering with truth; that she connives at a certain laxity of practice

amongst her children; that she quibbles, and teaches others to quibble; that, for the sake of expediency, she will sacrifice principle, and holds the maxim that it is lawful to do evil that good may come. These are the reproaches constantly urged against our Holy Mother, and which reiterated by a Kingsley provoked the noble and touching reply given by Dr. Newman in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. In this work the writer vindicates, not his own honor alone, but the honor of his spiritual mother; and though her children may oft have done, and may no doubt oft do again, many mean and dishonorable things, he shows that she at least has never sanctioned them, that she is not responsible for them, and that the dogmatic and moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, are to the minutest particular, in harmony with the code of honor, and that "*hault courage*" which the apostle of "muscular Christianity" can admire, though he cannot practise it. The true Catholic fears God, and therefore has no other fear; and he who should in all respects conform his life to the precepts of the Catholic Church would, no matter what his position or his calling, be indeed "*le preux chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*." The perfect Catholic would, in short, be the perfect gentleman, the *beau ideal* of the gentleman, whom no one could suspect even of a cowardly, a mercenary, or even of a doubtful action. Therefore is it incumbent on the Catholic legislator, on the Catholic publicist above all other men, to keep himself unspotted from the world; and never in any emergency to yield in appearance even, or make the slightest concession or approach towards concession, when a Catholic principle is at stake—lest by his timid, pliant, time-serving attitude he should endorse the calumnies urged by prejudiced Protestants against his spiritual mother—calumnies which it must be confessed, the conduct of our Catholic public men only too often confirms.

Now in the particular question before us what is the principle at stake? This is:—"That under no circumstances can a Catholic recognise in much less vote for giving to—any civil tribunal whatsoever, whether *in esse* or *in posse*, the right of legislating upon Marriage, and of legalising Divorce." This principle is either true or it is false. If true, no Catholic can, without dereliction of principle, vote for, or in any manner be accessory to, the adoption of the proposed Constitutional Changes; because they give to the central government the right of legislating upon Marriage and Divorce. If false, then did the Fathers of the Council of Trent err, then also has the Holy Father in his late Encyclical greatly erred. But whether this principle be true or false, whether we accept or reject it, let us be consistent with our principle. For the credit of our holy religion amongst Protestants, do not let us be seen as giving to the world the humiliating spectacle of men acting in contempt of principles which they profess. If it be lawful for the Catholic to vote for attributing to a civil tribunal the right of legislating upon Marriage and of legalising Divorce, for God's sake let us say so, and proclaim this principle from the house tops and to the whole world; but if it be not lawful, then again, for God's sake, let us make our acts to harmonise with our principles—no matter what the consequences. Consequences! forsooth—what has man to do with consequences? These are God's business—not to say it profanely, these are His look out. Enough for us that we do our duty, and leave all consequences to God. If asked to vote contrary to principle, or to do any other dirty action, the Catholic should make answer with the Holy Father in analogous circumstances, "*Non possumus*."

All shuffling, all quibbling, all attempts to prove that two and two are either five or three, are, as Carlyle would say, the *prima materia* of the devil, of him who was a liar from the beginning. They are not weapons with which the battle of Catholic truth against heresy can be fought, or brought to a happy issue: and even if it be deemed that we be beaten, that the hosts of the enemy be too many for us, let us at least fall with honor, and with such weapons in our hands as the honest man can use without a blush. We may perhaps be unable to enforce our views on a legislature in which Protestant principles are in the ascendant; but this we can do if we please,—we can enforce the respect of Protestants, we can compel them to recognise our consistency and our disinterestedness; and therefore to yield homage to that religion, to that Church, which not only arms her children with sound principles, but which animates and strengthens them in the combat. This we can do; and having done this, having exhausted every legitimate means within our reach for opposing the pernicious and demoralising system of legislation sought to be imposed upon us, we shall still be able, even if defeated, to console ourselves with the proud reflection that we have done our duty, and fought that good fight of faith which, no matter how the day goes, assures to the brave soldier a crown of justice which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to him on the great and terrible day of His coming. What in comparison with this bright crown, has "Jack-in-Office" to offer us, that we should sacrifice to him our principles, and

prostitute to him our honor and our conscience? *Non Possumus*.

At all events we have the right to expect that amongst our Catholic representatives one at least, honest, brave and faithful will be found, who will force the question of principle on the House; by moving an amendment for leaving out that clause of the proposed Union of the British North American Provinces which gives to the central government the right of legislating upon Marriage and Divorce; and upon the grounds that—to accord such right to any civil tribunal would be injurious to morals, and repugnant to Catholic faith. Upon this question a vote should be forced, so as to compel our representatives to show themselves in their true colors, and to commit themselves to the assertion of one or the other of the two principles—to wit:—the *competency*, or the *incompetency*, of any civil tribunal to legalise Divorce. From such a vote, which should of course be published—(those who voted for the *competency* carefully distinguished from those who voted for the *incompetency* of any civil tribunal to legislate on Marriage and Divorce; with a prominent place of infamy assigned to those who should have sneaked away to avoid voting at all)—we should be able to appreciate at their actual worth those professions of good principles—*bons principes*—of which some are so fond of making ostentatious parades when some material advantage to themselves is likely to accrue from so doing.

We have limited ourselves to the discussion of the great principle at issue in this question of "Marriage and Divorce;" in our next we propose to discuss the question from a lower standpoint, that of expediency.

A correspondent in London, C.W., whose far too flattering expressions of good will towards the True Witness we receive with gratitude, but dare not reproduce, writes to us on the subject of Catholic schools in his district. He says:—

"Religion is progressing here. Our schools are well attended, but I regret to say are not in such a state of efficiency as to compare altogether with the common schools. This is the only drawback to the present or ultimate success of our schools—a difficulty which must be met—because indifference and neglect on this matter might lead to an entire repudiation of the separate school system in Canada West, as practically unable to afford those facilities and advantages in the matter of education which were held out as an inducement to its establishment. Seven years ago we were led to expect that our separate schools would be at least equal in all respects to those from which we separated."

"CARNALITIES."
 Incalculable as are the blessings of separate schools for Catholics, they should not be too sanguine at first, or expect more from them than the actual circumstances of the case warrant them in looking for. A minority, especially if the members of that minority be poor—as is often the case with the members of the Catholic minority in Upper Canada—labor under serious material disadvantages to which no legislation can apply a remedy. We have always advocated, we still advocate separate schools for Catholics, not because of any material advantages that may be expected therefrom; not because in things purely secular they will be superior, or even at first starting, equal to the schools of the wealthier Protestant majority; but because of their moral and spiritual superiority over schools from which all religious teaching is eliminated, and which the Church therefore speaking as the Holy Ghost has given her utterance, has once and for ever condemned as altogether dangerous to faith and morals. Were reading, and writing, arithmetic, book-keeping by double entry, and the elements of grammar, the sole, or even the chief objects for which man was created, we should say, by all means let us stick to our non-Catholic schools, which, as alimented by the monies of Protestants as well as by that of our own co-religionists, must necessarily be superior in all mere material appliances, to schools alimented only by the monies of the Catholic minority.

This may seem a hard saying, and who shall bear it—yet it is true, and one which it would be foolish and wicked to ignore. Material prosperity is not always, and no where is proposed to us as, the reward for adherence to duty, and to Catholic principle. On the contrary, we cannot be faithful to these, as society is at present constituted, without sacrifices many and great. Is it worth our while to make these sacrifices? Assuredly it is—for what shall a man give in exchange for his soul, or what profiteth it to him if he gain the whole world, but lose his immortal soul? Heaven itself, that rest which yet remaineth for the children of God, is only propounded to us upon the condition of daily, hourly self-sacrifice; and if we shrink from the latter, how shall we dare to expect the other? It is not for nothing that we make these sacrifices.—Not one, even the least of them, but what is known to and appreciated by Our Father Who is in heaven; but what at last shall receive its great reward—reward so great, so out of all proportion to the sufferings of this present time, that no eye hath seen it, no tongue hath told it, no ear hath heard it, neither has it so much as entered into the heart of man to conceive it. If God calls upon us to make sacrifices, He is also the best of paymasters.
 Now—and we seek not to disguise it—our