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THE TRUE WITNESS

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1886

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

We are now sending out our subscription accounts to subscribers to THE TRUE WITNESS, and we earnestly trust that our patrons receiving these accounts will make it a point to pay off their indebtedness at an early date.

THE GRAND TRUNK.

The report of the annual meeting of the Grand Trunk in London indicates a condition of business which is very gratifying. The shareholders and management alike are to be congratulated.

THE POSITION IN IRELAND.

In another column of this issue, Mr. Redmond puts before our readers, with the full force of his facile pen, the position of affairs in Ireland. Interested persons may endeavor to spread about false rumors by means of certain sections of the press and by the miswae of the telegraphic facilities of the country.

"THE MAIL" GETS WORSE.

It seems hard to believe that any sane person can in this country, or for the matter of that anywhere else, point to the events which took place during the French revolution with approval or as worthy of imitation.

much as they could of the Church, and thought possibly that by rifling the tombs, defiling the sanctuary, and enthroning a harlot on the altar of Notre Dame, they had for ever obliterated the object of their diabolical hatred. The Mail begins at the beginning, what it calls the "disestablishment" of the Church, but its argument is the revolutionary period is to be dragged in at all, must go to the extreme.

LORD RANDOLPH'S MANIFESTO.

The spirit of levity and obstinacy running through the Bradford speech of Lord Randolph Churchill is not a hopeful sign of peace and progress in the affairs of Ireland, if that minister speaks with authority as the mouthpiece of the cabinet. It justifies all the gloomy anticipations that have been indulged in concerning the future since the rejection of Mr. Farnell's bill.

A SLANDER KNOCKED OVER.

Part of the programme of The Mail and its friends has for a long while past been to charge the local administration of Ontario with truckling to the hierarchy of the Church. It has been again and again asserted that the Hon. Mr. Fraser is "the" cabinet; that whatever he dictates to the Premier has to be carried into execution, and that he is, in turn, merely the spokesman and representative of the Archbishop.

statute book at the time of Confederation, and it provides for separate schools for Protestants and for colored people as well as Roman Catholics. Personally I should be glad if children of all denominations were educated together.

But whatever political advantage we may receive from the good will of Roman Catholics, whether clergy or laity, we shall not owe to any unequal rights or privileges obtained by their Church or people at our hands, for they have obtained none; nor do we owe their good will to any condition, promise or understanding in regard to the future, for there has been no such condition, promise or understanding.

THE CATHOLIC VOTE.

We maintain that, alike in Sir John and in Mr. Blake, this truckling in the Catholic vote gives to the Church which it and collects the price an exceptional and unparalleled status and authority in public affairs, and that the practice must be stopped if the country is to be preserved.—Toronto Mail, Oct. 27th.

The above may be taken as the key-note of the policy adopted by the party of which the Mail is the mouthpiece. War on Catholics and the Catholic Church! It suits the present purpose of our contemporary to bracket Sir John and Mr. Blake as traffickers in the Catholic vote, and the Church as fixing and collecting the price thereof.

Offensive as the remarks of The Mail are to Catholics everywhere, recalcitrant is cooled by the reflection that they are less intended as an insult than as a sap to presumed Protestant prejudices. It is a pretty safe proceeding to condemn Sir John for truckling in what he cannot obtain on any terms, so long as Mr. Blake is included in the sentence, it being understood by everybody that the Catholic vote is certain to be cast on the Liberal side, on account of the stand taken by Mr. Blake on the Home Rule and Northwest questions.

In taking this course the organ is acting entirely in sympathy with the spirit that animated the speeches of Messrs. White and McCarthy in Haldimand, and while we are willing to acquit it of entertaining the faintest spark of bigotry we feel assured that all thinking Protestants will preserve a wholesome doubt of its sincerity.

As a manufacturer of public opinion The Mail may fancy it is playing a very cunning game, but we are quite convinced, as all observant men, Catholic and Protestant, must be convinced, that if the organ believed it could secure the support of the Catholic electorate for the party led by Sir John Macdonald, it would be down on its knees to the Church on the first convenient opportunity.

Mr. Gladstone. The Church had nothing to do with it, could have nothing whatever to do with it. And as the Church would be powerless to make the Irish love and cherish their enemies and oppressors, so would it be impossible for it in Canada "to fix and collect the price" of what no institution, however sacred and revered, could dispose of to any power under the sun!

The exasperation of the French Catholics at the atrocities perpetrated under Tory Government sanction in the North-West, culminating in the tragedy at Regina; the indignation of the Irish Catholics at the conduct of Sir John Macdonald and his party in relation to Home Rule, were not worked up by the Church. They were the natural, inevitable results of events over which the Church had no control.

Yet these two points in Conservative policy are what alienated French and Irish and made them what they are to-day—determined opponents of Sir John Macdonald and his party.

But because opposition to the Government has arisen among French and Irish Catholics from causes purely secular, The Mail attacks the Catholic Church, not that it fears the influence or condemns the polity of the Church, but because it thinks it is a good card to play with the Protestants, from the Reform ranks of which it hopes to make good its losses!

The peace, the welfare, the happiness of all demand, to use The Mail's own words, "that the practice must be stopped if the country is to be preserved."

MR. GLADSTONE'S REPLY TO THE IRISH DEPUTATIONS.

Mr. Gladstone's reply to the address presented him on behalf of 400,000 women of Ireland, and to the deputations from Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Clonmel, who, at the same time, presented him with the freedom of those cities, will be read by Irishmen everywhere with profound satisfaction.

With perfect fidelity to historical truth and that grace of oratorical diction for which the Grand Old Man is famous, he reviewed the history of the Irish cause from the days of Grattan's Parliament to the present time in a manner to convince the most obturate of the justice contained in the demand for Home Rule.

In this speech Mr. Gladstone shows that he not only understands the subject in all its bearings, but also that he understands the Irish people, feels for their misfortunes, and shares in their aspirations.

He justly described the cause in which the Irish are embarked as "the cause of order, the cause of peace, the cause of legality, the cause of faith and confidence in the power of free discussion and of parliamentary institutions, to the working of which, in the face of the civilized world, they truly commit all the true interests that they now believe to be involved."

When we compare this admirably simple but profoundly true description of the Irish cause with the fanatical ravings and historical distortions of the Orange delegates who lately passed through this country, we feel that from the lips of the greatest of British statesmen a declaration has gone forth to the world which must be accepted, and which cannot long be denied the sanction of the Parliament and people of England.

Truly, indeed, did he point to the undeniable fact that "the interests of England were quite as much involved in this question as those of Ireland, and that until Ireland and Great Britain are thoroughly one, the authority of the nation in the councils of the world will never reach the height to which it ought to attain, and it will only be when the whole of the population of the United Kingdom is one in sentiment, when Ireland stands in the same relation to England as Scotland and Wales stand to England, that the weight of England in the councils of the world will be strengthened and its wise and just influences will be increased."

At the time Mr. Gladstone was speaking these words a portion, at least, of the British press was bewailing the evident paralysis of British diplomacy in Europe. If the cause of that paralysis was not mentioned after the manner of Mr. Gladstone, it was nevertheless apparent to all the world. And if the Tory ministry, now unhappily in power, prefers the interests of the Irish landlорd to the dignity, welfare and prestige of the empire, we can only regret the fact and wait till wiser counsels prevail, or, perhaps, until some bitter national humiliation will teach them the criminal folly of their policy.

The tribute which Mr. Gladstone paid to the moderation and self control of the Irish

people during this trying period was as graceful as it was well merited. No people ever displayed greater calmness under so severe provocation. In this respect we can point with pride to our countrymen whose conduct presents so noble a contrast to the blood-guiltily ferocity of the unhappy fanatics styling themselves "Loyal Unionists" in Belfast.

All the threats of civil war, of armed rebellion, of flame, slaughter and separation, came not from the Irish people who made no boast of their loyalty, but simply asked for justice, but from those who claimed a monopoly of loyalty, and who declared that should justice be granted they would resort to Cromwellian methods to prevent its administration!

What a commentary is this on the character of the people who have been largely responsible for the misery and degradation of Ireland! Worthy descendants are they of the "Undertakers" of the "Plantation"! Worthy representatives are they of the authors of the Penal Code, and doubly worthy companions for the instigator of violence, crime and inhumanity, whose padded puppyism is the last seedless flower of Toryism!

The fact that Home Rule is a leading plank in the platform of the Liberal party puts the question in a position which it never before occupied. It takes the place which all great measures of reform have successively held in the past before they were advanced to statutory recognition. Like them it has to pass through the ordeals of agitation, defeat, insistence, resistance, discussion, approbation, before it comes to final adoption.

No speech ever delivered on this burning question equals, in our estimation, this latest effort by Mr. Gladstone. It is at once a vindication of Ireland's right and a refutation of the calumnies of her enemies.

In the course of his speech Mr. Gladstone referred to Mr. Goldwin Smith and the opinions he once held and expressed with "that vigorous animosity," to use the words of the Saturday Review, "which characterize all his writings." In April, 1874, Mr. Smith, in a letter to the London Daily News, declared—"Home Rule, however undesirable in English eyes, is at least a public object. It is better than corruption, servility or mere wealth worship. It is at least as good as our national beverage and our national religion."

The learned professor has changed his opinion since then, and seems to prefer "Beer and the Bible" to Home Rule. We regret the change, but we still maintain the truth of what he then wrote, although the words may grate harshly when applied to himself, that "The wrongs of Ireland have not made a worse impression than the want of courtesy with which a large section of English writers and speakers have habitually treated the complaints and aspirations of the Irish people."

We make these quotations to emphasize the remarks of Mr. Gladstone, if such a thing be possible, and to point out that, while old friends have become cold or hostile, the cause of Irish freedom has steadily advanced, and, in spite of traitors and deserters, is certain soon to become the great political event in British history of this century, marking, as it will, the close of seven centuries of confiscation, tyranny, persecution, sorrow, misery for Ireland, shame and disgrace to England.

But we are willing, after what Mr. Gladstone has done and said, to forgive, though we may not entirely forget, the past, and strive to bring about that "Union between the mind of Ireland and the mind of England, between the heart of Ireland and the heart of England," which he so nobly advocates, and which the Irish stand ready to consummate the moment England shows a sincere desire for to reciprocate.

THE RIEL CRY.

Conservative newspapers have for some time been endeavoring to prove that the "Riel cry" was the great moving influence in the late Quebec elections. But the Ottawa Citizen, in its anxiety to placate the French Canadians, spoils the contention of its friends by pointing out that "the recent election returns show clearly that fully one-half of the French-speaking electors refused to be led astray by the Riel cry. They stood firm amidst great temptation and declined to fly to the other nationalities."

What becomes of the charge that the French-Canadians had united with the Liberals on the cry of race and revenge after that? If we read the deliverance of the home organ of the Government aright, the Conservatives have discovered that their contemplated crusade against the French people and the Catholic Church was all a mistake, that the people of Quebec have not been "led astray by the Riel cry," and that therefore there must be some other reason for their defection from the Conservative party. The enormous extent of that defection is shown by the Quebec elections.

When the legislature assembled after the previous general election the Liberal Opposition mustered only twelve members, this was subsequently increased to eighteen, at which it stood when the House was dissolved.

The elections are now over, and, granting the Conservatives all they can possibly claim, which is more than they really possess, that is 28 seats out of 63, they stand in a minority of 8. According to the Conservative Citizen, "the French-speaking electors refused to be led astray by the Riel cry." What then, may we ask, did lead them "astray"? Astray from the Conservative party they certainly were led, or the Ross government would not have been defeated.

Had there been no Riel cry at all, we are convinced the result would have been pretty much the same. The people of Quebec have been conservative in their leanings for many years. In former days their leanings were the other way, but they were estranged from the old Reform party by just such stupid intolerance in The Globe that now characterizes The Mail. Can we wonder that the result should be the same in both instances? But this is not the only cause. The record of the successive Conservative governments at Quebec and their connection with the Conservative government at Ottawa contain ample room and verge enough to account for the result of the late contest.

Despite the self-sufficient assertions of certain parties in Ontario, the people of this province are as well instructed in public affairs on the average as any other section of the Dominion. Indeed we venture to assert that the standard of intelligence in our most remote and backward counties would compare favorably with that, say of the "metropolitan county" of Carleton, in Ontario.

The issues of the campaign, the merits of parties were known to all. The forces that were working for the defeat of the Conservatives had been accumulating for years. The clouds of prejudice which had been industriously manufactured to darken the character and obscure the objects and aims of the Liberal party, had been breaking away long before the exposures of maladministration and the execution of Riel deepened the conviction in the minds of the great mass of the people that a change was necessary, and would be salutary. The Government of Quebec had thrown in its lot, mistakenly with the Government of Sir John Macdonald. It was felt throughout the province that the two were identical, and many former Conservatives felt bound on that account to vote against it.

The Riel cry had its effect we must admit, but it was only as an emphasis to what had gone before, and in that way it may have turned the scale between parties in several constituencies. The Conservative party had become discredited on account of the corruptions that had grown up under a long and almost uninterrupted lease of power, and when the Riel affair happened, it acted like the proverbial last straw and broke the back of the Conservative camel in Quebec. When the Federal elections take place, it will be found that the feeling of repulsion will have gathered intensity, and that very few apologists for the Ministry of Sir John Macdonald will find their way into parliament.

Nothing could be more incorrect than to confound the action of the people of this province with the attitude of the Church. In Nicolet alone was an expression of ecclesiastical opinion given, and that was in favor of the Conservatives. It will thus be seen how false and foolish are the attempts of western Tory papers to raise a cry against the Catholic Church and people of this province because a majority has gone against the Conservative party.

Those papers which, like the Citizen, are showing that parties were nearly equally divided in the late contest, are doing a service to the country. The facts they exhibit show that the people of Quebec are divided, as are the people of Ontario, on purely political questions, and that the idea that the French-Canadians are a flock of sheep is all nonsense. Conversely the same holds good in Ontario. The Riel cry will not disturb the normal condition of parties.

But there is this to be remembered: the Conservative party has heaped insult and contumely on the Catholic people through its organs, by the voices of its speakers in Haldimand, and no distinct repudiation thereof has yet been made by the leader of the Conservatives, the journals or the politicians who have been the authors of these wrongs. For these wrongs, in addition to other offences of corruption, extravagance, injustice, dishonesty and maladministration, Conservative candidates will be called upon to answer at the polls. Let them enquire of their own conscience what sort of answer they ought to receive. Catholics and Protestants of all nationalities will do the same, and, if we are not grievously mistaken, the answer will be alike in both instances and the result of the general election will be neither difficult to prophecy nor hard, nor a matter of astonishment when the ballots are counted.

CLEAR THE DECKS FOR ACTION.

Mr. Blake's announcement at Guelph that he had received information that the Dominion Government would very shortly announce the dissolution of Parliament confirms the general impression that the Ministry are afraid to hold another session. From a democratic point of view there can be no objection to shortening the Parliamentary term. The charter idea of annual Parliaments is founded on a correct principle, for the shorter the term the greater the control of the people over their representatives. But the power which Sir John Macdonald has arrogated to himself of dissolving parliament before the expiration of the legal term without reason, save what may be supplied by party exigencies, is an abuse which should not be tolerated. In the present case, however, the objection is less pressing than in 1882, because the country is ripe for a change, and the act of dissolution will be accepted by all as a confession of the Ministry's inability to control parliament any longer. Of the two evils—whether to hold another session or dissolve the House—we may be sure