

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,  
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY  
At No. 696, Craig Street, by  
J. GILLIES.  
G. E. OLBERG, Editor.

TERMS YEARLY IN ADVANCE:  
To all country subscribers Two Dollars. If the subscription is not renewed at the expiration of the year then, a 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 copy 3d.  
We beg to remind our Correspondent that no letters will be taken out of the Post-Office, unless pre-paid.  
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, AUG. 16.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

AUGUST—1867.  
Friday, 16—St. Roch C.  
Saturday, 17—Fast, Octave of St. Lawrence.  
Sunday, 18—Fifth after Pentecost. St. Joachim C.  
Monday, 19—St. Hyacinthe C.  
Tuesday, 20—St. Bernard Ab. D.  
Wednesday, 21—St. Jeanne F. de Chantal, V.  
Thursday, 22—Octave of the Assumption.

TO OUR READERS.

To-day we give to our readers the first number of the Eighteenth volume of the TRUE WITNESS, and in doing so we deem it incumbent to say something for ourselves. In every age since the introduction of printing, every country and clime blessed with civilization, and its concomitant blessings—religion and morality,—has been favored with journals of different shades of politics and peculiar literary or religious views. Canada has not, perhaps been peculiarly favored with a newspaper press as well conducted as could have been wished for. It is true the seeds of bigotry, intolerance, and irreligion have, on frequent occasions, been disseminated, but thanks to the vigorous literary attainments of the disciples of law and order, malcontents have not as yet been able to thwart the intentions of the good. In British North America there are many Catholics who agree in all the essential dogmas of our Church; there are thousands also who differ as much in politics as they agree in faith. They are scattered miles apart over the vast Continent of America, and number amongst their thousands a majority from the British Isles. God has favored them on a foreign soil with peace, plenty, and pleasure, with an excellent Government, and with all the accessories to their happiness in a future life. Bad literature imported from foreign countries and from the States, has been sown broadcast amongst them; and alas! but too frequently have the eloquent absurdities of our religious combatants led the unwary Catholic to doubt perhaps of matters to him of vital importance. It was to obviate the dire results which follow under such circumstances that the managers of this journal determined to found the paper, whose columns, as our readers are aware, have since its foundation, been exclusively devoted to the interests of the Catholic Church. Its end and aim are decidedly Catholic. From political squabbles and theickerings of office-seekers, it keeps apart.—There are other periodicals which exist by the purse and patronage of place-seekers—these let them use as tools befitting their work. However, although we strongly have opposed the attacks of the champions of the Reformation, no self-feeling or bitterness exist on our part. In conclusion, we may say that the TRUE WITNESS of 1867 is a fitting descendant of that of 1850. Its position and its prospects are mainly to be attributed to the kindness and consideration which we have experienced from our supporters. We sincerely accord our thanks to all who have paid in their subscriptions before hand, and hope that those who, through forgetfulness, have as yet deferred to do so, will ere long fulfil their obligation. We congratulate ourselves upon the position the TRUE WITNESS has maintained even amongst the opposition of many foes. We shall conclude our observations by hoping that our journal will ever maintain its popularity as a thorough Catholic newspaper, and hope that its claims to future support may be amply responded to.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The Prussian Government appear to take deep interest in the welfare of Baron Von Magnus, Minister resident of Prussia in the City of Mexico. It has been ascertained that Von Magnus endeavored to save the life of Maximilian and by his so doing that the Mexican leaders vowed vengeance against him. Be this as it may, Prussian journals assert that since the death of Maximilian the Prussian government have received no dispatches from the Baron.  
Kossuth has declined to take a seat in the

Hungarian Department to which it is alleged he had been elected unanimously.

The Reform Bill has obtained a third reading in the House of Lords.

Advices from Abyssinia report that the British captives in that country are no longer in the hands of King Theodoros.

It is officially stated that the contracts for carrying the British mails to New York at the expiration of the Cunard contract are open to all bidders, but that British vessels will get the preference.

Lengthy reports of the Wimbledon shooting match for the Duke of Cambridge's prize have appeared in all our English exchanges. An idea of the excellent claims of the breech loader as an arm of war may be had when we consider that 75 shots were discharged from one gun in three minutes!

Secretary Stanton and President Johnston have disagreed, as the latter wishes the former to tender his resignation. Mr. Stanton refuses to do so until the termination of the next election. This is only one of the beautiful bickerings of the Democracy.

An exchange paper from Cincinnati states that the weather is so warm as to be unfavorable to the growth of cereals.

The Indians have upset a freight train on the Union Pacific Railroad. The goods were consumed by flames, and the engineer, fireman and brakeman murdered. There is another report that three railway officials at a station on the line were killed.

The proclamation announcing the issue of the writs for the General Elections was published on the 7th. The writs are dated 7th August, and are returnable on the 24th September, with the exception of those for the counties of Gaspe, Bonaventure, Chicoutimi, and Saguenay, which are returnable on the 24th October.

With all our boasted intellectual progress, in spite of our much vaunted spread of knowledge, and consequent dissipation of prejudices, we cannot see that as yet much, if anything, has been done to eradicate from the popular breast the ancient and widespread prejudice with respect to the importance and direct influence of forms of secular governments and political institutions upon the material well-being and domestic comforts of the people subject to them. At the present day, perhaps more than even now, when the powers of government have been most strictly defined, and its functions have been most limited, is government interference incessantly and clamorously invoked to devise and apply a remedy to every ill which afflicts the sons of Adam. The effects of soil, of climate, of geographical position, and geographical conditions, which are after all the chief agents in determining the material condition of the human race, are all tacitly ignored, or treated as of very slight account; and everywhere the tendency is to attribute all differences perceptible betwixt the respective material conditions of nations, or political communities, to differences of political institutions, and of forms of secular government. These erroneous theories, or rather grossly exaggerated theories, as to the importance and the effects of political institutions and form of government are more than unphilosophical, they are actively and practically mischievous since they inevitably tend to beget and foster a taste or predilection for revolution; and inspire a wicked as well as foolish disaffection towards their particular government amongst a people which, contrasting its material condition with that of some of its neighbors, sees, or fancies that it sees, a greater amount of material prosperity amongst the latter, than itself enjoys.

We would not of course absolutely deny that the material well-being of a people may be affected by its political institutions; we will admit that there have been, there may be again, secular governments so exceptionally, so atrociously bad, or rather badly administered, as perceptibly to check or retard the material progress of a people possessing within themselves all the elements or factors of material prosperity, and capable of appreciating and making a due use of them. But such extreme cases are rare; and perhaps with the exception of Russia and Poland, not even in Central Africa or Asia is a living example of them to be found at the present day. But speaking of the ordinary forms of secular government under which the races of Indo-Germanic origin, for the most part live, it may safely be laid down as a general theorem, that the happiness of their several subjects in so far as happiness is in any manner connected with material progress, and domestic comforts, is altogether independent of their political institutions, or mere forms of secular governments. From this we deduce as a corollary, that a people that proposes to better its material condition by means of organic political changes, or in other words by political revolution, has imagined a vain thing, and doomed itself to continual disappointment.

Let us take a case or two in point. The resident of the British Islands, the laboring man, especially, contrasting his material condition with that of the laboring man in the United States of North America, will probably be struck by the

fact that the latter has, in many respects an advantage; that he has higher wages; that he is—with the exception of the lowest of the urban *proletaires* whose material condition already closely approximates to that of the same classes in London and Paris,—better fed, better clothed, better lodged than the English laborer, and that he has far greater facilities for raising himself to that of a capitalist or holder of property. Seeing these things; seeing also that there is a perceptible difference betwixt the political institutions of the U. States and those of Great Britain; and being at the same time but a bungler in the use of the inductive, or Baconian system of philosophy, he will very probably, indeed be generally do next to the absurd and illogical conclusion that, somehow or other the higher material status of the working classes in the U. States is due to some superiority in the political institutions, or form of government in the latter; to the absence of those monarchical and aristocratical elements which obtain in the British form of government. In this most pernicious delusion he will unfortunately be encouraged by many an unprincipled demagogue, and fautor of revolutions.

For the latter will carefully refrain from pointing out the fact, that every material advantage that the mechanics, laborers and cultivators of the soil in the U. States enjoy over the same classes in the British Isles is due wholly and solely to the material and geographical conditions of the said States; to their climate, to their soil; and above all to the fact that they in proportion to their population they possess, as compared with Great Britain, an incalculably larger area of good land fitted for the cultivation of the cereals, and of which a great part is still the property of the government and not of individuals, and of which therefore the government has the right to dispose on such terms as it pleases. To these things, and to its coal fields, in area equal to thirty seven times the area of all the coal fields of Great Britain, is all the material prosperity of the U. States exclusively due.

So too we shall sometimes hear Canadians grumbling, and shall read in the *Rouges* organs high spiced eulogies of Annexation to the U. States as a remedy for all the defects which they find or pretend to find in the material condition of Her Majesty's subjects in this part of the world. And so too no doubt, were there still further to the North, and on the very verge of the Arctic Circle, another political community with institutions and forms of government differing from those of Canada, there would not be wanting, amongst them wisecracks to attribute their poverty and disadvantageous physical circumstances to political causes, and to suggest a union with their Southern neighbors as the cure for all the consequences of their rigorous climate. In such a proposition there would be just as much good sense as there is in the proposition that political Annexation to the U. States would ameliorate the physical circumstances of Canadians.

But perhaps a more striking instance of the error which we insist upon is to be found in the history of Ireland. It is always assumed as incontrovertible, that there is no better test of the material condition of a people than that afforded by the statistics of population: that a steadily increasing population is an infallible sign of a well-to-do people, and therefore of good government; and that a decreasing population on the other hand is a certain sign of a suffering and therefore of a badly governed people. How do facts bear out these propositions?

Certainly if ever there was in Europe a people infamously governed, that people was the Irish during the one hundred and forty years that elapsed from the conquest of Ireland by the Anglo Dutch, to the repeal of the Penal Laws in the reign of George the fourth: and yet during the whole of that time, the population of Ireland steadily and rapidly increased, so that at the last named period it had reached the dimensions of about eight millions. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that since the passing of Catholic Emancipation, the political institutions of Ireland, though very far from being perfect, are far superior to her political institutions during the eighteenth century: and yet of late years the population of Ireland has steadily and rapidly decreased. Thus we have before us two phenomena, which directly give the lie to the vulgar impression respecting the omnipotent and direct influence of political institutions and forms of government upon the happiness or material well-being of the people. We have on the one hand the most abominable political institutions—and a constantly increasing population: on the other hand, political institutions greatly ameliorated accompanied with a rapid depopulation.

These phenomena, irreconcilable with the generally received theories, nay, utterly subversive of them—are susceptible of an easy solution by those who reject those theories—and believe with the poet that little, that but very little, of what men suffer or enjoy is attributable to forms of government or to political institutions. The rapid increase of Ireland's population during a period of most infamous government was due to the morality and chastity of the Irish, and this

morality was the work of their peculiar religion, which taught them to hold impurity, and these artificial checks on the increase of population known unhappily but too well on this Continent, in deepest abhorrence. The depopulation of Ireland now going on, is due, not to any change for the worse in its political institutions or form of government—for these in so far as they have been changed, have been improved—but to the greater facilities now afforded for emigration; to the cheapness and rapidity of the trans-Atlantic voyage; and to the powerful attraction of the rich corn-growing lands of the Western Hemisphere: in part, to the failure of the potato crop, which entered so largely into the diet of the Irish peasant; but above all to the demand for labor, skilled and unskilled, that necessarily obtains in a country in which the area of unoccupied arable land, stands in the ratio to population, that it stands in the U. States.

So also in these same vananted States we see a continual stream of emigration flowing from the Eastern, or sea-board States to the newly created States and Territories of the West. Shall we thence conclude to the superior political institutions and forms of government of the latter? Assuredly we must do so, if the theories laid down by some shallow politico-economists of the democratic school be based upon truth.

Given a good climate suited for the growth of the vine and the cereals; given, in proportion to the population, abundance of good land; given above all coal—for coal is the prime factor in all civilisation considered as a fact in the material order—and in so far as the physical well-being and domestic comforts of the people of a country so circumstanced are concerned, it matters but little, very little, what their political institutions, what their form of government. On the other hand, in spite of the best institutions, in spite of the best form of government that the wit of man ever desired, the land wanting in any of these important conditions; that has a capricious climate unsuited to the growth of wheat; where the area of good arable land in proportion to the population is small: and that has not an abundance of coal, can never be anything but a poor country, from which the people, in a chronic state of suffering, will by an inevitable law of nature, as constant as that which regulates the flow of rivers, continually emigrate in search of the three essential prerequisites of material prosperity, that is to say, climate, soil, and coal.

It is perhaps not inexpedient to insist upon these truisms, or axioms of political economy at the present day, when organic political changes—which of course imply revolution—are by designing and unprincipled agitators constantly held up to the ignorant and unwary as the certain cure for all the ills of humanity. Men are always too prone to believe that their sufferings, their poverty, their physical condition if unfortunate, are the fault of others, especially of their rulers; and thus are prone to disaffection against their government—for who is there who cannot find something or other in his material surroundings to complain of? Yet would a dispassionate review and careful enumeration of all surroundings convince them, in most cases, that after all their form of government, and the political institutions under which they lived, had little to do with their happiness or their unhappiness, in so far as these depend upon material circumstances: and would, we have no doubt, if carried on without prejudice, tend to render them more contented with those forms and institutions, and less prone to be seduced by the sophistries of the demagogue, and the clap-trap of the political adventurer.

DIVORCE, AND LEGALIZED CONCUBINAGE.

—In a late issue of the *Montreal Witness* we find the following extract from a Yankee journal, which we reproduce, together with the comments thereupon of an evangelical contemporary:

"MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE IN INDIANA.—The ease with which divorces can be obtained in Indiana may be gathered from the following from the *Winnipeg Democrat*:—There is a married couple living in this country whose matrimonial history is rather unusual, the woman having been married four times, and yet is living with her first husband. After sharing the couch of her "worse-half" a few years she was divorced from husband No. 1, and was married to husband No. 2. In a little while she applied for and obtained a divorce from husband No. 2, to husband No. 3. In the course of time she became weary of her bonds, and was divorced from husband No. 3. Then her first love resumed its sway in her heart, and to make amends for her seeming waywardness, she sought out and again married husband No. 1, when they were the second time indissolubly bound up in the tender cords of wedlock, and are now living happily and peacefully together, with the company of two children by their first marriage. She was not blessed with any offspring by either her second or third husband, so after years of separation from her first object of happiness, nature now remains to remind her of the past estrangement save the memory of husband's Nos. 2 and 3."

[The facility of divorce above indicated is the scandal and disgrace, not only of Indiana, but of many other States of the Union: the fruits of this unscriptural and disastrous system are neither more nor less legalized concubinage; and, where it prevails, here can be but small inducement to have a family. This is probably one of the causes of that singular unproductiveness of New England marriages which is now attracting the serious attention of New England divines and physicians.—Ed. *Witness*.]

But the "facility of divorce" is the direct and necessary consequence of the "possibility" of divorce: for that which is possible and agreeable, will soon, in the nature of things, become facile, and of frequent recurrence.

The Catholic principle of marriage "one with

one, and for ever," which tolerates no divorce *a vinculo*, under any conceivable circumstances, is intelligible, and, as we see by the facts around us in existing Catholic communities, can be reduced to practice.

So also is the extreme Protestant principle advocated by the school of which the *Westminster Review* is the organ or exponent: To wit—that marriage, or the cohabitation of the sexes is a mere civil contract, to be left therefore, in so far as its terms are concerned, to the discretion of the contracting parties: who should be at liberty to contract to cohabit, for life, for a term of years, or during mutual pleasure, or good behavior, just as it may suit their convenience, or their passions. This is the only Protestant theory of marriage, or sexual cohabitation, logically tenable; and according to it in the interference of the civil magistrate with the contracting parties, so long as neither breaks faith with the other, or does wrong to any third party, is a simple piece of impertinence. The civil accidents which accrue from the contract—and nothing more, belongs to the domain of the civil magistrate.

But between these two logical theories of marriage, the Catholic theory and the extreme Protestant theory—of which the first is based upon the assumption that, under the Christian dispensation God Himself has determined the conditions under which the sexual unions of His creatures should be contracted: and the second, or Protestant theory, is, that God has laid down no positive law on the subject, and has therefore left His creatures free to determine those conditions for themselves—it has been attempted to interpolate a third theory of marriage, to wit—that the State or civil magistrate has the right to determine the terms or conditions of the subject's sexual unions: that unions contracted in compliance with these terms alone are to be considered marriages: and that all other sexual unions are simply concubinage. This theory is so supremely ridiculous—not to say tyrannical—that it will not bear the most delicate handling: for how can a civil magistrate impose a moral obligation in the matter of the intercourse of the sexes: how can he by any act of his make that cohabitation holy, chaste, and pure, which without his intervention would be unchaste, impure? He can impose legal obligations of course; he can attach advantageous legal consequences in the matter of succeeding to, or inheriting property, to unions contracted in accordance with his requirements, and withhold those legal consequences from unions in which these requirements have not been complied with. But what he cannot do, what no one but God Himself can do, is to make that sexual cohabitation moral, which, without his sanction would be immoral—or that immoral which his sanction to it refused, would be moral. Prudential considerations, regard for the proprietary rights of issue of such unions, with of course prompt men and women to comply with the law in so far as that law interferes not with their conscientious convictions: but no one, not a born-fool, will in so far as the morality of the proceeding is concerned, ever bother his head, whether his cohabitation with a person of the other sex is, or is not in conformity, with the regulations of the civil magistrate. Morality depends not upon what the civil magistrate says but upon what God has said.

Therefore is it that, outside of the Catholic Church, and of that section of the Protestant world—daily we fear becoming smaller—which holds that, God Himself has prescribed the terms of His creature's marriages: that marriage is, therefore something more than a mere civil contract: that its terms, as having been determined by God Himself, are as far beyond the reach of the civil magistrate, as God is above man; that in consequence, a civil magistrate can neither bind with nor loose from the marriage tie,—can no more dissolve a marriage, than he can impose a marriage upon two persons reluctant to contract one with its obligations, therefore in it, we say that we can never obtain an answer to the question—"What is the moral (not legal) but moral difference betwixt marriage and legalised concubinage? Put this question to any Protestant who recognises the power of the State to grant a divorce, and you will find that, if he answer at all, he can assign no difference whatsoever except a mere legal difference betwixt the two.

What is the practical consequence? Very many Protestants argue in this wise, and by this logic bust the still small voice of conscience reproaching them with their irregular amours.—"There is only a legal difference, after all, betwixt marriage and concubinage, both are merely civil contracts, differing in this only—that one is a sexual union contracted in accordance with the conventional laws of the State, and the other is a union contracted without regard to those laws. It is true that we discard the person with whom we cohabit every six months or so, and choose other companions, but after all, how can there be any more sin in one doing so *proprio motu*, or by mutual consent, than in doing the same thing by authority of the divorce court? A legal difference, there may be; but not a moral one." We defy any one who denies that God Himself has determined the conditions of our