

The True Witness

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 16.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR. JUNE—1865.

- Friday, 16—St. J. Fr. Regis, C. Saturday, 17—Of the Octave. Sunday, 18—Second Sunday after Pentecost. Monday, 19—St. Julienne de Falcon, V. Tuesday, 20—Of the Octave. Wednesday, 21—St. Louis Gonzague. Thursday, 22—Octave of Corpus Christi.

The "Forty Hours" Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will commence as follows:—

- Friday, 16—St. Julienne. Sunday, 18—St. Antoine, Longueuil. Tuesday, 20—St. Henry of Mascouche. Thursday, 22—St. Outhbert.

NEWS OF THE WEEK

If in France the enrolments which, under the name of emigration to Mexico, are going on, in the Northern States, have excited a feeling of uneasiness, or rather indignation, so in England the reiterated demands of Andy Johnson's Government for compensation for injuries inflicted by the Alabama and other men-of-war of the Confederate Navy, on the commerce of the Northern States, have called forth a very general expression of opinion on the subject both in the Legislature and in the press.

In the House of Commons on the 26th, Sir J. Walsh asked Lord Palmerston whether the Government had received from the United States any formal demand for compensation to American subjects for losses sustained by the Alabama or any other Confederate cruiser equipped in British ports.

Lord Palmerston said correspondence had been going on between the two Governments on the prizes taken by the Alabama and other vessels of the same kind. There has been received within the last few days further correspondence on the subject through Mr. Adams, but there had not yet been time to reply.

Mr. Baxter asked Lord Palmerston whether in looking at the changed aspect of affairs in America, Her Majesty's Government, either separately or in conjunction with that of the United States, would consider the propriety of sending a squadron to the coast of Cuba to effectually terminate the slave trade.

Lord Palmerston said that 12 months ago the Government invited the Government of the United States to participate in its measures on the West Coast of Africa, but difficulties arose on account of neutral and belligerent rights, in the present altered state of things Her Majesty's Government had renewed the application, stating that their cruisers employed in that service would be received with every privilege and courtesy which belonged to a friendly nation and that former difficulties no longer existed.

No representation has been made as to co-operation on the African coast but if he assented to co-operate on the African coast he had no doubt they would also cordially co-operate on the coast of Cuba.

The London Times, in an editorial, trusts that there is nothing in the Alabama affair which need cause apprehensions of rupture either now or at any future time. The American commercial marine has indeed suffered, but such a calamity must be expected when a maritime and trading state enters into a contest with an energetic enemy.

The Daily News hopes that if President Johnson does not intend to give up the claim, he will soon prefer it, so that the matter may be brought to a settlement. It adds, Lord Palmerston's reply last night was very unsatisfactory. It would have been very easy to say that a formal demand had been made or that it had not.

The News trusts that some member of Parliament will insist upon knowing whether any new demands have been made since President Johnson's accession; and it adds: "We have not the slightest doubt as to the inevitable reply."

The correspondence of the London Morning Post says that the correspondence can lead to only one result:—unconditional refusal on our part to indemnify the Americans for the losses occasioned by the chances of war.

The Times, in another editorial on these claims, says that not a single precedent can be produced for the allowance of a similar claim under similar circumstances, and no rule of natural justice enjoins us to pay for mischief done by the Alabama.

The Times questions whether the American Government did their duty with adequate vigor against these privateers, and says that it was doubtless our part to prevent the Alabama and her consorts from putting to sea, if due evidence of their warlike equipment could be obtained. But whose part was it to capture after they had given us the slip. The U. States Government preferred to employ all their available fleet in blockading the enemy's coast, leaving us to guard every outlet of our own as best we could.

Surely it would be untenable in law to hold us liable for every case in which the Confederate agents were too quick for us. For those British subjects who did all in their power to thwart the honorable intentions of the Government we have not a word to say, but their acts were not the acts of the nation, which has suffered far more than individuals have gained by the untoward escape of the Alabama.

The news of the capture of Jefferson Davis created some sensation and the hope was generally expressed that he would be treated in no vindictive spirit. The London Times' "Oily Article" says: "The Scottish news caused considerable anxiety. Politically it was considered favorable. The possibility

of a dispute with Mexico, England or France, on a demand for extradition in the event of Jefferson Davis having escaped, has been definitively extinguished, but the public will await with extreme interest the news as to the spirit in which he is likely to be dealt with, not merely on its bearing for the few remaining years of the life of an individual, but because of the effect it must have on the national reputation for future generations. Those, however, who know the American character best, and who are aware that under sudden excitement, they are among the most placable people in the world, have little fear of the result.

The demand itself is so preposterous, and in putting it forward the Washington authorities must have been so certain that no British Minister would condescend to listen to it, that it looks like a menace, almost a declaration of war; as indeed, if persisted in, it will certainly prove to be. This should excite no surprise; for since the first outbreak of the war with the South, have not the journals of the Northern States constantly assured us that they were only waiting till they had finished with the Confederates, to turn their victorious arms against England? It is no use arguing that war with England, which would probably lead to war also with France; would be very injurious to the financial and commercial interests of the United States—and that therefore the moneyed classes would be opposed to it, and would seek to preserve peace. In a country governed as is England, and where the influence of the moneyed classes, of the intelligent and thinking classes, is of paramount influence over the Government, such a line of reasoning would authorize the conclusion that the nation would not wantonly plunge itself into a needless, costly and disastrous war. But in the United States a democracy not reasoning, not intelligent, is master of the situation; and though it has been aptly termed by D'Israeli a "territorial democracy," it is none the less as prone to foreign war as any other democracy; for, it cannot be too often repeated, in the present day it is not the ambition and greed of princes, but the passions of a politically powerful, but unreflecting democracy that menace the peace of the world.

The New York merchant and capitalist would no doubt, if he could make his voice heard in the councils of the nation, cry "Peace, Peace;" but his voice will not be heard: it will be drowned by the clamors of the mob who have neither his intelligence, nor yet his material reasons for dreading war, as one of the greatest of scourges.

It matters not one straw in principle, whether a man assert the authority of a living Church, in matters transcending the grasp of Reason or the authority of a dead book, which he calls the Bible. In either case he asserts, the principle of Authority as against the principle of "private judgment," or Reason; and he has therefore no right, to "suit the exigencies of controversy," to turn round and to assert the principle of "private judgment" as against Authority. He may accept one or the other; but he has no right, as the Protestant Reviewer above cited well observes, to play fast and loose; to assert the principle of "private judgment" against the Church and the Catholics, and the principle of "Authority" against those who, like the Protestants in Spiritual synod assembled at Chicago, make the "private judgment of each individual absolute and final."

This no man has the right to do; and yet this is just what Protestants of the evangelical school, as they are called, do incessantly. They invoke "Reason," as they call it, against the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence and of Purgatory; they dethrone Reason, as incompetent to adjudicate in the premises, and appeal to Authority, as against those who would submit the doctrine of the Trinity to the light of natural reason, and who question the reasonableness of eternal damnation.

How long will men halt betwixt two opinions? If "Authority" be the true principle let us submit to Authority: if "private judgment" be the true principle let us follow it whithersoever it may lead us, even though it lead us to the platform of the Chicago Spiritualists? Do we recoil from their conclusions? Let us suspect then that their principle is false, and re-examine our position; but foul shame on the moral coward who will not, no matter at what cost, or what the consequences, push his principles to their ultimate conclusions.

And so it is, as the Westminster Reviewer tells us, that men are now fast beginning to realize the fact that, betwixt the principle of "Authority," which if followed leads to Romanism—and the principle of "private judgment," or as he calls it Reason, which, if followed, leads to anarchy, "intermediate stand points are getting less and less tenable." Soon all men must range themselves beneath one or the other of two banners: beneath the banner of the Cross, the standard of the Church and Authority; or beneath that of "private judgment," beneath whose folds also the Spiritualists of Chicago and all consistent Protestants are gathered.

CONFESION.—The question whether, according to the law of England, a communication made by a penitent to his confessor, priest, minister, or religious teacher, for purely spiritual purposes, and with the intent of obtaining pardon from God for violation of His holy law, is a "privileged communication"—that is to say, a communication which a Court of Justice has no right to inquire into—has been again raised by the proceedings in the case of Miss Constance Kent; who it will be remembered is now in custody, charged, on her own confession, with the murder of her half brother some four or five years ago. In this case the spiritual adviser of Miss Kent, a clergyman of the Church of England, declined in Court to divulge what had transpired, in confidence, and under the seal of confession, betwixt him and his penitent. No penalties were imposed upon the reverend gentleman for this very proper behavior on his part, nor is it likely that any legal proceedings will be taken against

him, but both in Parliament and in the Protestant press, the merits of the question, and the conduct of the Anglican clergyman have been warmly discussed.

The result is, that as the law stands, the Catholic priest and Protestant minister, are like legally bound, when called upon to do so, as witnesses before a Court of law, to divulge anything and everything that may have passed betwixt them and their respective penitents. No communications are by the law held to be "privileged," except to the Counsel or Attorney of the accused, or party before the Court. This is the law of the land; which of course every Catholic priest, and indeed every honest Protestant minister will feel it his duty always to disobey, no matter what the consequences.

It is curious to note the excepted cases, or cases in which communications are "privileged" by the law of England. A thief, swindler, or murderer who desires to evade the law, to retain possession of property dishonestly acquired, to prevent right being done to those whom he has wronged or defrauded, and who the more effectually to accomplish these his objects, retains the services of a clever lawyer or attorney, and divulges to him all the facts of the case in order the better to enable his Counsel to set law and equity at defiance, is carefully protected by the law of the land; his communications, made often, generally indeed, with a guilty intent, that is to say, with the intent of opposing obstacles to the course of justice, are "privileged" communications. Be it so; we raise no objection to this; and ask not that the legal obligation which imposes silence on the prisoner's Counsel or Attorney be raised. But why is not the same protection given to the religious adviser? why is not confession to be held a "privileged" communication?

The man who goes to a priest to confess his sins, must—for this is a condition sine qua non in the Catholic Church—be sincerely penitent for all his sins; must be firmly resolved, with God's grace, never again to sin, never again even to expose himself to temptation, or occasions of sin; and must moreover be firmly determined, to the utmost of his ability, and immediately, to make full and ample satisfaction to any whom he may have wronged in person, in property, or in reputation. Any one of these conditions wanting or imperfect, confession is a sacrilege, and the absolution of the priest null and void. This every Catholic, the most ignorant, knows; and therefore from the penitent sinner who kneels before the priest in the Sacrament of Penance, neither society nor the individual has anything to dread, since neither his confession nor the priest's absolution afford any facility to the perpetration of fresh crime, or throw obstacles in the way of its detection when committed. It would be hard then to discover the motives which determine the action of the Law Courts of England towards Confession, or communication made to a priest for purely spiritual purposes, were it not for the essential character of Protestantism.—The motives are evidently religious rather than political; the object Protestant legislators have in view being, not the protection of society—for confession and the inviolable secrecy of confessions, can never injure society; but the discouragement of Catholicity, and the suppression of the Sacrament of Penance.

Indeed the London Times virtually admits that this is the sole object of Protestant legislation on the subject; since it shows that, if sinners were once convinced that confessions by them made to the priest or minister, were liable to be made public at the bidding of a Court of Law, the practice of confession would cease.

Criminals will be wary of making such a confession, when they have no solemn assurance that it will not be used against them.—Times.

And wherein will society, even in a material point of view, be the gainer? The criminal will no longer disburthen his conscience, at the feet of the priest, or seek the ghostly counsels of his accustomed religious adviser. But will he therefore be the less prone to repeat his crime, and to refrain from restitution to those whom his crime have wronged? Could it be shown that under any conceivable circumstance, the custom of Confession as enjoined by, and practised in, the Catholic Church, might facilitate or lead to, the perpetration of crime, or prevent its detection when perpetrated, or throw additional obstacles in the way of obtaining redress to the injured—then we could see some reason why the law should adopt towards the custom of Confession a repressive course of policy, which, if successful, would simply put a stop to the practise. As it is, it seems to us that a diabolical agency is at work, for as no one pretends that society is, or can be injured or menaced by the sacramental confession of the criminal to his priest—a confession made by those only who truly penitent desire to make all the atonement in their power, both to God and man, for their offence, so, it is evident that not the protection of society, but the oppression of religion, but the suppression of a practice which the devils hate, and which gladdens the hearts of the angels who are in heaven, is the one object that Protestant legislation has in view; when it refuses to extend equal privileges to the communications made by the penitent sinner to the priest, and to those of the impenitent thief to his Attorney.

By THEIR FRUITS SHALL YE KNOW THEM.—Men may dispute to the day of judgement, without arriving at any conclusion, as to the origin of the phenomena of a "Revival"—the howlings, the contortions, the epileptic like fits which the "converted" often fall into, and in which they are described as "having lost their strength." All these phenomena have been witnessed in many a country. They are the invariable concomitants of the "Revival;" and whilst by some they are attributed to the working of the Holy Ghost, and appealed to as a conclusive evidence of the immediate presence of the Spirit of God, by others they are cited as proofs of Satanic agency, and classed with the analogous phenomena of Mesmerism and clairvoyance.—There is, it must be admitted, much in scenes which occur at the Revival to remind one of the diabolical possessions mentioned in the Gospels; and there can be no doubt, so identical are they in their outward manifestations, that the physical phenomena of the Revival owe their origin to the same causes, to the same agencies, as those which produced the well attested extravagancies on the tomb of the Jansenist Deacon in the XVIII. century. But in these was God or the Devil the agent? is a question which will be answered in one sense by the Catholic, in the opposite sense by the Jansenist. So in like manner whilst all must admit the reality of the "Revival" phenomena, their origin will still be disputed vehemently, and most unprofitably, unless we apply to them, or rather to the "Revival" which elicits them, the Gospel test, "By their fruits shall ye know them."

analysis of the two contending forces—Catholicity and Protestantism—now working in society, and shows their results:—

"Liberal ideas are beyond all doubt advancing; but something else is also advancing, and that is Roman Catholicism. Twenty-five years ago, in his Essay on Rank's History of the Popes, Macaulay drew attention to the revival of Romanism. In his graceful way he painted the fact, but he did not attempt a solution of the problem implied by it. In England the number of Catholic priests and chapels has enormously increased of late years. In France the beau monde which once was infidel is now Catholic. Even in Germany the Catholic theologians and controversialists hold their own against their redoubtable Protestant and rationalistic foes.—Westminster Reviewer.

This is one force, which, if yielded to, carries men to the Church, because the vital or vivifying principle of this force, is "authority."

The other force of which the essence is negation of authority, or Protestantism, carries those who yield to it to infidelity and to the conclusions arrived at by the Chicago Synod. The Westminster Reviewer continues:—

"Thus we get two clear facts amid all the confusion and contradiction of modern thought—the growth of disbelief, and the growth of Romanism; the growth of the party which trusts in reason"—(the Chicago Synod of Spiritualists for instance)—"and the growth of the party which trusts in authority. Intermediate stand points are getting less and less liked, and less tenable. The age seems to shy to every thinking man:—

"Take which you like, Reason or Authority, but having made your choice manfully adhere to it. Do not play fast and loose with it, do not take first one, and then the other; do not use sceptical arguments against Roman Catholicity, and Roman Catholic arguments against scepticism. Do not let your opinions and canons of criticism vary according to the exigencies of controversy. If you choose Authority, follow it whithersoever it may lead you, and cast no lingering glance on the Reason"—(private judgment would be a better term)—"you have left behind. If you select Reason be true and fast to her, and do not fall into a panic, and be for deserting to her rival as soon as the contest becomes hot."—Westminster Reviewer.

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A great Revival took place some time ago in the North of Ireland; a great pouring forth of the Spirit according to some; according to others a melancholy and degrading outburst of low fanaticism and licentiousness. What have been the fruits of this "Revival" amongst those who were its principal subjects? The answer to this question will furnish a conclusive answer to the other question. From whom does the "Revival" itself proceed? from God, or from the Devil?

To the former question we have a full, and a very clear answer given in a lately published document, which as it bears the signatures of no less than seven Protestant Ministers, and of Twenty-six Elders, residents of the district wherein the "Revival" raged with greatest fury, and where its fruits are most obvious cannot be objected to on the score of one-sidedness or ignorance.

From this Report, published in the Northern Whig, it appears that the one conspicuous fruit of the "Revival" is unchastity. It commences in the following sad strain:—

"That we view with grief the many violations of the divine law with regard to chastity which are apparent in our district; and we feel called upon to testify that the cause of religion, the credit and efficiency of the Gospel ministry, and the welfare, temporal and spiritual, of our congregations, demand that this evil be abated, and a higher standard of morality in this respect attained."

The Report goes on to hint at "the meeting of young people" at unseasonable hours in the absence of all legitimate control; and concludes by recommending a combined effort to enforce by means of pulpit exhortations respect for the "Seventh Commandment," as it stands in the Protestant version of the Decalogue.

"Violations of the divine law with regard to chastity," these are the fruits of the "Revival," and a great increase in the number of illegitimate births are the certain and unmistakable proofs of the passage over the district, of that moral typhoon. These are facts admitted and deplored by Protestants; can we not then form a pretty sure conclusion as to whether God or the Devil be the author and father of the "Revival?"

Amongst educated and refined Protestants we know that "Reverals" are held in scorn and abhorrence. A Protestant lady or a Protestant gentleman would as soon be seen in a low pot-house, or in a worse place, as at a Revival meeting, and to their credit be it said the Anglican clergy set their faces sternly against such exhibitions of blasphemous fanaticism, libidinous desecration of holy things. But with the lower orders of Protestants, the sensual, the uneducated, and the depraved "Reverals" are, and we fear long will be very popular, and for the very reason which causes them to be held in abhorrence by all modest men and women of all denominations.

The Globe's correspondent who assumes the nom de plume of Sister Monica is out again as rabid as ever, against Convents and Nuns and Priests. "Oh! why do Protestant Governments suffer those dreary prison-houses to rise everywhere without control or inspection?" he she, or it—for we know not the creature's sex—exclaims: and for "the sake of true religion," that is to say Sister Monica's religion, whatever that may be—"and the good of our country," the correspondent urges upon the Globe to weigh the three statements and soul-harrowing, hair-straight-and-end-setting revelations, by it made concerning the progress of Popery in Toronto, and the vicinity.

Very dreadful are these revelations. A family, of which the mistress was a Catholic, but whose other members had passed as Protestants, was

of a dispute with Mexico, England or France, on a demand for extradition in the event of Jefferson Davis having escaped, has been definitively extinguished, but the public will await with extreme interest the news as to the spirit in which he is likely to be dealt with, not merely on its bearing for the few remaining years of the life of an individual, but because of the effect it must have on the national reputation for future generations. Those, however, who know the American character best, and who are aware that under sudden excitement, they are among the most placable people in the world, have little fear of the result.

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