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THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 24, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Parliament was opened by Her Majesty in person on the 31st ult. On her way to the House, the Queen was enthusiastically applauded; but Prince Albert received several marks of disapprobation from the crowd. We give the Speech from the Throne:

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

My Lords and Gentlemen:

I am always happy to meet you in Parliament. On the present occasion it is with peculiar satisfaction that I recur to your assistance and advice.

The hopes which I expressed at the close of last session, that a speedy settlement would be effected of the difficulties between Russia and the Ottoman Porte have not been realised; and I regret to say, that a state of warfare has ensued.

I have continued to act in cordial co-operation with the Emperor of the French; and my endeavors in conjunction with my allies, to preserve peace between the contending parties, although hitherto unsuccessful, have been unremitting.

I will not fail to persevere in these endeavors, but as the continuance of the war may deeply affect the interests of this country, and of Europe, I think it is requisite to make further augmentation of my naval and military forces, with the view of supporting my representatives, and of more effectually contributing to the restoring of peace.

I have directed that the papers explanatory of the regulations which have taken place on this subject shall be communicated to you without delay.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

The estimates of the year will be laid before you, and I trust that you will find them consistent with the exigencies of the public service at this juncture; and that they have been framed with due economy.

My Lords and Gentlemen:

In the year just terminated, the blessing of abundance has not been vouchsafed to us by the dispensation of Providence. The prices of provisions have been enhanced, and the privations of the poor increased; but their patience has been exemplary; and the care of the Legislature evinced by the reduction of taxes affecting the necessities of life have greatly tended to preserve them in the spirit of contentment.

I have the satisfaction of announcing that the commerce of the country still prospers; that trade, by exports and imports, has been largely increased, and that the revenue of the past year has been more than adequate to the demands of the public service.

I have recommended for your consideration a bill, which I have ordered to be framed, for opening the coasting trade of the United Kingdom to ships of all friendly nations; and I look forward with satisfaction to the removal of the last legislative restrictions upon the use of foreign shipping for the benefit of my people.

Communications have been addressed by my command, to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, in reference to improvements which it may be desirable to effect in these institutions. These communications will be laid before you, and measures proposed for your consideration with the view of giving effect to such improvement.

Bills will be submitted to you for transmitting from the ecclesiastical to the civil courts, cognizance of testamentary and matrimonial causes, and for giving increased jurisdiction to the Superior Courts of common law.

The laws relating to the relief of the poor, have of late undergone much salutary amendment, but there is one branch to which I earnestly direct attention, which impedes freedom of labor; and if this restraint can with safety be relaxed, the workman may be enabled to increase the fruits of his industry, and the interests of labor and capital be more firmly united.

Measures will be submitted for your approval for the amendment of the law relating to the Representation of the Commons in Parliament. Recent experience has shown that it is necessary to take more effectual precautions against the evil of bribery and corrupt practices at elections.

It will be also your duty to consider whether more complete effect may not be given to the principles in the act passed in the reign of my royal and lamented predecessor, when reforms were made in the representation of people in parliament. In recommending this great subject to your consideration, my desire is to remove every cause of just complaint, to increase general confidence in the legislature, and thus give additional stability to the settled institutions of the state. I submit to your wisdom the consideration of these important subjects, and I pray God to prosper your counsels and to guide your decisions.

The Address, in reply, was carried in both Houses without a division.

The subsequent debates in both Houses of Parliament were interesting. In the Lords, Earl Derby attacked, and Lord Aberdeen defended, the policy of the Government upon the Eastern question. The latter took occasion to allude to the malicious rumors so industriously circulated by the Radical, and a section of the Evangelical, press against H. R. H. the Prince Consort; and, in so doing, fully vindicated the conduct of that illustrious personage, whose judgment, wisdom, and prudence, Her Majesty's Ministers had often had occasion to admire at the Council

Table; and from whom no syllable had ever emanated which had not tended to the honor, the interest, and the welfare of the country. In like manner, Lord Hardinge vindicated H. R. Highness from the charge of undue interference with the administration of the army. These public and official denials of the calumnies which have been so long directed against the Prince, were received with much satisfaction by the House, and will, no doubt, have a good effect in removing popular prejudice, and causing a reaction in the Prince's favor.

In the Commons, Mr. Serjeant Shee noticed the omission in the royal speech of all allusion to Ireland, and to the Bills now pending, for adjusting the relations between landlord and tenant. Sir J. Young assured the learned member that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to press forward these measures without delay. Mr. D'Israeli objected to the introduction, at the present critical period, of any important alterations in the construction of the House of Commons, announcing his intention to propose several important amendments, calculated to give increased influence to the agricultural interests. Lord John Russell defended the foreign policy of the Government, and gave a formal contradiction to the rumors against Prince Albert, whose conduct he highly eulogised. In both Houses of Parliament therefore, Prince Albert's vindication has been complete, and the dirty libels of the radical, and evangelical crew have been triumphantly refuted.

Mr. Chichester Fortescue has been appointed to succeed Mr. J. Sadler in the Treasury, and has, in consequence, vacated his seat for Louth. Mr. Cantwell has taken the field against Mr. Fortescue's re-election, and a hot contest is anticipated, the former, of course, being the popular candidate.

An Inquest has been held on the body of two of the victims of the "Tayleur," during the course of which it was fully established, that the wreck of that noble vessel, and the consequent fearful loss of life, were entirely owing to the niggard parsimony, and culpable neglect of the owners, who permitted the "Tayleur" to put to sea in a most wretched condition; and with such a set of lubbers for a crew that, when it came on to blow, it took them two or three hours to take a reef in their topsails, and half the night to furl the mainsail. The ship herself would neither wear nor stay; the compasses were out of order; the commander seems to have paid but little attention to keeping his lead a-going; and so, betwixt owners and an ill found ship, captain and crew, they managed to get rid of another batch of Irish emigrants. The Coroner's Jury found a verdict in accordance with the evidence; and the attention of government having been thus again called to the subject, it is to be hoped that some means may be devised for protecting the poor emigrants from the rascally tricks of ship owners and agents. It is time, for the credit of the country, and the sake of humanity, that these wholesale *noyades* were put an end to; and this will never be done till some severe example be made of the mercenary scoundrels, to whose unprincipled hankering after high profits, these catastrophes are entirely attributable. For one vessel that is lost by accident, or causes beyond the control of man, ninety-nine are cast away through mismanagement, or want of due precaution in fitting them out for sea.

The Eastern Question, as it is called, seems at length to have reached a definite, if not a satisfactory solution. No answer to the Vienna Note has as yet been received from the Czar; but the explanations given to his ambassadors at London and Paris, respecting the intentions of the Allied fleets in the Black Sea have had the effect of putting an end to official intercourse betwixt the Allies and the Court of St. Petersburg; so that virtually the war may be said to have commenced. Much anxiety is felt on account of the doubtful attitude of Austria and Prussia. Professing an impracticable neutrality, these Powers are suspected of an intention to side with the Czar, who has already demanded of Austria permission to march his Polish reinforcements for the Principalities, across Austrian territory; as the speediest route to the seat of war. The answer to this demand, which if accepted will be an act of hostility against France and England, has not yet been given; but bound as Austria is to Russia by so many ties, it is most probable that before long we shall see the armies of Francis Joseph and Czar Nicholas, fighting side by side. Then, Kossuth in Hungary; and Mazzini in Italy, will again raise the standard of insurrection, backed by French and English influence; then again will the spirit of democracy, subdued, but not crushed, burst forth with renewed fury, and renovated hate against Pope and Cæsar; menacing with a common destruction the Throne and the Altar. Troublous times, such as have not been since the beginning, are in store for the Church, and fresh storms threaten the barque; but we need not be dismayed at the violence of the tempest, for the Lord is ever in the boat with Peter; even though, for the moment, He seemeth to slumber.

It is becoming customary for our public men in Canada, when assailed in the columns of the periodical press, to give their defence to the public through the same channel, in the shape of a communication to the editor. This custom is, we think, of very questionable propriety. In many instances, the attacks are not worth noticing; and in others, where the charges are more grave, and definite, we think that it would be more prudent, and more becoming the dignity of his official position, if the assailed Minister were to defer his reply to a more convenient time; such as is afforded him by the meeting of the Legislature. To the country, through its representatives in Parliament assembled, should the explanations of the members of the Administration be given.

But when so many of our public men have set the

example of an opposite line of conduct, rushing madly into print in defence of their Ministerial conduct, it is not to be wondered at, that Mr. Dunbar Ross, Solicitor-General, should also become a "correspondent;" and through the columns of the *Quebec Morning Chronicle*, reply to the attacks that, since the last Session of the Court of Queen's Bench, have been made upon him, both by Catholics and Protestants; by the former of whom he is accused of sectarian hostility towards the accused at the late trials growing out of the Gavazzi riots; whilst the former, headed by the *Globe*, Mister George Brown's organ, swear that it was by the connivance of H. M. Solicitor-General, that the indictments against the accused were so framed, as to render a verdict of acquittal a matter of certainty. Betwixt Catholic and Protestant, it must be admitted that poor Mr. Ross has fared badly; we think that he has been unjustly treated.

As Solicitor-General, Mr. Ross was Counsel for the prosecution; we had no right therefore to expect from him the candor and impartiality of a judge. His business was to procure, if possible, a verdict for his side—that of the prosecution; and, without appearing too much in the character of a partisan, to place the conduct of the prisoners in as unfavorable an aspect as possible, before the Jury. This Mr. Ross did, to the best of his ability; and we feel thankful to him for it; for, by so doing, the innocence of the accused, the groundlessness of the charges against them, and the perjury and malignity of their opponents, were made manifest. It was the duty of the Solicitor-General to press the charges against the accused; and he did so—but to no purpose.

As a Protestant, Mr. Ross was naturally anxious to procure the conviction of Irish Papists; because their conviction would have been the justification of his own friends and co-religionists. He did his best therefore to obtain a conviction; and, if he failed, it was not from want of will, but because it was impossible, even with the assistance of false depositions, and corrupt magistrates, to make out the semblance of a case against the prisoners. As a candidate for future Parliamentary honors from the hands of the electors of Megantic, Mr. Ross, the Solicitor-General, was naturally anxious to enlist in his favor the sympathies of the leading Protestant merchants of Quebec, whose influence over the "free and independent," of Megantic, is a matter of public notoriety; and how could he better establish a claim to these sympathies, than by procuring the condemnation of the obnoxious Irish Papists?

As a Law Officer of the Crown—as a Protestant, and a politician, seeking for a seat in Parliament—Mr. Dunbar Ross had every motive to be zealous in his prosecution of the Gavazzi rioters. He was so; but his zeal was powerless against the innocence of the accused; and if he failed, as fail he did, it was from the badness of the cause which he was hired to defend, and not from any indifference to the expressed wishes of his Protestant friends; still less from any partiality in favor of the accused, his political and religious opponents. But we are not of those who blame Mr. Ross for this anti-Catholic zeal; on the contrary, we feel grateful to him for it; for, but for that zeal, but for his unremitting exertions to procure the conviction of innocent men, our Irish Catholic friends would not be in the proud position that they are in to-day; they would not be able to boast that the talents and eloquence of the Law Officers of the Crown, backed by all the influence and wealth of the Protestant party at Quebec, had been brought to bear against them in vain; and that, strong in their innocence, they had triumphed over all.

In his letter to the editor of the *Quebec Chronicle*, Mr. Ross very chivalrously takes upon himself the blame—if blame there be—of the drawing up of the indictments. Neither Mr. Drummond, nor Mons. Chauveau, had anything to do with them; and though it is now clear that such charges as those contained in the indictments, could never have been maintained in a Court of Justice, yet were they fully borne out by the depositions made in Mr. R. Symes' private office; and by which depositions the Law Officers of the Crown, were obliged to be guided in framing the indictments against the accused. It would be unjust to hold Mr. Ross responsible for the innumerable lies, and false statements which these depositions—cooked by Mr. R. Symes and his friends—contained. The malice of these gentry, made them overshoot the mark, and advance statements which they could not maintain. Hence the errors—if errors there were—in the framing of the indictments. Hence, too, the triumphant acquittal of all the prisoners. This is clearly shown in Mr. Ross' communication to the *Quebec Chronicle*.

PROTESTANT CONSISTENCY.

An amusing instance of this was afforded at a meeting held in the Tabernacle, at New York, on the 2nd instant, with the object of memorialising the American Government to use its efforts with the governments of Continental Europe, in order to obtain for American citizens the right of proselytising, and distributing Protestant tracts, in foreign countries. The right of every man, being a *white* man, and not a "nigger," to impart religious instruction to his brothers was nobly, and eloquently asserted. Resolutions to this effect were unanimously carried, whilst Hiram Ketchum—"Phæbus what a name"—looked on benignantly, and snuffled out a nasal benediction from his tub.

But the meeting was not destined to close as harmoniously as it commenced: the sincerity of the saints in white chokers, who denounced the illiberality of Papists, and Popish rulers in putting obstacles in the way of Yankee Missionaries, was doomed to be severely tried ere the close of the evening. For a son of Belial arose in their midst, and with unheard of audacity, proposed to apply the principles of religious liberty to his fellow-countrymen, of a different

color; to apply them in fact without distinction of color or sex." Then arose in the Courts of the Tabernacle, one wild yell of indignation—and, with that love for "Freedom of Discussion" so eminently characteristic of Protestantism, fierce cries arose of—"turn him out—pull him down;" whilst respectable looking gentlemen in white cravats, raised their eyes and hands to heaven, and protested by their hopes of salvation, and their hatred of the Pope—"that the author of such a proposition should be ashamed of himself to go for to disturb the harmony of a pious and respectable meeting." Mr. Feller, for Feller was the name of this son of Belial, persisted, and moved the following resolution:—

"That by calling upon our Government to exert its influence to obtaining for American citizens freedom of religious conscience and privilege of worship, according to their religious faith, when travelling or sojourning in foreign lands, this meeting also pledges its earnest endeavors to call upon the Government to secure the same rights and privileges to American citizens throughout the United States; and to provide that it shall not be a criminal offence for an American of either sex, in any part of the United States, to teach the precepts or practices of Christ in their households, without regard to color, occupation, or family relations."

"There had (proceeded Mr. F.) been much said by the gentlemen who preceded him, that was germane to this resolution. It had been contended by one gentleman that 'every one, no matter who or what he might be, was entitled to a free exercise of his religious faith;' and by another, that in this country 'no man had power to close the Bible.' Let these principles, he claimed, be carried out fully in this land—without respect to color or sex—(hisses.) He did not offer the resolution in a factious spirit, but as one which he considered to harmonise with the principle of 'religious freedom.' If we were to have religious freedom, let it be on a basis as broad as Christ's injunction to his Apostles."

The scene that ensued beggars description; and matters were not improved by Mr. Feller telling his opponents, that, to his knowledge, persons were subjected to legal penalties for teaching negroes to read the Bible in the Protestant United States of North America. We need not add, that Mr. Feller's motion was not even put; a motion to adjourn immediately, having been carried. And so, having testified their attachment to the "principles of the Reformation," the meeting broke up.

ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY, QUEBEC.

The Annual Meeting of this valuable society was held at Quebec, on the 16th inst.—C. Alleyn, Esq., President in the Chair. The Annual Report regrets that the means at the disposal of the Society barely enable it to meet the wants of the numerous applicants for relief from its funds; and recommends the keeping up of a strict *surveillance* over the conduct of masters of emigrant ships towards their passengers. In view of the probability of a visitation from cholera, during the ensuing summer, the Report calls the attention of Government to the Quarantine establishments at Grosse Isle; and insists upon the expediency of putting these establishments in a fit state for the reception of sick immigrants. The balance on hand, after meeting all demands, was £15 1s 3d.—After the adoption of the Report, and a vote of thanks to the Officers, and Committee of Management, the Society proceeded to the election of Officers for the current year; when the following gentlemen were elected:—

President—Charles Alleyn.

1st. Vice President—G. R. Browne.

2nd. Vice President—John Hearn.

Treasurer—E. J. Charlton.

Secretary—John A. Ely.

Assist. Secretary—John Semple.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT: Paul Lepper, Michael Connolly, Charles McDonald, John Doran, Michael Mernagh, Captain Vaughan, Lawrence Stafford, J. P. O'Meara, Wm. McKay, John Giblin, Philip Whitty, William Quian, William Drum, Thomas Loughran, Matthew Ryan, John O'Kane, Matthew Plunket, T. J. Murphy, Charles Gilbride, Maurice O'Leary, John O'Leary, Patrick Grogan, and Michael McNamara.

CHAPELAINS.—The Rev. Mr. Nelligan, and the Rev. Mr. Campbell.

PHYSICIANS.—Drs. Moffat, Fitzpatrick and Russell.

CHARITABLE COMMITTEE.—Thomas McGreevy, Robert Gamble, John Lilly, Roger Finn, Patrick Shee, and John Nowlan.

COMMITTEE OF ACCOUNTS.—W. D. Burke, Charles T. Colfer, M. F. Walsh, John Lane, Junior, and P. Walsh.

MARSHALLS.—Messrs. Hartigan, Brothers, Lawlor, Driscoll & McMullen.

GRAND MARSHALL.—Phillip Whitty.

COMMITTEE OF INSTALMENT.—Messrs. Madden and Coveney.

Upon motion of Captain Vaughan, seconded by Mr. Roger Finn, it was

Resolved, That this Society regrets that the composition of the Board of Commissioners of the Marine Hospital is not such as to justify the hope that a proper degree of national sympathy for the patients of Irish origin is felt by its members; and that it would be failing in its duty if it did not express its dissatisfaction at the recent changes in the management, by which three of the late Commissioners, enjoying the confidence of Irishmen, have been dismissed without cause of complaint being made against them.

We fear that Reform in the establishment alluded to in the above "Resolution" is hopeless; and that our friends at Quebec will ultimately be compelled to do as we have done in Montreal—get up a St. Patrick's hospital of their own, where Sisters of Charity, and not hirelings, minister to the wants of the sick.

The *Munster News* announces the receipt of a letter of a recent date from Smith O'Brien. The writer was in good health, and had no idea of attempting his escape from Van Dieman's Land.—Smith O'Brien is a man of honor, and will never be guilty of a breach of parole, even for the sake of regaining his liberty.