

The True Witness

AND
CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

FEBRUARY—1871.

Friday, 17—Of the Feria.
Saturday, 18—Of the Immaculate Conception.
Sunday, 19—Quinquagesima.
Monday, 20—Of the Feria.
Tuesday, 21—Of the Feria.
Wednesday, 22—Ash Wednesday.
Thursday, 23—Vig. St. Peter Damian, B. C.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The Queen's Speech at the opening of the Imperial Parliament is a document of great interest; we therefore give in full, as transmitted by electric cable, those portions of it which refer to the domestic policy of the Imperial Government.

Her Majesty, having alluded to the terrible war on the Continent of Europe, and expressed a hope that all questions now pending between Great Britain and the United States would soon be amicably settled, continued:—

"My Lords and Gentlemen, the lessons of military experience afforded by the present war have been numerous and important. The time appears appropriate for turning such lessons more decisive than heretofore to practical improvement. In attempting this you will not fail to bear in mind the special features in the position of this country so favorable to the freedom and security of the people; and if the changes from a less to a more effective and elastic system of defensive military preparations shall be found to involve at least for a time an increase of various charges, your prudence and patriotism will not grudge the cost, as long as you are satisfied that the end is important and the means judicious. No time will be lost in laying before you a bill for the better regulation of the army, and auxiliary land forces of the crown, and I hardly need commend it to your anxious and impartial consideration. I trust that the powerful interest at present attaching to affairs abroad, and to military questions, will not greatly abate the energy with which you have heretofore applied yourselves to the work of general improvement."

"In our domestic legislation I commend anew to your attention several measures on subjects which I desired to be brought before you during the last session of Parliament, but which the time remaining at your disposal, after you had dealt with the principle subjects of the year, was not found sufficient to carry to a final issue. I refer especially to the bills on religious tests in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, on ecclesiastical titles, on the disabilities of trade combinations, on the courts of justice and appeal, on the adjustment of local burdens, and on the licensing of houses for the sale of intoxicating liquors."

"The enquiry made by a committee of the House of Commons being complete, a measure will be placed before you at an early day for the establishment of secret voting."

"A proposal is anxiously expected in Scotland for the adjustment of the question of primary education, with reference to the training of the young in schools on a national scale and basis. That portion of the country has special claims on the favorable consideration of Parliament; and I trust the year may not pass by without your having disposed of this question by the enactment of a just and effective law in that country."

"The condition of Ireland with reference to agrarian crime, has, in general, afforded a gratifying contrast with the state of that Island in the preceding winter; but there have been painful though very partial exceptions."

"To secure the best results for the great measures of the last Session, which have so recently passed into operation, and which involve such direct and pressing claims upon the attention of all classes of the community, a period of calm is to be desired; and I have thought it wise to refrain from suggesting to you at the present juncture the discussion of any political question likely to become the subject of new and serious controversy."

There was no allusion made in the Speech from the Throne to the most important event of modern times—the unprovoked attack upon, and invasion of the States of the Church by the troops of Victor Emmanuel; the assault on, and capture of Rome, and the violation of the laws of nations, of recent treaties, and the rights of weak States, therein involved. Upon all these points the Gladstone Government, speaking by the mouth of the Queen, maintained a discreet but most suggestive silence. Indeed what could a British Sovereign officially say upon such a subject? Formally to have approved of the attack on Rome would have been to give the sanction of the British Government to the principle that weak States have no rights that powerful States are bound to respect; and that the most solemn treaties are no longer of force, when they can be violated with impunity. And yet as the victim of this outrage upon the law of nations, upon what Kinglake in his history of the Crimean War calls "the Supreme Law or Usage which forms

the *Stiefgarden of Europe*, is a Catholic Sovereign, and his Sovereignty, the oldest of Sovereignities—this outrage, though establishing, if allowed to pass without a protest, a precedent most dangerous to Christendom, commands itself to the Protestant people over whom Queen Victoria rules. She could not therefore openly denounce it without putting herself in opposition to the Protestant feelings of the people; neither could she justify it, without thereby justifying the act of any State or people, which or who, upon the pretence of freeing the Irish from the yoke of an oppressive and alien government, may, at some future day, invade Ireland, just as Victor Emmanuel invaded the States of the Church; and therefore she was in prudence compelled to keep total silence. The omission, however, of any allusion to the invasion, conquest, and annexation of these States by the Piedmontese will, we may be sure, attract the attention of all, and probably will provoke comment from some of the Catholic members of Parliament.

Of the topics to which the Royal Speech did allude the most important are:—The *Ballot*, which implies universal suffrage, which again implies the Republic; and the abolition of Religious Tests in the Universities, which again implies the speedy disestablishment of the "Church by Law Established." Who 20 years ago would have dared to prophesy that such measures would be recommended from the Throne?—and yet the thing has come to pass. The Irish then may take heart; for certainly it is not more improbable to-day, that Repeal, or a serious modification of the terms, of the existing Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, shall within five years be made a Ministerial measure, than it was improbable, in the early days of Queen Victoria, that she would recommend from the Throne the introduction of the *Ballot*, and the abolition of Religious Tests, and therefore of all distinctive Christian teaching in the great Universities, hitherto the stronghold of Anglicanism, and the Established Church—measures essentially revolutionary; whilst on the other hand, Repeal of the Union, though it may be condemned as inexpedient, cannot be denounced as in any sense a Revolutionary or destructive measure, or as one which it is disloyal or extravagant on the part of the Irish to demand. The Union, the destruction of Ireland's ancient Legislature, that indeed was revolutionary; its restoration would be a measure of justice, and a truly Conservative or reactionary process.

Whilst awaiting the result of the pending elections in France, we have little of much interest to report from the seat of war. Gambetta's influence it would seem is on the wane; and it is said that the Imperial party is numerically strong. What this may portend we know not; but peace at any price is the desire of a large body of the French people: and if peace can be obtained from Germany on easier terms for an Imperial than for Republican France, it is not impossible that the "Man of Sedan" or his son may be recalled. What the terms that Germany exacts as the condition of relaxing her hold upon her prostrate foe, we know not positively; that they are onerous in the highest degree we may be certain; but so exhausted is France that it is to be feared that she will find herself compelled to accept them.

Hopes are expressed that the action of the Joint Commission to meet for the discussion of the long pending Alabama claims, and the question of the Canadian Fisheries, will be final and satisfactory. The Commission, it is expected, will proceed to business about the first of March.

By later telegrams we learn that the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne has been carried in the House of Commons. Mr. Gladstone is reported to have given a telling rejoinder to the adverse criticisms of Mr. D'Israeli upon the Ministerial policy.

The Man of Sedan has at last broken his long silence, and addressed a Proclamation to the electors of France, in which he implies that there exists at the present moment but one Government—to wit, the Regency, and that all acts not emanating from that government are illegitimate. It would seem therefore that the prisoner of Wilhelmshöhe still cherishes the idea that the Empire will be restored, in spite of the miseries that it has entailed upon France. Meantime the elections are going on briskly, and in so far as they have yet gone, seem to have given a majority to the Orleanist party in the rural districts. For the City of Paris the names of Victor Hugo, Gambetta, Garibaldi, and such like are mentioned; the Southern departments will, it is thought, return Republican representatives. On the whole, however, it is expected that there will be a Conservative majority.

The New York *Herald*—not a very reliable authority perhaps—has a story to the effect that a Catholic League is forming in Belgium, with branches throughout Europe, to prepare an armed expedition to deliver Rome and the Sovereign Pontiff from the hands of the Piedmontese. That in time the Catholic world

will take action against the invaders of the States of the Church, and the tyrants who now trample under sacrilegious foot the Holy See, is highly probable; and when that time comes, to their fervent prayers for the downfall and humiliation of the robber government of Piedmont; it will be the duty of Catholics throughout the world to add their material contributions. In the meantime they must watch and pray for the speedy arrival of the day of retribution. There have been disturbances at Nice, and the crowds were only dispersed at the point of the bayonet.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—The Montreal *Witness* has not as yet vouchsafed any reply to our question as to "how he determined for himself the Canon of Inspired Scripture?" and more particularly, "how he determined for himself the right of the treatise addressed to the 'most excellent Theophilus,' commonly called the Gospel according to St. Luke, to a place in the Canon of Inspired Scripture?" To answer such questions as these, underlying as they do the entire Protestant system of Christianity, and on which therefore that system is based, is not the *forte* of the *Witness*, or of evangelical Protestants. They either shirk such questions when propounded to them, by evasive, irrelevant answers; or they set to, and call the troublesome questioner bad names—"infidel, sceptic, rationalist," and such like. It is this manifest inability of so called evangelical Protestants, to assign any "reason" for the faith that they profess in the Bible as the inspired Word of God, that drives so many intelligent and thinking Protestants into the ranks of infidelity: for, as we showed in our last, on the authority of no less a witness than Dr. Dawson, "four-fifths" of the educated, of the literary and scientific classes of English society, have rejected Bible revelation. How can it be otherwise? If traditions of men be appealed to, if the opinions of the Christians of the first centuries be cited, to establish a supernatural fact—to wit, the inspiration of certain writings—then is the fundamental doctrine, or formal principle of evangelical Protestantism renounced by those so appealing to tradition and human authority; if, on the other hand, the belief in the Bible as the inspired, infallible, all sufficient rule of faith be made to rest upon some special supernatural enlightenment, upon some mysterious inward spiritual faculty, or insight, then "reason" a purely natural faculty, is by implication acknowledged as incompetent alone to determine the Canon of Inspired Scripture.

In short—the *Witness* may convict us of error if he can, and we still offer to publish his reply—it is impossible for any Protestant to give any "reason" for assigning a place in the Canon of Inspired Scripture, to the treatise commonly called the Gospel of St. Luke.—Any one of our readers may easily test the truth of this assertion for himself, by simply putting the question to the first of his Protestant neighbors whom he may meet, and noting the absurdities and inconsistencies of the answers that will be given to him. For these reasons we strongly suspect that the *Witness* will in future, as heretofore, prudently abstain from attempting any reply to the question we have put, and again put to him—"How do you determine the right of the work called the Gospel of St. Luke to a place in the Canon of Inspired Scripture?"

VOTE BY BALLOT.—This we may suppose may now be looked upon as an *fait accompli* in England, as it is recommended in the Speech from the Throne, and is therefore no longer a Chartist, but a Ministerial measure. The importance of this step can hardly be too highly estimated, as it involves a thorough and radical change in the principle of the existing British Constitution; and if logically carried out must lead to universal suffrage, whilst universal suffrage leads to political chaos.

It is important, not so much because it will secure henceforward the independence of the voter, and give us purity of elections; for if one half that we read of as habitually occurring at New York elections, and at other elections in the U. States where voting by Ballot is the rule, be true,—the Ballot assures neither the one nor the other. But it is important because it, by implication, changes the franchise from a trust committed to a limited number, by them to be exercised for the good of the whole community, and therefore to be publicly, and openly exercised, into a natural personal right, of the exercise of which the owner owes no account to any one on earth. Hitherto the theory in Great Britain has been that the franchise is a trust, not a personal right; that it is, not a right, but a privilege accorded by law to a limited portion of the male population, for the proper exercise of which however the privileged person is responsible to the entire community; and which as a political privilege should therefore be exercised openly. On the same principle as that on which the votes on all important questions of the members elected to make laws in the Legislature are made public, so hitherto has it been deemed right that

the votes of those politically privileged to elect members of the legislature, should also be publicly given. We are not arguing for, or against the Ballot, we are only stating facts.

Now with the Ballot this theory of the British Constitution—if we could be consistent, must be changed. If secret voting is to be the rule for the electors, so also should it be the rule for the elected in the House of Commons. It is a poor rule that does not work both ways; and the *viva voce* voting of the House of Commons should be superseded by voting by Ballot.

Nor can Universal Suffrage long be withheld, when once the Ballot shall have been introduced into our election customs. If the franchise be a political privilege accorded by law, a national trust, and not a natural right inherent in every citizen, then the non-enfranchised classes have a right to know how that trust is exercised; and if it the franchise be not a political privilege, but a natural right, then there must no longer be any non-enfranchised classes; we must do away with all arbitrary conventional limits dividing society into two classes, "voters," and "non-voters." The Ballot therefore necessarily leads to Universal Suffrage, and logically to secret action everywhere; in the Legislature, and in our Courts of Justice, as well as in our Courts of Legislature. This will be a great change, though it be only the strict logical consequence of the Ballot. Hitherto the idea has been that publicity given to political and judicial acts, and not secrecy, was the best guarantee that these acts should be honestly and faithfully performed. For the future we must assume as true, that darkness is better than light; and that secrecy will best insure the faithful performance of his duty by the public political functionary.

We see with pain, and so must all good citizens, that the Montreal *Witness* is trying to raise a "No Popery" cry in the matter of the pending municipal elections. The fact that a candidate for a seat in the City Council is a Catholic is enough; and at once the *Witness* begins to throw filth at him and to pelt him with hard names. So it is that he treats Mr. McShane, long a member of the Corporation for St. Ann's Ward, a most respectable man, a hard worker in the Council, and one of whom every body speaks well. But he is a Catholic and therefore must be put out, to make room for one of the *Witness* "ring," or clique.

This must not be; and we hope the good sense of our fellow-citizens will be enlisted against the blatant fanaticism and hypocrisy of the *Witness*. It is to degrade religion to drag its name into connection with our municipal elections; what have river police, tavern licenses, and butcher's stalls to do with religion? There is but one consoling feature, however, about the business, and it is this:—That the journal which makes this vile use of religion, which calumniates Mr. McShane in the name of the God of charity, and upon high Calvinistic principles pronounces that gentleman unfit to give judgment on the butchers' stall question, is "the only daily religious journal in the world." Thank God that "varmint" of this kind are scarce; we trust the breed is nearly extinct.

INSTITUTION FOR BLIND YOUTH, NAZARETH ASYLUM, MONTREAL.—If there be a misfortune worthy in the highest degree of the sympathies of Christian souls, it is without doubt, that of our fellow-creatures who by birth, or by subsequent fatal accident, have been deprived of the sense of sight. Their eyes are formed for light; who can tell the depth of their privation? In truth we think that there is not a sufferer on earth more to be pitied than the child who cannot even see its mother's smile. To heathen society steeped in the depths of an egotistical sensuality, Charity was unknown; and not only do we nowhere perceive that the wisest of Legislators took heed to provide for the well-being of these unfortunate, but on the contrary we know that in certain States, and those the most celebrated Republics of antiquity, children born subject to this infirmity were deemed not worthy to live. But Jesus Christ the God of Charity, came down upon earth; and, whilst preaching His Gospel, He traversed Judea and Galilee, amidst all the infirm and sick brought to Him to heal, He ever manifested a particular compassion for the blind. This was enough to inspire His disciples with a love for the blind, the more ardent the more devoted, in that in these sufferers they distinguished their brothers of all the most afflicted; endowed with immortal souls, created in the image of God, redeemed with His blood, and called to the enjoyment of His glory. Therefore did they collect these sufferers into Hospitals, and lavishing on them the fondest care, endeavored with all the industry of zeal to initiate them into the moral life, to raise them to a perception of the supernatural order, whilst ministering to the wants of their material existence by instructing them in trades, and useful arts. Large establishments were set apart exclusively for their use, as for instance the *Hospice* of the

Quatre Vingt, founded at Paris, by the King St. Louis, which institution six centuries have respected, and in which Three Hundred Blind continually received, together with the blessings of education, all the means for supplying both their bodily wants, and their spiritual necessities.

And to-day in all the kingdoms and empires of Europe, as also in the United States, we may see a considerable number of Institutions for these unfortunates.

Nevertheless until lately Montreal which possesses so many flourishing establishments, for the training of infancy and of youth, for the infirm, orphans, and the aged, the Deaf and Dumb had nothing of the kind for the Blind. These, who nevertheless seem the most to be pitied of all had no Asylum either in Montreal, or in Canada.

At last, however, a House has been built for them, and in a few weeks—on the 1st of March—will be opened for their reception. The Sisters of Charity by whom it will be managed, are acquainted with all the modern processes for instructing the future inmates of the Asylum, in reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, music, and manual work that are in use either in the U. States, or in the Institution of the "Young Blind," at Paris, the most celebrated institution of the kind in the world. Thus they, the Sisters, have the three methods of reading and writing; by Points, in Gothic characters, and in ordinary characters raised—so that not only may the Blind, without difficulty read, and instruct themselves from books, but put themselves in communication both with one another, and with the rest of the world to whom the sense of sight is not denied. In the same way the notes of music being raised, they can by the sense of touch be distinguished by the blind, who can thus read them with their fingers, and sing them, or play them on the piano or the organ. This Institution is the only one on this Continent in which the French language is used; but the pupils will also be instructed in English. We need not speak of either the Religious Education or the comforts of the House; nothing will be wanting the public may be assured, as it will be under the care of the Sisters of Charity. All that we would wish in concluding to remark is this:—That having visited the Asylum, everything appeared to us so clean, so appropriate, so comfortable, that it almost seemed to be open to the reproach of excess of luxury, were it not that we know that in the case of a Catholic and National Institution, everything should be on the very best footing.

This, the first Institution for the Blind in Montreal is chiefly designed for young girls; the Sisters will however receive in a separate apartment, boys up to the age of from eleven to twelve, in the hopes that ere long for them also an Institution shall spring up.

Parents who may have children afflicted with blindness must apply to the Sister Superior for the conditions of admission.—*Com.*

THE ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC.—We have authority for stating positively, that the Rev. M. Taschereau, Superior of the Seminary of Quebec, has been appointed successor to the late lamented Mgr. Baillargeon, Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec.

RAFFLE AT THE ST. JOSEPH ASYLUM, BONAVENTURE STREET.—We would call the attention of our readers to the raffle which will be held on the evenings of Wednesday 15th, Thursday 16th, and Friday 17th, of this month, at the above named Asylum in Bonaventure Street for the benefit of the Institution. The articles exposed for competition are numerous and varied; comprising a handsome sofa—a magnificent stand of artificial flowers, beneath a glass case—a fine silver watch; and other objects, too numerous to mention.

PROTESTANT LECTURES.—An advertisement in the Toronto *Globe* announces that—Whereas it is evident from the portentous events now occurring that the day of Grace is closing and that of judgment about to open on earth; and whereas all popular religious theories called Christian, fail to represent truly the primitive faith of the Gospel—lectures on the Church, the Gospel, and on preparing for what is coming on the earth will be delivered in the Temperance Hall, "by competent and authorised ministers." The question arise, who is to judge of the competence of these ministers? who has authorised them? Produce your certificates and testimonials gentlemen.

Emperor William will not allow spoon stealing among his officers. One of them is to be overhauled for taking some spoons from a hotel table at Etampes.

It is lucky for the great Yankoo General, B. Butler, that he is not in the Prussian service.

NOMINATIONS.—The Municipal nominations were held this morning. Mr. Oursol was elected Mayor by acclamation. Mr. Wilson, in the East, Mr. Garth in the Centre, and Mr. Hood, in St. Antoine Wards were elected without opposition. The remaining wards are contested.—*Witness, Monday.*