

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 10, 1860.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

By the arrival of the Asia we are put in possession of European news to the 21st ult. The plot thickens, and everything would seem to indicate an open rupture betwixt Louis Napoleon and the Church. His last letter to the Sovereign Pontiff, recommending the latter to give his assent to the spoliation of the Holy See, and the proscription of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which has had the honor of incurring the French Emperor's hostility, are pretty conclusive proofs of the sentiments by which Louis Napoleon is actuated; whilst the formal withdrawal of the Archbishop of Paris from the Conseil would seem to indicate that the French Clergy have at last appreciated the true character of the man, and the value of his Catholic professions. What will be the issue of all these things it is impossible to tell; only this we know, that the promises of Christ can never fail; and that though the princes of the earth may conspire against His Church, and though the nations may rage furiously against her, every weapon forged for her destruction will ultimately be turned against the bosoms of her enemies.

The North Briton from Liverpool 25th ult., arrived at Portland on Thursday. The British Parliament was opened on the 24th. The speech from the throne declared the intention of the Government to be endeavor to prevent foreign interference with the affairs of Italy—or in other words to be to give free scope to Sardinia to rob the Pope of his dominions, and to prevent Austria from coming to the help of the latter. The French alliance was alluded to in the speech, as were the affairs of Spain and the San Juan dispute. On the whole it would seem as if the British Government were fully committed to the Louis Napoleon policy.

Amongst the arrivals by the North Briton we find the names of Messrs. Smith and Galt.

We have been requested to mention that it is in contemplation to hold a general meeting of the Catholic laymen of this City, in order to prepare an address to the Sovereign Pontiff, expressive of their sympathy with him in his afflictions, their devoted loyalty towards him, and their detestation of the policy of his enemies. The Saint Patrick's Society have for this purpose put themselves in communication with the National Society of our brethren of French origin, by whom the proposition has been favorably received: and thus, acting in concert, Catholics without distinction of origin, and as children of one mother, will we trust meet upon the common ground of religion, to testify their attachment to the Pope, and their determination, by all lawful means at their command, to uphold his power.

Neither the time nor place of the meeting has as yet been definitely settled; but we believe that the interior of one of our Churches will be used for the purpose, and that the afternoon of Sunday week, the 19th instant, will be selected as the time for the holding of the meeting. Further and full particulars will however be made public in a few days: and in the meantime we exhort our friends to stir themselves so as to make the projected demonstration worthy of themselves, the Catholic community of which they are members, and the illustrious Pontiff who is their object.

We congratulate the Witness upon the insight that he has obtained, or rather is beginning to obtain, into the reasons for the Catholic's faith. A glimmering of the truth has at last dawned upon his intellect; and may, we hope that it may, yet shine brighter until it reaches the light of perfect day. He has, in short, discovered that the reason, and the only reason, for the Catholic's belief in the supernatural order, is the authority of the Church; and that therefore the sole question at issue betwixt the latter and the Protestant is, the simple historical question—"What means, if any, did Christ Himself appoint for perpetuating and promulgating amongst all nations, and through all days, the supernatural knowledge of which He was the bearer?" The Catholic replies to this question by asserting the Church as the sole means so appointed; and his faith may be thus summed up:—

"Lord I believe all things whatsoever Thy Church believes and teaches, because Thou Who art the Truth hast revealed them unto her."

The question of "Church Authority," its origin and extent, are therefore the only questions the Catholic can entertain with the non-Catholic; and if the latter rejects the Church as the means, or medium by Christ Himself appointed for preserving and promulgating the supernatural truths of Christianity, he is bound to one of two things. Either he must show from authentic history that Christ has Himself appointed some other means for that purpose; or he must admit that He has appointed none—which would be tantamount to asserting the incompetence of Christ as the Messiah, and as a heavenly teacher.

But to admit the Church, as the means appointed by Christ for spreading the knowledge

of His Gospel, and to call in question, or to hesitate even about accepting, any of her teachings, would be a stretch of absurdity to which even the Witness would find it difficult to attain.— Either the Church is a sufficient authority for every article of faith, or she is not sufficient for any one of them; if her testimony is accepted on any one point in the supernatural order, it must be accepted as valid, indeed absolute on all; and if she be a divinely appointed teacher, he who rejects, or call in question even, any one of her teachings, calls in question the divine veracity itself, and is in danger of hell-fire.

This being the case the Witness is quite correct in its surmise that we do not dream of citing any other authority than that of the Church as the reason for our belief; and that we never appeal to writings of any kind in support of her teachings. 'This however is what we have done. We have shown that those teachings are not contradictory to, nor irreconcilable with, the language of the writings known as the Old and New Testaments; and this we have done because the Church teaches that those writings were divinely inspired; do contain therefore some portion at all events of the Word of God; and because it is important to show that the teachings of the Catholic Church, which are also the very Word of God, are not in contradiction with any other portion of that Word.— For this purpose, but for this purpose only, do we cite the Bible in controversy with Protestants. We do so, not to prove that what the Church teaches is true; not even to show that betwixt what she teaches, and what the Bible—the most mysterious indeed unintelligible book in the world—really teaches, there is, when the latter is properly interpreted, no semblance even of contradiction; but that the Bible is susceptible of an interpretation perfectly in harmony with the teachings of the Church. This is all that the Catholic can be called upon to do; and he can be called upon to do this, only because the Catholic Church herself teaches that the Bible is a divinely inspired book, whose teachings must therefore be in harmony with the teachings of the Church.

Thus in reply to the charge of idolatry, we argued that in giving to creature that which could not be offered to Creator, without a gross insult to the latter, without a denial of His Supreme Majesty—there could not be idolatry; which consists essentially in giving to creature that which belongs exclusively to Creator. Now the honor, and cultus which Catholics render to the Saints, and especially to the Blessed Mother of God; could not be offered to God. It differs from the worship that we offer to Him, and which is due to Him, not in degree but in kind; and even were it wrong, were it a violation of the Divine Law, it would no more be idolatry, than house-breaking is idolatry, or than Sabbath-breaking is burglary. It would, if a crime at all, be a crime sui generis, not comprised, or rather not prohibited in the Decalogue; which enjoins the worship of one sole God; which forbids the worshiping of more than one God; but which is perfectly silent as to the propriety or impropriety of invoking the assistance of the prayers of the Saints. To establish this fact we cite the Decalogue in controversy with Protestants; but merely to show that betwixt its precepts, and the teachings of the Church—to the effect that God is honored by the honor that we render to His Saints; and that His Supreme Majesty is not impugned by our invocation of their prayers to Him in our behalf—there is no irreconcilable difference, and that both therefore may be true, or from God Himself. That they actually are so, we can know only by means of the authority of an infallible Church; the sole medium of communication, in the supernatural order, betwixt God and man that we know of, or to which we would condescend to yield the slightest deference.

So also we cite several passages of Scripture to prove the historical fact, that the Israelites used images, or sensible signs, as adjuncts to, though not as the objects of, divine worship; and that this employment of sensible signs was not repugnant to the precepts of the Decalogue, which only prohibits the rendering to those sensible signs of that worship which is due to the invisible God. We argue also that—since one of the reasons why the Israelites were forbidden to make any image, sensible sign, or representation of God, was, that on the day when the Lord spake to them from Horeb, they heard the voice of the words only, but saw no similitude—and since that reason no longer exists for Christians to whom God has been made manifest in the form of a man, amongst whom the Word made flesh has dwelt—the prohibition, once binding on the former is not binding on the latter, as the reason for the prohibition no longer exists. In so far, but so far only, would we condescend to cite Scripture with Non-Catholics; as authentic historical documents, as credible in the natural order—but never as inspired or supernaturally credible, or as competent of themselves to settle a single point of doctrine.

For this reason too, the "hope" in which the Montreal Witness indulges, to the effect that "the Roman Catholic laity will search the Scriptures for themselves," is but a vain thing, an idle dream. The Catholic knows that the Scriptures of themselves, and without the authority of the Church are utterly useless; that they never were designed for a "rule of faith," and that had they been so designed, they are eminently unsuited for that purpose. Indeed it would be impossible to adduce an argument more conclusive against the divine mission of Christ than that with which the Protestant furnishes infidels when he pretends that the Bible is the sole "rule of faith" given to us by Christ. The author of such a "rule," so imperfect, so deficient in all that is most needed, most indispensable, in a "rule of faith," i.e., in explicitness and comprehensiveness—must, it is evident, have been deficient either in honesty or in intelligence—either in will or in power—and upon neither hypothesis therefore could he have been commissioned by a God the author of light and of truth. In matters with which as mortals we are concerned, in the affairs of this life, we can tolerate vagueness of expression, and ambiguous terms; but in those matters which concern us as immortal beings, but in the affairs of religion, we demand, above every-

thing, clearness, conciseness and precision, the absence of all vagueness or ambiguity, and indeed a sharpness of definition which we do not exact, and can safely dispense with, in all other circumstances. This clearness, conciseness and precision no one will pretend are to be found in the Bible; which, on all the most important articles of the Christian faith, observes a most careful silence, or at most indulges in a few mysterious and generally unintelligible hints; which of all the books or collections of writings, which treat of religious subjects, is the most obscure, enigmatical, and open to the most various and contradictory interpretations. The very idea of God involves the idea of a Being, infinitely Wise, Just, and Powerful. Reason teaches us that, if an all-wise God has made a revelation of His Will to man, He requires man to accept it in its plenitude and integrity; and that an all-just, and all-powerful God, must, therefore, have given to man, to all men without exception, to the most simple and unlettered as well as to the most highly cultivated, some short and simple means of arriving at the certain knowledge of all that He has revealed. We know too from history that the Christian revelation was not at first propagated by means of Scripture; whilst from the actual condition of that portion of the professedly Christian world which accepts Scripture as the sole "rule of faith," we know that it must be deficient in the most important, indeed indispensable, conditions of such a "rule," viz., in clearness and explicitness. We cannot, therefore, believe that an All-just, Wise, and Powerful Being has left us nothing but the Bible as our "rule of faith."

Nor is it only on matters of supernatural dogma, such as the Godhead, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Vicarious Atonement, that the language of the Bible is open to contradictory interpretations; but on matters of morality as well, or matters in which the temporal interests of man are directly concerned. Take the question of the sexual relations of Christians, or marriage—which again, is the basis of the Family and of Society; and from the Bible alone, Protestants have not as yet been able to ascertain, whether the union of the sexes is indissoluble, or not; or whether, if it is not indissoluble, for what causes it may be dissolved. Here is a question of immediate practical importance both in a temporal and spiritual, both in a natural and supernatural, point of view; and yet to this vital question it is practically impossible from the Bible alone to elicit any clear explicit response. What thence do we conclude? That God has not made the union of the sexes the subject of His Divine law? No, indeed! but that from the Bible alone, it is in practice impossible to deduce His revealed will upon the subject; and that, therefore, and because He is all-wise and infinitely just, He has given to His creatures some other means of arriving at a full and certain knowledge of that Divine Will—which He requires us to obey; and to a full and certain knowledge of which He must, therefore, if Wise and Just, have given us some easy means of attaining.

THE MARQUIS OF NORMANBY AND THE ITALIAN PATRIOTS.—The severest blow hitherto inflicted on the Italian Liberals comes from the pen of the Marquis of Normanby, in the form of a pamphlet entitled "The Congress and the Cabinet." We make some extracts.

The noble writer replies to the assertion that "nothing can exceed the order and regularity of the revolutionary governments":—

"Now, I say that, before Lord John Russell, a Minister of the Crown, volunteered these assertions, which of course his hearers believed, he ought to have informed himself as to facts. He must have known that the real truth was never permitted to appear in any of the revolutionary papers on the spot, which are all under strict censorship. That Lord John had no desire to inform himself I happen to know, as just at the close of this session a Tuscan arrived in England of some diplomatic experience, and who knew his own country thoroughly; and was a man so respected and esteemed by all parties, that this very Provisional Government had requested him to continue his administrative functions, that his influence might tend to preserve order. This person had been in Tuscany till the time of the elections, and of course knew much of all that was passing there. He had no mission from any one, and was only ready to make known what he thought important. Presuming upon my old friendship with Lord John (although my opposition in public to the policy of the present Government prevented my asking to introduce personally my Tuscan friend), I requested him by letter to see this person, and for his own sake he readily declined it; saying he was satisfied with what the Marquis Layetico told him. I will not stop here to comment upon the foreign intrigue, willfully ignored by Lord John, by which this impure of the supposed desire for annexation (to Sardinia) throughout Central Italy has been palmed upon those who have only a superficial knowledge of these subjects. I trust the Congress will boldly decide the question of principle—first, whether any popular leader may, with impunity and with European sanction, usurp supreme power in a small State, aided by foreign arms and assisted by foreign money and intrigues; and, secondly, whether he may at any moment, by an irregular appeal to an arbitrarily chosen minority of the population, transfer the allegiance of a settled State to a foreign pretender.

"Lord John Russell has taken a line by which it may be inferred that he or his deputy is prepared to urge in Congress that the vote of the Tuscan Assembly annexing that country to Piedmont must be accepted as a final solution. He will not listen to the plea that such vote was obtained by every variety of intimidation, and wholesale corruption by foreign agents, while the Government of the country was in the hands of those who had conspired against their Sovereign under the protection of the Sardinian flag; that the constituency was arbitrarily limited; that not more than half of those selected of the classes favorable to the change actually voted; that the electors were never told, and did not know for what their deputies were summoned; and that those deputies, without deliberation or explanation, in a silent sitting of a few minutes, voted the extinction of their country, which during the last five hundred years has boasted citizens proud of that country and worthy of it, somewhat superior to the Piedmontese tools which now fill the benches of the Palazzo Vecchio. All these considerations Lord John Russell is obstinately determined to ignore."

The gross dishonesty, or rather the thefts of the Italian Patriots, whose patriotism means but love of money, are next exposed by the Marquis of Normanby:—

The Dictator Ricasoli sent the officers of the Go-

vernment to the institution for young ladies in the Via della Scala, founded by the Dowager Grand Duchess, and renowned all over Italy. They broke open every drawer and every desk, searched from the cellar to the garret in hopes of finding the jewels of the Grand Duchess which they heard had been deposited there. They afterwards committed the same outrage at the Convent of Noble Ladies, the Mantellini—without success, as luckily the Grand Duchess took her jewels with her. They might just as well have rifled the jewel-box of any English lady, as they are all well-known to be private property; moreover, all the Grand Duke's property in Tuscany is private property; the palaces, the villas, the pictures, the statues, the gems of art, are all private property, for which an equivalent was given at the time of the cession to the House of Lorraine, with the exception of the gallery at the Pitti Palace, which was equally left to the Grand Duke, with the proviso that it was never to leave Florence, and to be left open for the public. All this was regulated by the will of the Princess Palatine, the last of the Medici, and guaranteed by European Treaties with a contingent succession to the House of Hapsbourg.— Having said thus much of the honesty of this "Model Government," let us see the liberty enjoyed under those "who seem as if they had long been the citizens of a free state." Arbitrary arrests have been numerous and important; officers of the army of the rank of major have been marched handcuffed through the streets to prison, because they have said they thought it would be the best thing to restore the Archduke Ferdinand, whose liberal feelings and intentions no one ever doubted.

The Advocate Andriozzi, was arrested, with many others, on a charge of conspiring against the existing Government. No evidence however was produced against him, but he, has since been tried in his dungeon by the prefect, in what is called, "Via economica," which means by a secret tribunal, without witnesses or power of defence, and has been condemned to two years imprisonment in a fortress. This leading person was not what the little coterie which Lord John lived with in 1856 at Florence, which went usually by the name of "Lord Minto's set," would have called "un vile codino." He was more liberal than the existing Government. This act was, in short, as if it were possible that Lord John Russell could, without regular trial, shut up John Bright for two years in a dungeon.

The amount of freedom, of civil and religious liberty that exists under Liberal Italian governments is also pointed out:—

It would be useless to detail now the many beneficent acts of the Grand Duke Leopold, at all periods when his people required his superintending assistance. Nor have his people forgotten the charitable exertions personally made both by him and the Grand Duchess, when together and on foot they visited the poorest parts of their city, and relieved the miseries and alleviated the sufferings caused by the great inundation of Florence; the devotion to his people which the Grand Duke showed when, sending his family for safety to the Lucca baths, he remained alone in Florence during the awful visitation of the cholera in 1856, when he emptied his cellars of all the wine they contained for the use of the hospitals, and personally superintended the working of that benign Institution the Misericordia—thereby exciting the imitation and stimulating the activity of all the upper classes, who nobly seconded his efforts. If any one wishes to inform himself as to what will be a true and faithful opinion of the reign of the Grand Duke when these trumpety slanders have been consigned to the oblivion they deserve, let him turn to a pamphlet recently published, entitled "Tuscani da se, or an owre true Tale." I do not know the writer, and he states that he never had any personal communication with the Grand Dukes, father or son, and therefore his opinion cannot be warped, as mine may be, by the friendship with which the Grand Duke Leopold has honored me for more than thirty years. I am aware that some of the statements I have made, and some which I am about to make, may be denied by the authorities of Florence, as has been the case before. But I am confident of the truth of the sources from which I derive my facts, and as long as the press is muzzled, and terrorism prevails I cannot compromise names. The public, therefore, must accept my facts as I receive them, and, assertion against assertion, must form their own judgment on the aggregate.

To return from this inevitable digression to the question how far Lord John was justified in the economies he passed upon any of these Governments.— The difficulty of ascertaining the truth is aggravated by two facts, neither of which I should think would please Lord John. The Press is shackled and the Post office rifled. As to the first, the same authority I have before quoted says, "This Government is always ready to pounce upon any paper, pamphlet, squib, or caricature which is distasteful to it;" and as to the Post-office, I myself received a letter the other day, sent by a private hand, announcing the appointment of two new officers, called "Verificatore," whose duty it is to open and suppress at their pleasure all letters containing anything the Government would dislike.

Now, as to the intimidation and corruption by which the so-called Popular Vote of Annexation was obtained, the details are but imperfectly known as yet; but the amount of the population which alone took part in it has been admitted by those who fixed the Constituency to have been intended to comprise only one twenty-fifth of the population; and as only one half voted the extinction of the country, it was only sanctioned by one in fifty of the population!

Even the Times's correspondent admits the dishonesty, and gross jobbery of the Italian patriotic party. Thus he writes:—

The Monitor contains a very lengthy decree for the reorganisation of the War Ministry. The office will be divided into three general departments, at the head of which will be a General Aide-de-Camp, a Secretary General, and a Director-General. It will consist of six sections, making up a personnel of 60 employes or officers, exclusive of a commissariat for the navy affording occupation to 16 more persons; altogether, with the Minister, the heads of departments, and their respective aides-de-camp, the War-office may turn out, whenever it pleases, a little battalion of 100 men.

All these doings of the Tuscan Government strike thinking persons about me as being melancholy in the extreme. Consider that Tuscany, so far as her own wish and irrevocable engagement may influence her destinies, is already, to all intents and purposes, an integral part of the strong Italian kingdom under King Victor Emmanuel; consider that by a league contracted months ago between this State and the adjoining Amilian Provinces, all the available Tuscan forces are under the command and general direction of General Panti, who is at the same time at the head of the military administration of the minor Duchies and the Legations, and could, without the least effort, take into his hands the reins of the whole war department of Central Italy; consider, moreover, that by the late appointment of Buoncompagni to the pro-Renegy it was settled that the general command of the forces of the League should—nominally, at least—devolve upon him, and that no better opportunity could offer itself for the organisation of a combined administration of the warlike resources of a state which may so soon be called upon to put such resources into operation, and could not fail to derive the greatest benefit from that union or unity of action which alone constitutes strength—consider all this, I say, and then explain, if you can, the conduct of a Provincial Government coddling its brains to give a permanent organisation to the separate military establishment of a country which is to cease to be a separate country; which, even as a separate country, never was, never is likely to be, a warlike State, and give it such an organisation, too, as could scarcely best a

military State of the very first order. A navy administration also! 16 employes and a chef to manage the affairs of the Tuscan fleet—a fleet consisting of a single petty frigate, the Giglio, which never performed, and never will perform, any more important office than it did yesterday, of conveying the body of the Marquis of Lajatico all the way from Genoa to Leghorn!

His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto sails for Europe on the 11th inst., bearing with him the affectionate regards of his spiritual children, to whom he has ever been a most attached and zealous father.

BAZAAR FOR THE SALLE D'ASYLE.—This Bazaar opened on Monday last, and has been continued throughout the week. The display of objects is very handsome, and the purpose for which the funds are designed most meritorious. We trust therefore that the bazaar may receive that encouragement from the public which it deserves, and that thus the Salle D'Asyle may be enabled to continue with renewed vigor its work of Christian Charity. We would remind our readers that the bazaar will open until to-morrow evening; and that every day at 3 p.m. there is a most interesting examination of the little pupils, at which all are invited to assist.

A DEAF AND DUMB SISTER OF CHARITY.—On Saturday last His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, received the vows of Miss Margaret H. Henley, aged 17 years, a deaf and dumb pupil of the Institution in Mignonne Street.— This young lady is the first deaf and dumb person in Canada who has made a religious profession, and is a striking proof of the advantages conferred upon the community by the institution wherein she received her training.

SCHOOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS.—We had the satisfaction of witnessing on Tuesday last the examination of the Schools in the Quebec Suburbs under the direction of the Christian Brothers; and have much pleasure in recording our admiration of the wonderful proficiency evinced by the pupils. Montreal has good reasons to congratulate herself upon having in her midst such a band of noble instructors as are the good Brothers; and it is earnestly to be desired that Catholic parents should avail themselves of the advantages which they thence enjoy. In a community like ours, blessed with such institutions as the Christian Brothers' Schools there can be no excuse for ignorance; and God will demand a strict account at the hands of that parent, who failing to profit by the many blessings which he enjoys, allows his children to grow up destitute of a sound Christian education.

It would be superfluous to speak of the pains taken with the religious instruction of the pupils of the Christian Brothers; for the malice of bigotry cannot deny to them the merit, at all events, of giving the first place in their system to the inculcating of the truths and duties of Christianity. But in a secular point of view their system is no less admirable, and worthy of the highest praise, as was abundantly established by the great proficiency of their pupils, in all the branches of their studies—comprising Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, Trigonometry, and the elements of Astronomy. The proceedings were agreeably diversified by music, and addresses from the several pupils, and left upon the minds of all present a profound conviction of the value of the services which the Christian Brothers are rendering to the Church, and to civil society.

"THE CATHOLIC LADDER."—This is a very handsomely executed sheet, with an accompanying pamphlet in explanation, wherein is traced the history of God's Church from the creation of the world to the present day. By means of this Ladder, the student of ecclesiastical history can at a glance collect, and assign to each its due significance—all the most important events connected with religion that have occurred in all parts of the world; and we can therefore warmly recommend it as a most valuable adjunct to our educational institutions. His Grace the Archbishop of Oregon sanctions the publication of this work, which is for sale at Messrs. Sadliers', and at M. M. Fabre et Gravel, Montreal. As the number of copies is limited an early application is necessary.

ESSAI SUR LES LETTRES DE CHANGE, ET LES BILLET PROMISSOIRE. Par Desire Girouard, John Lovell, Montreal.

This is a treatise in the French language, on Letters of Exchange and Promissory Notes, which will be gladly received by the commercial public. The work is dedicated to the Hon. Sir Louis H. Lafontaine, and is elegantly printed by the Montreal publishers.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR MADE EASY.—By George G. Vasey, John Lovell Montreal.

Well adapted for the use of schools, and students of the English language.

A PORTRAIT.—The Kingston Herald of the 3rd instant notices the visit of the unhappy Chiquay to Kingston, and his dreary exhibition at the different meeting-houses of that city. Our contemporary describes him as the possessor of "a somewhat over-fed inexpressive countenance;" and speaks of his address, as "somewhat more humorous and ejaculatory in style than the sermons." Protestants are accustomed to hear, but destitute of all "pretensions to eloquence or learning."

ERRATUM.—Remittances received through E. M' Cormick, and not through E. M'Carthy, as acknowledged in last week's list of acknowledgments.

TERREBONNE ELECTION.—We learn from parties who were present at the show of hands yesterday in Terrebonne County, that the majority for Mr. Morin was very great—three to one says our informant.—Transcript, 9th inst.

SUDDEN DEATH.—We understand that Mr. A. Hume, formerly a candle-maker in the Quebec Suburbs, died of apoplexy on board the cars coming into town on Monday night from New York.—Herald, 8th instant.