

## The True Witness

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 27.

## ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

APRIL—1866.

Friday, 27—SS. Soter and Caius.

Saturday, 28—Of the Immaculate Conception.

Sunday, 29—Fourth after Easter. St. Peter, M.

Monday, 30—St. Catherine, W.

MAY—1866.

Tuesday, 1—SS. Philip and James, Ap.

Wednesday, 2—St. Athanasius, B. D.

Thursday, 3—Finding of the Holy Cross.

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The promptitude with which the people of Canada responded to the appeal of their Government, when the country was menaced with a Fenian raid, is recognised, and duly praised in the British press. There is no talk now of Canadian apathy, or of Canadian disloyalty, but, on the contrary, there is a sincere feeling of respect for us; and the determination is avowed to protect the Province with all the resources of the Empire, should the occasion make it necessary. The Volunteers, their appearance, their good discipline, and efficiency are noted, and commented upon; and one consequence of the late excitement has been greatly to raise Canada and her people in the estimation of the British public.

The English papers speak more confidently of the chances of the Ministerial Reform Bill. Mr. Gladstone had made a great speech at Liverpool, in which he spoke of Fenianism as, in great measure, the product of bad government; and held out hopes that the affairs of Ireland, and more especially its land question, were to be taken up seriously by the Ministry of which he is a member. He alluded also to the menaces of Fenians in the U. States against Canada; denouncing the threatened raid in the following energetic, but by no means exaggerated terms of reprobation:—

"We are told that Canada and New Brunswick are threatened with fire and slaughter from the revenge of Fenians for wrongs inflicted by England upon Ireland; and this I must say, that if the men of Canada and New Brunswick, who are wholly guiltless of those wrongs, be they what they may, who have not entered into these controversies, who have no more to do with them than the people of the Sandwich Islands—if the Fenians, as they call themselves in America, are capable of the diabolical and abominable wickedness of passing the frontier, and of making their miserable and impotent attempts—which they will be—(cheers)—and carry desolation over those peaceful districts and among those harmless colonists—then I say, so far from treating the conduct of those men (let them be Americans, or let them be whom they like) with allowance or indulgence, I say more execrable manifestation of folly and of guilt has ever been made in the annals of the human race from the time it has existed on the globe. (Cheers.) Men who are capable of such proceedings would at once by their insanity, place themselves entirely beyond the sympathy of the whole civilized world." (Cheers, hear.)

The altercation betwixt Prussia and Austria still seriously threatens the peace of Europe.—Both Powers have put their armies on a war footing, and we may expect to hear at any moment of the outbreak of hostilities. This would be the signal for a general war. Russia and France, and Piedmont would feel themselves called upon to take part therein; and thus the outrage upon Denmark promises to be speedily and signally avenged.

The Fenian demonstrations at Eastport have resulted in one valourous case of arson, on Indian Island, a small undefended spot where there is a Custom House. On Thursday night a small party of Fenians crossed over to the island by stealth, and having heroically set fire to the building, they gallantly ran away again. The U. States authorities, it is now said, are in earnest in their endeavors to put a stop to those proceedings, which to the unprejudiced savor more of petty larceny, than of patriotism.

At Halifax the Cholera has made its appearance on shore. A young priest, the Rev. Mr. McIsaac, whom many at Montreal must remember, had been attacked whilst heroically laboring in his holy vocation; the last accounts represent him as progressing favorably. Of the medical men who so nobly volunteered their services in the case of the pest ship—the *England*, one, we regret to say, has fallen a victim to the disease. His name—be it mentioned with honor such as that which we give to the brave soldier

who dies on the field of battle—is Dr. Slayer. Two others of his gallant companions, Drs. Garrie and Gossip had been attacked, but were recovering. Eight of the passengers made their escape from the *England*, and it is thought must have brought the disease, now declared to be Asiatic Cholera of the most malignant type, on shore with them. One fatal case is reported from Portland; and this also is said to have occurred amongst some of the escaped *England's* passengers.

Wheeler, the person said to be a Yankee colonel, who was arrested the other day at Cornwall on suspicion of being a Fenian agent, has been discharged. In the telegraphic report the conduct of the magistrates is harshly criticised, and it is hinted that Methodism and Masonry were at the bottom of their decision. The other prisoners, Murphy, Shedy & Co. are still under examination; but, if in their case anything important has been elicited by the Magistrates, it has not as yet been made public.

Spring is coming on fast. Steamers and barges have arrived in port, and the advancing season warns us to set our houses in order against Cholera. The Corporation is but a rotten stick to lean upon, and our citizens must learn to help themselves. Every man can do something towards preserving the health of the city, by his personal cleanliness, by his attention to ventilation in his own house, and by keeping his premises free from dirt, and all nuisances. He who allows filth, manure, and decaying animal or vegetable matter to accumulate in his yard, is an active ally of the Cholera, and is morally responsible for the consequences of his criminal neglect: he should be treated as an enemy, and his neighbors should take prompt legal measures to compel him to do his duty. It seems to us also that the Police are shamefully negligent in the matter of domiciliary visits, for many of the yards in all parts of the town are still in a most disgraceful condition of filth. Numbers in short do not appear to be impressed with a due idea of the all importance of cleanliness, and good ventilation: and yet how striking is this one fact in the case of the disease on board of the *England*. Its ravages were confined to the steerage passengers, all those in the cabin escaping unscathed. Does not this show clearly, that what fuel is to fire, are dirt and bad air to Asiatic Cholera?

Dr. Carpenter whose name as a sanitary reformer has long been before the public, and who has rendered great services to the people of many of the large cities of England, is now in Montreal, organising local health committees, to suppress nuisance in their several districts, and to co-operate with the authorities in the task which evidently lies before us, and cannot be shirked. It is to be hoped that the counsels and labors of the above named gentleman, will be properly appreciated; and that he may be as successful in improving the sanitary condition of Montreal, as he has been in England.

One of the difficulties—and an incomprehensible one it is—with which the Corporation has to struggle, is that of finding some place whereon to discharge the filth and refuse of the City. What in the name of all that is wonderful are our farmers, our market gardeners about? Are they idiots, that they do not compete with one another for the riches that the Corporation of Montreal is throwing away, or trying to get rid of on any terms? They should be glad to be allowed to carry away with them to their farms, the filth of the City, even if they were charged for the privilege, for thereby they would be enabled to bring back their miserable, half-starved lands into good condition, and to make fortunes for themselves whilst conferring a benefit on the town. They would rush for gold if it were told them that gold nuggets were to be picked up in the streets: but to the farmer and gardener, the filth of a town is far more valuable than gold.

It has been generally assumed that the programme of a filibustering raid upon Canada has found acceptance only with the Sweeney wing of the Fenian host in the United States; and that the O'Mahoney wing or section, has always been opposed to it, either because impolitic, or useless to Ireland, or as manifestly dishonest. From the New York *Irish People*, Mr. O'Mahoney's accredited organ, it would seem, however, that this assumption is erroneous; that the only difference betwixt the two factions in the Fenian body, as to the meditated raid, is as to the time when; and that an attack upon, and the robbery of, their unoffending neighbors always was, and still is, an integral portion of the Fenian programme, but kept in the back ground for fear of interference from Washington. Upon this matter, in its issue of the 21st instant, the *Irish People* thus expresses itself:—

"We see no reason why General Sweeney's plans could not be carried out as originally intended, in conjunction with movements in Ireland and elsewhere."

"The invasion of Canada is not an original idea with the men who advocate it before the public now. It is a part of the original plan of campaign, snatched from its proper place in the secret archives of the Brotherhood, and given to the country to secure popular support. The publicity given to this project by the 'party of action' as they are called, must be in evident ignorance of the neutrality laws of the United States, or for the purpose of inducing

the interference of the Government in the affairs of the brotherhood—Irish People.

It is strange that the Fenians do not see the false and odious position in which they place themselves, and their countrymen in whose name they profess to speak, by this declaration of their utter disregard for all the laws of political morality, of their contempt for right, and of their willingness to inflict wrong on others, from whom their countrymen, in the hour of distress, have received nothing but kindness, and hospitality, and true Christian charity. The Fenians would fain enlist the sympathies of the world in behalf of Ireland, as a country oppressed, and held by brute force in subjection to an alien rule; and yet they do their best to render that sympathy impossible, by proclaiming themselves ready—not only without provocation of any kind, but in spite of the hospitable reception which their starving, plague-stricken countrymen have always received in Canada—to inflict on the latter the self same wrong. If the military rule of Ireland by England, be a sin calling to heaven for vengeance; if the Government of Great Britain have no right to impose its yoke, its favored form of policy, on Ireland—how can it be less a sin, for the Fenians in the United States to compass the infliction of a hated alien rule upon Canada, of which a large portion is French by race, Catholic by religion? what better right have they, or have the people of the United States, to attempt to impose their favored system of policy on the people of Canada who hate it?

Nothing can be more just, and reasonable than that men who do not scrupulously respect the rights and liberties of others, should themselves be trampled upon, and treated as slaves.—Were the expressed sentiments of the Fenians towards the people of Canada the sentiments, as towards other political communities, of the Irish people (which we firmly believe that they are not) the latter would deserve to be looked upon, and to be treated as the enemies of the human race; as men who having no regard, no respect for the liberties and the national independence of others, deserved no better fate than that of being kept down, and checked in their piratical or filibustering propensities, by the strong hand of the stranger. It would be impossible to sympathise with the Irish, where they really prepared to be the oppressors of other nationalities, and to inflict upon inoffensive strangers the same wrongs which, when inflicted upon themselves, they so bitterly resent, and cry out against. How is it possible, we do not say to sympathise with, but to refrain from contempt for the cant and hypocrisy of men who, whilst loudly asserting in their own behalf the right of self-government, by their acts deny the same right to others? who are in Europe clamorous for the severance of the political bonds which unite their country to England? and on this side of the Atlantic give their aid to rivet by force of arms the same bonds upon the gallant people of the Southern States, struggling for national independence, and upon the Catholic children of Old France? We say it advisedly. The inconsistency of the Fenians, and their openly proclaimed contempt for the rights and liberties of others, bring disgrace upon that country of which they profess themselves the champions; force the blush of shame to the cheeks of her best friends; and make it painful and difficult to the latter, nay, almost impossible, to advocate her cause, and to justify the reasonable claims of Ireland's true patriots.

The aspirations of the Irish after freedom for themselves, after the right to govern themselves, and to reform the abuses of which their country has long been the victim, are not only legitimate, but are high and holy aspirations, if proceeding from a genuine love of right, if proceeding from a genuine and intense hatred of wrong, no matter by whom, or to whose profit perpetrated.—But who shall believe that in such a love, and in such a hatred, the Fenian aspirations have their rise, when we see them so indifferent to the rights and liberties of others; when we hear them boasting of their intention to inflict wrong, the wrong of alien rule, in their own behalf, upon Canada? This is not, we say, the way to make Ireland respected, or her cause popular with honest men: and altogether irrespective of the ends which the Fenians propose to themselves, the means by which they propose to attain those ends are such as to deserve the scorn of every honest man, and the execration of every lover of liberty.

Certainly if it had been from the beginning of their enterprise, the object of the Fenians to quench all sympathy for the cause of Ireland, and to make their own names stunk in the nostrils of honest men, they could not have adopted a better plan than that which under the councils of their leaders they now declare themselves prepared to follow. Herein lies a grievous wrong inflicted upon Ireland by the Fenians; for naturally all unprejudiced persons, all Catholics especially, are disposed to sympathise with Ireland, and to bid God speed to all who by lawful means, such as the Catholic Church can approve of, seek to ameliorate her social and political condition. But the Fenians, in so far as they represent Irish sentiment, are doing their best to put their country outside the pale of human

sympathy; since they hesitate not to proclaim their disregard for all right, for all justice, and their readiness to inflict—had they but the power to do so—the curse and the disgrace of alien rule upon this Catholic country, which has never wronged Ireland.

CONFEDERATION IN NOVA SCOTIA.—This long agitated question has assumed quite a new aspect, in consequence of a Resolution lately adopted by the Legislature of Nova Scotia by a large majority—31 to 19. We may therefore accept it as indicative of the views upon the question generally entertained by the people of that Province.

The Resolution, which was introduced by Dr. Tupper, the Premier, and seconded by Mr. Archibald, leader of the Opposition, was conceived in the following terms:—

"Whereas, in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a Confederation of the British North American Provinces should take place,—

"Resolved—Therefore, that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be authorised to appoint delegates to arrange with the Imperial Government a scheme of Union which will effectually ensure just provision for the rights and interests of this Province; each Province to have an equal voice in such delegation,—Upper and Lower Canada being for this purpose considered as separate Provinces."

It will be seen that by this Resolution Nova Scotia rejects, or ignores all that has hitherto been done in the premises, whether by the delegates to the Quebec Conference in 1864, or by the Canadian Legislature in 1865. The Sister Province is for a Union of some kind; to that Union it is willing even to give the name of Confederation, though such a title applied to any conceivable Union of States not sovereign and independent, not absolutely the arbiters of their own destinies, is a ludicrous misnomer; and to bring about this Union it is willing to send its delegates to confer, under the auspices of the Imperial Government, with delegates from the other Provinces. This Resolution, if acted upon, is a death blow to the Quebec scheme.

Again it is proposed, that the Union of Upper and Lower Canada into one Province, should, for the purpose of carrying out the plan of a new Conference of Provincial delegates, be treated as rescinded; that they should, as represented in the said delegation, be considered as to all intents and purposes two distinct and separate Provinces. This also is what we have insisted upon in the *True Witness*. The very term of Confederation implies previous separation: since, as no one at a ball can be his, or her, own partner, so for a Confederation of any kind there must be at least two distinct, or separate States or Provinces. A virtual repeal of the existing incorporating Union betwixt Upper and Lower Canada, by which they are at present welded into one mass, or political organisation, is a condition, *sine qua non*, of any future Confederation betwixt them.

It is highly probable that the lately passed Resolution of the Nova Scotia Legislature will be accepted as the basis of fresh negotiations on the question of the Union of British North America. If so, we say, the whole work has to be done over again; and Lower Canada, if in the contemplated delegation she be treated as virtually a distinct State or Province, will be to a much greater extent than she has been heretofore, mistress of her own destinies; provided only that it be clearly understood that no system of Union be imposed upon her by a majority of the said delegation, contrary to the expressed views and the votes of her own particular delegates. These, as the representatives of their several Provinces, must have, severally, the right of stipulating absolutely for those whom they represent, and of accepting, or rejecting without appeal, the proffered terms. In a word, each Province should have through its delegates the right of absolute veto upon the entire proceedings: for without this, Catholic Lower Canada would be obliged to put up with any terms that a majority of Protestant delegates might be pleased to impose upon her.

THE JAMAICA COMMISSION.—The chief difficulty in the way of arriving at the truth in the matter of the negro insurrection and massacre at Morant Bay, and the consequent alleged atrocities of the troops, consists in this: That the witnesses are for the most part negroes; and that negro testimony is for the most part worthless. Of this a very striking instance is given in a recent letter by the *Special Correspondent* of the *London Times*.

Hearing that an investigation into the circumstances of the insurrection was taking place, and believing that they were to be indemnified for any losses by them sustained during the disturbances, the negroes of course came forward in large numbers as volunteer witnesses, to swear to all manner of atrocities, hangings, floggings, and house-burnings, by the troops. Of their stories many are incredible; many—as in the case of women who, having sworn to the fact of their having been flogged, have been subsequently examined, and proved never to have received a blow—are evidently false; but of all the horrid stories, that sworn to most positively by a negro woman, Sarah Robinson, is the most remarkable, and the best illustrative of the worth of negro testimony.

This woman came a distance of 31 miles to tell

her story before the Commission. She deposed that her husband and her son had been hung; that she herself had been ordered for execution, but respited; that she had been brutally ill-treated by the soldiery; that the latter had killed many little children by dashing their brains out against trees; and that she had herself seen several soldiers go to a woman, and deliberately shoot her, and the baby of which she had just been delivered. All these horrors she swore to, giving place, and particulars; so that Sir Henry Storks asked her if she could point out the house, where the last mentioned atrocity took place. "Oh yes," she replied, "I can point out the very house;" whereupon His Excellency replied, to her surprise, "Then you shall go with us to-morrow and do so;" for he was determined to probe the matter to the bottom.

Accordingly next day, the Governor, accompanied by this Sarah Robinson, sailed in steamer *Constance* for Morant Bay; and upon her arrival she was requested to point out the houses where the horrors by her sworn to before the Royal Commission, had occurred. We will here let the *Times* correspondent tell the remainder of the story in his own words:—

She rode to Stony Gut with the Governor, the Commissioners, and the aides-de-camp. The house she was to point out was not at Stony Gut, but two miles further on, and she led the way to a cluster of small settlements called Middleton. His Excellency, with Mr. Gurney, Mr. Maule, and the whole following, went patiently in her wake. At length she pointed out the house—a small cottage, made of mud and wattle, with hard earthen floor, divided into two rooms or compartments. But there were these difficulties in her story—first, that the triple murders, if they took place in this house, could not possibly have been seen from the road, as she alleged; and secondly, that the owner and occupier of the house, with the neighbors, denied all knowledge of the massacre. This, however, did not alter Sarah's view of things, and she stoutly persisted that she was telling the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.—Then a high Commission Court was held under a tall, but not particularly wide-spreading cocoa-nut tree. Depositions were taken unfavorable to Sarah's story; and in the absence of secretary, or shorthand writer, Mr. Maule took the notes. The principal witness kept up wonderfully; but when the Commissioners returned to Morant Bay, and proceeded to the police-station, at which plumed hats and swords had been left, she seemed to think that her time had come to make a clean breast of it. Mr. Maule suddenly found her at his feet, lying a pair of somewhat dusty boots, and refusing to be lifted up. She said, apparently with much inward, and certainly with considerable outward struggling, that she had made a mistake—that was her mild euphemism for the lie; but if Massa would not shoot her, she would never—never make such a mistake again. The Commissioners ought to have been indignant, but I believe the difficulty was to keep grave.—Sarah was assured that she would not be shot, but she instantly came to the conclusion that she would be flogged, and that redoubled her lamentation until a comfortable assurance came that the 'buckra' gentlemen did not even mean to inflict this punishment.

We have here a fair specimen of the nature of negro testimony; and with scarce anything better than this testimony to guide them, it is no wonder that the Royal Commissioners find their task a very difficult one; nor will it be much matter of surprise if but little value be attached to their Report based, as that Report in the nature of things must be, on the evidence of such witnesses as this Sarah Robinson. Where their evidence is corroborated by that of white men it may be accepted; but in all other cases it is not worth the trouble of taking down, so regardless of truth are negroes for the most part, or rather so incapable of appreciating the moral guilt of perjury.

CRIME AND IGNORANCE.—A gentleman named Dr. Blanchard Fosgate, of Auburn, N. Y., formerly Physician to the New York State Prison at Auburn, has lately published a pamphlet, containing the results of his experience; and has given to the world some very important statistics, as illustrative of the relations existing betwixt Crime, and Secular Education. On the principle that one ounce of facts is worth a pound of theories, we would respectfully present to the consideration of the Rev. Mr. Ryerson some of these statistics, as culled from Dr. Fosgate's pamphlet.

The most important facts laid before the public in his work are these. That the greater proportion of criminals are men who have received, at least, a common school education; that great numbers have had the benefit of a still higher educational course; and that the proportion of educated to uneducated criminals or convicts, is greater than that of educated to uneducated persons outside of the walls of the Penitentiary:—

The popular belief that ignorance is the source of crime, and consequently intellectual cultivation—the ability to read, write and to calculate,—will improve the moral sentiment, statistics accompanying prison reports for the past seventeen years show to be an error. At Sing Sing, in the year 1848, the average number of convicts was seven hundred and forty-four, of which seventy-five per centum possessed in some degree the elements of education, and of that number only one hundred and seventy-six were convictions of the year. In 1856, eight years thereafter, the average number was nine hundred and sixty-three, and of these three hundred and forty-six new convicts, but one of their number was unable to read. In 1864, eight years more, the average number was nine hundred and forty-three, two hundred and thirty one being the convictions of that year, and but thirty-six of them were without some education. At Auburn the reports of 1848 and 1856 show no better results; while that of 1864 informs us that of the five hundred and fifty convicts there confined, the degrees of education are, "seven classical, fourteen academic, two hundred and thirty-seven common school, two hundred read and write, fifty-two read only, and forty-one are without education," presenting proportionally, a higher grade of education than that of the surrounding community. From these facts, in connection with the almost universal diffusion of education emanating from the free