

The True Witness

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. XXIX.—NO. 9.

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1878.

TERMS: \$1.50 per annum In Advance.

OUR PARIS LETTER.

XXVII.

(From a Regular Correspondent.)

HOTEL DE LOUVRE,
Paris, Sept. 26, 1878.

The trains are yet flooding us with visitors; they bring hundreds, nay, thousands, from the provinces daily. Only the other night one train from Dieppe brought five hundred. It is almost impossible to crowd the Exhibition, two hundred thousand would do not that except in a few comparatively confined sections, where committees of arrangements have created what are practically *enclaves*—a sad mistake. The average has now reached nearly 70,000 a day; the average for the whole period to the end of August is over 57,000 a day, and the money taken for tickets, alone, considerably over 6,000,000 francs.

September has been the grand month for pleasure, parades and Exhibitions, and our own countrymen have, next to England, doubtless, supplied the largest foreign contingent. The Trocadero has a grand character of its own; it is complete in itself and deserves special treatment. He must be an ardent sight-seer indeed, who will get through the Industrial Building over the Champ de Mars, and finish his day by working up the Trocadero. The Trocadero not only has its own facade and grand entrance, but these form one of the remarkable features, from an architectural view, of the whole Exhibition; and, what is more, it is considerably more easy of access than the other buildings. On the Avenue de la Gare, a special station, called the Avenue de Trocadero, has been built. Visitors from the terminus of St. Lazare, or any other station on the line, reach it in a few minutes for four or six sous, and a ten minutes' walk, or a comfortable tramway carriage, will set them down at the building.

The Palais des Fêtes, as it is baptised, is peculiar in its architecture, and has been dubbed "Byzantine-Renaissance of the 19th Century," but it is a very striking building, grand in proportions, capped with two elegant towers, and occupies a most imposing position. The approach to it is especially striking; in front is the largest basin of water containing the grandest fountain in all Paris. The water is not spouted out of shells, nor out of the mouths of amphibious, mythical or any other kind of animals, but is thrown up in a grand *gerbe*, or sheaf, from a mass of billushes. In the centre is one fine jet, and all around falls the liquid and sparkling water in exquisite curves, breaking into spray and reflecting the sunshine with the most varied and beautiful effects. This fountain is alone worth coming to Paris to see. The basin is probably a hundred feet in diameter, and the fountain is quite large enough for such a basin. Around the former is a broad band of brilliant flowers, outside this again an emerald slope and slight iron fence, and beyond, there is a fine circular promenade with a double row of trees. Opposite this grand fountain is the great Salle des Fêtes, not, however, visible from this, the Passy, side. Two grand entrances, one on each side of the central portion, lead into noble vestibules, the roof supported by massive polished pillars of Jura stone, with handsomely sculptured capitals and bases, and between these some pieces of sculpture in bronze, including a fine Buddha from Japan. From these vestibules, doors lead into the grand *salle*, or amphitheatre. The decorations of this *salle* are light and effective. Right and left of this gigantic central body, like those of an extra large specimen of the famous *roc*, the outspread wings of the palace extend more than a thousand feet across the whole of the hill, and, curving gracefully, seem to half envelope the lonely grounds in their embrace. The park-front of the central *salle*, as well as of the wings, is reached throughout its entire length, and from it an admirable view is obtained not only of the river and the Exhibition on the opposite bank, but of a considerable part of Paris on the one hand, and of the suburbs on the other. Here, too, the great cascade, the fountains and the plantations are seen to advantage. On the plinths of the head of the cascade, and on others which surround the basin below, are fine emblematical figures of personages and animals in bronze gilt by some of the best sculptors in France; and, below and beyond, the French and other gardeners have exhibited their utmost skill. The cascade is not considered a success. There is a large body of water, but the fall is altogether too measured, too artificial to produce much effect, except when regarded from the edge of the great basin in the garden below. I should mention that the immense basin referred to above is the reservoir that supplies the cascade. Below are fine jets of water, and at the sides of the cascade a number of small fountains, which have a charming effect. There is, however, much to notice before descending into the grounds beneath.

On the first floor most of the congresses and conferences meet; there are two *salles de conference* capable of accommodating 500 persons each, and here meetings of savants, economists and others are held daily. The last that I attended was on geology; the course now progressing includes weights measures and money, industrial and artistic property and rights. Some of these congresses are free, others require membership with subscriptions of 10 francs to 25 francs. But these rooms are not confined to the purposes of conferences; they contain a large and most interesting collection, from various sources of national portraits, many of them of great excellence, and many others most curious. I cannot here describe the contents of these and the other galleries on this side, but I may mention that amongst the portraits will be found those of a large number of the most famous men and women of the two last centuries by the most eminent artists of the time. None, perhaps, are more full of interest than two effigies of Paquelin *de* Mollere, by two eminent hands, alike in feature, but as

unlike in expression as possible, but in perfect condition, and two of Boileau.

The retrospective collections which form of themselves a suburb exhibition, occupy the entire length of the two immense wings already referred to, each composed of sixteen *salles*, or sections, and will be described separately. It is sufficient here to say that almost every country in Europe and Asia has contributed to them, and that the arts of barbarism, semi-barbarism and civilization, from the flint age to the last century, are admirably, if not completely, represented. Such is the extent of this marvellous collection of works of all ages, in metal, wood, ivory, stone, marble, clay, wool, silk, &c., that these thirty or more *salles* are filled and a large collection of Oriental objects had to be placed in a gallery on the floor above.

From the terraces of the *Palais des Fêtes* bold flights of steps descend into the grounds. In the midst of the beautiful garden on the left hand, a mass of rock, partly overhanging and overrun with trees and shrubs, ferns, flowers and mosses, marks the place of the great water aquarium to which there is access by flights of steps. On one side of the great basin into which the water of the cascade falls, is a Spanish, and opposite to it a French restaurant; still further down, on the right hand, is the group of interesting annexes belonging to various Oriental nations—Persia, Egypt, Morocco and Tunis, China, Japan and Siam, with three pretty timber constructions belonging to Sweden and Norway; and in the corresponding portion of the grounds, on the other hand, is the handsome Algerian palace, and its surrounding kiosks. A considerable portion of this corner is occupied by a building constructed by order of the board that has the care of the woods and forests of France, and admirably is the subject illustrated with its fine timber and its picturesque cottages. In connection with this is an exhibition of insects, useful and injurious to man and to

AFGHANISTAN.

By Mr. ROBERT MURPHY, "EVENING POST."

The present war now impending between England and Afghanistan having brought this almost unknown portion of the globe before the public, we publish a series of papers from the pen of Mr. Robert Murphy, of our staff, resident for a considerable period in the midst of this semi-barbarous nation, and which will appear from time to time in our columns.

FIRST PAPER.

Afghanistan borders the north-western portion of our Indian Empire, and has, from the date of the battle of Plassey been a serious bone of contention between the Anglo-Saxon and the Russ. It is, however, unimportant to bring forward the several intrigues of these two powers for ascendancy in the East. That is a matter of history, and will no doubt be read by every scholar and student of the present day with great avidity, especially owing to the position and character of the scenes and actions about to be encountered by the rival powers. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon the geographical or physical peculiarities of this interesting country. However, one noteworthy fact in connection with the Afghans may be alluded to at the outset, and that is the general belief prevailing among the natives, that they are the lineal descendants of the

LOST TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL. This fact or assumption is further corroborated by their cast of features, peculiar customs and general nomenclature of localities. The Afghan country being of a mountainous character, its inhabitants, as might be expected, are brave, hardy and warlike, fearless of danger, and ever ready to fight to the death for their hearths and homes. Their

from the borders of Persia during the latter part of the thirteenth century, and such was the zeal then displayed by the disciples of that most notorious of modern impostors, Mahomet, that in a few short hours, as it were, the entire country was converted to that religion, and have ever since remained one of the most faithful and zealous of its supporters. Mohammedans are generally looked upon as fanatical, in so far as their creed is concerned, but this is one of those general and popular delusions so prevalent amongst the professed Christians of the present day. Although the strict order of the Koran, the Mussulman's Bible, prohibits the use of either wine or any fermented fluid of the grape, yet visit whatever party or other convivial gathering, this liquid is found in frequent use. This is even the case with their most celebrated Moolahs or priests. This distinction is not, however, to be attributed to a wilful contravention of the laws of the Koran, but simply to a generous and hospitable nature and a genuine thorough knowledge of what Mahomet meant when he pronounced against *Shirah*. No doubt as far as the sanctity of their mosques or places of worship are concerned, they are particularly noticeable, as other orientals are, in their determination to prevent strangers or people of other creeds from entering therein; still, if asked in a becoming manner, they, if the stranger conforms to existing rules, will admit him and he will be courteously received by all concerned. The ignorant part of the population is just the same as that portion of the community to be found in other countries.

ISLAMISM

is, with the usual contradiction of almost all religious beliefs, divided into a thousand and one ramifications, and, no doubt, owing to this very common feature of our worldly system, has

as that of Catholic and Orangemen in the city of Montreal.

In our next paper we shall give a brief and succinct account of the manners, customs, social relations, government, and personal features of this most interesting nation.

PART II.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

The extreme cordiality of the social customs and manners of the Afghans is almost a proverb throughout the East. No doubt there are exceptions to every rule, and as a matter of course also to this most sweeping assertion, but it must be decidedly shown that such is the case. The first salutation of two people meeting on the streets or highways, or of one visiting another, is that well known Oriental one, *Salam Alakoom*. This is immediately answered back by the expression, *Alakoom Salam*, which is then answered by the host with the peculiarly Mussulman expression of *Bismillah*—in the name of God. A single instance will suffice the reader of their manner of entertaining invited, or even uninvited guests, or whosoever claims the host's protection.

A HOSPITABLE HOST.

I had hardly reached Cabul and taken up my quarters in the Caravanserai Kalaat, when I hurried towards the quarters of Sherref Aga Khan, a well-known *Sheef*, or banker, in order to arrange a certain financial transaction at that time most pressing. Proceeding through the streets, which presented the usual Oriental aspect of narrowness and dirt, dogs and filth, and amid a somewhat heterogeneous mass of humanity, the Afghan, the Persian, the *Biluch*, the *Hindostanee*, the Arab, and even the heathen Chinese, I arrived in safety.

INTERVIEW WITH THE SHEEF.

Salam, Alakoom, and pronouncing my credentials, was immediately asked to take a seat

the yard or *pat*, and then being cut into squares of the above size, is placed opposite the guest, and also serves as a table napkin. Thus the reader may judge that the Afghans are far ahead of us in their knowledge of the use and requirements of bread. There were no plates or knives or forks even displayed. Around this table cloth and men's display of crockery ware, were seated some thirteen or fourteen men of different ages and character, mostly dressed in the white loose flowing garb of their nation. All retained their hats and were seated cross-legged. At the head of the table—I was nearly saying, but let me add cloth—was seated the host, the portly and mid-looking Aga Khan, while at his back glowed a bright and sparkling fire. My entrance evidently caused a momentary excitement, as the dinner had been specially got up for the entertainment of a *Feringhee* Sahib from Hind. The host, rising from his recumbent posture, invited me to take up a position on his left, the post-honor with this people. Several attendants then entered with a variety of marble and chibouques, and in a short time the apartment was completely filled with smokers.

In this case, the attendants were to be dimly observed, offering in upon which were several small glasses; I guest, taking one of these and drinking, discovered them to contain arrack of the strongest nature, distilled from the cocount of the adjoining districts. This lasted for some ten minutes, when, with another rush of attendants, pipes, arrack and smoke disappeared. Our host then procuring two prepared chickens and two spits, skinned them both, and with the aid of a companion cooked them over the fire. This having been successfully performed, and the heat of the flesh allowed to cool, mine host, with his fingers, pulling a fowl off the skewer by the right wing, offered it to me. Fancying a leg, I caught that portion of the fowl's body, and, both tugging together, I managed to separate it. This manner of eating was proceeded with in rotation until the fowl was entirely demolished. Start not, old civilized being, knives (for eating) and forks are mostly unknown to this people. This having been concluded,

THE DINNER BEGAN.

Aga Khan, clapping his hands, the Oriental substitute for bells on such occasions, brought in a dozen servants, all of whom carried a bowl or dish. Placing these in positions along the table cloth, they at once retired. The guests sat in silent but observant attention. The display of *plout*, *plout*, the cooked in different manners and other Eastern eatables, was truly appetizing; while the savory smell from the ascending steam added not a little to the already sharp appetites of the expectant guests. Mine host suddenly broke the tranquillity of the scene by the *Bismillah*, to which was responded by an immediate attack upon the viands. The room became enlivened by the usual *was*—a sudden transformation of statues into living beings. Aga Khan, drawing a bowl towards himself, invited me to assist in its demolition. A venerable Sheikh, who was seated on my other hand, also invited in our speculation. Thrusting our three right hands into this one bowl by a spontaneous movement, we, in silence, devoured its contents, which consisted of a delicious *plout*. The remainder of the guests, dividing themselves into parties of three or four, according to the number of dishes available, did likewise. Another clapping of hands on the part of the *Sheef*, brought in the cloud of attendants, who instantly cleaning off the empty dishes, replaced them by dishes containing all manner of fruit, from the luscious grape to the ordinary *benjal*. The flowing of the wine and sherbet also then commenced, and a scene of great hilarity and conviviality then commenced. The laugh and jest, quotations from various Oriental poets, the playing of tambourines and *rubras*, the singing of songs, and swearing of eternal friendship followed fast one upon the other. Amid all this, the guests behaved with the greatest courtesy towards me, and when, at a late hour, I arose to take my departure, I had the utmost difficulty to do so. So ended an Afghan social entertainment.

The cultivation of the sugar cane will, it is believed, become an important industry in the peninsula between Lakes Erie and Ontario.

Another powerful English organ, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, says:—"To the credit of Ireland, not a single convert came from that island, which was proof against the persuasions of the Mormon missionary?" The Irish may well take any credit that England offers; but we don't think Ireland will become vain for having refused Mormonism. Such a course delusion may spread among ignorant and degraded masses, like the unfortunate working people of England; but with all her poverty and suffering, Ireland holds her skirts clean from such filth, and cheerfully kicks out the Mormon missionary.

Mothers, during your child's second summer, you will find MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP an invaluable friend. It cures dysentery and diarrhoea, regulates the stomach and bowels, cures wind colic, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. In almost every instance, where the infant is suffering from pain and exhaustion, relief will be found in fifteen or twenty minutes after the Soothing Syrup has been administered. Do not fail to procure it.

Brown's Household Panacea and Family Liniment, which has wrought such wonders, is a purely vegetable preparation. It cures Cramp in the limbs and stomach, Rheumatism, Dysentery, Toothache, Sore Throat, Bilious Colic, Cholera, Colds, Burns, Chapped Hands, and all kindred maladies.

For Liver complaint use Dr. Harvey's PURGATIVE PILLS



SCENE IN PHOENIX PARK, DUBLIN.

agriculture, from the bee to the phylloxera. Here also is a small building containing the scientific apparatus, &c., employed in the recently founded meteorological observatory in the park of Montsouris; and a glass house, in which is a most interesting collection of the telescope and other extraordinary fish and reptiles of India, China and Japan, shown by one of the best known of practical naturalists, M. Charbonnier, of the *Quai du Louvre*; the perfect condition of these strange creatures shows how thoroughly M. Charbonnier has studied them. Lastly, the Arab tent, in one corner of which swarthy natives are making and selling Eastern shoes, slippers and Fez caps, and where, in another part, the native officers of the Algerian guard of honor rest their picturesque figures, attracts all eyes, whilst some noses and mouths are "tickled" by the Oriental sherbets, sweetsmeats and perfumes close at hand.

FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.

TO ST. ANN, OF BEAUPRE.

Along the proud St. Lawrence shore
How lovely is the scene,
But none so famed, both far and near,
Than thine, St. Ann's, has been.
The weary pilgrims wend their way
At thy best shrine to kneel,
And, through thy intercession, ask
That God their wounds may heal.
The lame no longer need a crutch,
The blind receive their sight,
And many sad and weary hearts
Before thy shrine grow light.
St. Ann, thou art our own dear Saint,
Protectress of our land,
O may thy name become more great,
Thy church become more grand.
And I shall cull the choicest flowers
And twine a garland fair,
And when I kneel before thy shrine,
For thee I'll place it there.
JULIA FARLEY.

Quebec, 1878.

neighbors, the *Biluch*, Turkomen, Thibetians and Cashmerians are also inhabitants of hilly countries, the world-famed Himalayas and Sulliman ranges traversing their districts from east to west, and are consequently of the same warlike character. This affinity of nature has, no doubt, occasioned the frank, fearless and desperate disposition of the people of Central Asia. The Afghans were, previous to their connection with the English power in India, a noted and warlike race, and on a former occasion evinced to the gaze of the entire world a determined resistance to foreign subjugation, with the total loss of a whole British army. Who is there at present living who has not heard of that terrible disaster, that horrible massacre, the entire annihilation of the British forces on their way back from Cabul and while in the fatal pass of the Khyber? Alas for British generalship! the dotage of the commanders on that occasion brought grief and tears to many a home. Let us hope for a different result on this occasion, and also for a clever plan of campaign, if such a termination to the present dark and gloomy cloud is about to ensue.

THE KHYBERNES AND AFGHENS.

The two most prominent tribes inhabiting the present frontier and living within a gunshot of our most advanced position, Peshawar, are dangerous races, but from what can be learnt from the former and present relations between them and the moving power at Cabul, they are most likely to participate with the British in the coming contest, which is now almost a certainty.

THE CREED.

The Afghans are of the Mohammedan creed and were converted from their previous paganism by the sudden influx of one of Mahomet's most celebrated and zealous votaries, Sulleiman Aga. This fanatical general, at the head of a swarm of ardent arabs, invaded the Afghan frontier

been of great assistance in forming the distinctive features of this peculiarly oriental nation. The Afghans have been, from almost the earliest period, true and faithful followers of Osman, faithful prototypes of the Turks, and have hitherto been the most deadly enemy to the adherents of Ali—for instance, the Persians. There is no necessity to enter into a detailed account of the causes of this diversion of belief clearly plain to the Canadian reader, we give a synopsis of the event in question. On the death of Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, the succession of the Khalifat was disputed by three persons. Those were Hassan and Hoosain, the sons of Ali by Mohammed's daughter, Fatima, and one of their co-religionists named Osman. This diversion of opinion caused a split in the adherents of the followers of the announced favorite of Saint Gabriel, and a war began for the ascension to the Kingly chair of the head of the belief. Osman, who had the greater part of the Arabs in his favor, owing to his venerable aspect and previous known acquaintance with the founder of their belief, eventually succeeded in making Ali's sons, Hassan and Hoosain, flee towards Bagdad. Before reaching this city of refuge the refugees were overtaken and massacred. This caused the first break up in the faith of Mohammed, and one party went one way, while the other went the other. The Afghans followed the cause of Osman, who they believed was the rightful successor of Ali, in accordance with the belief of the Turks; while their neighbors, the Persians, espoused the opposite side, and have remained so to the present day. It is from this event that the Turks are often styled Osmanlis as anything else. The two present distinctive titles of these rival followers in belief are the followers of Osman Soonee, while those of Ali's two unfortunate sons are termed Sheca. These two derivations have as equal a signification