

The True Witness.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 1860.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The most important item of intelligence, is the publication of the text of the Excommunication launched by the Pope against the aggressors upon the rights of the Holy See. The Protestant press, with, of course, the London Times at their head, would fain persuade us that this act of the Supreme Pontiff, is a mere brutum fulmen, a thunder clap without lightning; but fortunately for the ends of truth they themselves furnish us with proofs to the contrary. So after a column of editorial sneers in the Times against the "maundering lucubrations" of an Italian priest, we find his Paris correspondent writing to the effect that a most "uneasy feeling" exists in Paris amongst the friends of the Imperial Government lest it should be thought even that the Emperor was comprised in the excommunication. "Qui s'excuse s'accuse," says the Times correspondent; and he adds—"the note in the Moniteur some days back, warning the public that no Papal Bulls, rescripts, briefs, &c., could be introduced into France without an infraction of the organic laws of the Concordat; the digging by a police emissary of M. Louis Veuillot's footsteps during his journey to Rome, his stay there, and his return to Paris; and the elaborate articles in this day's Constitutionnel, signed, it is true, by M. Grandguillot, but most probably furnished by authority, all indicate nervousness on the subject, as well as an earnest desire to remove any impression unfavorable to the Imperial Government." These precautions, this "nervousness," and this "uneasy feeling" would seem to indicate that the persons most directly affected by the excommunication look upon it as anything but a joke, or subject of trifling. The affected indifference of the anti-Catholic world is but as the "I don't care" of the sulky schoolboy; and "don't care," as the proverb tells us, came to a bad end.

As a specimen of the dishonorable but paltry expedients resorted to by the Protestant press to excite prejudice against the Court of Rome, we may cite the following ingenious device of the Times and its contemporaries. In their text of excommunication they published it as signed by two officers, "Apostolical Curser," and "Magister Curser;" evidently with the design of impressing upon their ill-informed readers that, attached to the Roman Church, there are two official "curser," or officers whose special duty it is to "curse." The fact is, that the real word is "Curser," which is a Latin term signifying an officer whose duty it is to serve processes, and is derived from the same root as that from which in English we form the words "curator" or "curator." By the change of a single vowel, however, and with the design of pandering to the No-Popery prejudices of their intelligent readers, the Protestant press transmute the innocent Latin term "Curser" into the English "curser," derived from a Saxon root, and suggestive of profane swearing. Upon the same principle the Protestant press of Great Britain and the United States, followed therein by the infidel press of France and Canada, have been in the habit for the last hundred years of publishing as the authentic formula of a Papal Excommunication a well-known chapter of Tristram Shandy. There is, in short, no trick so dirty, or so trivial that Protestants and infidels will not employ it in their war against the Catholic Church.

The lately annexed portions of the Sardinian Kingdom do not seem destined to form a very happy family. "It is well the world should know the fine Parliament we have," are the words which the Times's correspondent, writing from Turin under date 5th inst., attributes to "poor Garibaldi!" on coming out of the Carignano Palace. From them we may reasonably anticipate that the deputies from the several Provinces will not agree well together, and will soon be amiably engaged in the task of cutting one another's throats; indeed, on the very first evening of the Session, a very brilliant passage of arms occurred between Garibaldi and Cavour. There is an old proverb about "honest men getting their own, when rogues fall out;" and we are not without hopes that the truth of the old saw will soon be verified in Northern Italy.

Sympathy for the Holy Father is extending in France, and bringing forth good fruit. General Lamoriciere, a distinguished French officer, has undertaken the charge of reorganising the Papal army; large sums of money are being collected throughout France for the service of the Pope; and many members of ancient Catholic families, are going to serve in his troops as volunteers.—The London Times's Paris correspondent writes:—"Among these the Duke de Larochelecauld Doudeaurville gives up £10,000 a-year, the half of his income, to maintain a guard of honor;—and his son, Count Sosthenes, takes service in the Pontifical ranks." This is cheering news; and when to it we add that, in order to testify their admiration of the Bishop of Orleans, and their detestation of his persecutors, the citizens of Orleans have defrayed his law expenses by voluntary contributions, we have good reasons to

hope that even amongst his own subjects, Louis Napoleon will find serious obstacles to the further development of his anti-Catholic policy.

A Carlist insurrection, or "pronunciamiento," as such things are called in Spain, has been repressed; for asserting that this outbreak was occasioned by British intrigues, the Pays and Patrie have received a reprimand, or warning, from the Imperial authorities.

The British news is of little interest; but it is with deep regret that we learn that another exodus, or wholesale emigration of the Irish peasantry is again in existence. From every point of view this is to be deplored, as morally and materially injurious to the interests of Catholic Ireland.

THE HOLY SEE AND ITS ENEMIES.

"Is the Emperor Louis Napoleon a member of the Catholic Church?" To this question we reply—No; certainly he is not a member of the Church, if he is excommunicated; if either explicitly, or by implication, he is included in the excommunication launched by the Sovereign Pontiff against all who directly, or indirectly, by deed or counsel, have been accessory to the spoliation of the States of the Church; and the annexation of the Romagna to the dominions of the dishonored and excommunicated Victor Emmanuel—whom George Brown admires, and holds up to the world as the model Catholic Prince and Statesman.

An excommunicated person is not a Catholic; is not, in any sense, a member of the Catholic Church, no matter what he calls himself, or what religious opinions he professes. The Church, taking the very lowest ground in her defence—has the right, and the exclusive right, to admit to, and cut off from, her communion. This right is claimed by, and is exercised by, and is recognised as inherent in, every society on the face of the earth; it would therefore be the height of absurdity to call in question the right of the Catholic Church to excommunicate, or eject from her communion, whomsoever, and whosoever, she pleases. Shall we deny to the Catholic Church the exercise of a right which we recognise as inherent in all other societies?—in the Methodist, in the Congregational, and in the Presbyterian organisations?

It must be remembered too, that the act of excommunication is not the personal act of Pius IX. He, in excommunicating those who have seized upon, and detained the temporalities of the Church, exercises the functions of a judge, who applies pre-existing public law—not that of a Prince, or legislator who makes law. By the Council of Trent, Sessio 22, c. xi., all persons, no matter of what quality, whether clerics or lay—no matter of what rank, whether Emperors or subjects—who appropriate to themselves, or keep possession of aught belonging to the Church, or who are by deed or counsel accessory to such illegal appropriation, and iniquitous detention by others—are, ipso facto excommunicate, that is to say excluded from the pale of the Catholic Church. This is the public law of the Church; and the duty of the Pope is merely to apply this law impartially and inflexibly, to all cases which fall within its provisions. So the Methodists, so the Presbyterians have the right, if they please, to decree that any person wearing coloured garments, or singing on Sabbath days other than nasal and lugubrious melodies, shall be excluded from the Society of Methodists, or from the Kirk; and no one would have the right to complain, or exclaim against either Methodist or Presbyterian despotism, were they to enforce that law. For, if there be one right clear, it is that of every society to prescribe its terms of membership; and to excise, or cut off the peccant member, or person guilty of an infraction of those terms.

This is what the Church has done in the case of all those who have been parties, or accessories, to the annexation of the Romagna to Sardinia. The Romagna formed part, not of the domains of Pius IX. merely, but of the domains of the Catholic Church throughout the world; of domains in the integrity of which the Catholics of Great Britain, Canada, and the United States are as much interested, as are the Catholics of Italy, as is the Sovereign Pontiff himself; though upon the latter in particular devolves the duty of representing the Church, and asserting her rights, towards and against those who seek to despoil her. Victor Emmanuel, and Louis Napoleon—if the latter has been accessory to the acts of the former—are excommunicate because they have been guilty of the offence provided for by the above cited decision of a General Council—the highest tribunal of the Church. Even had no Bull been issued from Rome, even had the Pope remained silent under the recent outrages, its perpetrators would have been nevertheless none the less excommunicate; and the action of the Sovereign Pontiff in their case has been simply ministerial or declaratory, not enactory. This should be borne in mind by those who presume to censure Pius IX for his conduct towards the sacrilegious invaders of the States of the Church. He does not make the law, he merely applies it; he does not himself cut off from the communion of the Church those who have violated her laws; he merely pronounces or declares them to be, in virtue of their violation of those laws, cut off or excommunicate, and that in virtue of the public discipline of the Church.

The question then with which we prefaced these remarks, resolves itself simply into this.—"Was, is, Louis Napoleon in any way, by advice or assistance, a consenting party, or accessory, to the annexation of the Romagna to Sardinia?" If he was, or is, he is, in virtue of the cited decree of the Council of Trent excommunicate; and is therefore no more a member of the Catholic Church, than is Joe Smith the Mormon elder, or than is his accomplice in iniquity, the King of Sardinia.

The assent of the Civil government to the publication of a decree of excommunication, is not of the slightest consequence whatsoever; and the withholding of that assent cannot add to, detract from, or in anywise effect the spiritual or ecclesiastical status of him, or those against whom it is directed. The ostrich when hard pursued is popularly said to stick its head into the sand, and

to tatter itself, because it can no longer see; it is therefore no longer seen by its pursuers. The action of the Civil Power or State refusing to allow the publication of a Papal Bull within the limits of its jurisdiction is precisely analogous to that attributed to the simple ostrich; and would find its exact parallel in that of the convicted criminal who, in the hopes of escaping sentence of death, should firmly close his ears to the words of the judge. So with the civil ruler, no matter what his rank, who, excommunicated, refuses his assent to the publication of the Church's sentence. He but adds to the burden of his iniquities; and shows himself to be an equal compound of fool and tyrant.

Whilst upon this subject we would allude to a most laughable absurdity into which the simple editors of the Pays—a French Canadian paper published in Montreal—have been betrayed.—The silly young men at the head of the editorial department of the said Pays, whose acquaintance with English literature of the last century, is upon a par with their theological attainments, have been cruelly imposed upon by some malicious wags, anxious to play off a sorry jest at their expense; and have in consequence been persuaded to publish as an authentic formula of excommunication by the Roman Catholic Church, the laughable, though somewhat coarse form of cursing given in Tristram Shandy, and of which poor Dr. Slop—what time he cut his fingers—gladly availed himself against the unconscious Obadiah. We have a profound commiseration for the unhappy youngsters of the Pays, as for the victims of a cruel and heartless joke—what the French call "une mauvaise plaisanterie"; and we wish that the state of the law was such as to enable them to recover damages from those who have imposed upon their credulity, and been the immediate occasion of making them the laughing stock of all the well informed portion of the Catholic community. It will however have one good effect; it will no doubt serve as a caution to our unflinching philosophers, or philosopherlings amongst the French Canadians, how they treat topics of which they are profoundly ignorant; and will we hope inspire them with the conviction that, neither the London Punch, nor the Charivari, are reliable sources of information upon matters theological or ecclesiastical.

We would also avail ourselves of this occasion of replying to another question suggested by the following passage in the Toronto Freeman, of the 20th inst.:

"The Irish Catholics of Toronto do not favor the oppression of their co-religionists in the State of the Church; the Pope's subjects have just the same right to elect their own rulers as the people of Ireland, Poland, Hungary, India, or the Ionian Isles have to choose theirs."

Have then, the people of the States of the Church the right to elect their own rulers—with of course the correlative right of ejecting the Sovereign Pontiff? This question is suggested, we say, by the above paragraph in the Freeman; though far be it from us to insinuate even, that the editor of that paper would answer it in the affirmative. But since that question is so suggested, we reply, as Catholics, that the people of the Romagna have no right to renounce their allegiance to the Pope, and therefore have no right whatever to "elect their own rulers." For had they that right, he or they, whom the people of the Romagna so elected, would be the rightful ruler, or rulers, of the Romagna; and Victor Emmanuel would not be obnoxious to the reproach of sacrilege, and what the "Protestant Reformers" of Upper Canada term "the honors of excommunication;" for there can be no wrong in accepting that which he who gives has a right to give. The right to govern the Romagna belongs exclusively to the Holy See, as the supreme administrator of the temporalities of the Church. To contest, to call in question even, this exclusive, inalienable right of the Holy See, is tantamount to an apology for sacrilege, and is a justification of the policy which has resulted in the excommunication of George Brown's Catholic friend. We answer then, briefly and emphatically, that no matter what may be the case with Ireland or with Poland, the Pope's subjects have not the shadow even of a "right to elect their own rulers;" for this would imply their right to dispose at their pleasure of the temporalities of the Holy See, which is the property of the Catholic Church, administered for the good of that Church by the Sovereign Pontiff; and would imply therefore the right of Victor Emmanuel to annex the Romagna to Sardinia.

On this point there can be no two opinions amongst Catholics, seeing that the language of the Council of Trent, with respect to those "qui bona ecclesiastica occupant," is clear and explicit. Without the consent of the Church, pronounced through her Chief Pontiff, first obtained, no one ever had, or ever will have any right to rule over the Romagna, or any portion of the Church's temporalities; and if the Freeman contests this—though such we feel convinced it is not his deliberate intention to do—we would refer him to the theologians and doctors of our common mother the Church.

Our cotemporary will also we trust permit us as Papists, to whom therefore the Papacy is dearer than any nationality, and with whom the interests and honor of the Holy See take precedence of every earthly consideration, to express our surprise and regret at the appearance of such a passage as the subjoined in the columns of a professedly Catholic journal—and which would be in place only in those of a rabid no-Popery or Orange organ:—

"The pages of Irish history in other respects gloomy and overcast, is bright in the record of the narrative of the firm and continuous opposition which the Irish people gave even to Papal Nuncios when urging a policy adverse to their views and aspirations after liberty."—Toronto Freeman, 20th inst.

In our eyes the brightest feature in the history of Ireland is the submission and docility of its people to the Pope; to us, the fidelity of the Irish to the See of Rome is the most glorious trait in the national character; and the worst libeller of Ireland and Irishmen appears to us—looking at the subject as simple Papists, to whom all questions of policy and nationality are paltry, are as naught, when brought into competition

with the Holy See—to be the man who represents them as rebels to the authority of the See, as "firm and continuous" in their opposition to the Nuncios of the Sovereign Pontiff.—There may have been, even in Ireland, a tendency to that spirit of opposition to the Papacy, which preceded and heralded the Reformation in England; which, under the name of Gallicanism was the precursor of the Reign of Terror, and its nameless atrocities; but in Ireland, thank God! that foul spirit never had the chance to develop itself. The boast, the glory of Ireland, of which no enemies can rob her, is that she has ever been the most truly Popish country in Europe; and the Freeman can surely hardly be serious when he reckons amongst the bright pages of her history those in which the triumphs of a secular policy, and a national or political opposition to the Sovereign Pontiff, are recorded.—We hope, indeed, that we have misapprehended him; for as Papists, and therefore lovers of Ireland, we look upon the "firm and continuous opposition to Papal Nuncios" to which the Freeman alludes, as unfounded reproaches; which, could they be established, would be a dark blot upon her escutcheon, and would constitute a very heavy drawback upon that love and admiration which every true Catholic should feel for faithful Popish Ireland. This too we assert without fear of contradiction from a Catholic; that in every dispute in which the Holy See has ever been engaged with any Prince, with any people, the latter have been invariably and entirely in the wrong, the Holy See invariably and entirely in the right.

OLD CALUMNIES IN A NEW DRESS.—We have received from a respected correspondent in Pictou, N.S., the annexed communication, to which, from pressure upon our columns, we have not hitherto been able to give insertion:—

To the Editor of the True Witness.

DEAR SIR—As the accompanying leaves, taken from a monthly periodical issued by the press of this town, reiterate certain charges against Catholicity in general, and the Irish in particular; which charges the author pretends to substantiate by facts and figures, I forward them for your inspection; as I know of no journal in the Lower Provinces able or willing to meet the calumnies therein contained in a better manner, and shew the truth concerning them in its proper light.

Hence I have taken the liberty of addressing you this note, and of sending to you the article therein referred to; knowing that if you can find time to notice it, the subject is one that will prove interesting and satisfactory to the many readers of your truly Catholic journal.

I remain yours sincerely,

X.

Referring to the brochure accompanying the above, we find that it is an extract from a periodical called the Christian Instructor, of date March 1860; and contains the report of a lecture lately delivered before the Nova Scotia Protestant Alliance, by the Rev. George Patterson, on "The Influence of Popery on National Prosperity." From its title, it is not difficult to conclude to its contents; it is in short but a rechauffe of the dreary fallacies, false premises, had logic, and irrelevant conclusions, which the Protestant press is in the habit of serving up as a standing dish to its guests; confident that the depraved stomachs, and voracious appetites of the latter, will enable them to gulp down its most nauseous contents. It is not a pleasant task for one of a more delicate stomach, and a more refined taste, to analyse the villainous ingredients of which the mess is compounded;—yet out of respect to our correspondent, we will do our best to comply with his expressed wish.

The lecture to which he refers us is but a repetition of the old argument, founded on the groundless assumption, that material prosperity is the sign and invariable concomitant, of the true faith; that as Our Lord cautioned His hearers against "false prophets," and declared that the latter may be judged of by "their fruits," so the comparative merits of Catholicity and Protestantism, as religious systems, may also be estimated by their respective "fruits"—the said "fruits" being the material prosperity of their respective professors. In the words of the reverend Protestant lecturer—"If it be found that those nations that have embraced the one—Protestantism—have been steadily advancing in all that relates to the greatness and happiness of man, and that those who have embraced the other—Catholicity—have been as steadily retrograding—then we claim under the authority of Our Saviour's maxim to say, that the former system is His, and that the latter is a vile counterfeit—an impudent imposture." Having laid down these premises, the lecturer then proceeds to apply his principle: contrasting, for this purpose, the condition of Protestant Great Britain, with that of Catholic Ireland; and summing up in favor of the former, because of the greater wealth and material prosperity of its inhabitants. We need not follow the lecturer through all his details; our readers are of course intimate with all that can be said upon the subject; and it is quite true that in Ireland there are, and for the last three hundred years have been, much suffering and destitution—whilst it is equally true that the physical sufferings and destitution of the Catholic Irish are, and have been, owing to the constancy with which the Irish have adhered to the Catholic faith. All this we readily admit; and admitting it, we laugh at the Rev. Mr. Patterson's argument thereon based, in favor of Protestantism, as scarce worthy of any serious refutation.

For, in the first place, material prosperity, high farming, manufactures, and a flourishing trade, are no proofs, or signs, of the possession of the true religion by those who are in the enjoyment of those things. "My Kingdom"—said Our Saviour, apparently with the very object of anticipating the miserable sophistries of men like this Mr. Patterson—"My Kingdom is not of this world." It does not consist in the possession of the good things of this world, in wealth and prosperity; but on the contrary, in the abandonment of these, in trials, in persecutions, and in many tribulations. The true follower, or disciple, of Christ is known, not by that he wears good broad-cloth, but in that he bears his cross; not in that his belly is well filled, but in that his heart is mortified, and the lusts thereof crucified

with Christ. Were it otherwise, the argument against Christianity; which might be based upon a comparison of the material condition of the Christian Greeks, with that of the Moslem Turks, would be irresistible in favor of Mohammedanism, and in condemnation of Christianity.

What the Christian Greeks in the Turkish Empire have for long centuries been to their Non-Christian oppressors, that in every respect have been the Catholics of Ireland to the Non-Catholic rulers of Great Britain. The two cases are perfectly parallel. As the sufferings of the Greeks have been caused by their constancy to Christianity, in spite of the many efforts of their Moslem masters to induce them to apostatize, so the fidelity of the Irish to the Catholic faith, in spite of the cruel Protestant Penal Laws—which in brutality far exceeded the worst atrocities of the Turks towards their Christian subjects—has been the direct cause of their poverty, of their sufferings, and of their cross upon earth, which shall be one of the brightest jewels in their crown in heaven. If then we are to judge of a religion by its "fruits," if amongst those "fruits" we are to reckon wealth, political power, and material prosperity; and since Moslem Turks are in these respects superior to their Christian subjects—we must at once conclude that Mahomet, not Christ, was the true prophet, and that the Son of Mary was but a wolf in sheep's clothing. From this conclusion there is no escape, if we admit the Rev. Mr. Patterson's premises, and with him seek for the "fruits" of the true religion in the material order.

But here is his fundamental error. It is, of course, true, that every religion must be judged by "its fruits;" but those "fruits" we look for in the moral, not in the material, order; and looking for them in that order, we find them in such abundance, and in such perfection amongst the Catholics of Ireland, that we at once conclude that their religious system is true, and that that of their more prosperous Protestant taskmasters and persecutors is from the devil; seeing that the fruits it produces are fruits of hell—apples, which like those said to grow by the shores of the Sea of Sodom are, it fair to the eye, full within of all bitterness and filthiness.—Great as is the material contrast betwixt Catholic Ireland, and Protestant Great Britain, the moral contrast is still greater; and if to the latter we must award the palm for its progress in manufactures, and farming, and commerce, so also we must admit its supremacy in all the arts of crime and impurity; in child-murdering, in husband-poisoning, in wife-poisoning, and in all manner of abominations, wherewith we cannot pollute our columns, or insult the eyes of our readers. Here for instance, is a pleasant picture of the "moral fruits" of Protestantism, as ripened beneath a Protestant sun, and on the Protestant soil of Great Britain, drawn too by a Protestant hand.

PROTESTANT ENGLAND.

The vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's face,  
Till the fitfully-by-way rings to the yell of the  
trampled wife:  
While chalk and atom, and plaster are sold to the  
poor for bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means  
of life.  
And sleep must lie down armed, for the villainous  
centre-bits  
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moon-  
less nights;  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last  
gasp as he sits,  
To peate a poisoned poison behind his crimson  
lights.  
When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a  
burial fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's  
bones!"

TENNYSON.

No one conversant with the actual moral condition of Protestant Great Britain will dare to call in question the fidelity with which that condition has been depicted by a master's hand; whilst no one would dare to pretend that the picture bears any, the most distant resemblance to the moral features of Catholic Ireland. Not that we deny that crime exists in Ireland, and that on its soil many horrid deeds of blood have been perpetrated. But justice requires that we should trace these to their true source; and he must be dull indeed who cannot find that source, not in the national peculiarities of the Irish people, who are neither treacherous nor cruel by nature; not in their religion which abhors blood and inculcates peace and forgiveness of injuries; but in the brutal misgovernment of which they for centuries have been the victims, and in the glaring political and social anomalies of which Ireland is the scene. The Penal Laws, imposed by Protestant Great Britain upon Ireland, generated and perpetuated a disregard for law. Ireland has for centuries been governed, not for Ireland, but for England; the Catholics of Ireland have been burthened with the support of an alien and hated Church Establishment; and their lands, the inheritance of their sires, have been torn from them by iniquitous laws, and parcelled out amongst aliens, with whom they have nought in common, and who have ever exercised the powers placed by the law in their hands, with the utmost severity. Under such circumstances the marvel is that men thus treated should have been so patient and enduring; that agrarian outrages, and desperate attacks upon alien landlords, and extorting tithes-gatherers, have not been more frequent and more bloody; and that the people so oppressed and misgoverned are not in a chronic state of rebellion against the foreign Government that thus oppresses and misgoverns them. How would it be with Scotland, were her people forced by law to maintain an Anglican Church, and if her soil had been parcelled out amongst the descendants of Cromwell's troopers?

Yet if agrarian crime—that is crime proceeding from the unhealthy relations existing between the legal owners of the soil, and its cultivators—is rife in Ireland, this does not necessarily indicate the same moral corruption of its people, as is established by the class of crimes which chiefly obtain in Protestant England and Scotland.—True—it is seldom that in the latter we read of a landlord having been shot from behind a hedge by an ejected tenant, because the system of wholesale ejectments is fortunately not adopted in England or Scotland. But in revenge, the