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THE TRUE WITNESS
AND
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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, SEPT. 14, 1855.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The Africa brings the usual weekly budget of news, but there is in it very little that is satisfactory. As we anticipated, the report of the destruction of Sveaborg turns out a regular "cock and a bull" story. The Allies, it is certain, expended an immense amount of ammunition, and it is equally certain that they inflicted no material injury upon the defences of the place. A Russian man-of-war is said to have taken an active part in the proceedings; and as, after the conclusion of the bombardment, the Admirals did not think it advisable or prudent to stand in, and capture or destroy her, we may be very sure that they did not believe that the defences of Sveaborg were destroyed or even materially injured. Nothing of consequence has occurred in the Baltic during the last week. The Times is ashamed of the inactivity of the Fleet, which it says "would cause Nelson and Collingwood to blush in their graves."
From Sebastopol, we learn that, since the sanguinary battle of the 16th ult., which was a real victory, things have remained pretty much unaltered; and that nothing of any importance will be attempted, until the Allies shall have crossed the Tchernaya, which they were preparing to do. On the 27th ult. the batteries reopened a heavy fire on the Redan and Malakoff; on the glacis of which last named work, the French had succeeded in carrying an important post, after a severe struggle. There can be no doubt that the garrison is suffering severe privations. The Queen had returned to England, after having experienced a most enthusiastic reception in Paris. The crops were looking well, and all anxieties as to the state of the potatoes in Ireland were at an end. From the Continent the news is uninteresting. There are hints that Queen Isabella of Spain will be forced to abdicate, and that the Czar is willing to re-open negotiations for an honourable peace.

SABBATARIANISM.

Our respected cotemporary the Transcript catechises us in the following fashion:—
1. "Is it"—ball-playing—"that sort of amusement which right thinking, serious Christians would be likely to follow on the day which God sanctified and set apart, separating it for ever from all profane or ordinary purposes?"
2. "Is it in good taste to exhibit it before the eyes of a large portion of the community who have been taught to regard the Sabbath as a day of rest, to be spent in meditation, devotion, and retirement?"
To be candid with our cotemporary, we see no reason why "right thinking, serious Christians" should refrain from "ball-playing" on Sunday, or from any other innocent, healthy, and perfectly legitimate amusement, which does not encroach upon the hours devoted to the worship of Almighty God, and which does not tend to alienate their affections from Him, or to fix them more strongly upon creature. On the contrary, we know many exemplary, devoted Christians, who, with the TRUE WITNESS, look upon Sunday ball-playing as a very harmless amusement, if practised within the limits defined above. There is, we may remark, in the form in which our cotemporary states his case, a begging of the question at issue—when he assumes that God has sanctified and set apart the Sunday or first day of the week—"separating it for ever from all profane or ordinary purposes." It is for him to prove—1st—that God has sanctified and set apart the Sunday, or first day of the week;—2nd—that He has so set it apart from all other days as to prohibit thereon all "innocent, healthy and perfectly legitimate amusements." These two propositions the Transcript is bound to prove, but must not assume.
Our cotemporary will pardon us for resorting to the argument *ad hominem*. He is evidently, from his allusions to the Anglican Cathedral, a professing son of the Church of England. What then is, or rather was, the doctrine of that Church when its formularies were compiled, on the subject of "Sunday Amusements," and the mode of observing the Sunday? We need scarcely refer one so well read in English history as the editor of the Transcript, to the famous "Book of Sports," issued by the express authority of the Head of his Church upon earth—a book which received the sanction of the Anglican Primale, and the great body of the Anglican Hierarchy—and was read publicly on every Sunday, and other Holy Days, from the pulpits of every parish church in England. In this book, Sunday amusements, such as, Morrice dances, archery, &c., were not only permitted to the people after divine service, but were strongly recommended. This was the public teaching of the Anglican Church in the

XVII. century; and what was in accordance with God's law then, cannot be contrary to it now, and surely should not give offence to any "right thinking, serious Christian" of the Church of England—as we have no doubt, is the editor of the Montreal Transcript.
To the second question—"Is it, in good taste, &c. &c.," we have no hesitation in replying, that, in a mixed community like ours, Catholics and Protestants should mutually abstain from giving one another offence. If therefore the ball-playing, to which our cotemporary alludes, is carried on in such a manner as to annoy Protestants—that is, if they who indulge in it, purposely select the vicinity of Protestant places of worship, or the great thoroughfares leading thereunto, as the scene of their sports, and with the design of disturbing, or causing scandal to those who differ from them as to the mode of observing the Sunday—we are prepared to admit that it is not only in bad taste, but that such conduct argues sad want of Christian charity. There are in the vicinity of Montreal many vacant lots—there is plenty of open ground, where the ball-players may play out their game without annoying, or giving reasonable cause of offence to, their more straight-laced brethren; and to these places would we recommend the former to resort.
On the other hand—though, as the Transcript will see, we are ready to make all reasonable concessions to the prejudices of our separated brethren—they must not be too exorbitant in their demands. We—Catholics—for the same reason that we believe the first day of the week is to be kept as a Holy Day, believe also that many other days in the course of the year are in like manner to be kept Holy; that is, sanctified by special religious observances, and by a total abstinence from all servile work. But we do not therefore insist that our Protestant fellow-citizens shall go to church, abstain from work, and shut up their places of business on these days—the observance of most of which, by the bye, is as strictly enjoined by the Protestant Church of England as it is by the Catholic Church. On these Holy Days—for the sanctification of which there is just as much authority in the Bible as there is for observing the Sunday as the Sabbath—Protestants keep their stores open, and go about their daily business as usual, without a word of comment from Catholics. We never dream of asking the former—"Is it in good taste for you to exhibit your disregard for these Holy Days before the eyes of a large portion of the community who have been taught to regard them as days of rest?"—and yet a Catholic has as good cause to be scandalised at seeing a Protestant doing servile work on the Festival of the Ascension, as has a Protestant to be offended with a Catholic for ball-playing on the hebdomadal Festival of the Resurrection.
The Transcript it seems can cite Scripture for his purpose; but, we fear, that he cites it without fully understanding its meaning—"St. Paul"—argues the Transcript—"said that, if meat would make his brother offend, he would eat no more while the world lasted"—adding—"we suppose the TRUE WITNESS is willing to receive him—St. Paul—as an authority." Certainly we are; but then we must endeavor to put upon his words that construction only which they will legitimately bear. St. Paul, as cited by the Transcript, does not say—"if meat offended his brother"—but, "if meat made his brother to offend, he would eat no more." In the same way, if ball-playing "made our Protestant fellow-citizens to offend," caused them, or even induced them to commit sin, it would be our duty to play no more ball while the world lasted. But the Transcript does not pretend that such is the case; his complaint, is, that ball-playing offends his Protestant brethren—not that it "makes them offend." Since however he institutes a comparison betwixt "ball-playing" and "meat-eating," what will he say to the following text, also from St. Paul? We quote from the Protestant version:—
"Let not him that eateth"—or playeth ball—"despise him that eateth not"—or playeth not at ball; "and let not him which eateth not"—or playeth not ball—"judge him that eateth"—or playeth ball. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"—Romans xiv., 3-4.
The Transcript calls upon us, "if we have any influence," to use it, and put a stop to the practice of ball playing on Sundays. We must tell him that we have no influence or authority in the matter; that we could not put a stop to the practice if we would, and that we would not if we could; lest by so doing, and thus depriving the ball players of an amusement which even the Transcript admits to be "innocent and healthy," we should be the means of compelling them to resort to amusements which are neither innocent nor healthy, but ruinous to soul and body. It is impossible to make men pious by law; and though the Police might indeed force the ball-players to abandon their game, yet as it could not compel them to attend church or chapel, the inevitable result would be that, instead of expending their superfluous energy—or "letting off the steam," as the saying is—in a healthy and harmless sport, they would seek for amusement in the grog-shops and the brothels. That this is the certain consequence of all Puritanical restrictions upon harmless Sunday sports, all experience teaches, and the Police Reports of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other large cities where Sabbatarianism is in the ascendant, abundantly testify. In the interests therefore of religion, morality, and decency, would we exhort the Transcript to allow the ball-players to finish their game without molestation. This is the sum of the matter:—We, Catholics, differ in opinion with Protestants as to the obligation of abstaining from innocent amusements on Sunday. On the other hand, Protestants differ in opinion with us as to the obligation of abstaining from work on other Holy Days, whose observance the Catholic

Church enjoins. Now although in our eyes a de-secration by Protestants of the "Feast of the Assumption," or of a *Corpus Christi*, is as grievous an offence against the Law of God, as ball-playing on the Sunday is in the eyes of Protestants—yet, as we do not call upon the Civic authorities to compel the latter to observe our Holy Days after our fashion, so also, even handed justice requires that Protestants do not interfere with us in our amusements upon Sundays. It is as unreasonable for the Transcript to urge the Police to put a stop to Sunday ball-playing, as it would be for the TRUE WITNESS to insist upon a "Bye Law" compelling all Protestants to close their stores, and suspend their works, on "All Saints Day."
Our cotemporary complains likewise of the incessant ringing of the bells of the French Cathedral—we suppose he means the Parish Church—for half an hour about noon every Sabbath. This ringing, he says, whilst it lasts, renders the voice of the preacher in the Anglican Church nearly inaudible; and he wishes us to use our influence to put a stop to it, by inducing the authorities to postpone the obnoxious chimes for an hour, until the Anglican service is over. Here again we must inform our cotemporary that we have no more influence than he has. The custom of the Catholic Church throughout the world is, by ringing of bells, to summon the faithful to prayers at stated hours—morn, noon, and evening—and we do not think it likely that this practice, so ancient, so universal, and so sacred, will be set aside here. Our cotemporary modestly requests us to postpone our prayers for an hour; would it not be as easy and as reasonable for his friends to commence their services an hour earlier? and thus avoid the nuisance, of having their sermon interrupted by the ringing of the "Angelus." Our friend exaggerates a little; the ringing of which he complains does not last half an hour. On Sunday last, which was a high festival, and when of course the bells rang out their loudest and longest, we took the pains to count how long the ringing of the "Angelus" lasted, from first to last. The time was, not half an hour, but eight minutes; and as there are several intervals during which the bell does not sound, this would give as actual ringing time, not much more than five minutes. Our cotemporary must also remember that if our bells ring during the time of Protestant worship, the bells of their churches in like manner ring whilst the Catholic portion of the population are at their devotions. Of this we have no right to complain, for it is an interruption unavoidable where there are so many churches, all holding their services at different hours.

THE INVASION OF IRELAND.

"What about the projected expedition from the United States, to wrest Ireland from the hands of the stranger?" is a question we often hear put. "Why! that it is a humbug"—is the reply of every sensible man—a smart speculation, perhaps, which may cause a few dollars and cents to flow into the pockets of its "cute" promoters—who, in the meantime, will take good care to keep out of harm's way, and to leave the blows and kicks for those whose cash they have pocketed. It is a plan that may subserve the private ends of a few sordid adventurers; but one that is sure to result in loss to the honest enthusiasts who allow themselves to be duped into taking any active part therein.
As a plot against Great Britain, and for the benefit of Ireland, it is naught. It does not contain one element of success; and as if to make assurance of failure doubly sure, its promoters have from the beginning, adopted a line of policy that would destroy the most likely plot the wit of man ever devised.—At best, the chances of an armed invasion of Ireland from New York would be but small; but small as they were, the authors of this notable scheme have, by their babbling, and chuckling, and ostentatious blather, cleverly contrived to make them even less, and to throw an air of ridicule over the whole affair.
Never were there such candid, outspoken fellows as these conspirators. They scorn to take a dirty advantage, or to strike their foe unawares. What they are going to do—and how, and when they are going to do it—they are determined that all the world shall know. "Howld me, or I'll strike you"—is their chivalrous motto; and like our old acquaintance Mr. Winkle, the friend and companion of the immortal Pickwick, before they commence the row, they very deliberately "take off their coats" in the face of heaven and earth, and warn their adversaries "that they are going to begin;" the leaders of this new movement are evidently belligerents of the Winkle school. From this then may we safely prophecy the failure, and the ridiculous failure, of the projected expedition—that its leaders have a great deal too much "slack-jaw."
We say nothing of the obstacles that the expedition will have to encounter in the United States, nor of the difficulty of conveying a large body of men, with the necessary *matériel*, across the Atlantic, without transports. We will suppose the invading army to have eluded the vigilance of the British cruisers; we will suppose—more monstrous still—that the British Government has no hired agents amongst their leaders there are no traitors, selling the secrets of the Society for good hard cash; or that the British Government wilfully shuts its eyes and ears to all that is going on around; nay, we will grant—most monstrous of all—that the invading army, some thousands strong, is safely landed on the Irish coast, with its artillery, cavalry, and Commissariat—what would it do then? what hopes would it have of assistance or encouragement from the people of Ireland?—and without that assistance, how long would we ask, would it be before the invaders were quietly marched off, under escort of half a dozen policemen, to the nearest jail? These questions have been al-

ready answered by one who knows Ireland well, and who is intimately acquainted with the actual condition of the people. Let us then listen to an Irishman—Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee, the talented editor of the *American Celt*.
"If it were possible—which it is not—that such an expedition, large or small, in gross or in detail, could leave the ports of the United States, with outlawry written on their backs, what evidence is there, that any party in Ireland would receive them as friends, not enemies? We spent this Spring in Ireland; and even the radicals will not suppose us a fool. We were chiefly in Munster and Leinster; we bought and conversed with every class of society: We met representative men of each class—young Old-Irelanders, and old Young-Irelanders; devout men who looked for God's good time, and impatient men who watched the war with feverish anxiety. But we did not meet one man—not one—who had any confidence in the leadership of the men of '48. The very best said of those men, was what one usually says of a dead or hopelessly disabled person; "poor Meagher; poor Mitchell; and so on. As to putting faith in any scheme, endorsed by their names; no class, no one man in all Ireland, will do it. Let those who stake their personal liberty on the present project, inform themselves well of the state of feeling in Ireland. If they will not take our word for what we saw and heard less than six months ago, let them adopt any other means they please of testing Irish feeling. We do not question the result. We do not hesitate to state that the vast majority of the Irish people would volunteer to fight against these fillibusters as soon as they landed. Are you then going to force your crude republicanism down the throat of the mother-country? Are you going to take her by the neck and shake her into freedom? Can you begot republicanism by committing an incestuous national rape? Can you bring force enough with you to move six millions of people, without their own consent? It is absurd, impossible, ridiculous, to think or to say so.
"He who has not seen Ireland since the Famine and the sale of Encumbered Estates, knows very little about her actual condition. He may know Ireland as she was, but he does not know her as she is. The national schools with their million and a half of pupils; the railroad revolution which made William Dargan the most popular man since O'Connell; the renovated spirit of the Irish Church—the only old Institution left standing in the country—all these have wrought a total change, which the patriotic absentee cannot comprehend. Ireland of to-day is more unlike the Ireland before the Famine, than that was unlike the Ireland of Tiger Roche and Fighting Fitzgerald. She has at length passed out of the old social state which was ripening and rotting for a thousand years, and whoever would understand the new must go and see it with his own eyes. We do not expect the liberating forces to understand so plain a fact as this. They have all drunk too deeply of the opiate of egotism; they are all so firmly resolved to liberate Ireland on their principles, whether she will or not, that we fear they are quite beyond the comprehension of any single political fact connected with that country. They sit in a contracted circle; they heat each other up; like Sweeney's stoves, they consume their own smoke, and are altogether independent of external action. They care for neither wind nor tide, but assuredly they will find, to their cost, that absolute theory is the worst possible guide in the affairs of nations. What story does the unwilling retreat of Mr. Duffy to Australia tell? The present stagnation of all national spirit? Supposing him as adverse to revolutionary means, as his meanness and falsest foes would have him, is he to be thought dead to his own honor, or his own interest? If there were, in his accurate estimate of Ireland as she is, any imminent hope of liberation, is it to be supposed that such a man, with such devoted personal friends, with such a conceded fitness for organizing efforts, would leave the country, perhaps for ever, on the eve of opportunities for which he had sighed in vain for many long years?
That God will yet reward Ireland for her long-tried fidelity, no Christian can doubt; that she may, some day, and soon, succeed in throwing off the yoke that has long crushed her to the earth, is the prayer of every Catholic heart throughout the world. But it will not be done by these windy conspirators of New York, nor can Ireland be regenerated by talking fustian on this side the Atlantic. The cause of Ireland is the cause of the Church; by the Church must her banner be blessed; and the standard which alone can lead her sons to victory, is the standard of the Cross. Now this standard is certainly not in the camp of the "fillibusters."
The Quebec Gazette calls attention to what he calls "the very significant fact"—that "crime, pauperism, and all kinds of suffering have decreased throughout Ireland in exact proportion to the decline of priestly rule;" or in other words—that the condition of the people has improved in exact proportion to the decline of Catholicity in Ireland. We demur to our cotemporary's statement of facts.
It is perfectly true that, of late years, owing to the cessation of the potatoe disease, to the increase of material prosperity, and the diminished pressure upon the means of subsistence in Ireland, consequent upon the depopulation of that country by plague, famine, and emigration—pauperism, and consequently all kinds of crime—to which poor starving creatures are driven by desperation have greatly diminished; and that in no part of Her Majesty's dominions—we may say, in no part of the civilised world—is there such a truly moral and religious people as the people of Ireland. Their social virtues are the admiration of all travellers; and the purity of their women, to tourists accustomed to the licentiousness and female depravity of Protestant countries, seems at first almost incredible. We refer our Quebec cotemporary to a work published some two or three years ago by Sir Francis Head, a staunch Protestant, in which the writer knows not where to find language strong enough to express his surprise at the virtue of the Irish women—"which he adds they wear wherever they go, and which, in spite of their poverty, it appears no human power can deprive them of." Not thus does the traveller speak of the chastity of the women of Protestant Britain,