

## The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, FEB. 11, 1859.

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE last accounts from Europe would seem to indicate a momentary suspension of the war panic occasioned by the French Emperor's menacing language to the Austrian Ambassador, the blustering tone of the King of Sardinia's speech, and the revolutionary attitude of the North of Italy. The *Times* believes, or affects to believe, that there is little danger of an Italian insurrection; it says:—

"The Milanese in 1859 are pretty much what they have been any time during the last ten years—very full of martial and sneering against the Austrian rule, very skilful in putting petty slights on the Austrian authorities, and not careful to confine the social war to the sterner sex; great in deserting opera boxes when an Archduke happens to be present, or affecting to be engaged earnestly in conversation when an Austrian lady might claim a recognition of her presence. They know how to wear a hat sedulously, show aspirations for liberty by the tie of a cravat, or express their views of an Italian future by pulling only Piedmontese cigars. But this is all, and it is nothing more than they did last year, and will probably do for many a year longer. Any appearance of a meditated rebellion does not exist. A placard may be posted up during the night by a man who runs off immediately, or a patriotic cry may be uttered when there are only Italians to hear it; but that there has been any braving of the Austrian power, any menace of popular rising, any refusal of obedience to the police or the taxgatherer, is the grossest misrepresentation. Whether voluntarily or not, the French and their ally have imposed on the credulity of Europe; but how the Sardinian Monarch, who must remember the events of 1848, can believe in a popular insurrection in Lombardy, passes conception."

A telegram announces the somewhat sudden death of the King of Naples, after a few hours' illness, but the report is not confirmed. In other respects, the news from Europe is of little interest.

The result of the secret examination of the prisoners imprisoned at Belfast is at last before the public, and certainly does not seem to justify the extraordinary measures of the British Government. The "Secret Societies" now appear to be of the most insignificant dimensions, and the conspirators, a parcel of silly beardless boys, who met occasionally in taverns to drink whiskey, and talk treason. That such societies should exist, is to be deplored; but their existence is but the inevitable consequence of the growth of Orangeism. There is nothing of importance from the disturbed districts in India; but Lord Clyde's tactics are becoming the subject of much hostile criticism. There are marchings and counter-marchings, but no progress is made towards the suppression of the insurrection, or the capture of its leaders.

## PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—The proceedings in this branch of the Legislature have been of little interest since our last; with this exception, that the Ministerial proposition to carry out the understanding with Quebec, by which the Seat of Government was to be removed to that City at the end of the present year, was negatived by a small majority.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.—The debate on the Address, in reply to the Speech from the Throne, has been prosecuted with much energy during the past week. The amendment proposed by Mr. Sicotte asserts, as the fundamental principle of representative government, the right of the majority to have their views and opinions carried out; and, referring to the vote of the Assembly on the 28th of July last, declares that the House then "expressed its views and opinions on the subject of the Seat of Government in the ordinary and constitutional exercise of its privilege."

To this amendment, another amendment was subsequently moved by Mr. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Wallbridge, to the following effect:—

"We feel it our duty to express our devoted attachment to Her Most Gracious Majesty, and our gratitude for the interest she has taken in the welfare of Her Canadian subjects by selecting the City of Ottawa as the future Seat of the Provincial Government; but we would at the same time, respectfully beg leave to submit to your Excellency that the Federal Union of all the North American Colonies having been moved by your Excellency's Constitutional advisers to the Imperial Government, and also to the Governments of the other Colonies which, should such a Union take place, might be desirous of having a voice in the selection of a Seat of Government, it is inexpedient at present to take any steps towards the erection of public buildings at Ottawa."

It is impossible within our limits to give any abstract of the desultory debate, to which the discussion of the original motion, and the amendments thereunto proposed has given rise. The respective advantages of Montreal and Ottawa as the permanent Seat of Government—the

policy of the Brown-Dorion Ministry—the poetic merits of Mr. McGee's lately published collection of Ballads—the Ryerson frauds, and the immunity of which, thanks to the present Ministry, the delinquent is assured—these, with some fifty thousand other topics all as unconnected with the one question at issue—i. e., the propriety of accepting as final the decision of the Imperial Government on the Seat of Government Question—have formed the subject matter of the long-winded discourses which honorable members have deemed it their duty to inflict upon the community since the opening of the Session. Nor do we see any cure for the evil, or any prospect of checking the fearful incontinence of words with which our legislators are troubled, except in an immediate reduction of their salaries. Six dollars a day per head for members of Parliament, is a monstrous burden upon the finances of the country, whilst the irrelevant twaddle in which they indulge is an insult to the sense of the community.

Though we have not space to report the several speeches delivered during the course of the debate, we cannot but notice that of Mr. McGee, which is allowed on all hands to have been one of the most effective delivered during the debate; whilst we have no doubt that the Hon. Postmaster-General will long remember the castigation inflicted upon him by the junior member for Montreal, who in a masterly manner exposed the artifices employed by his Ministerial opponent to secure his election by appealing to the Anti-Catholic fanaticism of the people of Upper Canada. As a specimen Mr. McGee read the following extracts from one of the Ministerial electioneering placards:—

"No (Mr. McGee,) held by mere accident in his hands one of the hon. gentleman's electioneering placards, issued the last time he was a candidate. The document was headed—'Protestantism in danger; come to the rescue—vote for Smith!!' (Loud laughter.) 'Mr. Burnham is supported by Father Smith,' a Catholic clergyman in the town of Cobourg, 'who boasts he can return Mr. Burnham by holding up his right hand.' 'Remember the civil butcheries of Rome!' This was one of the documents which the Hon. Postmaster-General, who is opposed to religious dissensions, had put forth. 'It is part of a deep laid scheme to bring Canada under the dominion of the Pope, by means of Separate Schools.' (Loud laughter.) This was the placard and the platform of the hon. gentleman when before the electors."

Strangest of all, it is for the men who make these appeals to the Protestantism of Upper Canada, that the support of the Catholics of the Lower Province is claimed, by the friends of "bons principes!" Why even George Brown himself was never more brutal in his denunciations of Popery than are the leading members of the present Ministry!

Up to the time of going to press the debate on the address still continued. Mr. Hogan's amendment had been negatived, as also one proposed by M. Archambault.

THE "BROWN-DORION POLICY."—We have carefully perused the speeches of the leading members of the short-lived administration of last summer, in the hopes of discovering wherein its policy consisted; and how it proposed to deal with the great questions of the day, such as the "School Question," the "Seat of Government Question," and the "Question of Representation by Population." The only conclusion at which we can arrive however, is this—that upon these, as upon all other important topics, it had no clearly-defined policy whatever. Mr. George Brown tells us indeed, that, had he been allowed to remain in the enjoyment of his salary, it was his intention to have "grappled" with these questions; our opinion however from the first was, and always has been, that he and his colleagues were determined to shirk them; and in this opinion we are fully confirmed by their own official declarations in the present session of Parliament.

Take the "School Question" for instance—(the most difficult, and incomparably the most important, of those questions with which any Ministry that may be formed, will have to deal)—and the declarations of the "Brown-Dorion" administration as to its intentions towards it; and its incompetency to deal with that question, is at once apparent. "It was agreed"—so we are now informed—"to take the question up, and after examining the systems in vogue in Belgium, Ireland, Prussia, &c., to introduce into our common school system such amendments as might seem necessary." In other words, it was agreed to evade the question; and under the pretence of "grappling" with it, to postpone, indefinitely, its discussion and settlement, whilst inquiries were being made into the school systems of other countries; systems utterly inapplicable to the circumstances of Upper Canada; and all open to the same objections as those which Catholics urge against the system now actually in operation in that section of the Province.

For the main objection against that system, and one which is conclusive in so far as Catholics are concerned, against it, and against the school systems of those countries from which we were to borrow "such amendments as might seem necessary"—is this; that it, and they, are common or mixed school systems; and that all such systems of education are repugnant to, and have been once and for ever condemned by, the Catho-

lic Church. Every one in the slightest degree acquainted with the public declarations of the Catholic Church, must know that it is to mixed or common schools—no matter what may be taught therein, or how conducted—that the Catholic Church objects; and that no possible or conceivable modification of a common or mixed system, can mitigate our hostility towards it, or induce us to regard it with an eye of favor. An essential condition of any and every system of public education to which we will ever give our support, is a provision for "separate," as opposed to "common" or "mixed" schools. In the plenitude of our rights as parents, we declare that we will not—so help us God—that we will not allow our children to be educated, either by Protestants, or with Protestants; that in this matter we are answerable to God, and to Him alone; and that we will listen to no compromise, and will allow no one, no human authority, no matter how constituted, to dictate to us therein. The Catholic, or professing Catholic, who can talk of so modifying a "common" or "mixed" system of education, as to make it tolerable to Catholics, must be either a simpleton or something worse.

What then must be our opinion of those who twaddle about reforming our actual system by importations from Prussia, Belgium, Ireland or elsewhere—as if it were merely to the details, and not to the fundamental principle, of all "common" or "mixed" education, that Catholics object? Either that they are grossly ignorant of the state of the "School Question," as betwixt Catholics and Protestants, and therefore intellectually incompetent to legislate thereupon; or that they are for party purposes prepared to sacrifice our rights as parents, and to make abnegation of their duty as Catholics; and are, therefore, morally unfit for the office of legislators, and altogether unworthy of our support.

At the same time, and in justice to the late Brown-Dorion Administration, we must admit that the scheme of looking for amendments to the Upper Canada School Laws in the School Laws of Ireland, was by no means original on their part; but was borrowed from the policy of their Ministerial predecessors. Though Ministers and their organs may to-day reproach the "Brown-Dorion" Administration with a design of importing the Irish system into Canada, they themselves some two years ago entertained somewhat similar views on the School Question; and in the *Pilot* of the 21st August, 1856—then as now a docile Ministerial hack—we find the following significant hints upon the Separate School system, and its remedy:—

"The administration,"—says the *Pilot*, under the above mentioned date—"strong enough to abolish this (the Separate) system, and establish one in which every boy could receive a practical education; that would ally or eradicate its vices; and in place of nourishing though collateral, dissension, distrust, and discord, encourage and cultivate the more Christian feelings of forbearance and respect, would confer on the people of Canada a blessing invaluable to us, and to our children. It has been done in Ireland, and may be done here.—*Pilot*, August 21, 1856. (The italics are our own.)"

Now this was just what the Brown-Dorion Administration profess to have had in view; and it is therefore entitled, in so far as the *Pilot* and its Ministerial patrons are concerned, to the praise due to those who design well. Mr. Brown it seems picked up the cast-aside garments of his predecessors in office; and it is really too bad that the latter should now condemn in him, that which originated with themselves. With Catholics, however, the case is different; and we, at least, are justified in looking upon all as alike our enemies, who endeavor to impose upon us, or perpetuate any modification of, a "common" or "mixed" system of education.

Plain speaking is at all times a salutary practice; but above all upon a question of such transcendent importance as the education of our children, and at a time when men, who from their position ought to know better, will still persist in talking as if it were possible so to modify a "common" or "mixed" system of education as to render it acceptable to Catholics. It is for this reason then, that we assert that the most objectionable feature of all those systems from which the amendments to our Upper Canadian system were to have been borrowed is this—that they are common or mixed systems; that to no such system will we ever give our approbation; and that the total separation of Catholic children from Non-Catholic children, in the School as in the Church—in education as in religion—is, and ever will be, an indispensable condition of any school system for which we Catholics will ever submit to be taxed.

THE ANNIVERSARIES.—In this country, Christmas Pantomimes, the fantastic tricks of Harlequin, the sprightly Columbine, and the rich drolleries of Clown and Pantaloon are almost unknown. Yet are we not without our winter amusements; and the farce which reverend buffoons in black coats and white chokers annually re-produce on the boards of the Wesleyan Methodist Theatre in Great St. James Street, is worth all the Christmas pieces of Covent Garden or Drury Lane. Not even Joe Grimaldi of comic memory, in his happiest moments, was more droll, or mirth-provoking than are the greasy sensual looking "men of God" who figure at the

Montreal Anniversaries; and in every conceivable variety of nasal intonation denounce the "*Man of Sin*," and invoke the wrath of heaven upon the head of the "*Scarlet Woman of Babylon*."

It may be, and indeed has been, objected that there is a sameness, a want of variety in the amusements given by the Montreal Evangelical troupe; that they vary not from year to year; and that we have always the same old jokes, the same "touching appeals," the same "consolations in the past," and the same "lively hopes" for the future. This complaint is no doubt only too true, and the proceedings of the past week were no exception to the general rule. We may, therefore, be excused if we give but a very cursory glance at them and the prominent actors. The only thing indeed worthy of being put on record is the following, which we find in the Montreal *Witness*' notice of the annual Farce played with great applause by the French Canadian Missionary Company. Our cotemporary says:—

"The meeting of the French Canadian Missionary Society has on former years been characterised too much by controversial speeches, which, however true, jarred a little upon the tender feelings of love and compassion for perishing souls which the previous meetings had excited; but this year no discordant note was struck."

In other words, if there was as much misrepresentation, there was a little less blackguarding usual; and above all, warned by repeated exposures, the several speakers were careful not to indulge in the dangerous luxury of "*the lie with a circumstance*." This of course detracted very much from the interest of the proceedings; but upon the whole it was no doubt the most prudent course to adopt, and one to which we expect our evangelical friends will for the future adhere.

The finances of our reverend Buffoons do not seem by their own Report to be in a very flourishing condition; but this, seeing that they have no longer the funds of a "Savings Bank" to fall back upon, and that their leading men no longer enjoy their former opportunities for robbing the public, is not to be wondered at.—Their total income was put down at \$10,048; their annual expenditure at \$10,008; and their debt at \$1,600; so that unless something speedily "turns up" in their favor—as Mr. Micawber would say—their "swaddling" operations will have to be suspended.

It seems further that the number of children by them inveigled into the "Swaddling" establishment at Pointe Aux-Trembles amounts to 94; that the congregation at the same place "numbers 73, exclusive of pupils, of whom 22 are communicants. These," adds the Montreal *Witness*, "with about one hundred pupils make the largest French Protestant Congregation in Canada." Altogether it would appear that the Society has about 281 children in its hands undergoing the process of perversion; and that the aggregate congregations average about 500. Considering the amount of money annually expended; and comparing that amount with the results as evinced by the above statistics—we think that we are fully justified in applying to the proceedings of our farcical friends of the French Canadian Missionary Society, the words of the old adage, "Much cry, and little wool."

There is, however, an amount of work done by the Society—in its Report—which cannot be expressed in figures, or laid down in terms of dollars and cents. If, in substance it is said, we have but few converts to boast of, we have at least shaken the faith of many simple *habitans*, in the doctrines of the Catholic Church; if we have made but trifling additions to the frequenters of the conventicle, we have at all events contributed towards swelling the ranks of the infidels, and in so far have done the work of our great master the devil. "Confidence in Rome is shaken,"—we are told—"much more extensively than the number of actual converts;" and so our friends have the consolation of knowing that the cause of Protestantism or Denialism is advancing at a far more rapid rate than the increase to the numbers of pupils at Pointe Aux-Trembles, or of devout worshippers in their meeting-house, would seem to indicate.

Upon the whole, however, we have every reason to be satisfied with the Report of the French Canadian Missionary Society, as a convincing proof of how little harm the Society is doing, and of the general morality of the people of Lower Canada. Protestantism never thrived, never yet made any progress amongst a people whose morals were pure; amongst whom honesty, chastity, and temperance were held in estimation; whilst on the other hand, an impure, and corrupt population always holds out prospects of easy triumph to the Protestant Missionary.

Of the addresses delivered upon the occasion of the Anniversary, and after the reading of the Report, we have left ourselves no room to speak. Suffice it to say that they were characterised by the usual amount of imbecility, unvarnished, and twaddle. A Mr. Fraser gave out a capital comic song, beginning, "*Avenge O Lord thy slaughtered saints whose bones*" &c., with great effect; and a doxology, as they call it, intoned in the regular "*We won't go home till morning*" style, concluded the evening's entertainment.

THE LAY OF THE ANCIENT SUPERINTENDENT.—There are men who are, as it were, doomed to expiate their manifold offences by public acts of confession of their wrong doings; and to seek solace for their wounded spirits in bestowing their tediousness upon the ears of an unsympathising public. So was it with the "*Ancient Mariner*" of whom Coleridge sang; so also is it with our reverend Superintendent of

Education for Upper Canada. He is doing penance for his frauds, through the columns of the Toronto press; and the Canadian public is the unfortunate "*wedding guest*" upon whom he pounces, and whom he compels to listen to his pitiful story.

By his own showing the Reverend Superintendent is an old man, and a much wronged man.—His fraudulent appropriations of the interest accruing upon public monies entrusted to him for defraying the expenses of the Educational Department of his section of the Province, and by him deposited in the Bank of Upper Canada, may, in the eyes of profane persons, ignorant of the privileges of the saints, and strangers to the blessings of evangelical Methodism, appear but little removed from what the world terms swindling; but, as narrated and commented upon by the "*Ancient Superintendent*" himself, are made to assume the aspect of acts of almost heroic virtue, and stoical self-denial. The "*Three per cent*," upon deposits of public monies, and which he appropriated to his own use, becomes under his magic touch a holy thing; and the resolution of the Legislature in virtue of which he was compelled to disgorge his long arrears of plunder, seems to us, as we listen to the sophistical pleadings of the outraged official, an act of heartless cruelty, not to say of ruthless sacrilege.—Such is the skill of the old man eloquent, vindicating his peculations against the strictures of the *Globe*, and its unprincipled editor, Mr. George Brown.

Well, we are not disposed to be very hard upon the reverend delinquent. Judged by the very low standard of morals that obtains in Canada, and compared with his official cotemporaries the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, if no better, does not seem to be worse than other men. In a more than half Yankeeified community such as that of Upper Canada it would be absurd to look amongst its public men for specimens of chivalrous integrity, or high-minded contempt for dishonestly acquired wealth. Here, as in the United States, the "*All mighty Dollar*" is the God of every man's idolatry, the Baal before whom all must bend the knee. "Smartness," not honesty, is the virtue for which men are most esteemed on this Continent; and all that can be said against our reverend Superintendent of Education is, that in matters of dollars and cents he is just as smart as those amongst whom he lives and moves, and has his being. He has been unfortunate in his speculations lately; that is, he has been detected, and compelled to disgorge his plunder; but this is the only difference that we can detect betwixt him and his brother officials.

This we say is the best apology that can be urged in behalf of the reverend Chief Superintendent; and to this he would, therefore, have confined himself had he been wise; had he not been as it were possessed with a "*cacochæth scribendi*," and an irresistible impulse to disburthen his conscience before the public. The following defence of the "*Ryerson Frauds*," which we extract from a lengthy communication over the signature E. Ryerson in the Toronto *Colonist* of the 7th inst., will, we fancy, do him but little good:—

This is the whole question. I submit to my reader, that in case a neighbor or company should place in his hands £1,000 or £10,000 with a request that he would pay it out from time to time for certain purposes, he being responsible for the safe keeping as well as the due payment of such money, though receiving no remuneration for his responsibility and trouble, whether he would not feel himself entitled to any allowance a bank might grant him for the deposit of such money, and whether he would feel himself in duty bound to pay out in behalf of the neighbor or company more money than he received from them; and whether he would not feel that he had equitably and faithfully performed his duty in paying on their behalf a thousand pounds for every thousand pounds he had received from them.

This is not "*the whole question*;" for the reverend Chief Superintendent forgets, or rather purposely omits, one very important feature thereof, and one which essentially affects the whole question at issue. He was the hired and salaried servant of the public; paid, and handsomely paid, for his trouble in paying out from time to time the money by them entrusted to him for defraying the expenses of his Department; and his position was therefore in no wise analogous to that of an unsalaried person, undertaking to take charge of, and pay out, a sum of money placed in his hands by a neighbor. The latter would no doubt have a right to exact a commission as a remuneration for his trouble; but the public servant in receipt of a salary has no right to levy toll upon public monies passing through his hands, because by his salary he has already been amply remunerated for all work by him done.

Our Reverend "*Ancient*" is far more successful in attacking the character of Mr. George Brown than in defending his own; and we can heartily approve of every epithet which he applies to the latter, believing as we do—and upon the strength of the old adage—that when two such personages as the Reverend Mr. Ryerson and Mr. George Brown fall out, honest men have a chance of coming by their own. Indeed, as a specimen of the "*Pot and Kettle*" style of vituperation, we believe that the following extracts from our Chief Superintendent's letter in the *Colonist*, cannot be excelled:—

"I am thankful"—says the writer after enumerating his many infirmities—"I am thankful, that under