

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, OCT. 19.

ECCLIASTICAL CALENDAR.

OCTOBER—1866.
Friday, 19—St. Pierre d'Alcantra, C.
Saturday, 20—St. Jean de Cantil, C.
Sunday, 21—Twenty-second after Pentecost, Purification of the Blessed Virgin.
Monday, 22—Of the Feria.
Tuesday, 23—Of the Feria.
Wednesday, 24—St. Raphael, Arch.
Thursday, 25—Of the Blessed Sacrament.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The arrival of the *Belgian* has brought us no news of any importance.

The *Times* suggests that the difference relating to the Alabama claims ought to be set at rest, and that the necessary temper and judgment may be brought to bear upon it. The *Times* further suggests that England should offer and submit her Neutrality laws together with those of the United States for revision, by a mixed commission; and also that the time has come when concession respecting the Alabama claims is no longer open to misconception, and would be accepted by the United States as spontaneous of our good will.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* says that the seizure of the British steamer *Tornado* and the imprisonment of her crew, on positive orders from Madrid, is assuming a very serious aspect. The ground alleged by her captors is that the *Tornado* was a Chilean privateer, the fact being that she is owned by Campbell & Co., of London, and was on a legitimate voyage from Leith to Rio Janeiro, and her crew are all British subjects. Moreover, they have been kept in close confinement for a month and treated with brutal severity by the Spanish authorities.

The Berlin *Kreutz Zeitung* states, on good authority, that General Castelnau has been despatched to Mexico by Napoleon, with orders to treat with Juarez concerning the withdrawal of the French troops, as well as the recognition by the Republican Government of the debt contracted by Maximilian. What service Gen. Castelnau is in a position to offer in return is not divulged.

The Paris correspondent of the *London Times* asserts that, notwithstanding the pacific countenance assumed by France and Prussia, there is in higher regions, as strong, if not stronger, irritation against Prussia than at any previous period.

Official intelligence from Candia, via Corfu states that another battle has taken place, in which 7,000 Christian and 7,000 Egyptian troops were engaged. The former commenced the attack, and drove back the Egyptians to the sea shore where they were received on the ships of the Turkish squadron.

By the telegrams from the United States, we learn that by an order issued by the United States Attorney General the Fenian arms, seized in Buffalo, are to be delivered up to them; to be used, we have no doubt, when they see fit, in another marauding raid upon our peaceful homes.

THE WHITE SLAVES OF ENGLAND.—We continue from our last, our extracts from the almost incredible revelations of the Parliamentary Report, as given in the *London Quarterly Review* upon this revolting topic. In our last we took a cursory glance at the condition of the "in-door slaves;" to-day we treat of the still more wretched and degraded beings who are doomed to toil at the forge, in the mines and in the collieries. The *Reviewer* thus opens this part of his case:

"We find that in the blast furnaces, mills and forges of Staffordshire and Worcestershire, the number of children, young persons, and women employed amounts to about 3,800, and to 3,000 in the miscellaneous metal trades of the Wolverhampton district, making with those engaged in similar employments in Lancashire a total of 17,729 persons, who might most beneficially be brought within the operation of the Factory Act. In the blast furnaces, mills, and forges, great numbers of children and youths are employed in night sets between 6 P.M. and 6 A.M.; and in the miscellaneous trades, overtime is very common, a great number of children working as long as the men, viz. from 6 A.M. to 11 P.M. Little girls are employed in bellows-blowing (very hard work for children) for fourteen hours a day, standing on platforms to enable them to reach the handle of the bellows."—*London Quarterly Review*, April, 1866, pp. 200, 201.

The age at which children are set to this kind

of work is about seven; and its severity, and consequent injurious effects upon the bodies of the poor little things can scarce be exaggerated.

"Iron chains are wrought in this district, and there is no employment in which boys are subjected to a greater amount of labor. Each link is formed by welding together, at a white heat, the ends of thick pieces of red-iron, a man and his boys striking alternately with the greatest possible rapidity the iron should cool before the welding is completed. The labour of boys is measured only by the strength of the men; for as long as the men can work, the boys must attend them."—*ib.*

Girls too—in Christian England—girls of tender years are employed in this same heavy work of the forge, for the Commissioners report having met with a case in which:—

"Two girls, nine and ten years of age, were working as 'strikers,' and a little girl of eight, occasionally relieved by a younger one of six, was working the bellows."—*ib.*

If a photograph of the scene here described by the Commissioners, could have been taken, it would have made an excellent pendant for some of those fancy sketches in which the unguary sufferings of stout clumsy niggers too lazy to work without a little compulsion have been paraded before the world by Northern Abolitionists, and other poor creatures laboring under the effects of "nigger on the brain." Here is another case, somewhat similar: for which as well as for the above, we think that it would be difficult to find a parallel in any of the slave-holding States of this Continent:—

"One of the greatest abuses of juvenile labor that we have met with occurs in the manufacture of bricks. The weights carried on the head, and in the arms of young girls are astonishing. A girl twelve years of age was found engaged in catching and passing on two bricks at a time, weighing 14 lbs. for a whole day; a work which involved the handling of a weight amounting to 36 tons, and to accomplish which, standing on a narrow sloping plank, she had to make 11,300 complete half turns of her body. Other girls—'pages,' as they are called—carried six fire-bricks at a time to the kilns. A fire-brick weighs, if wet 9 lbs, and when dry 7 1/2 lbs. A child only five years old has been seen at work in a brick field, undergoing an amount of labor sufficient to completely crush out its vital energy, and bring it to a premature grave."—*ib.*

We have not space for more of the monstrous details of this cruel system of white slavery; but the above given will suffice to convey to the reader some faint idea of it. It is a system the more cruel, because it presses exclusively upon the weakest and the most helpless class of our fellow-creatures; upon little children whose tender years cry aloud for pity—and which but for the unfortunate fact that they are white children—nigger children, would be freely accorded to them. These unfortunates, sold at an early age to the child-jobbers who go about the country, as described by the *Reviewer*, buying up little children from their parents, have none to help them: their place in case of death can be so quickly and cheaply supplied, the child market in fact is always so well stocked, that the owner or task master has not the same interest in using them well, as that the planter had in the case of his black slave, who cost a high figure, and could not easily be replaced: and so it is that if we consider only the bodies and the physical suffering of the white slaves of England, there seems no exaggeration in the language in which the *Reviewer* describes the system itself indeed as one,—

"Compared with which the abominations of negro slavery were examples of mildness and humanity."—*ib.*

But if from the bodies of these white slaves, we direct our regard to their souls, if we look into the moral and intellectual results of the system of bondage that we have described, we shall have still greater reason for placing the status of the English white slave, below, far below, that of the negro on the Southern plantation. We will merely quote the words of the *Reviewer* on this subject:—

"The defective state of education is brought forward very prominently by the Commissioners, and the ignorance not only on religious subjects but even of the commonest and simplest objects of nature that was exhibited was amazing. In religion, especially, the minds of hundreds were found in a state of absolute darkness. In a button manufactory, out of thirteen selected boys, nine had never heard of the Bible, or knew anything that was in it, and some of the elder boys laughed at the idea of their being supposed to know anything."—*ib.*

In a foot note the *Reviewer* gives from the Report, the following fair specimens of the average state of religious knowledge amongst English children in the manufacturing class of society:—

"Although it is painful to do so, we give a few illustrations of this ignorance on religious subjects, taken from the answers of children.

"God is a good man, or the man in heaven—I've heard of Christ, but don't know what it is—Don't know where God lives, or about the world being made, or who made it—The Bible is not a book—Have not heard of Christ—Don't know if I am a Christian, or what it means—The good and the bad go to heaven alike—Them as is wicked shall be worshipped—When people die they be burned, their souls and their bodies—All go into the pit hole, where them be burned—They never get out, and live again—they have not a soul—I have not one—The soul does not live afterwards—It's quite an end of people when they die—The devil is a good person; don't know where he lives—Christ was a wicked man—Don't know what prayer means, or who it is said to."—*ib.*

The secular intelligence of these poor creatures is on a par with their religious knowledge, as will be seen from the following extracts:—

"On an analysis of a hundred, from seven to ten years of age, 72.5 per cent admitted that they could not read; 13.75 per cent could not; 12.5 could read a little; and the remaining 1.25, i.e. one girl, could read well. In Birmingham thirty-two persons averaging more than twelve years of age, including a young man of twenty and two young women, could not tell the Queen's name. The commonest and simplest objects of nature, such as flowers, birds, fishes, rivers, mountains, and the sea, were unknown.

Some thought London a country, one that it was in the Exhibition; a violet was said to be a pretty bird; a primrose, a red rose; a lilac, also a bird; but when they saw a robin, or an eagle were birds, none could say; some knew not what a river meant, or where fishes live; or where snow comes from; and a cow in a picture was pronounced to be a lion. Multitudes of these poor children can never have seen a primrose by a river's brim, or heard the song of a lark.

"Not for them
The vernal cuckoo shouteth; not for them
Murmurs the laicouring bee."—pp. 203, 204.

Much virtuous indignation against Southern planters has been expressed, much misplaced sympathy has been professed for the well-fed Carolina negroes by men beneath whose eyes the white slaves of England, starved, beaten, and in ignorance like the beast of the field, were driven by scores to an untimely grave, and sold by unnatural parents into worse than Egyptian bondage, and not a voice was raised in their behalf. Always intent upon their neighbor's affairs, and keen-eyed to detect a hole in his coat, our English philanthropists the Pharisees of the XIX. century, are blind to the horrors enacted within their own doors. Well would it be for the reputation of England as well as for the cause of humanity, were these gentry to look at home before casting their eyes abroad to scan the short comings of their neighbors: well will it be should the exposure lately made by the publication of the Parliamentary Report of the abominations of the white slave system of England have the effect of provoking the interference of the Legislature, and of wiping away the foul stain from the name of Christian and Bible reading England.

THE AMENITIES OF CIVILIZED LIFE, versus THE DARK AGES.—We have the highest Educational authority in this country for the fact that the Middle Ages were "Dark Ages."

Whether this assertion was the deliberate conclusion of deep and attentive study, and of careful and impartial comparison with other and brighter ages, or whether it was the mere offspring of an unguarded and heated moment of controversy—or, third and last eventuality, the foregone conclusion of a bigoted mind, we know not. The ipse dixit of the Educational Office has said it—the decree has gone forth to the Medes and Persians, and for all practical purposes as far as Upper Canadian education is concerned, it must henceforth be allowed to be so. "The resurrection of the human mind from the lethargy and enslavement in which it had been buried during the Dark Ages"—really we quite admire the expression: more it is true, for its rollicking recklessness, than for constructional perspicuity.—That the Dark ages had many and great disadvantages, we admit, amongst which not the least was the fact of the Chief Superintendency of Education not being open to Methodist Parsons in general and those in particular, who had tooted for political parties; but then neither is it now open to Catholic Priests, whatever may be their qualifications.

Now let us not for a moment be thought to be so utter a Vandal as to wish to assert against the Education office, that the Middle Ages were paragons of perfection. Nay! we will admit all that their most bigotted maligners would advance against them. All we would wish to say is, that, after all, they were not one whit better or worse than their malignant neighbors. It is true, that the present ages have the advantage of being admitted to be *civilized*, whilst the Middle Ages have been decreed to be *Dark*; but these are only relative terms dependent on the first principles of their sponsors, and may mean, after all, that the Middle Ages were far superior to their successors. But this is in advance of our thesis; all we wish to say is, that all ages are—to use a homely phrase—"much of a muchness."

As far as "continual wars" are concerned, we do not appear to be very far in advance of our fellows, unless it be in the matter of dispatch and the increased facilities for slaughter. Our needle-guns may be triumphs of mechanical skill; but they are no less man-slayers than was the old fashioned falchion. It may appear an advantage to some minds to be made with Mon. Mantlin; into a decent *body*, to be punctured punctually, rather than hacked hacklogly, but the end we opine is the same, whether we have a polite perforation through the heart, from a conical bullet which revolved spirally in its flight, or a vulgar gash in the cranium from a claymore, both will be "vanitas et afflictio."

For deeds of personal violence too the *porchant* differs slightly at different periods. The stroke on the head from a quarter staff of the Dark Ages—the "stand and deliver" of the Turpin era, and the refined garotte of more advanced civilization, are only different methods of availing one'self of one's neighbor's purse, wherein if there be indeed any superiority, it might perhaps be awarded to that period of civilization whose refinement pursues its avocation in the heart of the great metropolis of the world, and within call of police, rather than in the bye ways of some unfrequented forest.

In those social amenities of man towards man that bespeak refinement, it cannot but be expected, that the age of civilization will bear away the palm. And this we find to be the case.

Never perhaps was it more aptly verified than in the social bearing of those intelligent artisans, who in a London Anglican Church under the very shadow of the Fountain of all Honour, whilst the Lord's Supper was being administered by the officiating clergyman, cries out "What's thee going to have Dick? some pickled cockles eh? whilst another, with equal refinement, shouted exhortingly to an accomplice who was going in scorn to receive the Communion, "Have a gu's full, Dick!" Whereupon Dick seized hold of the communion cup and tossed off its whole contents at a draught. Whatever might have been the behaviour of the Hodges and Clodpoles of the Dark Ages, it cannot certainly compare with this truly refined conduct of a more advanced civilization.

But it is during the era of Reformed religion and almost at the doors of the Apostle of Protestantism, that any little superiority claimed by the age of the "resurrection of the mind" must be awarded. A "congress of students" (continental liberalism delights in big words) is held at Liege, that city of coal smoke and pop guns. Young men in their teens and old magistrates in their second childhood attend:—

The meeting was opened by a young student, who without any introduction or circumlocution whatever, dashed into *medias res*, and *ex principio et cathedra* declared he stood before them as an Athiest; and, impudently glorying in his shame, felt happy in informing them that true peace of mind and of an untroubled conscience was centered in the denial of a God, and, consequently, in the rejection of all religion whatever; that, of all religious superstitions and fanaticisms, Catholicism was the worst, must be hunted down, persecuted, radically pulled up, annihilated, and completely swept from off the face of the earth, ere liberty could exist in its reality, entirety, glory, and surpassing beauty and loveliness. To this youthful *esprit fort* succeeded another equally bare faced and shameless, who adopted the views of the first speaker, and gave a sample of his political creed, viz. that he was a Socialist of the first water; that property, as now constituted, could not possibly co-exist with the modern ideas of free liberty in the second half of the nineteenth century; that class privilege, whether civil or clerical, and aristocratic claims were all humbug, humiliating, derogatory from, and *de facto* incompatible with the inalienable rights of humanity; that he rejected all authorities whatever, both in Church and State; that he was his own master, independent of heaven and earth, &c. &c. A third young hot blood arose and with vengeance re-iterated that his principles were those of '93—of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre; that he hated with cordial sincerity and enthusiasm the *drapeau rouge*—the red flag of liberty, and hoped the time was near at hand when he should be its standard bearer through heaps of slain, through rivers of warm blood and human gore.

Certes! Atheism, Bishop Colensoisms, Socialism *Congres des etudiants*, Danton—Robespierism and *Drapeaux rouges* are specialties worthy of our age of advanced civilization.

PISSIFATUS.

BREAKERS AHEAD.—It needed not the gift of prophecy to foretell, years ago, that the real political difficulties of the United States would commence only with the triumph in the field of the Northern or ultra-Jacobinical party. The conquest, by force of arms, of the Southern States was, an easy task in comparison with that which victory has imposed upon the Northern States—to wit, the task of governing the conquered South without tearing to shreds the Constitution, and thereby inaugurating an era of tyranny, not only for the conquered, but for the conquerors. As we wrote in the *TRUE WITNESS*, years ago, at the commencement of the contest, the Northern States had then to elect betwixt a sacrifice of territory for the maintenance of their Constitution, and the sacrifice of the Constitution for the maintenance of territory. They made their election in favor of territory, and are now in the political anarchy reigning, and in the civil war and military despotism impending, or looming in the future, reaping the fruit of their unwise election.

"As a nation"—says the *Boston Recorder*—"we are drifting into fearful danger. The desperate struggle for party power is really appalling. Never since we were a nation were the fundamental and co-ordinate branches of the Government so rent asunder, and never were such means resorted to, nor such ebullitions of passion in high places. It is a serious question whether we have gained anything by the war, and indeed whether a more fearful war is not just before us."

Very similar is the tone of most of the Northern papers in their discussion of domestic affairs; and the opinion is daily gaining ground, that another appeal to arms is inevitable, the combatants will be, not North against South, but Northerners against Northerners, but Western men against Western men, Jacobins against Constitutionalists, the party of the Revolution on this Continent against Conservatives, and the friends of law, order, and liberty.

And should such a contest break out, it needs not, we say again, the gift of prophecy to foresee that it will be more desperate, more bloody, than that lately closed, and will partake far more of the hideous characteristics of a real civil war. The war from '61 to '64 was a war of different rival and independent States; States dictated, on the one hand, by the resolve to uphold their national independence, on the other hand, by that just for conquest, and territory to which democratic communities are justly as subject as are Kings and Emperors. The next war, if it break out, will be a struggle betwixt citizens of one and the same State; a war of principles, a war to the knife, or rather to the scaffold, such as that which was waged in France betwixt the Mountain, and the party called of the Gironde. Indeed the great questions now at issue betwixt

the Northern supporters of the Presidential policy, and its opponents, are almost identical with those which after the death of the King were discussed with the assistance of the guillotine betwixt the partizans of Verginaud and of Robespierre. The political ideal that the Northern demagogues are striving to realise is a Republic, one and indivisible, in which all rights, civil, political, and social, shall emanate, and be held, from the one supreme central government, or authority; in which the last vestige of State Rights, or State autonomy shall be blotted out; and under which Maryland and Massachusetts, Virginia, Vermont, and the Carolinas shall be simply Departments, or arbitrary divisions established for the more easy working of the grand scheme of centralisation. The one great difficulty to the realisation of this idea is of course to be found in the fact that, as yet, there exists not in the United States, any one city that stands to the rest of the Republic in the same, or even in a similar position to that in which Paris stood, and still stands to the rest of France.—New York may be the commercial capital of the United States; Boston—so at least all New England men believe—is its literary or intellectual capital, and Washington its political capital; but strictly speaking there is as yet no capital in the United States, no one city which combines in itself all those peculiarities which make of London the capital of the British Empire, of Paris the capital of France; and in this accident is perhaps to be found, at the present moment, the best, the only guarantee against the triumph of Jacobinism in the United States. In the jealousies and clashing pretensions of their several large Provincial Cities is to be found the best bulwark against centralised despotism, which commencing with Jacobinism, culminates always in Caesarian, or a military Dictatorship.

Still it must be remembered that the Yankee Jacobin party is numerous, indeed all powerful in some of the Northern States; and that, flushed with its late victory over the Southerner, it will not, without a desperate and prolonged struggle submit to have the fruits of that victory wrenched from its hands; and though from the particular cause assigned above, it is possible that, ultimately, the Girondists, or modified State Rights party may issue victorious from the strife, it will not be until after a bitter and bloody war, which to all human appearance must terminate in the breaking up of the Giant Republic into several mutually independent communities. Thus will the South ultimately be avenged, and then only will the cause of civil and political liberty be promoted and secured. Of two things, however, one seems certainly destined to flow from the impending civil war. Either the Jacobin party will triumph: in which case will be reproduced on this Continent a political order similar to that which an Augustus founded and a Tiberius consolidated—which may God in His infinite mercy avert; or else the Jacobin party, defeated, and the progress of centralisation arrested, the work of political disintegration will set in; and this Continent—a consummation most devoutly to be wished—will be broken up into several free, independent, self-governing but not necessarily hostile States. Never at any epoch in the world's history, has a greater and more intricate political problem been propounded to man than that upon the solution of which the people of the neighboring Republic are now engaged.

ST. PATRICK'S HALL.—In our last we gave a pretty full description of this magnificent and truly national building, which promises to be one of the finest architectural ornaments of our good city. During the past week, the site was visited by hundreds, who were attracted to the busy scene by our description, which was copied by several of our city contemporaries with laudatory remarks on the enterprise of our Irish friends for having secured such a splendid site, and for having had the courage to undertake the erection of such a building.

We would say a word to-day on the massiveness of the foundations which are six feet thick at the base, the lowest courses being composed of solid blocks of stone six feet long, and these rest on a firm bed of gravel, which makes one of the best bottoms for the foundation of any public building to rest upon.

As the splendid weather of the last three weeks still continues, there can be no doubt but that the promise of the Contractors, who have a large force of men at work, of having the foundations well in this fall, will be fully carried out. To this great enterprise so well commenced we wish God-speed.

SENTENCE OF DEATH.—*Court of Queen's Bench Montreal.*—At the sitting of this Court, last week, Mack, a soldier, who cut the throat of Corporal Smith, a few months back was found guilty, and sentenced to be hung on Friday, the 23rd November next.

The calamity that has overtaken our sister city, Quebec, is so sudden and overwhelming that immediate aid most unquestionably is required. It is suggested by several citizens that a public meeting to consider this urgent matter should be called here forthwith.