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THE TRUE WITNESS
 AND
 CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.
 MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1854.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The *London Gazette* of the 28th ult. contained the long-expected Declaration of War, a measure which had been formally announced on the preceding evening to both Houses of Parliament, by a message from the Queen. Loyal addresses, in reply, have been unanimously carried in the Lords and Commons, and duly presented to Her Majesty. The "Declaration" in the *Gazette* gives a brief summary of the events which have thus, after near 40 years' peace, compelled the great powers of Europe to have recourse to arms—"to save Europe from the preponderance of a power which has violated the faith of treaties, and defied the opinion of the civilised world."
 The military preparations are continuing with increased energy; and every day sees some powerful ship leave her anchorage to join the Baltic fleet. In some quarters however complaints are rife that the vessels are greatly undermanned, and are especially deficient in the class of "able seamen." The news from the seat of war indicates the intention of the Russians to hurry on a decisive action, and thus bring matters to an issue, before the arrival of the French and British contingents. The last rumor is that the Czar has formally declared his readiness to evacuate the Principalities provided—the Western Powers succeed in securing by treaty, the emancipation of the Christians in the Turkish Empire, and withdraw their fleets from the Black Sea.

We argued last week, that the only valid argument for the "secularisation" of the "Reserves" must be based upon the principle, that State endowments in aid of religion are always, and essentially evil—and that the support of religion should always be left entirely, to the Voluntary efforts of the members of the various religious denominations. But this principle no conscientious Catholic, can ratify by his vote, because it is opposed to the teachings of his Church: nor will any prudent Catholic venture to affirm it for Upper Canada, because, if true there, it must be true here; and in its application would prove fatal to our ecclesiastical system in Lower Canada, by leading immediately to the abolition of "tithes"—the source from whence our parochial clergy are principally supported. The logical consequence of the *Kingston Herald's* argument in favor of "secularisation," is—that the compulsory levy of "tithes" in Lower Canada is an evil which should be immediately repressed; and we frankly admit it, did we recognise the truth of our cotemporary's premises, were we in consequence prepared to advocate "secularisation" to-day—upon the very same principles we should feel ourselves called upon to agitate for the abolition of tithes to-morrow.—We say therefore, to the *Canadian*, and his friends, "Be careful what you are about—look well to the consequences of your principles. To-day you are called upon to assert the "Voluntary" principle for Upper Canada; to-morrow you will be asked to apply the same principle to Lower Canada—and how, or with what arguments, will you be able to refuse compliance?" Knowing, therefore, that we shall soon be called upon to defend "tithes"—and knowing that they can only be logically defended by asserting the principle which "secularisation" denies—we are careful not to admit, to-day, a principle, which to-morrow, we shall be compelled, in self-defence, to repudiate.

The next objection urged against us is specious, but nothing more:—

"What does the TRUE WITNESS mean by the expression sacrilegious spoliation? Does he mean to assert, in the face of his oft and fierce denunciations of Protestantism, of a faith that he believes to be heretical and damnable, that it would be sacrilege to deprive the Church of England its parent of the ill-gotten means by which she is able to sow broadcast her heresies? If he believes this, then he is not a true Catholic, and in using the language he is guilty of rank heresy."—*Kingston Herald*.

We trust that we may save our orthodoxy, without any sacrifice of our consistency. By "sacrilegious spoliation" we mean, spoliation involving sacrilege; and by "sacrilege" we mean—(we quote Webster)

"The alienating to laymen, or common purposes, what has been appropriated, or consecrated, to religious persons or uses."

But the Clergy Reserves have been appropriated to "religious uses;" therefore, to "secularise" them, or to alienate them to "common purposes" would be "sacrilege."—Q.E.D.

This objection of the *Kingston Herald* is based upon a misconception of Protestantism; which, *per se*, is not a religion, but simply the negation of a religion. In so far as Protestants have any religion at all, in so far as they merit the name of Christians, it is

in virtue of what they have retained of old Catholic doctrine; and not of what they Protest against, or deny. Some Non-Catholic sects—as the Anglicans—retain more; others—as the Unitarians, and Universalists—retain less, of, Catholic doctrine; but almost all profess to recognise a God—the immortality of the soul—man's moral responsibility—a judgment to come, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Now, though we do not pretend, that, in so far as the *spiritual* interests of the individual are concerned, it is of any consequence how much, or how little, of Catholic doctrine he has retained, so long as he is outside of the Church—whether he be a Methodist or a Mormon, a Baptist or a Presbyterian, an Anglican or a Unitarian—yet, in so far as these Protestant sects inculcate the obligations of the moral law, by holding out inducements to obedience, and threats against the refractory, we recognise their utility to the State; we see in them a kind of moral police—not of a very high order indeed—but still, better than no police at all. In other words, we contend that it is better, for the security of property, the prevention of outrages, and the general interests of society, that its members should be Anglicans, Unitarians, Methodists, Presbyterians, than that they should be ultra-Protestants, or of no religion at all. No man will be a thief, or murderer, a drunkard or unchaste, because he is a conscientious and faithful member of the Church of England, or of Scotland; every Protestant sect, in so far as it is a *religious* denomination at all, imposes some checks upon the passions of its members; and therefore, though, we do not pretend that it can fit them for heaven, it will always render them less unruly and dangerous members of society upon earth. In so far then as the "Clergy Reserves" furnish the State with a supply of moral schoolmasters—and as we look upon them, poor as they are, as better than no moral schoolmasters at all—we deprecate the proposed "secularisation" as injurious to the *material* interests of society. In so doing, we assert no heresy, and make no concessions to Protestantism as a religion.

Instead however of arguing against the propriety of Catholics helping, by their votes, to "secularise" the religious endowments of Upper Canada, we have the right to call upon our opponents to show cause, to assign some reason—a reason to which, as Catholics, we can listen, and whose force we are prepared to admit—why we should adopt the line of policy which they advocate. The reasons of the *Kingston Herald* are, as we have shown, no reasons at all to Catholics—who are not Voluntaries upon principle, and who are not "opposed to Church Establishments;" whilst the *Canadian*, conscious of the weakness of its cause, refrains altogether from discussing the question upon its merits; but contents itself with continually mumbling something about the "double majority," and the duty of Catholics to vote with the majority of Upper Canada, and to violate a Catholic principle, because it is unpopular. We know not how to qualify such advice; it is unworthy of every honest man, as well as of every Catholic. "Shew us"—we say to the *Canadian*—"that 'secularisation' is *right*, and we will vote for it, though we vote alone; fail to do this, and we will oppose it, though twenty times the majority of which you boast, and on which you rely, were in favor of it."

Catholics respect "public opinion;" they have the highest regard and deference for "public opinion;" they bow and yield to "public opinion;" when "public opinion" is *right*—when it is a sound opinion; but when "public opinion" is *wrong*—and as it often has erred, so it may err again—the conscientious Catholic has no more respect for a wrong "public opinion" than he has for a wrong "private opinion." The sole standard by which the Catholic can consent to test measures, like this of "secularisation," involving a most important principle, is, not "public opinion," but the teaching of the Church—What does she say?—what do her interests require? These are the questions the Catholic asks.

We call then upon the *Canadian*, to discuss the question of the "secularisation" of the "Clergy Reserves" upon its own merits, irrespective of the clamor of democratic majorities. He has no right to demand the votes of his fellow-countrymen, in favor of "secularisation," unless he can show that it is *right*, as well as popular, that the "Clergy Reserves" should be "secularised;" unless he can show, that the cause of morality and religion, and the interests of the Catholic Church, will be thereby advanced and secured. These are the only reasons to which a Catholic will ever condescend to listen—these the only arguments which the conscientious Catholic, or the honest politician will ever deign to employ. Tell us not of your majorities—for the clamor of the multitude is too often but the "crucifige, crucifige eum;" and the *vox populi* is as little the *Vox Dei* to-day, as it was some eighteen hundred years ago. But show us rather, why, as Catholics—for the honor of God, and the good of His Church—we should vote for the "secularisation" of revenues set apart for religious uses. Do this, O *Canadian*, and the TRUE WITNESS will at once range himself under your standard.

One war at a time on its hands is not enough, it seems, to satisfy the bellicose spirit of the House of Commons, which has signalled itself by another declaration of hostilities against about one-third of the subjects of the British Empire; who, for their part, have boldly accepted the gage of battle. Whilst Sir C. Napier, and his stout squadron, are intent upon knocking the fortifications of Cronstadt about the ears of the Russian garrison, Mr. Chambers, and his Exeter Hall colleagues, have led the assault upon the conventual establishments of England; and threaten to drag their inmates before the table of a "select committee," there to answer any beastly and impertinent questions which the malice, or foul imagina-

tions of their unmanly persecutors may suggest. It is pleasant to see however that, throughout the Empire, this brutal outrage—not upon the civil and religious rights of Catholics alone, but upon the sanctity of domestic life—has aroused the indignation of the whole Catholic body, whose ill-will, at the present moment, is not altogether to be despised. Could the Irish Catholic members be persuaded to lay aside their disputes, and heartily combine in defence of their common religion, the British Government would soon learn, to its cost, that the eve of a bloody and dangerous war is not the fitting moment to insult the faith of eight millions of its subjects. As it was, Mr. Chambers' motion was not carried in the House of Commons without strenuous opposition.

Mr. Bowyer moved the amendment, that the order for the "select committee" be discharged. In a long and eloquent speech, the Hon. Member pointed out to the House, the injustice of the measure which Mr. Chambers called upon them to pass, and the dangers to which it would expose the peace of Her Majesty's dominions. He reminded them—that convents were as much private houses, and therefore as sacred, as the house of any lady or gentleman in the land—that the law had no more right to interfere with their inmates, than with the persons of any other private individuals, against whom, no charge had been substantiated—that if they had acted illegally, they were amenable, as any other of Her Majesty's subjects, to the law of the land, but that it was unjust to subject them to any special penalties from which other private citizens were exempt; and, finally, he reminded his opponents that the army, which was now gone forth to uphold the honor of Her Majesty's Crown, and the integrity of the dominions of her allies, was composed, for the most part, of Catholics—of the co-religionists, the brothers and fathers perhaps, of the inoffensive women whom it was proposed to subject to the most unmanly and insulting treatment.—Was it prudent, under these circumstances, to strike a blow against the loyalty and devotion of the people who had contributed so largely to furnish that splendid army?

Lord J. Russell supported Mr. Bowyer's amendment; justly characterising the stories circulated in England by the Missionary Societies, against nuns and nunneries, as "cock-and-bull stories." Several other Protestant gentlemen spoke in a similar strain, and condemned the intolerance of Mr. Chambers' motion, as unbecoming British statesmen, and English gentlemen. Unfortunately, Exeter Hall principles were in the ascendant; and after a debate, protracted though several nights, Mr. Chambers' infamous motion was carried by a large majority.

Beyond the mere pleasure that the fanatics of Exeter Hall will feel in the offering of this wanton insult to Catholics, we do not think that any very important results will follow the success of Mr. Chambers' motion; or that its effects will be more injurious to the Church than those of the ridiculous Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. The "select committee" may indeed be named—hold its sittings—summon Catholic ladies to appear before its august tribunal—perhaps, by brute force, drag them from their cloistered retreats to listen to its obscene interrogatories—but it will be unable to compel these ladies to reply to its filthy questioning; and thus, in all probability, the malice of Mr. Chambers and his accomplices, may yet be foiled by the maiden dignity of their intended victims. There is no law to compel them to answer; and if there were, they would have the right, and it would be their duty, to treat it with contempt; for Catholics owe neither respect nor obedience to Protestant Penal Laws against the Church—to violate such laws may often be a duty; to evade them, always a right.

The legal right however, of the nuns to refuse answering the questions of a "Parliamentary committee" is plainly asserted by the English Protestant press. In the case of the "corruption committee" now sitting, Mr. M. Morris of the *Times*, positively refused to answer certain questions put to him respecting the business arrangements of his journal, and has been highly lauded for so doing; the nuns will, therefore, be perfectly justified in declining to answer any questions touching the business arrangements of their private houses; and what the *Spectator* says of the inquisitorial nature of the proceedings of the "corruption committee" is perfectly applicable to Mr. Chambers' "select committee" on Convents:

"It is time that this indefinite privilege of the Commons should be challenged, in order that the common sense of the country may reprove the paltry excesses into which it has run, and may re-establish the constitutional dogma that every Englishman's house is his castle, inaccessible even to 'honorable members' without a proper warrant, under executive signature from the established law of the realm."—*Spectator*.

Could this "constitutional dogma" be re-established, for Catholics as well as Protestants, there would be an end for ever to the investigations of the "select committee." In agitating therefore, for the immunity of the private houses of Catholic ladies from domiciliary visits, the British Catholics are contending for the civil liberties of the whole community; for the re-establishment of what the *Spectator* calls a "constitutional dogma." Were Protestants wise, they would applaud and assist, instead of misrepresenting and opposing their Catholic brethren, in their noble struggle.

The "School Bill" for Upper Canada, as amended last session, seems far from giving general satisfaction; we copy from the *Catholic Citizen*, who speaks his mind freely upon the subject. It will be seen that our cotemporary fully bears out the prognostications of the TRUE WITNESS, as to the insufficiency of the remedy contained in the "Act Supplementary." Writing on the 15th of April last year, we complained of the "ambiguous" manner in which that "Act" was worded; upon the 6th of April, 1854, the *Catholic Citizen* of Toronto writes

as follows; we suppose that our cotemporary has good authority for what he advances:—

"This Canadian Reform Cabinet, as they call themselves, who are absolutely maintained in office by the Catholic votes of Eastern and Western Canada, are infinitely more hostile to the education of Catholics than the Tories were, as will be seen by reference to the parliamentary debates; and if further proof were wanting, the pretended amendment of the Common School Act of the last session, will prove their profession of honest intention to be, as we have called it, a delusion, a mockery, and a snare.

"If they did not intend it to be a delusion and mockery, why did they reject the amended Bill presented on behalf of the Catholic body? This Bill neither professed, nor intended to give to Catholics more privileges than their Ministerial enactment professes on the face of it to do. There was, however, this difference between the two. The Bill presented to them by the Catholics would ensure impartial justice, whereas theirs is absolutely impracticable in the administration, and they, as well as their anti-Catholic Superintendent of Education knew that such would be the case.

"As a matter of course, it is proclaimed in the returns on education that very few districts or localities call for Separate Schools; and this is taken as a proof that the Catholics do not want them, whereas the reason why the Catholics do not, is because in the present state of the law they cannot call for them. The Catholics in Western Canada value the faith of their children as highly as they or their ancestors did in Ireland, and will preserve it at the price of property, liberty, or life itself. Do not the noble educational endowments of Western Canada belong as well to the Catholic as to the Protestant inhabitants? If they do, why is it that the class books of Upper Canada College and of the Grammar schools are such as Catholics cannot use without feeling the insults intended either to their faith or morals? We need only remind our readers of the erudite and invaluable lecture of the Vicar General of this Diocese, delivered at the Catholic Institute in this city some two years ago, in which he produced the class books used in these public establishments, supported by endowments, the property, as well of Catholics as of Protestants.

The truth of the matter is simply this:—A large portion of English literature, from Locke to Lindley Murray, particularly educational elementary publications, is so generally tainted with the prevailing spirit of "hatred of Popery and Papias," that very many well meaning, and we hope well intentioned protestants are quite insensible of the extent of calumny and insult which is contained in these college and school books, as well as in the libraries purchased with the joint property of Catholics and Protestants. Our space will not now permit us to give, as we intended, the details of the measure of justice which our Reform Cabinet rejected last session, but we shall place the whole subject in due time before the Catholics of Western and Eastern Canada, that they may at the coming elections show how they will trust wolves in sheep's clothing."

So long as full control over the Common Schools of Upper Canada is entrusted to a man so notorious for his anti-Catholic prejudices, as Dr. Ryerson, it is in vain to expect that any "Amendments" in the "School Law" will suffice to remedy the grievances of which our cotemporary complains. These grievances proceed, rather from the partial manner in which the Law is administered, than from any defects in its provisions; and the best intentions of the legislator are defeated by the cunning of a Methodist Chief Superintendent, to whom our "Common School" system is only so far valuable, as it enables him to insult the faith of his Catholic fellow-citizens.

A recent work by a Protestant minister of the name of Beecher, gives occasion to the following appreciation of Calvinism by a writer in the *Christian Guardian*. It is indeed curious to observe how similar are the views taken of "Calvinistic Orthodoxy" by men so unlike one another, as the refined and highly educated Unitarian, and the shouting Methodist:—

"Whatever he"—Mr. Beecher—"has failed to prove, this at least he does prove, that Calvinism, with its unreasonable dogmas, its internal divisions, and its bitter controversies, has become a fruitful source of error. From it has sprung some of the most deadly and destructive errors that have ever disgraced our common Christianity. To this origin he traces—clearly and satisfactorily traces—Unitarianism, Universalism, and even open scepticism. That he is in this particular correct, is abundantly proved by the history of New England. There—of all places upon the earth—there Calvinism has had ample opportunity to develop itself, and to produce its legitimate results. And where can a spot be found where error is more rife? The prevalence of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Infidelity is truly appalling. . . . Calvinism has been a prolific source of deadly and destructive errors. It is the hot-bed of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Infidelity."—*Christian Guardian*, March 29.

Rather a severe sentence this, for one Protestant sect to pass upon another; but at all events, a full justification of the conduct of the Catholic clergy of Canada, in their opposition to the French Canadian Missionary Society. The fundamental doctrines of this Society embrace all the fundamental, and peculiarly characteristic dogmas of Calvinism—dogmas not only "unreasonable," but "the fruitful source of deadly and destructive errors," and which, if allowed to produce their "legitimate results" would soon assimilate the moral and religious aspect of Canada to that of New England—a spot than which none can be found "where error is more rife;" and where of course—as immorality is the invariable concomitant of infidelity—the moral condition of the people must be as deplorable as their religious. The TRUE WITNESS has never been so severe upon the F. C. M. Society—with its unreasonable dogmas, its deadly and destructive errors, and its soul-destroying heresies—as is the Methodist organ of Toronto; to whom we beg leave to tender our thanks for his disinterested and unequivocal testimony to the nature and tendencies of modern Protestantism. What a dreadful reflection it must be to our Methodist friends, that one of their most distinguished preachers, one whom all the old women of the conventicle delighted to honor, should have renounced the standard of Wesley for that of Calvin; and, for the sake of an increase of salary, should have plunged into the pit from whence have "sprung some of the most deadly and destructive errors that have ever disgraced our common Christianity"—at least so says the writer in the *Christian Guardian*.

We would beg of our readers to bear in mind that Tuesday next is the day fixed for Mrs. Unsworth's Concert of Vocal and Instrumental music. Several important additions have been made to the programme; and we trust that the lovers of good music will not fail to show by their attendance on Tuesday evening their appreciation of the talents, and kind services of Mrs. Unsworth.—See Advertisement.