THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE NOVEMBER 29: 1861.

True Mitness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOV. 29, 1861.

TO OUR READERS.

Mr. Gillies, of the TRUE WITNESS office. is now on a collecting and canvassing tour through Canada West. He has full authority to receive all monies due to this office, to give receipts, and to make such arrangements as he shall deem most convenient. We would respectfully bespeak for him a good reception from our numerous, delinquent subscribers.

NEWS OF THE WEEK. THE enormous armaments of France have long

excited not only the anxiety, but the wonder of Europe. Whilst they were a standing menace to other and pacifically disposed countries, they seemed to the statesman to offer a financial phenomenon; and men asked one another "how does Louis Napoleon contrive to pay for all these things?" This question has now been answered, and in a manner which will tend to allay both the alarm and the surprise of the world. The costly armaments of France have not been paid for ; and have been hitherto maintained by the old-fashioned expedient of contracting debts, to an amount which the finances of France, great, powerful, and populous, though that country may be, will scarcely be able to houidate. By the last arrivals from Europe it is announced that there is a deficit of £40,000,000 sterling, equivalent to an entire year's revenue; and confidence in the stability of the Imperial regime is so greatly shaken, that it is notlikely that capitalists will deem it a safe speculation to vest their money in the new loans which have been spoken of as one of the means to be adopted for restoring order in the French finances .-Under these circumstances the Emperor will find husself compelled to reduce his military and naval establishments to a level with the actual wants, and pecuniary capabilities of his subjects, out giving the fie to their professions, and claims and this system of retrenchment appears to be of sovereignty over the Southern Confederation, . that which the French ruler has determined to recognise its envoys to Europe as ambassadors adopt. He has called in M. Fould to the Cabinet, as Minister of Finances; and as the latter is well known to have been averse to the late war, it may be presumed that a pacific policy has been also determined upon, and that the " rectification" of France's frontiers on the side of the Rhine has been indefinitely postponed .-There is besides, so it is hinted, much discontent amongst the people of France with their present Government; and under these circumstances. these financial, political and dynastic embarrassments. Louis Napoleon will be cautious how he provokes hostilities with Austria, or encourages in Italy a policy which must, if pursued, inevitably involve France in war with the Germanic Powers.

From Italy the tidings are most encouraging. Everywhere, in the North as in the South, there is springing up a general and intense disgust against the rule of Piedmont. In the Kingdom of Naples it is not only amongst the partisans of Francis II. that this feeling displays itself; for thousands who were by no means friendly to the Bourbon dynasty are actively hostile as towards the intrusive Government of Victor Emmanuel. Their national pride is hurt by the treatment that they have received from the Piedmontese invaders; they feel that their country has been dealt with, and is still ruled, like a conquered Province; and even the extreme members of the revolutionary party are offended at the transfer of the Seat of Government from Nantes to Turin. In the North, the same causes which immediately provoked the Vendeeans to take up arms against the Convention are at work, and with similar results. The people find the conscription, to which Piedmont is obliged to have resource in order to keep on footits large army - an intolerable grievance; and have no idea of tamely submitting to being dragged from home to furnish food for powder, and to serve as tools for an ambitious and unprincipled Sovereign whom the majority of Italians look upon as an "alien" in blood. To this cause of Minister, has announced his plan for restoring irritation against the intrusive Government of Piedmont must be added many others, originating in the embarrassed state of the finances, the greatly increased pressure of taxation, and the ure. 200 Renunciation of power to decree suppledisappointed expectations of Lyriads of place cal changes a remedy for their broken fortunes. 3 per ceuts. 5th Consolidation of the floating d. bt.

and across the straits from the Island of Sicily, the outery against the rule of Victor Emmanuel rises up to heaven; and now that Cavour has gone to his account, there seems to be no man capable of coping with the difficulty ... All these facts-so consoling to the friends of civil and religious liberty—are corroborated by the correspondent of the London Times, whose lamentations over the prospects of a "United Italy' will be found on our sixth page. The Sovereign Pontifi's health is now said to be completely re-established; and the Cross of Savoy -the "cross of the impendent thef," as by some it is profanely styled-will not be planted over the Vatican quite so soon as the enemies of the Papacy expected. The robber-King will find it no easy task to retain possession of the Provinces upon which he has lately seized. and for the present he must abandon all hopes of making other conquests.

The rupture betwixt Austria and Hungury is complete. The Constitution of the latter has been suspended, and superseded by martial law. The condition of Poland is still the same, and an appeal to arms to decide betwixt the oppressed and their oppressors cannot, to all appearances, be very remote. The internal condition of Russia is however by no means that of calm; and what with the discontent of the lately emancipated serfs with the imperfect boon bestowed upon them, and what with the disgust of the landed proprietors with, what they deem, the confiscation of their property-a Russian social and political revolution seems to be impending.

The cotton famme is telling seriously upon the artizans of England, even as the failure in the potato crop is spreading desolation amongst the peasantry in many districts of Ireland. The prospects for the winter are not bright; and no feasible scheme has as yet been broached, either for securing an immediate supply of cotton for the manufacturers, or for warding off the horrors of destitution of another kind, with which Ireland is again seriously menaced.

The capture of Messrs. Slidell and Mason on board of an English mail steamer by the U. States ship San Jacinto forms the chief topic of discussion amongst our republican neighbors. Musty fyles of newspapers are diligently ransacked for precedents to justify the act; and if no precedents can be found, then are they boldly invented. Thus much stress was laid upon the alleged capture of an American diplomatic agent from on board of a Dutch ship, by an English frigate, the Vestal, during the War of Independence. Here, it was contended, was a precedent, or case in point; but upon examination it appears that the American envoy was captured from on board, not of a Dutch or neutral vessel, but, of an American packet slup. The question at issue, and which diplomatists will be called upon to discuss is this-"Has a government the right to claim political offenders upon the high seas when under the protection of a neutral flag and on board of a neutral ship, sailing from one neutral port to another?" It must be remembered that it is as rebellious subjects, as political offenders, and not as the ambassadors of a belligerent Power, that Messrs. Slidell and Mason are treated by the authorities of Washington. The latter do not profess to recognise the Seceded States as belligerents; and cannot therefore, withor "contraband of war." It is therefore only in their capacity of rebels, or political offenders, that the Northern Government can claim the right to detain Messrs. Slidell and Mason as prisoners; and therefore the only question at issue is one as to the right of a Government to arrest such offenders, or rebels, upon the high seas, and when on board of the ships of other nations?

This question will no doubt be discussed calmly and in good faith by the representatives of the two countries interested therein; and by the result of that discussion we are well content to abide. trusting that it may terminate honorably and amicably. War is one of the greatest of earthly calamities, and there is scarce any sacrifice which should not be made to avert so great an evil .-But even war is not the greatest calamity; and to sacrifice national honor to preserve a precarious peace, would be the most injudicious of all conceivable policies. What may result from the present imbroglio no man can foresee. We may be sure that the British Government earnestly desires to avoid war, and that it will not fight unless compelled to do so in defence of the honor of its flag. But at the same time, it will probably, and with reason, insist upon applying to the case of the seizure of passengers on board of the Trent, by a United States ship, the same principles of international law as those which the Government of the United States would insist upon applying to the case of one of their own ships stopped and searched upon the high seas by a British cruiser; and to the seizure on board thereof of rebels, or political offenders against British rule. Lord Lyons, it would appear, has carefully abstained from committing himself upon the subject. He is probably waiting for instructions from home how to act; and until these instructions arrive, and the determination of the British Government is known, it is, we think, incumbent upon non-official persons, and upon publie journalists especially, to copy the example of the British Ambassador, and to unitate his prudent reserve. We trope, ardently, that the difficulty may be honorably smoothed over, and that peace may be preserved; but if these our Christian hopes should be disappointed, we do hope and betieve, that the Catholics of Canada snall ever be found willing and prompt to do their duty in every emergency.

The Canada from Queenstown, 17th instant, is telegraphed. M. Fould, the new French the floances. The following are said to be the conditions of his acceptal of office:-

1st. A Budget to be voted, for in detail, so as to give the legislature some control over the expendimentary credits without the consent of the council of Ministers. Sen. Conversion of Frentenary on gahunters, who expected to find in organic politi- ions 4th. Conversion of the entire pub ic debt into

Rome. 8th., That, on taking office, he should be the intermediatory of all communications between Minis-

ters and the Emperor. " The Piedmontese Government announces a levy of 80,000 men; Cialdinishas resigned .-The King of Portugal is dead, and the Duke of Oporto is proclaimed as his successor. The steamer Himalaya is also reported at Halifax. and is said to have brought news of the reception in England of the tidings of the capture of Stidell and Mason by the Northerners, in consequence of which a British frigate had unmediately been despatched to the United States. This is very doubtful, however, and up to the time of our going to press, the report had not been confirmed.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF INSPEC-TORS FOR ASYLUMS, PRISONS, &C., FOR

We have to return thanks for a copy of this very instructive and carefully compiled document published by order of the Provincial Government. It contains valuable and ample details respecting our gaols, penitentiaries, reformatories and lunatic asylums, and reflects much credit upon the Inspectors and other officials by whom it has been prepared.

The question of secondary punishments is one of the most difficult, and at the same time the most important, with which the Statesman of the XIX. century has to deal. That it has, hitherto, been thoroughly exhausted, is more than any one who is moderately conversant with gaol statistics, or who has made social pathology his study, will pretend; but the publication of carefully prepared statistics will furnish us with facts, from which by means of a cautious generalisation we may in time hope to arrive at a satisfactory answer to the great question, daily forcing itself more importunately upon the attention of society-" What shall we do with our criminals, whom we cannot hang, and whom we cannot let loose upon the world?" In the meantime we may console ourselves with the reflection that, if we have not solved the problem satisfactorily as yet, we have adopted the very worst system of secondary punishments concervable; one which combines every possible disadvantage with a minimum of good qualities; which without serving as any effectual deterrent from crime, is at the same time physically and morally injurious to the criminal, and burdensome to society. If the great, indeed onc, object of the civil magistrate in inflicting punishment, be to deter by example, then must it be admitted that the system of long protracted imprisonment, here in vogue, has been most cunningly contrived, and that it is most admirably administered, so as to defeat the sole legitimate end of secondary secular punishments.

Our prisons are threefold. They may be classed as simply places of detention—as reformatories-and as penitentiaries or places of punishment. It is with the latter only that we propose to deal; and the statistics furnished by the Report before as with reference to those Penitentiaries are interesting and instructive .-They furnish us above all with an infallible test for trying the comparative morality of Upper and Lower Canada, and of the Catholic, and Protestant elements of our mixed community; and it is to the facts-facts which cannot be gainsaved-relative to the comparative ments of Catholicity and Protestantism in promoting the moral well-being of their respective votaries, that we would especially direct the attention of

Nothing can be more unjust and more illogical than, from a comparison of the criminal statistics of communities existing under widely different social, material, and political conditions, to attempt to deduce conclusions as to the comparative morality of the communities themselves. and thence of the comparative ments of their respective religious systems. In a badly governed community, in one especially where the people are divided into classes, of which one stands to the other in the relation of conqueror to conquered-where, in consequence, class is arrayed against class-and where in addition to such fruitful causes of dissension there exist besides, untipathies of race and antipathies of creed, we may naturally expect that deeds of violence shall be rife; that blood shall be repeatedly and on slight provocation shed; that outrages, called 'agrarian," in Ireland, or "brigandage" as in the Kingdom of Naples-and which in reality are but the revolt of the oppressed against the oppressor-shall swell the criminal statistics .-These are crimes, in short, which are the direct almost inevitable consequences of certain social and political antecedents, and which will vary as the political antecedents themselves. Given, for instance, a state of society such as that which obtained, and still to a considerable degree obtains, in Ireland; under which the legal owners, and the actual cultivators of the soil, are to one another aliens in language, in blood, and in religion, and you shall find agrarian crime, or violence of a quasi-political description as the inevitable consequence. Given a political regime which compels a majority of one religious persuasion to support the clarge, and to build the temples of a minority of another and contradictory religious persuasion, and you have at once

fences against the property and the persons of Table of the number of "Convicts Received in the the intrusive minority. Scotch Protestants or Provincial Penitentiary," from 1856 to 1860. Western Whigs, in the days of the last Stuarts. showed as little inercy towards the ministers forced upon them by Claverhouse and his dragoons, as did the Irish Catholic peasant of a quarter of a century back, to the Protestant tithe collectors, and other myrinidons who in the name of the law, and the Gospel according to Act of Parliament, confiscated his pig, and consigned him, his wife, and little ones to the long protracted agonies of famine. Irish crime, in so far as the Catholic portion of the community is concerned, has been, and still is in a great measure, the result of these abnormal social and political conditions, imposed upon the Irish by an alien Protestant Legislature. As these conditions have been modified, Irish crime has diminished both in quantity and in intensity.

Instead therefore of comparing the criminal statistics of Ireland, the victim of the above mentioned monstrous or abnormal social and political conditions, with the criminal statistics of Great Britain, where no such conditions exist, or exist only under a modified, and very mitigated form-as a test of the comparative moral influences of the respective religious systems of the above-named countries, let us, as is both just and logical, direct our attention to the criminal statistics of Canada. Let us compare the criminality of Catholic Lower Canada, with that of Protestant Upper Canada; let us question the Records of our Jails and Penitentiaries; and these shall give us, in clear unambiguous and infallible tones, an answer to the question at issue-" Is Catholicity or Protestantism the more favorable to the growth of morality, and the repression of crime?" To this mode of procedure, to this test, to these oracles, no U. Canadian Protestant can object: for it is his boast that his section of the Province is more wealthy, and better educated than that to which his Romish fellow-subjects belong. If there be any material advantages on either side, they are altogether on the side of the Anglo-Saxon and Protestant portion of our mixed population; and if statistics show any difference betwixt its moral condition and that of the other or Catholic section, and to the advantage of the latter, that difference must be owing exclusively to the moral and religious superiority of Popery; - since in all other respects we must yield the palm to Protestant Upper Canada, whose citizens, if there be any virtue in material progress, would also be remarkable for their greater integrity, sobriety, chastity, and their regard for law.

Now the first thing that strikes us upon turning over the leaves of the Report of the Prison Inspectors, is the enormous, but constant disparity betwixt the criminal records of Upper and Lower Canada-of the Catholic and Protestant sections of our mixed community, respectively. The following figures are more eloquent than words; and arithmetic furnishes us with argument which no amount of declamation or sophistry can destroy. We will begin with the Report upon the "Penal Institutions" of the Province, which commences at p. 12.

Of these Penal Institutions the chief is the Kingston Penitentiary, which is the common sewer, or receptacle of the moral guilt of both sections of the Province. Now with respect to this institution, we find that on the 31st of December last, the Protestant convicts therein confined were to the Catholic convicts in the ratio of more than two to one-the numbers be-

> Protestant. Catholic.

During the course of the year 1860, two hundred and fifty-five convicts in all, had been struck off the roll of the inmates of the Penitentiary; of these some had died, a few had been transferred to Reformatories or to Lunatic Asylums, but the majority had been discharged, in virtue either of a pardon, or of the expiration of their sentences. Now of these 255 convicts thus got rid of during the year, there were.

> Protestant, Catholic.

These figures are conclusive as to the morality Canada, are very nearly equal. We will now examine into the Provincial origin of Canadian

There were, on the 31st December last, 784 convicts in the Penitentiary; of whom,-

Upper or Protestant Canada furnished 198 Lower or Popish Canada

Have we not then abundant reason to say that, whatever may be the case in the Legislative Assembly, Upper Canada has fully its fair share of representation in the Provincial Penitentiary? We should add that according to the Official Report, "the districts of Gaspe, Kamouraska, Three Rivers and Ottawa with a population greatly exceeding 200,000 souls, have not furnished a single convict to the Penitentiary." m: 13. com to the latest the wall and the first of

or we find the same phenomenon repeated during that which occ red in France, and shook Eu-

From one end of the Peninsula to the other, 6th Reduction of the Army. 7th Evacuation of an infallible receipt for lithe outrages, for of a series of years; as appears from the following published at p. 7.

Upper Canada. Lower Canada Year. 194 179: 50 6 - 815 - 50 5 49 .238 and the 10 1 .226 stead with 167 63 1,004

In other words, during a series of years, Protestant Upper Canada has upon the average furnished annually upwards of Two Hundred convicts to the Provincial Penitentiary-Catholic Lower Canada not quite Fifty-eight. These facts, furnished by official statistics, require no

Another very important or significant fact is implied in the returns of the number of prisoners from Upper and Lower Canada, respectively undergoing a first imprisonment. Of these there are from,-

Upper Canada Lower Canada

Total 6.045

Here then we have a series of figures, which establish the facts, that in proportion to its numbers the Protestant element in our community furnishes the immense preponderance of serious crime; and that the average criminality of Upper Canada is far greater than that of the Lower section of the Province. For this phenomenon there must be a cause. That cause cannot be found in the different political conditions of the two communities—for in this respect there is no difference betwixt them. Neither can it be found in any unfortunate material or physical condition to which Upper Canada is exclusively subject-for in this respect the advantage is on the side of that section of the Province which enjoys a milder climate, and can boast of possessing a more fertile soil than have fallen to the lot of Lower Canada. But if neither in the material nor in the political conditions of Upper Canada can the cause of its constant superahundant criminality be found, then must that cause be looked for elsewhere; and amongst its moral and religious conditions must we expect to find the secret of that remarkable contrast betwixt its people, and the people of Lower Canada, which official statistics force upon our attention. The latter are for the most part Catholics-the former Protestants; and to the supernatural influence of Catholicity or Popery upon its professors, and not to any natural moral superiority of the French Canadian over the Anglo-Saxon. must we attribute the comparative immunity from crime which distinguishes the former, and the widely-spread, deep-rooted depravity which characterises the other. That this hypothesis is well-founded we may feel certain from two considerations. One-that when the French Canadian, as too often happens when he crosses the Lines to the United States, throws off his Popery he becomes one of the most disgusting and depraved specimens of humanity with which listory and modern researches have, as vet, made us acquainted. He apes and exaggerates all the worst features and vices of those whose Protestantism he has adopted. He spits more than an ordinary Yankee; he blasphemes more, and with more diabolical energy; and he becomes more coarse and repulsive in his person, manners, and language, than are those whom it is his ambition to imitate, and for whom it is his pride to be mistaken. This shows that it is not to any natural, but to some supernatural, endowment that the Popish French Canadian owes that general urbanity, that politeness, suavity of manner, purity of morals, and decorum of language and demeanor for which he is honourably distinguished amongst all the races on the Continent of Ame-

A second consideration is this-That the same difference which statistics reveal as obtaining betwixt Upper Canadian and Lower Canadian criminality, obtains also betwixt the criminality of Catholics and that of Protestants; the latter furnishing more than two-thirds of the total number of convicts sentenced to the l'enitentiary. According, therefore, to every rule of sound induction, it is to the religious and not to the ethnological differences betwixt the two sections of of Catholics and Protestants, whose numbers in the Province, that the constant difference betwixt the respective amounts of their contributions to the great receptacle of Canadian crime must be attributed.

> A CHEERING PROSPECT - OVERTHOW OF THE CHRISTIAN SUPERSTITION. - We copy from the European correspondent of the Montreal Herald of the 16th ult :-

Among the "signs of the times," most interesting to friends of Iuly from a distance is the widespread movement of revolt going on here against the principle of ecclesisatical authority which is the basis of the Roman heresy. This revolt against spiritual absolutism is the natural and inevitable complement of the political struggle through which Italy has been passing; and from the mement in which this reaction is successfully inaugurated among a people, the doom of the so-onled " Catho-

lic" Church is sealed. We do not contest the truth of the Herald's premises, nor will we attempt to impugn the validity of his concusions. There is taking Nor is this disparity betweet the criminality place in Ita ; in 1851, an intellectual, moral, of the two sections of the Province, exceptional and religious move ent, the very counterpart of