

The True Witness.

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 1859.

As the editor of the TRUE WITNESS will be absent from town for a few days, it is requested that all communications intended for his exclusive perusal, and not requiring an immediate answer, may be marked outside "PRIVATE."

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

By the arrival of the *Hungarian*, we have been put in possession of English and Irish papers. The news is not very important. From the seat of war, there is nothing interesting to report.—Up to the latest dates, there had been no battle. It is said that arms have been sent to Hungary, and that the Hungarians abroad are indefatigable in their exertions to create a diversion in favor of the French.

The Prussian Chambers closed with a remarkable speech from the Prince Regent. He declared that Prussia was determined to maintain the basis of European public right, the balance of power in Europe, and the national interests of Germany.

An angry correspondence, says the *London Advertiser*, is going on between the French and English Governments, in consequence of the permission given by the latter for Austrian vessels to take shelter under the guns of Malta.

In reply to our request of the 13th ult. to the *Toronto Freeman* to define "clearly and unambiguously," the terms by him stipulated on the School Question, with those to whom he wishes us to give our political allegiance—our cotemporary writes as under:—

"We shall be very explicit on this point: first, however, premising that, we have had no understanding or treaty with any party, or with any individual of any party on this or any other subject. The views set forth in the *Freeman*—however feeble their expression—are founded upon the deep conviction, we feel that Catholic Education is the inalienable and indispensable right of Catholics, under whatever form of Government they exist. This conviction is not the growth of a year or two; it is the settled principle of our life.

"Here are our terms, which we quote from the *Freeman* of the 11th February:—

"We take our stand under the banner of Education with Religion, and we demand for Catholic Schools equal rights, equal privileges, equal facilities with the Protestant Schools."

"Having enumerated our requirements, embracing as they do, even more than the Committee of Alexandria advanced—whose Petition met the approval of the Hierarchy and the *True Witness*—we made the following affirmation:—

"This alone is the condition *sine qua non* that we will ever cease to agitate; and again: "These will be the precise terms of the compromise."

"Our terms are still the same; our stand is still under the banner of Education with Religion. Our demand for Catholic Schools, equal rights, equal privileges, and equal facilities, with the Protestant Schools, shall, with God's help, be as unflinching as the Brown-Dorion or any other administration, as it has been under a Cartier-Macdonald. This is our resolve; this our declaration of principle, solemnly and unambiguously expressed."

Now, in so far as the *Freeman* alone is concerned, the above is quite satisfactory. But, as to every alliance, there must be two parties, we still want to know what the "Liberal" party of Upper Canada, and the political followers of George Brown, have agreed to grant on the School Question—as the condition, *sine qua non* of the support of the Catholic vote? Have they publicly expressed their assent to the terms of stipulation propounded by the *Freeman*? and given guarantees for the faithful performance on their parts, of the conditions of the treaty with respect to our separate schools? If they have, and if besides they are prepared to give us equally satisfactory guarantees on all the other politico-religious questions of the day—we are prepared, may shall be delighted, to enter into a close treaty of alliance with them; without extending any terms of stipulation as to the mere secular questions, such as those to which in a recent issue the *Freeman* alluded. But if—on the other hand—if, as we firmly believe, the "Catholic Gits" have not as yet publicly expressed their full and unqualified acceptance of the terms propounded by the *Freeman*; if they have given no guarantees, or pledges, for their faithful adherence to those terms; and for their scrupulous regard, for the rights and honor of our religious institutions of all kinds, and for the interests of Lower Canada—then indeed, we repeat, it would be most impolitic, and most dishonorable for us, on our side, to ratify any treaty of alliance betwixt ourselves and those whom we have but too good reasons for still looking upon as our enemies; as the enemies of the race, the language and the religion of the great majority

of the people of Lower Canada, and as the enemies of Catholic schools in the Upper Province. The *Freeman* will therefore perceive that his reply, which defines merely his demands; and does not mention what the other party to the proposed alliance are prepared to concede, is by no means an answer to our question. For, as we said before, there must be two parties to every treaty; and on that point upon which we mainly desire to be informed—viz., what the "Liberal" Protestant party have stipulated to grant—the *Freeman* says not one little word. His demands, his terms, are excellent; less it would be unworthy of us to ask for, or accept; but as yet we see no signs to induce us to believe that those demands have been acceded to, those terms accepted, by the other party to the alliance. Now until they have been publicly and unconditionally acceded to, and accepted by the latter, its alliance with the former is impossible without dereliction of principle on the part of Catholics.

We regret that our U. Canadian cotemporary still repudiates, or appears to repudiate, the only alliance to which the TRUE WITNESS can ever become an assenting party—viz., an alliance of the Catholics of Upper Canada, with the Catholics of the Lower Province. We trust however that, upon this point, the latter misunderstands the drift of the *Freeman's* argument; as the latter certainly misunderstands us, when he accuses us of injustice towards him on the School Question. We recognise cheerfully his able and consistent advocacy of that important question; but we repeat, nevertheless, that in those series of articles by him devoted to the discussion of political alliances, that question has been entirely ignored; whilst—as it seemed to us—an undue importance was given to merely secular questions—that is questions involving mere material interests only—such as questions of finance, retrenchment of public expenditure, clearing forests, and topics of a kindred nature. This was the gist of our charge against the *Freeman*; that in his discussions as to the prudence or imprudence of a certain political alliance with a party that has hitherto distinguished itself by its hostility to Catholic Schools, and "Freedom of Education," he never discussed that alliance with reference to its immediate effects upon the School Question. This we repeat; but we repeat also, in justice to the *Freeman*, that in his others articles, or when not treating of the subject of political alliances, no one has more ably or more conclusively handled the School Question, than has our respected Toronto cotemporary.

Let us not then bandy hard words; but seek rather, by common means, and harmony of action, to obtain a common end. We earnestly desire to see perfect "Freedom of Education" established in Upper Canada; to have the Catholic Schools of that section of the Province, established upon a satisfactory footing; and to see a check placed upon the progress of Orangeism. We desire in like manner, and with equal earnestness, that the autonomy of Lower Canada be preserved, which can be done only by maintaining "Equality of Representation" betwixt the two sections of the Province; and we desire also that the rights and honor of all our charitable, educational, and religious institutions, be scrupulously respected. This is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the policy of the TRUE WITNESS; comprising, as the *Freeman* will see, two politico-religious questions—the School Question and the Orange Question—in which his section of the Province is more immediately interested; and comprising in like manner two other politico-religious questions—the Representation Question and the Question of Religious Incorporations—in which Lower Canada is the more directly concerned. We offer him our aid to procure a satisfactory settlement of the first two questions; and we invoke his aid and the aid of his Catholic friends in Upper Canada for the furtherance of our Lower Canadian policy. We propound these four questions as the base of the Catholic alliance, which we would desire to see accepted throughout Canada; firmly convinced as we are, that the terms are just, honorable, and equally advantageous to both contracting parties; whilst we are also firmly convinced that, only by a just, honorable, and mutually advantageous union, or alliance betwixt all the members of the body Catholic, can its interests be promoted, or its vitality maintained.

We have now, we hope, done justice to the *Freeman*. We have explained our views, and stated the terms, or conditions, *sine qua non*, of any political alliance, to which we will be a consenting party. To those terms we invite the *Freeman* to give his adherence; or else to point out wherein they are opposed—not to the material interests of this man, or that man, of this party or that party; but—to the honor and interests of the Catholic Church in Canada. We trust that this is a matter that may be discussed in a friendly spirit betwixt us; for we assure the *Freeman*, that it is our most anxious wish that there should be no ill-feeling, no jealousies, betwixt two journals, which, if true to their mission, and docile to their Church, must ever be of one mind, and of one heart. In one point we are delighted to see that the *Freeman* is at last entirely in ac-

cord with the TRUE WITNESS; and that is with regard to Mr. George Brown; of whom it now speaks in the same terms as those that we have ever employed towards that individual:—

"Mr. Brown has now had a fair trial. He was left unembarrassed during the Session to fulfil the promises of triumph which he held out to his friends since last August. He has failed to keep his word."—*Toronto Freeman*, 20th ult.

Thus detected, exposed, denounced as false, and abandoned by men of all parties, we hope that we have nearly heard the last of George Brown and of the Brown alliance. The only marvel with us is, that amongst Catholics, there ever were to be found any, simple enough to believe, that Mr. George Brown, after the fairest trial, would even prove anything but what the *Freeman* now admits him to be: a man altogether unworthy of credit, because "he has failed to keep his word;" and therefore a disgrace to every man, and to every party with whom he has been, or ever may be, connected.

The Catholic journalist's position is, in some respects, by no means an enviable one, if he be faithful to his mission. He must, if worthy of his position, be entirely independent; independent of all Ministerial influences on the one hand, and of all popular influences on the other. It is certain that in his career, if honestly followed, he must make for himself many enemies; it is doubtful whether he shall ever gain a single friend.

His position differs essentially from that of the secular journalist. It is the object, and to a certain extent, it is the mission of the latter to follow, rather than to lead or form public opinion: to collect into one focus the scattered rays of that opinion, and then to reflect them thus concentrated. His highest authority is the "consensus generalis" of mankind, or rather of that portion of it to which he addresses himself; and in consequence, his business it is to study the tastes, or opinions of his readers; and to be more careful to please, than to tell the truth, when the truth is, as is too often the case, unpalatable.

It is the mission of the Catholic journalist on the contrary to guide, not to follow, public opinion; to form it, and not to reflect it; to look to the unalterable teachings of the Church, as to his sole authority, as to what is right and to be approved, and as to what is wrong, and therefore to be condemned. He must above all be careful to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and that with a perfect indifference as to whom, or how many, he may offend by so doing. Thus the truly conscientious and consistent Catholic journalist need never expect to be popular; though if honest and consistent he will in the long run, compel the respect even of those whose prejudices he opposes.

We are therefore by no means surprised at the offence that has been taken by some of our readers, at our article of the 20th ult.; wherein we expressed strongly our opinions, as to the injustice of giving to Protestant Upper Canada a number of representatives in the Legislature greater than that accorded to Catholic Lower Canada; and as to the impolicy, or rather the suicidal policy, of those Catholics who countenance, even in appearance, the agitation for that measure raised by the "Liberals" of the Anglo-Saxon section of the Province; and wherein we frankly declared that we could not but look upon, and treat, every man as "our political enemy," who directly or indirectly, took part in that agitation; or who, to the utmost limits of his political influence did not oppose it, as hostile to the interests of the Church, and the autonomy of Lower Canada. This frank expression of opinion—an opinion we may observe *en passant*, that has seen no reasons to change, or modify—has as we anticipated, raised amongst a certain class of our readers a storm of indignation against us; expressing itself in the form of a request from some, for the immediate erasure of their names from our subscription list; and on the part of others, in the form of an active and incessant denunciation of the TRUE WITNESS, as the enemy, not indeed of truth, nor yet of the interests of Lower Canada, or of the Catholic Church, but, of the junior member for Montreal. This is the head and front of our offending; that, in our eyes, French Canadian Nationality, the claims of justice, and the highest interests of our religion, are of more importance than the re-election of Mr. McGee for this city. This is the charge urged against us in the streets and in the market-place; repeated from house to house, and carried from door to door. To this charge we offer no defence; but at once, and without one word of explanation or apology, plead "Guilty" in the most liberal sense of the term.

But when—as by some we have been—we are taxed with having been actuated in our course, and inspired in our policy of opposition to "Representation by Population," by motives of hostility, or ill-will towards Mr. McGee, or by any desire to injure him in the opinions of his constituents, we enter a plea of "Not Guilty," and undertake to establish our innocence of that charge, at least, by proof irrefragable. Long ere Mr. McGee was Member for Montreal, years before it was ever deemed that he was to become a citizen of Canada, the TRUE WITNESS

had expressed precisely the same opinions as to the injustice and impolicy of "Representation by Population;" and in language at least as strong as that which we made use of in our last article upon that question, had denounced that measure and all its supporters. This is a proof, we say, which no one can contest—1st—that in its opposition to "Representation by Population," the TRUE WITNESS has not been actuated by hostility towards Mr. McGee; and 2nd—that this journal is, and always has been, perfectly consistent; that it has never varied one hair's breadth from its original policy; and that it is to-day, what it was in the beginning, and what we can assure all our readers, it shall be to the last day of its existence: the uncompromising opponent of "Representation by Population," and of all public men who give the slightest semblance even of countenance to that, in so far as Catholics are interested, most impolitic, and, in so far as Lower Canada is concerned, most unjust measure. Perhaps, if the truth were fully told, which never is the case, it would appear that it is our very consistency, undeviating adherence to principle, regardless alike of whom we may please, or of whom we may offend, that has given deepest and bitterest offence; that it is because we will not sacrifice one iota of our principles on the altar of any political idol, that we are to-day charged with the crime of political sacrilege, and denounced as contemners of the popular divinity.

In support of our consistency, and therefore of the absence of any hostility on our part towards Mr. McGee, in our unqualified condemnation of the latter's advocacy of "Representation by Population," we will content ourselves by referring our readers, to the TRUE WITNESS of the 31st August, 1855: an epoch when certainly no ill-will towards Mr. McGee could have actuated us; as at that time no one dreamt that he would ever be in any manner mixed up with Canadian politics. We make one or two extracts from the TRUE WITNESS of that date; and we ask our readers who may feel disposed to question the propriety of our course, and of our present policy, to show us some reason why we should not denounce "Representation by Population" as strongly, and as unreservedly again, in the month of May 1859, as we did in the month of August 1855? What was truth then, is truth now—the TRUE WITNESS, if worthy of his name, must therefore be the same to-day, that he was four years ago. How then, in honor, could we, or why in the name of consistency should we, have allowed that same policy, and the abettors of that policy, which, and whom, we warmly denounced in 1855, to pass unnoticed, unrebuked, in 1859! Do our readers then really desire that the TRUE WITNESS should make sacrifice of his principles, cast away his consistency and integrity, and subside into a mere time-server, and a parasite? We will not allow ourselves to believe that they do desire it; and even if they do desire it, we take this opportunity of assuring them respectfully, but in all sincerity, that they have imagined a vain thing, and will find themselves most egregiously disappointed.

Here now are our opinions as to the policy of "Representation by Population," and its abettors, as expressed in the TRUE WITNESS of the 31st August, 1855; and we ask again why we should not entertain, and give public expression to, the same opinions in May 1859, when by one of our own representatives the same question is again brought prominently before the public? We pause for a reply; but expect that we shall have to wait for one for a long time, for a very long time indeed.

Speaking of the arguments of the *Globe*, and put forward by Mr. G. Brown, then and as now, the bitter enemy of our religion—we observed:

"Being translated, and purged of cant, the language of the *Globe*, and his colleagues"—(amongst whom we then certainly never expected to reckon a Member of Parliament returned by the Irish Catholics of Montreal as their representative)—"amounts to this—That it is expedient to put down French Canadianism and Romanism in Lower Canada, by an Anglo-Saxon and Protestant majority from the Upper Province; and that for this purpose, it is necessary to give to the latter a greater number of votes than to the former. This do the Liberals of Upper Canada hope that they will be able to seize upon the property of the Catholic Church, break down our Altars, burn our Convents, and turn the Sisters of Charity adrift upon the world. There are the designs and aspirations of Upper Canada Protestant Liberalism; and 'Representation by Population' is the means by which it proposes to carry its designs into execution."—*True Witness*, 31st August, 1855.

Having shown the injustice towards Lower Canada implied in "Representation by Population," we proceeded to show the folly, we may say the wickedness, of which the Catholics of Upper Canada would be guilty in giving the slightest countenance to the advocates of that measure:—

"Perhaps," we argued, "no portion of our Canadian population is so deeply interested in resisting the aggressive demands of the Protestant Liberal party, as are the Catholics of Upper Canada; for they will inevitably be the first and greatest sufferers by the meditated change in the Representative system. Give a Protestant and Upper Canadian majority in Parliament, and the fate of their separate school system will at once be decided; 'Freedom of Education' will be but an empty name."—16.

We showed that in so far as the Catholics of Upper Canada were represented at all in Parliament, it was, not by the members for their respective districts, but, by the Catholic members

from Lower Canada, but for whom the Catholic minority of the Upper Province would be deprived of all voice in the Halls of the Legislature.—So literally is this the case that Mr. McGee in his late speech admitted it when he pointed out that in consequence of the want of any real representatives of their own in Parliament, the Catholics of Upper Canada had been compelled to entrust to him, a Lower Canadian member, their petitions praying for justice on the School Question. How, then, we argued in 1855, and we argue now, can Catholics be so silly, or so unprincipled, as to countenance a measure which, if carried, would but diminish the relative number of their own representatives?

Finally we quoted the Protestant press of Montreal, as evidence that even in the eyes of Protestants, the agitation for "Representation by Population" was primarily an anti-Catholic movement; and indeed but a repetition in Canada of that anti-Catholic and anti-Celtic agitation then raging in the United States under the name of "Know-Nothingism." Thus the *Commercial Advertiser* described it in the following terms:—

"The object of the *Globe* is avowedly to seek in the question of Representation, a means of overwhelming the nationality of the majority of Lower Canada, and an offensive weapon against the Church of Rome. It is a Know-Nothing movement urged with like arguments, and to be productive of like results."—*Commercial Advertiser*, August 1855.

We have thus shown that in opposing the movements for "Representation by Population," and denouncing as our "political enemies" its abettors—we are merely doing in 1859, what we did in 1855; and that our consistency is a proof that it is not hostility towards Mr. McGee that has provoked our earnest condemnation of his pet measure—of that measure whereby Mr. G. Brown hopes to enslave Lower Canada, and put down Romanism. If we have spoken against the former, it is because we could not consistently with our duty to ourselves, to our Catholic readers, and the interests of the Church, allow our representative—the man chosen by us to defend these interests—without rebuke, to put into the hands of our inveterate enemy, Mr. G. Brown, "an offensive weapon against the Church of Rome;" and because we would not as Catholics and citizens of Lower Canada, tolerate a Know-Nothing agitation against our civil and religious liberties, against the nationality of French Canadians, and against our common Church and religious institutions. This is our answer to those who attribute to us unworthy motives, because we speak the same language and pursue identically the same course in 1859, as that which we spoke and followed in 1855.

And if we have always been faithful to our old principles, so also we firmly believe has it been with the great majority of the Irish Catholics of Montreal, and indeed of Canada, spite of the noisy efforts made by a few disappointed place-hunters to cry down the TRUE WITNESS. We firmly believe that the Irish Catholic body throughout the Province is still as strongly opposed as ever to "Representation by Population;" and that Irish Catholics will neither support any man in his agitation for that measure—nor allow him to advocate it in the name of 300,000 Irish Catholics of whom he styles himself the representative. They are not so blind to their own interests; they are not so deaf to the voice of honor, or so lost in their allegiance to their Church, as in the words of the *Commercial Advertiser*—to put "an offensive weapon against the Church of Rome" into the hands of Mr. G. Brown; and believing this, we can confidently appeal to them for their support against the advocates of "Representation by Population."

In the absence of the editor of the TRUE WITNESS, who never publishes any of the good things that are so often said of him, the writer of these few lines having a knowledge of the unscrupulous and cowardly efforts which a few individuals in this City are making to impair the usefulness of that journal—deems it a duty to call the attention of the misguided few to the following notice of the TRUE WITNESS, and its high-minded editor. The article is taken from the *New York Tablet*—a paper published by the Messrs. Sadlier—and is, if the writer is not much mistaken, the production of our gifted and distinguished countrywoman, Mrs. Sadlier.

The picture, it will be perceived, is well drawn; but the Catholic reader, who is not a stranger to the TRUE WITNESS, will unhesitatingly admit that it is not too highly colored. As the writer in the *Tablet* justly remarks, there is no one layman in Canada who is more respected by the Catholic Hierarchy. To him we owe a debt of gratitude which we never can repay; for it may be truly said, that there is not this day living a Catholic journalist more devoted to the true interests of his co-religionists, than is George E. Clerck.

And yet this is the man whom a few persons, calling themselves Irish Catholics, would, if they could, banish for ever from amongst us. It is, however, due to the friends of the TRUE WITNESS to state, that, notwithstanding that the petty agitators have been hard at work, particularly during the last five or six weeks, to crush