

GATHERINGS

MORAL CONDITION OF CANADA.

The condition, manners, habits, and pursuits of the Canadians of French origin, resemble, at the present time, many of the characteristics described by Governor Murray.

The manners of the women and children have nothing of the awkward bashfulness which prevails among the peasants of Scotland, nor the boorish rudeness of those of England. While we know, that each may be equally correct in heart, yet, we cannot help being pleased with the manners that smooth our journey; and often have we compared the easy obliging manners of the Canadian habitants with the rough—"What d'ye want?" of the English boor; or, the wondering, "What's your will," of the Scotch cotters.

In the village (St. Thomas) there is a handsome, though plain, stone church, said to contain near 3000 persons. We had the opportunity of being at this church on a Sunday. Nothing could be more pleasing than the scene which presented itself.

About ten o'clock the roads leading through this extensive parish, exhibited a decently dressed peasantry, clad chiefly in fabrics manufactured by themselves. A great multitude moved on, with a sober trot, in calèches, cabriolets, several on horse back, and others on foot; but no one disturbed the calm tenor of the day, further than casual converse between two or three. In church, if the most close and devout attention, during the whole service of mass, and the delivery of a short, practical, but not argumentative, sermon, which dwelt altogether on their moral conduct, without alluding to points of faith, be considered as general proofs of sincerity, and piety, the habitants of this parish have undeniable claims to these virtues. We believe there is little difference to be found, in this respect, among the other parishes. If there be, we have failed to discover it. And, admitting, as we have frequently heard, that they are religious by habit, and imitation rather than by conviction, no one, who has travelled among them can deny that they are sincere, amiable, charitable, honest and chaste.

Let us leave abstract points of Christian doctrine to theological disputants; but if we look for a more correct, or moral people than the Canadian habitants, we may search in vain. A Sabbath morning in the Scotch parishes, most remote from towns, bears the nearest resemblance to a Sunday before mass in Canada. The interval, however, between morning and evening service, differs, but not widely; for, in both countries, those who do not return to their houses, spend the time in conversing on local incidents, or in communicating what news is gathered during the week. But the evenings of Sunday are far more cheerfully spent than in Scotland: the people of the parish often meet in small groups, or at each other's houses, for the sake of talking, and on these occasions they sometimes indulge in dancing. We may always observe beings kneeling along the aisles, or beside the columns, with their faces towards the altar; and as we pass along, we hear the half smothered breathing of their devotions. At such a time, rather than during the pompous celebration of High Mass, few, we believe, have ever found themselves within the walls of a spacious Catholic Cathedral, that have not experienced a deeper feeling of reverence, and a more impressive consciousness of the presence of Omnipotence than is usually experienced within the temples of Protestantism. This we know is not philosophy—but it is nature.

To the Catholic priests of the present day in Canada, justice requires us to acknowledge that there is great merit due. Although, generally speaking, their education and attainments, do not, perhaps, exhibit the splendid points of acquirement in polite literature, and in the sciences, which distinguished the Jesuits, yet, they neither want intelligence, nor are they destitute of useful or classical learning. Many of them are eloquent preachers; and it is worthy of our consideration to know, that since the Catholic clergy have consisted nearly all of Canadians, born in the Province, and have themselves received their education in the colleges of Canada, they have directed their special attention to the instruction of youth.

They have been accused of silently opposing the establishing of schools, and the instruction of the Canadian youth, particularly in the English language. No charge can now be more unjust. Disputed points of faith do not belong to our province: and having known many of the Canadian Priests, truth and candour require us to declare, that they are pious and amiable; and not only watch carefully over the morals of their parishioners, but conduct themselves as individuals, and as a body, with praiseworthy correctness. They certainly never give any advice to others, that the example of their own conduct does not enforce.—Many of the schools have been established by the Curés.—*The Progress of America, from the discovery of Columbus to the year 1846, by John Magregor.*

MORAL CONDITION OF SCOTLAND.

At a public meeting of the inhabitants of Edinburgh, lately held for the purpose of forming an association for suppressing drunkenness, Mr Pringle, of Whytebank stated that Scotland was the most drunken nation in Europe; that in proportion she consumed twice as much spirits as was done in "Popish Ireland;" that, with a population not equalling 3,000,000, she consumes annually 6,935,000 gallons of spirits (there is surely a plenitude of the "spirit" in that;) that in Edinburgh alone, on the Sabbaths, the consumption of spirits amounted to £100,000 per annum. Sheriff Allison, of Glasgow, at the same meeting, stated, that no former period in the annals of mankind could compare with the unexampled progress Scotland has made during the last thirty years in serious crimes; that in Glasgow alone, which comprises a population of about 380,000, spirits to the value of no less than £1,200,000 was annually consumed—that is 36 bottles of whiskey to every individual in the city, including the infant at the breast—more than twice the whole poor rates of Scotland; that the gaol was continually kept filled with from 700 to 800 prisoners. Again, William Logan, in his "Moral Statistics of Glasgow," shows that the number living directly on the wages of prostitution in Glasgow alone, is 3,600!—that the number of weekly visits to the Glasgow brothels is 36,000—and that the total amount expended annually in Glasgow alone in prostitution, is £514,800! Such is the rich harvest of immorality, not only in Scotland, but, as Laing, in his "Notes of a Traveller," shows, in

all the northern countries of Europe where Protestantism prevails; whilst the testimony he bears to the morality of the people, and particularly the women of Catholic Ireland, is creditable to their religion and country.—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal.*

REIGN OF TERROR UNDER CALVIN.

In perusing this politico-religious code, one imagines himself reading fragments of the laws of some savage tribe, discovered after the lapse of several thousand years. Idolatry and blasphemy are capital crimes, punished by death. There is but one word heard or read: DEATH.—Death to every one guilty of high treason against God.—Death to every one guilty of high treason against the state.—Death to the son that strikes or curses his father.—Death to the adulterer.—Death to heretics. And, with sanguinary irony, the name of God incessantly drops from the lips of the legislator. It is ever that same coldly cruel soul, which, at a later period, will exhort the princes of England to put the Catholics to death.

During the space of twenty years, commencing from the date of Calvin's recall, the history of Geneva is a burlesque drama, in which pity, dread, terror, indignation and tears, by turns, appear to seize upon the soul. At each step, we encounter chains, thongs, a stake, pincers, melted pitch, fire and sulphur. And throughout the whole, there is blood. One imagines himself in that doleful city of Dante, where sighs, groans and lamentations continually resound.

Quivi sospiri, pianti, et alti guai
Risonavan per l'air senza stelle.

After the lapse of three centuries, at length a cry of reprobation bursts forth from a Genevese breast, and in a writing, printed at Geneva, by a Protestant, we can read this energetic sentence:

"Calvin overturned every thing that was good or honourable to humanity in the reformation of the Genevese, and established the reign of the most ferocious intolerance, of the most gross superstitions, of the most impious dogmas."—*Galiffe, Notices généalogiques, t. III, p. 21.*

Now, to the man who should say that he is impelled by the Holy Ghost to preach a word different from that of Calvin; the hierophant is there, ready to seize the audacious man, and he will put him in irons or cast him into the fire, if he consent not to retract. Colladon will put him to the torture, and give him, as he did Goulaz, "a strappado" with the rope, if he will not confess; and order him to be shorn for using enchantments; and have him proceeded against by all manner of justice, till the pure truth be known." (22 janvier, 1543. Reg. de la ville.) "and," adds M. Galiffe, "after the confession shall have been obtained, subject him anew to the torture, to the end that something else may be learned."—*Not. Général. Article Colladon, p. 566, t. 11.*

Sometimes a wretch, worn out by sufferings, after having in vain cried for mercy to Colladon and his acolyte, the executioner, who, on the next day, were to resume their office, addressed himself to God, imploring him to terminate his life; but soon he learned that God had not heard him; then he fell into despair, and requested to see Calvin. And Calvin entered the dungeon, and wrote to Bullinger: "I am able to assure you that they have acted very humanely towards the guilty; they hoist him up on the stake, and cause him to lose the earth by suspending him from the two arms."—*A. Bullinger.—Manusc. gen.*

We shall shortly behold a Spaniard, guilty of blasphemies against the Trinity uttered in France, ask of Calvin, not some bread and water, but a shirt, as a change for the one on his body, and which the vermin are devouring, and Calvin will answer: No.

Most of the patients subjected to the torture, "on recommendation of M. Colladon," as we read in the registers of the city, acknowledged the real or false crimes, of which they were accused, and passed from the fiery chamber to their punishment.

These torments and punishments had affected all hearts at Geneva: but they wiped away their tears; for, had they wept, they would have been denounced to Calvin. Some verses were put into circulation, in which the judges and executioner were devoted to the wrath of God. The police seized upon them, and noted in them several infernal heresies. Three citizens, suspected of occupying themselves with religious poetry, were cast into prison. Colladon, who had tortured them, according to his custom, concluded that they should suffer "the pain of death." But the poets did not die; they were condemned to make the *amende honorable*, with torch in hand, and to cast their heterodox inspirations into the flames.

Colladon, who did not believe that God, in his mercy, wished to save sinners, treated his prisoners as so many damned souls. If they refused to confess their crime, he said: the finger of Satan is here; and he had the criminal shorn, and again subjected him to the torture, persuaded that the devil was concealed in the hair of the sufferer.

Do not fear that Calvin will cry mercy, in behalf of the victim. If he descend into the lion's den, called the question chamber, it is not in order to say to the executioner: enough! but coldly to write to Bullinger: "I should never have done, were I to refute all the idle stories which are circulated in my regard." They say that unhappy persons have been forced to confess, under the torture, crimes, which, afterwards, they disavowed. There are four of them, it is true, who, at the moment of dying, changed some trifling things in their first avowals; but that torments constrained them to lie to God, this is not so." Do you recognize the student of Noyon, who, by the dead body of his child, wrote to his friend:—Do come, we shall chat together?—*Audin's Life of Calvin.*

TREATMENT OF AN EVANGELICAL WITNESS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

On the day in which he was brought to the bar, Westminster Hall was crowded with spectators, among whom were many Roman Catholics, eager to see the misery and humiliation of their persecutor. A few years earlier, his short neck, his legs uneven as those of a badger, his forehead low as that of a baboon; his purple cheeks, and his monstrous length of chin, had been familiar to all who frequented the courts of law. He had then been the idol of the nation. Wherever he had appeared, men had uncovered their heads to him. The lives and estates of the magnates of the realm had been at his mercy. Times had now changed; and many, who had formerly regarded him as the deliverer of his country,

shuddered at the sight of those hideous features on which villainy seemed to be written by the hand of God.

It was proved, beyond all possibility of doubt, that this man had, by false testimony, deliberately murdered several guiltless persons. He called in vain on the most eminent members of the Parliaments which had rewarded and extolled him to give evidence in his favour. Some of those whom he had summoned absented themselves. None of them said any thing tending to his vindication. One of them, the Earl of Huntingdon, bitterly reproached him with having deceived the houses, and drawn on them the guilt of shedding innocent blood. The judges brow-beat and reviled the prisoner with an intemperance which, even in the most atrocious cases, ill becomes the judicial character. He betrayed, however, no sign of fear or of shame, and faced the storm of invective which burst upon him from bar, bench, and witness box with the insolence of despair. He was convicted on both indictments. His offence, though, in a moral light, murder of the most aggravated kind, was, in the eye of the law, merely a misdemeanour. The tribunal, however, was desirous to make his punishment more severe than that of felons or traitors, and not merely to put him to death, but to put him to death by frightful torments. He was sentenced to be stripped of his clerical habit, to be pilloried in Palace Yard, to be led round Westminster Hall with an inscription declaring his infamy over his head, to be pilloried again in front of the Royal Exchange, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and, after an interval of two days, to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. If, against all probability, he should happen to survive this horrible infliction, he was to be kept a close prisoner during life. Five times every year he was to be brought forth from his dungeon and exposed on the pillory in different parts of the capital.

This rigorous sentence was rigorously executed. On the day on which Oates was pilloried in Palace Yard, he was mercilessly pelted, and ran some risk of being pulled in pieces; but in the city his partisans mustered in great force, raised a riot, and upset the pillory. They were, however, unable to rescue their favourite. It was supposed that he would try to escape the horrible doom which awaited him by swallowing poison. All that he ate and drank was therefore carefully inspected. On the following morning he was brought forth to undergo his first flogging. At an early hour an innumerable multitude filled all the streets from Aldgate to the Old Bailey. The hangman laid on the lash with such unusual severity as showed that he had received special instructions. The blood ran down in rivulets. For a time the criminal showed a strange constancy; but at last his stubborn fortitude gave way. His howlings were frightful to hear. He swooned several times; but the scourge still continued to descend. When he was unbound, it seemed that he had borne as much as the human frame can bear without dissolution. James was entreated to remit the second flogging. His answer was short and clear. "He shall go through with it, if he has breath in his body." An attempt was made to obtain the queen's intercession, but she indignantly refused to say a word in favour of such a wretch. After an interval of only forty-eight hours, Oates was again brought out of his dungeon. He was unable to stand, and it was necessary to drag him to Tyburn on a sledge. He seemed quite insensible, and the Tories reported that he had stupefied himself with strong drink. A person who counted the stripes on the second day said that they were seventeen hundred. The bad man escaped with life, but so narrowly that his ignorant and bigoted admirers thought his recovery miraculous, and appealed to it as a proof of his innocence. The doors of the prison closed upon him. During many months he remained ironed in the darkest hole of Newgate. It was said that in his cell he gave himself up to melancholy, and sat whole days uttering deep groans, his arms folded, and his hat pulled over his eyes. It was not in England alone that these events excited strong interest. Millions of Roman Catholics, who knew nothing of our institutions or of our factions, had heard that a persecution of singular barbarity had raged in our island against the professors of the true faith, that many pious men had suffered martyrdom, and that Titus Oates had been the chief murderer. There was, therefore, great joy in distant countries when it was known that the divine justice had overtaken him. Engravings of him, looking out from the pillory, and writhing at the cart's tail, were circulated all over Europe; and epigrammatists, in many languages, made merry with the doctoral title which he pretended to have received from the University of Salamanca, and remarked that since his forehead could not be made to blush, it was but reasonable that his back should do so.—*Macaulay's History of England.*

SETTLING A KING MAN-OF-WAR FASHION.

One of her Majesty's ships, while cruising on the African station was ordered to proceed to the Camaroon river, and deliver the presents to King Bell and Aqua, in fulfilment of a treaty entered into with these sovereigns by the British Government for the suppression of the slave trade; and, on the morning after her arrival, at daylight, was surrounded by a number of war canoes, with fifty men each, one division having King Bell and his chiefs on board, another division the eldest son of the late King Aqua (who had died since the delivery of the former presents,) and the other division, the youngest son of the late King, who had deposed his eldest brother, and assumed the sovereignty. The Captain declined receiving them on board till eight o'clock, when the colours were hoisted and a guard of marines ready to receive them, the officers wearing their sword and cocked hats. King Bell was the first to come on board, accompanied by his favo-

rite wife and twelve of his chiefs; he was dressed in the full dress of a mail-coach guard, with a petticoat instead of trousers; next was the eldest son of old Aqua, wearing an English general's full-dress coat and epaulettes, no breeches, nor any substitute for them; last came Tim Aqua, the younger brother; he wore the full dress of a general officer, and was decently clad in a pair of white duck trousers and ankle boots, also a white beaver hat, with a blue silk band; and on it in letters of gold "King Aqua." The English resident at Bell Town also came on board, and represented to the captain that, in consequence of Tim having assumed the sovereignty, the trade of Aqua was stopped, much to the injury of the Liverpool merchants, whose agent he was, and requested the captain would use what authority he possessed to place the rightful heir in his proper position, and prevent Tim Aqua from taking upon himself the rank of his late father. A palaver was immediately held on the quarter-deck, King Bell and the Aqua chiefs examined, when it was proved to the satisfaction of the captain that the prince without the breeches was the eldest son of the late King, and consequently the rightful heir to the throne. The master-at-arms was ordered to dispossess Tim of his emblem of sovereignty, by removing the blue band from his white hat; this ceremony appeared excessively disgusting to Tim Aqua, but having no power to resist, he quietly acquiesced and became a subject. The elder brother was then required to enter into the same treaty as his father had done, and sign the same in presence of the several witnesses, which having done, he was desired to go on his knees, and the captain, drawing his sword, gave him the flat side between his shoulders, saying, "In the name of Victoria, Queen of England, I acknowledge you King of the Aqua country." At the conclusion of the ceremony the marines presented arms, the chiefs cheered, and King Aqua was congratulated on being established on the throne of his forefathers. The younger brother, Tim, asked the captain what he intended doing with him; he was told, "If he would take the oath of allegiance to the King, his brother, and swear to serve him truly and honestly as his lawful Sovereign, and render all and every assistance in his power to British subjects trading to the Aqua country, he would be created Prince Royal." This Tim Aqua rather reluctantly agreed to, and having signed the necessary document in the presence of the former witnesses, he was desired to kneel, when the same ceremony was gone through as with the King, excepting the captain saying, "In the name of Victoria, Queen of England, I create you Prince Royal of the Aqua country." The presents were then delivered to Kings Bell and Aqua, consisting of, to each sovereign, one puncheon of rum, twenty barrels of gunpowder, sixty muskets, twenty bales of blue cotton cloth, and a general's uniform, coat and epaulettes, with a handsome sabre in a gold-mounted velvet scabbard. King Aqua generously offered one half the presents he received to his brother Tim, now Prince Royal, no doubt fearing that if he had not done so, that when they reached the shore Tim might dispossess him of the whole. This division, except the rum and gunpowder, took place on the quarter deck; and when the tin case, containing the general's coat and epaulettes, was opened, the Prince Royal proposed to divide the coat by cutting it down the centre of the back, and the King to have one epaulette and himself the other. The King without the breeches appealed to the captain to prevent such an outrage. He decided that the coat and epaulettes were the insignia of sovereignty appointed by the British Government to decorate the body of the lawful King, at the same time strongly impressing on the mind of his Majesty that when he wore the coat and epaulettes, he ought, out of respect to her Majesty and the British Government, always to put on a pair of breeches. Thus, in an hour, was one King deposed, another established, and the dynasty of an empire settled, without bloodshed, by the captain of a British man-of-war.

This being Sunday, I heard, about 7 o'clock in the morning, a sort of jangling, made by a bell or two in the Cathedral. We were getting ready to be off, to cross the country to Burghclere, which lies under the lofty hills at Highclere, about 22 miles from this city; but hearing the bells of the cathedral, I took Richard to show him that ancient and most magnificent pile, and particularly to show him the tomb of that famous bishop of Winchester, William of Wykham; who was the Chancellor and the Minister of the great and glorious King, Edward III.; who sprang from poor parents in the little village of Wykham, three miles from Botley; and who, amongst other great and most munificent deeds, founded the famous College, or School, of Winchester, and also one of the Colleges at Oxford. I told Richard about this as we went from the inn down to the cathedral; and, when I showed him the tomb, where the bishop lies on his back, in his Catholic robes, with his mitre on his head, his shepherd's crook by his side, with little children at his feet, their hands put together in a praying attitude, he looked with a degree of inquisitive earnestness that pleased me very much. I took him as far as I could about the cathedral. The "service" was now begun. There is a *dean*, and God knows how many *prebends*, belonging to this *immensely rich* bishopric; and chapter: and there were, at this "service," two or three men and five or six boys in white surplices, with a congregation of fifteen women and four men! Gracious God! if William of Wykham could, at that moment, have raised from his tomb! If Saint Swithin, whose name the cathedral bears, or Alfred the Great, to whom St. Swithin was tutor: if either of these could have come, and had been told, that that was now what was carried on by men, who talked of the "damnable errors" of those who founded that very church! But, it beggars one's feelings to attempt to find words whereby to express