

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 15, 1863.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The situation in Europe has undergone no im-
portant change since our last. Poland is not
subdued, and no positive or reliable news as to
the ultimate intentions of the Great Powers have
as yet been made public. In Italy the govern-
ment of Victor Emmanuel is surrounded with
difficulties, its finances are in a state of bank-
ruptcy, and the suppression of the insurrection in
the Kingdom of Naples is an event apparently
as remote as ever. Our readers will be glad to
learn that the health of the Sovereign Pontiff is
excellent, in spite of all that the Liberal press
has said to the contrary.

There have been great events on the Rappa-
hannock since our last. We left General Lee
engaged with the invading army near Chancel-
lorsville on Monday, 4th inst. On Tuesday Gen.
Hooker finding himself defeated on all points de-
termined upon a retreat, and fell back across the
Rappahannock, thus bringing the campaign to a
speedy and inglorious termination. The losses
on both sides must have been great, but as yet
we have no authentic information on these points;
only we learn with deep regret that the gallant
Confederate Gen. Jackson was severely wounded,
and has had to submit to the amputation of his
left arm. We trust however that he may ere
long be again in the saddle, leading on his brave
troops to victory. It is impossible for any man
not to admire the skill of the Confederate lead-
ers, and the pluck of their little band of soldiers.
Outnumbered, oppressed by fearful odds, yet are
they always victorious on the field of battle, and
the heroism of the Southerners in defence of
their liberties has not been exceeded by that of
any community mentioned in history.

On Saturday a report was circulated by the
Yankee telegrams to the effect that General
Keyes had advanced upon Richmond from York
Town and had captured the Confederate capital.
This was however contradicted on Monday; but
upon the morning of the same day General
Hooker again crossed the Rappahannock with
his entire force, and proceeded in search of the
Confederates under General Lee. The con-
scription is we are also told to be put in force im-
mediately, and the first essay is to be in the State
of New York. Whether the people will submit
to it we cannot yet say; but we have heard ru-
mors of an intention to resist the draft, and it is
hard to believe that the people will much longer
tolerate the vile military despotism which Abe
Lincoln and the Abolitionists have set up.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.—The debate on
Mr. J. C. Macdonald's motion of want of con-
fidence was brought to a close on Thursday night,
by a division which resulted in a majority in
favor of the motion, and against the Ministry of
five—the numbers being 64 to 59. Immediately
after the result of the division was declared, it
was moved by Mr. S. McDonald, and seconded
by Mr. J. A. McDonald that the House be ad-
journed until Monday. The motion was carried
unanimously, and the House adjourned.

On Monday evening, Mr. J. S. Macdonald
offered the Ministerial explanations. It was
their intention, he said, to proceed with the more
pressing business of the country as quickly as
possible, and having obtained the necessary sup-
plies, to adjourn with a view to an immediate
dissolution. These explanations did not satisfy
the Opposition; and Mr. Cartier, noticing the
absence of the Lower Canadian Ministers from
their places, put the question to the head of the
government—whether it was his intention to go
before the country with his present colleagues,
or resort to a change of personnel in the Min-
istry? Mr. J. S. Macdonald refusing any fur-
ther explanations on the subject, M. Cartier
moved that the House do adjourn. This led to
a warm debate; and on a division the Ministry
were again defeated by a majority of eleven—
the numbers being, for Mr. Cartier's motion 55,
against it 44. The House then again adjourned
till Tuesday.

On Tuesday the Houses having assembled the
Speaker and members of the Legislative Assem-
bly were summoned to attend the Governor
General in the Chamber of the Legislative
Council, when after several Bills had been as-
sented to by his Excellency, Parliament was pro-

rogued with a view to an immediate dissolution,
and general election. The Governor General
made the following speech upon the occasion:—
Hon. Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:
Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

The course of events has shown that it is not
possible to conduct in a satisfactory manner the public
business of the Province under the existing con-
ditions of the Legislative body. Within the last year
two successive administrations have failed to secure
the confidence of the Legislative Assembly.

I shall therefore endeavor to prorogue this Parlia-
ment with a view to its immediate dissolution in or-
der that I may ascertain in the most constitutional
manner the sense of the people upon the present
state of public affairs.

The pressing importance of various questions con-
nected with the trade and industry of the Province
and with its internal improvement and defense de-
mands that no time shall be lost in convening a new
Parliament.

In bidding you farewell, I desire to express my
earnest prayer that the constituencies of this Pro-
vince may be guided by an All-Wise Providence in
the selection of representatives, whose judgment,
forbearance and patriotism may enable them to co-
operate with me in my efforts to maintain the honor
of our Sovereign, and to promote the happiness of
the people of Canada.

In the mean time a *replacage* of the Ministry
is going on. The Lower Canada section have
all resigned, and Messrs. Dorion, Holton, Letel-
lier, and Huot are spoken of as their successors.
Mr. Drummond it is also said will come in as
Attorney General. Some changes in the Upper
Canadian section of the Ministry are also hinted
at. Mr. Foley is, so it is rumoured, to go out,
and Messrs Mowatt and Wallbridge are to come
in.

COMPARATIVE MORALITY.—This is the
heading of an article copied by the *Montreal Wit-
ness* of the 6th inst., from an English journal, the
Morning Advertiser; in which the writer at-
tempts to establish, from official statistics, the
fact that Protestant communities are more
moral than Catholic, and that consequently Pro-
testantism must be from God, and Catholicity
from the other party.

To this mode of argument no Catholic can
possibly object. There is, and can be, no more
infallible proof of the origin of any religious sys-
tem, than that derived from the morality of the
people subject to it. The argument *per se* is
unanswerable; and if we demur to the conclusions
of our Protestant contemporaries, it is solely be-
cause we contest the accuracy of their statistics.

The statistics cited by the *Morning Adver-*

tiser from the eighth Report of the Registrar-
General of Scotland, are, in so far as the moral-
ity of that land of psalm-singing and Puritanical
Sabbatarianism is concerned, perfectly conclu-
sive. They show that illegitimacy is on the in-
crease in that Bible-favored land, and that for
the year 1862 it has advanced from one in
eleven, to one in every ten of the present popu-
lation.

But even this gives but a very imperfect idea
of the amount of impurity, and of the extent to
which the illicit commerce of the sexes prevails
in all parts of Scotland, and not in the large
cities merely. The peculiarities of the Scotch
marriage laws greatly tend to keep down the re-
ported number of illegitimate births; while the
practice of child-murder, which may be almost
reckoned as one of the Protestant fine arts, still
further tends to conceal the hideous and con-
stantly increasing immorality of the most Pro-
testant country in Europe. Still with all these
drawbacks, the actually reported illegitimate
births for 1862 were as nearly as possible 10
per cent of the whole—or 10,234 out of
107,138; a state of things for which the *Morn-*

ing Advertiser pretends to find an explanation,
if not an excuse, "in the large proportion of
young men who leave Scotland to seek their
fortunes at or about the usual time for marriage,"
and the "excessive use of ardent spirits."

Physiologists might be inclined to call in ques-
tion the soundness of our contemporary's deduc-
tions; but the moralist will find no difficulty in
admitting that a community excessively addicted
to the vice of drunkenness, must also be pre-
eminent for its disregard of the laws of chastity
as well as of those of temperance. Indeed, in
the same issue of the *Montreal Witness* as that
from which we have already quoted, we find the
following important admissions respecting the
constant connection of one form of vice with
another:—

"Wherever drinking abounds, the Sabbath is
desecrated."—*Witness*, 6th inst.

And again:—

"When the Sabbath was neglected, all other
Commandments, and indeed religion itself was
neglected."—*Id.*

So that, as by the admission of the *Morning*

Advertiser, the apologist for the impurity of
Scotland, the "use of ardent spirits" in that
country "is excessive;" and since according to
the *Witness*, "where drinking abounds the
Sabbath is desecrated," and "where the Sab-
bath was neglected, all other Commandments,
and indeed religion itself was neglected"—it
follows as a logical consequence from these
premises, that in Scotland, all the Command-
ments and religion itself are neglected. Q.E.D.

In support of this conclusion, we may be per-
mitted to cite here the language of Protestant
witnesses as to the fact of the general irreligious-
ness of Scotland, and the contempt of God's law
which characterises its intensely Protestant popu-
lation.

According to the Duke of Argyll, the annual

consumption of "ardent spirits alone" was seven
millions of gallons, more than three gallons for
every man, woman and child in the kingdom;
and from the Trade and Navigation Returns for
1862, quoted by us in our last, it appears that
not less than 4,400,271 gallons of home made
ardent spirits, were in that year consumed "as
beverage." The excessive use of ardent spirits
in Scotland which the *Morning Advertiser* de-
plores, is therefore established beyond the possi-
bility of cavil. Of the general immorality and
irreligiousness of the Protestants of Scotland we
find the following admissions in the Scotch Pro-
testant press. Thus, some years ago the *Edin-*

burgh Advertiser told us that "those masses of
ignorance, vice, socialism, and infidelity which
swarm in all our large towns—who vitiate all
that is virtuous in their vicinity and person, and
threaten the welfare, the very existence of so-
ciety—are on the rise among us, is indisputable.
They are in fact a feature of the age." The
following are some further extracts from the
same Scotch paper:—

"Dr. Buchanan of the Free Church has revealed
not merely the existence (that every one saw for
himself) but the appalling magnitude of the evil in
our western metropolis. . . . Upwards of 250,000
human beings in one city with no possible means of
entering a church. In a parish of 12,000 people not
700 copies of the Bible—the Bible which may be
bought for sixpence! Yet in the same parish—may
in a single district of this same parish—there are a
hundred and fifteen low drinking-houses, and three
and thirty brothels."—*Edinburgh Advertiser*.

Lord Aberdeen, an unexceptionable Protest-
ant witness, bear testimony to the same effect.
In a public discourse delivered some years ago
in Aberdeen, he stated that it appeared from
statistics that in Scotland for the last twenty
years:—

"The increase of crime has been six or seven
times in an increased ratio to that of the popu-
lation."

That:—

"It has been assumed that more than 500,000 of
the population of this country are living without
God in the world."

And, finally, that when all deductions, all al-
lowances were made for possible errors in statis-
tics, and official documents, the result,

"Leaves such a state of intemperance as I believe,
was never witnessed in any civilised country in the
world."

These facts, we say, all asserted upon Protest-
ant testimony, fully bear out the thesis of the
Montreal Witness as to the necessary connec-
tion betwixt excessive drinking and contempt for
all religion, and all the Commandments of God
without exception. Again, if further evidence
be needed, we will quote the words of *Black-*

wood on the same subject:—

"If there be any truth in evidence—any reality in
the appalling accounts which reach us from the
hearts of the towns, there exists an amount of crime
miserable, drunkenness, and profligacy, which is un-
known even among savages and heathen nations."—*Blackwood Magazine*, Sept. 1851.

And to conclude, for we would not wear out
the patience of our readers, we may again be
permitted to cite the evidence of the Protestant
Actuary of the Standard and Colonial Life As-
surance Company, Mr. Thomson—who in a
pamphlet which he published a short time ago,
and which in April of last year received the for-
mal approbation of the Royal Society of Edin-
burgh—deposed as follows:—

"In more than one county in Scotland, out of
every seven persons you meet, one is probably illegi-
timate."

"Female chastity is scarcely known, and certainly
not appreciated."

By way of evading the force of these facts,
the *Morning Advertiser* undertakes to show
that, bad as Scotland is in respect to morals,
Catholic countries are worse; and thus he does,
not of course, by citing the official returns of
illegitimacy in Catholic Ireland—but by appeal-
ing to the asserted immorality of certain large
cities on the Continent, such as Paris, Brussels,
Munich and Vienna. The Protestant apologist
must be conscious of a bad cause, or he would
not have recourse to such a flimsy, to such a pal-
pable fraud as this. Admitting for the sake of
argument, that his statistics of illegitimacy in the
above named four great Cities are correct—
though like a true Protestant he carefully ab-
stains from citing his authority for them—what
follows therefrom? why this. That Scotland
as a whole, is not so immoral, not quite so bad,
as are certain large cities on the Continent; but
it would not follow that his statistics afforded
any test for determining the comparative moral-
ity of Scotland and Belgium, or that of Scotland
and Bavaria. The logic of our Protestant con-
temporaries is as that of one who should ascer-
tain the existing proportion betwixt the number
of licensed taverns, and of the population in
Montreal, and thence conclude that the same
ratio betwixt taverns and population obtained
throughout the Province. Were a writer upon
Canada to fall into such an error, inadvertently,
we should laugh at him as a fool; were he to
avail himself of it as an argument to establish the
drinking habits of the Lower Canadians, we should
write him down a knave.

But why do not our Protestant contemporaries
if they seek only after the truth, compare Pro-
testant Scotland with Catholic Ireland? This
would be a fair comparison, but it would not suit
the purpose; for unfortunately for their theories
Catholic Ireland is, and by the testimony of
Protestant writers, as gloriously distinguished for
the purity of her women, as Protestant Scotland

is notorious for its drunkenness and impurity. If
we would really ascertain the moral effects of
Popery, of the Confessional and of the Sacra-
ment of Penance, justice demands that we should
study the conduct of those who most generally
and constantly avail themselves of that Sacra-
ment, and who most faithfully adhere to the pre-
cepts of Popery. If, after this study, it should
appear that the masses of Brussels, of Paris, of
Munich, and of Vienna, that the denizens of the
brothels, and the frequenters of the places of de-
bauch of those large cities, were far more strict
and devout practical Catholics than are the
classe Irish—far more regular in their attend-
ance at the Confessional, and more frequent in
their reception of the Sacraments than are the
latter—then indeed a strong, a very strong case
against Popery and the Confessional would have
been made out. But should it upon examination
appear that amongst professing Catholics, the
most immoral were invariably those who in their
practice the most closely approximated to Pro-
testants—who, like Protestants, never submitted
to the discipline of the Church, like Protestants
never fasted, and like Protestants never knelt
down before a priest to confess their sins—then
indeed the argument in favor of Popery, and of
the beneficial moral effects of the Confessional
would be complete. We should then be able
to retort upon the *Witness* and others of that
stamp, in the following terms: "True—there is
fearful immorality in Paris, in Brussels, in
Munich and in Vienna; but this is so, not be-
cause the masses of the populations of those
cities are rigid Catholics, but because they are
practically Protestants—because without having
given themselves the trouble of making with
their lips a formal Protest against the Church,
they content themselves with setting all her pre-
cepts at defiance, and keep aloof from the Con-
fessional and the Sacraments." A bad Catholic is
in fact indistinguishable from a good Protestant;
and so completely is this the case that, if Pro-
testants meet a stranger in hotel or steamboat
who eats meat on Fridays, who tells obscene
stories about priests and nuns, who swears,
drinks and makes a beast of himself generally,
who laughs at the rites and ceremonies of the
Church, and who rails against the practice of
confession—they all at once and without further
question put him down as one of themselves—as
a genuine staunch Protestant, and perhaps an
Orangeman.

But why again, we ask, should Protestants in
England look for the moral effects of Popery to
the large cities of Continental Europe, the cor-
rupt masses of whose populations have thrown
off their allegiance to the Church; when Ireland
whose people are still strictly Catholic, and
whose statistics are made up by a Protestant
Government, lies at their very door? Why
again do Protestants in Canada not form their
conclusions as to the comparative moral effects
of Catholicity and Protestantism from the cri-
minal statistics of the Province, and the moral
aspects of Lower and Upper Canada respecti-
vely? Here are some figures which cannot be too
often placed before the public, because they de-
clare in clearest language what are the moral
effects of Popery, and what those of Protest-
antism:—

CONVICTS IN THE PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY.
From Upper Canada (Protestant) . . . 542
From Lower Canada (Catholic) 222
764

And if we enquire as to the religion of these
764 convicts, we find that 464 are Protestants,
and 296 Catholics.

These figures show that, social, political,
and material conditions being nearly the same in
the two sections of the Province, the criminality
of the Protestant section is far more than two to
one of that of the other or Catholic section.—
These facts are we contend conclusive.

It is indeed almost superfluous to argue the
question as to the moral effects of the Con-
fessional with Protestants; for they, even when re-
viling it, do not believe in the truth of their
own denunciations. They know by experience
that the criminal classes amongst Catholics are
recruited not by the frequenters of the Con-
fessional, but by those who never approach it; and
when in the Imperial Parliament it is proposed
to appoint salaried Catholic chaplains to the
Jails and Penitentiaries for the moral reforma-
tion of the Catholic inmates of those institutions,
not even a Whalley or a Newdegate dare oppose
the motion upon the grounds that the ministra-
tions of the Romish priest have a deleterious
moral influence, as they would do if they really
believed that confession, and the reception of the
Sacraments tended to harden the heart, and to
confirm the sinner in his evil ways. If, as the
Protestant journal cited by the *Montreal Wit-
ness* pretends, "confession and absolution can
remove both modesty and remorse," how is it
that amongst Catholic women the frequenters of
the Confessional are not the most immodest,
and the most hardened in guilt? and that those who
keep away from it entirely are not the most
chaste, and the most irreproachable in their
lives?—How is it, short, that the harlots and
street walkers, who never, from the first of Jan.
to the 31st of December, approach the confes-
sional, are not the purest and the most modest of

their sex? The charges of our enemies are self-
destructive; for remorse, keen remorse for sin,
the feeling that sin is a burden too heavy longer
to be borne, coupled with an earnest desire to
lay down that crushing burden at the foot of the
Cross, can alone induce either man or woman to
submit to a practice so repugnant to mere human
nature, and so revolting to human pride, as is
confession. Without remorse there could be,
there would be no confession; and it is sin, and
not confession of sin that is destructive of mo-
desty.

SERIOUS RESULTS OF AN "OPEN BIBLE."
—One of the most ordinary consequences of
Bible reading amongst Protestants is an obfusca-
tion, or darkening of the intelligence. The
effect is much the same as that of an over-dose
of opium, or of any other powerful narcotic; and
the symptoms of the disease are in many respects
identical with those of the later stages of inebri-
ation, or stupefaction caused by the inordinate
use of tobacco. The victim of one and the other,
of too much opium and of too much Bible, may
be easily recognised by his wandering eye, his
incoherent babbling, and the general prostration
of his intellectual faculties.

We regret extremely that the editor of the
Echo, a very low Anglican journal of this city,
has been "took very bad" in this way. The
poor man has, it seems, of late been endeavoring
to interpret the obscure prophecies relating to the
second advent of Christ; and, as might have
been anticipated, the effects have been very seri-
ous indeed. He has read and studied himself
into a state of coma, or rather of extreme per-
plexity and bewilderment, from which it will take
some time, much care, and good treatment, for
him to recover. We should, in his case, recom-
mend a course of *Punch*, to be followed by the
administration of some of Dickens' novels, or
other works of light and improving literature.—
The patient's Bible, in the mean time, ought to
be strictly closed; and his attendants should be
most careful to prevent him from troubling his
head about the "number of the beast" or the
"man of sin." Spiritual horrors—a disease
akin to *delirium tremens*—might be the conse-
quence of neglecting our salutary admonitions.

The case of the editor of the *Echo*, as de-
scribed by himself in his issue of the 16th ult.,
should be a warning to all young people, and to
all old women of both sexes, not to attempt the
interpretation of the Apocalyptic Vision of St.
John, and to leave the second advent of Christ
in the hands of God. See what a pitiable men-
tal state our poor evangelical contemporary has
got himself into by not attending to this sensi-
ble advice. He says, speaking of the last result
of his researches and study of his "open bible,"
that, "after reading many books, and not having
time or power to enter further into the question
for ourselves, we, with many others, become first
bewildered, and then indifferent."

This bewilderment, followed by indifference, is
a very common, and quite natural consequence of
excess in Bible reading; and others, as well as
the poor young man of the *Echo*, are suffering
from the effects of rashly attempting to interpret
the mystery of the Woman, and to make out the
number of the Beast. Not to speak of Tribu-
lation Cumming, and other well known followers
in his footsteps, we see the announcement of a
new work, by a Rev. Mr. Baxter of the Episco-
pal Church—wherein it is satisfactorily proved
that Louis Napoleon is the "personal Anti-
Christ," that he is just going to make a seven
years' covenant with the Jews, and to commence
the final period of 3½ years of great tribulation,
or Napoleonic persecution. All these things the
writer proves by ten good reasons sufficient to
convince the most sceptical. If this be the pro-
duct of biblical studies and of an "open bible,"
Papists have abundant reasons for being thankful
that their studies of the written word are pur-
sued under a safe guidance; and that their Bible
is illuminated by the light of the Catholic Church,
the sole guardian and interpreter of Holy Writ.

It is not often that Protestants go down upon
their knees and take to confessing their sins; but
when they do anything in that line of business,
they find it far more convenient to confess other
people's sins, than their own. So Mr. Jones being
took pious, can moralise most beautifully over,
and most pathetically bewail, the folly and extra-
vagance of his next door neighbor Mr. Walker;
and in return Mr. Walker will groan in spirit as
he gives God thanks that he is not as other men
are, and not a *dead* something or other screw,
like that skinkint Jones. It is a very pleasant
pastime that of confessing other people's sins.
With a goodly show of godliness you can indulge
in a large amount of malevolence, and give vent
to your spite against your more prosperous and
well-to-do neighbors. It is far more convenient
than is the Romish practice of confession, where
every man confesses his own sins only, and
bothers not himself with recounting the misdeeds
and short-comings of others. The Romish prac-
tice requires as an essential preliminary, a peni-
tent spirit, and a long and rigid self-scrutiny, or
examination of conscience; the Protestant mode
of confession exacts only from those who adopt
it, a censorious and somewhat malignant spirit,