

The True Witness.

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 15, 1859.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

FULL details of the sanguinary battle of Solferino are now before the public. It appears that though the Allies may claim a victory, they bought it dearly; and that the Austrians inflicted on their enemies losses almost as great, as those which they themselves suffered. Since the last dates, the relative position of the contending hosts had not much changed. The Sardinians have partly invested Peschiera, and a large French naval force in the Adriatic menaces the rear of the Austrian famous quadrilateral. There is little of interest from England. The new Ministry have reiterated their pledge to observe a strict neutrality. Renewed attempts at a mediation are however hunted at.

FOUR LETTERS TO A FRIEND. *The Relations of the Irish Catholics of this Province to the French Canadian Parties and the Protestant Population of Lower Canada, and the Conservatives and Reform Parties of Upper Canada, considered.*

The object of the writer of these letters, is, as we indicated in our last, to persuade the Irish Catholics of this Province that it is their interest—(he does not pretend that it is in the interest of the Catholic Church that they should follow his advice)—to detach themselves politically from the French Canadian Catholics; and to unite with what he designates by the rather vague and indefinite title of the Reform Party in Upper Canada; mainly composed, as he in his fourth letter seems to admit, of Scotch Presbyterians, and other Protestant sects, dissenting in faith and discipline from the Church of England. This, we say, after a careful perusal of these letters seems to us to be the writer's object.

To effect it, he has resource, as we showed in our last, to a system of tactics which every true and intelligent Catholic must condemn and deplore. We hold it to be a self-evident proposition, that our religious interests, the well-being of our Church, and the integrity of our religious, charitable, and educational institutions, should, amongst Catholics, take precedence of all secular considerations; that those interests can be consulted, that well-being promoted, and the integrity of those institutions secured, only by means of a cordial alliance of all Catholics, without distinction of origin, or Provincial boundary lines; and by their continuing to present a bold uncompromising front to their common enemies, the enemies of their common faith.

Now if this proposition be true, it follows as its corollary, that every thing that tends to create division in the Catholic ranks, or to array one portion of that body in hostility to the other, should be repudiated by Catholics; and, therefore, we conclude that—if the policy urged by Mr. McGee upon his countrymen, in the Four Letters under review, would, if followed, have the tendency to detach the Irish from the great body of the French Canadian Catholics; and to array the one in hostility to the other—it is a course, which, though to the place-hunter, to him who is ever on the look out after a government situation "even as a scavenger" it may have its attractions, the independent Catholic, intent only upon the interests of the Church, and the general good of the Catholic body, will be loth to adopt.

But we have shown that the very object Mr. McGee has in view is to detach Irish Catholics from French Canadian Catholics; and in this suicidal policy he has unhappily been only too well seconded by some of the latter. We condemn, we resent as warmly as Mr. McGee does, the unwarrantable insolence displayed by some members of the Government party towards Irish Catholics; but we contend that Mr. McGee has no right to impute the insolence of a few, to the entire body of French Canadian Catholics; and that, of all men, he is the very last who should complain of that insolence, seeing that it is through him, and because of him, that the insult complained of has been offered. He complains that Mr. Cartier "declared he did not want the Irish—would not have the Irish, for support;" and in so far as Mr. Cartier is concerned we have not one word to say. But who, would we ask, exposed the Irish Catholics to this gross insult? who was it that tendered to the Ministry the Irish Catholic vote as a marketable commodity, which they, the Ministry, might purchase for a consideration?—that consideration being

that they should favor the candidature of Mr. McGee, and admit him within their ranks. Who represented the Irish Catholic body to Mr. Cartier, as so destitute of fixed principle, and of all honesty of purpose, as to be ready to vote either for one party or for the other, without the slightest reference to the principles of either? Who in short waited in Ministerial ante-chambers; and pretending to have the Irish Catholic vote in his pocket, offered it for purchase, first to the Orange Attorney General, and when refused in that quarter, carried it over to Mr. G. Brown? We reply—Mr. McGee. To Mr. McGee is then mainly attributable the gross insult alleged to have been offered by M. Cartier to the Irish Catholic body.

But what have such paltry personal considerations as these to do with the general policy of the Irish Catholic body? or what argument in favor of a union betwixt the latter, and the most inveterate enemies of their religion, can be based upon the impertinent and offensive language of an individual? Indeed, if we must speak of such matters, who has so grossly insulted the Irish, their Clergy, and their Religious Sisterhoods as has Mr. George Brown—the leader of that party to which Mr. McGee wishes his countrymen to yield their allegiance. If we turn to the *New Era* of only a few months back, we find denunciations of George Brown's brutal insolence towards Catholics perpetually recurring. Phrases such as, "Globe's billingsgate—Globe's wild sectarian screech"—are plentiful as blackberries in the columns of the *New Era*:

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallombrosa."

And offensive as the expressions attributed to Mr. Cartier no doubt were to Irish Catholics, we are not aware that he has ever branded their Sisters of Clarity as strumpets, or denounced their Convents as no better than brothels. If then the insolence of M. Cartier be a good reason why Irish Catholics should detach themselves from French Canadian Catholics, surely the rabid "billingsgate" and the "wild sectarian screech" of Mr. G. Brown offer at least as valid reasons against a union betwixt Irish Catholics, and the party which recognises as its chief the four mouthed slanderer of their race and their religion. Of course we offer no opinion as to the matter of fact whether M. Cartier or others of his colleagues employed the offensive language attributed to them; for whether they did, or did not, affects not our argument.

The argument put forward by Mr. McGee in defence of the political union by him advocated, will we think, as little bear examination, as that by him urged as a reason why Irish Catholics should detach themselves from the great body of French Canadian Catholics: We must however here let Mr. McGee state his argument in his own words. We copy from the fourth, or concluding letter of the series. He argues:—"That we"—(the Irish Catholics)—

"must be the natural allies of other Reformers, is evident from the fact, that, how widely different sover their religious education and ours, we have yet in common in political opinion, much more than we have in dispute."

Mr. McGee then proceeds to enumerate those principles which he pretends Irish Catholics hold in common with the Protestant Reformers.—Having enumerated their common hatred of Orangeism—though the fact is that the ranks of the Orange body are at present recruited chiefly, not from amongst the Anglicans, but from amongst the Presbyterians, Methodists, and other sects dissenting from the Church of England—he continues in the following strain:—

"The Protestant Reformer holds that the maintenance of all religious institutions in mixed communities should rest on the free will of those who believe in them—other words, he holds the voluntary principle in its broadest application; all the habits and traditions of the Catholics of Irish origin lead him to adopt the same conclusions."

In so far as regards the Irish Catholic this is false. If a Catholic in something more than name, he cannot hold "the voluntary principle in its broadest application," or as held by the "Clear Grits" or Protestant Reformers. That principle "in its broadest application," leads to the total separation of Church and State, and has been explicitly condemned by the Church; and in particular in the famous Encyclical Letter of Gregory XVI. Mr. McGee should study his theology a little, before he assumes the privilege of dictating to Catholics what line of policy they should adhere to, on politico-religious questions.

Again it is false in fact, that by tradition, the Irish Catholic is necessarily a supporter of the "voluntary principle in its broadest application." The last occasion upon which the voice of the Irish Catholic nation made itself heard, was in 1689, and during the session of Ireland's last independent Parliament, held under James II. That body, the true representative and last exponent of Irish Catholics, amongst other important measures—such as the Repeal of the Act of Settlement—passed a well-known Bill upon the subject of tithes and ecclesiastical endowments; not, however, with the idea of suppressing or abolishing them, as something repugnant to "all the habits and traditions of Catholics of Irish origin;" but with the express object of transferring those tithes and endowments from the hands of an intrusive Protestant, to those of the legitimate Catholic, clergy. This is a conclusive proof

that, neither by habit, or tradition, is the Irish Catholic hostile to the principle of endowments by the State in aid of religion. We conclude, therefore, that M. McGee not only misrepresents the habits and traditions of his fellow-countrymen; but that he is also inculcating amongst them grave theological error, and endeavoring to win their assent to a proposition involving a damnable heresy—that is to say a heresy formally condemned by the Vicar of Christ.

"Here then" continues Mr. McGee, "are political principles held in common by both, and which must naturally lead them to act together as one party—

- First, Hostility to Toryism.
- Second, The Voluntary Principle.
- Third, The widest extension of popular suffrage.
- Fourth, Non-interference of the Imperial authorities in our domestic affairs.
- Fifth, Economy in Expenditure, and reduction in taxation.

"One main prop of the Reform party of Upper Canada is to be found in the Scotch Presbyterian body."

Here then we have defused the party with whom Mr. McGee now wishes to unite the Irish Catholics of Canada; the party whose main prop is the Scotch Presbyterian body; whose recognised head is Mr. George Brown; and who of late years have been known and spoken of as the "Clear Grit" party. It will be remarked too, that Mr. McGee does not so much as pretend that on the vital questions of the day, i.e., the politico-religious questions,—(with the exception of the question of State aid to religion, whereon he misrepresents his Catholic fellow-countrymen)—there is anything in common betwixt Catholics, and those with whom he wishes Catholics to contract an unnatural and most degrading alliance. On the School Question, infinitely the most important question of the day, for it concerns the souls and the eternal salvation of the rising generation, Mr. McGee does not so much as insinuate that there is aught in common betwixt Irish Catholics and the "Clear Grits;" and he carefully leaves out of sight the solemn and repeated pledges of the former, never to support any party which shall not have first made "Justice to Catholics" on the School Question a prominent plank of its political platform. Here then is one conclusive, unanswerable reason why the Irish Catholics of Canada should not consummate the union whose bans have been published by Mr. McGee. They cannot do so, without the most infamous dereliction of principle; without proclaiming themselves to the world as pledge-breakers, and as false to their plighted faith; without bringing themselves, and the Irish Catholic name, into ridicule amongst all who respect consistency and scorn the place-hunter.

And whilst Mr. McGee, in his enumeration of principles held in common by Catholics and the Scotch Presbyterians, thus leaves out of sight the main question of the day, he is strangely oblivious of his own public and deliberately recorded opinions of that same "Clear Grit" party, of which he is now the advocate. Here again we must quote Mr. McGee of 1857, against Mr. McGee of 1859.

In the month of November of the first named year, and whilst his negotiations with the Hon. J. A. Macdonald were still pending, Mr. McGee, whose object then was to discountenance any alliance betwixt Irish Catholics and the "Clear Grits," and to prepare the public mind for his connection with an Orange Attorney General—thus delivered himself in the *New Era* concerning that official, and the "Clear Grits":—

"Mr. McDonald means to be as liberal as he dare be in the present fanatical temper of a large portion of the Upper Canadians. For there exists for our friends in Upper Canada, a second danger—a twofold dilemma. In religious hatred, the party designated 'Clear Grits' outbid and outstrip the Orangemen themselves."—*New Era*, Nov. 28th, 1857. The Italics are our own.

And it is with these fanatics, who "outbid and outstrip" the most rabid Orangemen in hatred to Popery, that the writer of the above, now tries to persuade his Catholic fellow-countrymen to enter into close political partnership! whilst there has not been in any one act, or vote of that same "Clear Grit" party, the slightest indication of its design to relax in its hostility towards us, or to do us justice on the School Question.

Why then does Mr. McGee advocate that union? We answer without reserve: Because he sees therein the only chance now left to him of obtaining a Government situation. Rejected by the "Ins" or Ministerial party, he turned to the "Ous" or Oppositionists, in the hopes that should they succeed in ousting their opponents, a place with a salary attached to it, would be awarded to him. The *Leader* states positively—with what of truth we know not—that according to the degrading treaty known as the Brown-McGee alliance, the place of Provincial Secretary was to have been the price of the latter's services; but that on the formation of the short-lived Brown-Dorion administration, he was persuaded, though reluctantly, to refuse the infamous wages.

Will Mr. McGee succeed in the task he has undertaken? We think not; for we have too high an opinion of the intelligence, of the honor, and the soundness of the faith of the great body of our Irish co-religionists, to believe that they will allow themselves to be duped by such shal-

low sophisms as those to which Mr. McGee has resource, and couches, it must be admitted, in most choice English; or that they will submit to the degradation to which, for the furtherance of his mercenary objects, he is willing to subject them. To forgive all private injuries and insults is a Christian virtue, and an indispensable duty; but these are public injuries to which it would be a crime to extend forgiveness; there are insults which no man of honor, which no Catholic, should ever forget. Of these, Mr. G. Brown has been repeatedly guilty towards the entire Catholic body of this Province. By means of these injuries and insults he has attained his present popularity amongst the "Clear Grits," and his political power. It behoves us then, if we do not wish to be ill-treated and insulted by others, as we have been insulted and ill-treated by Mr. G. Brown, to teach that individual—and through him, the entire Protestant community amongst whom there are some ready to follow his example—that the very means he has employed to attain to political eminence, have been fatal to the darling object of his life; that the "High Protestant Horse" is a dangerous animal to ride; and that he who bestrides it, may make up his mind to find all the avenues leading to political advancement inexorably closed to him for ever. For such a one as George Brown, there should be, from Irish Catholics, if worthy of their name, no pardon, no semblance even of forgiveness; lest others by our culpable facility towards him, be tempted to offend as he has offended. Place-hunters, and place-beggars, craving after government situations "even as scavengers," may extend the hand to George Brown, and consent to eat out of his dish—for there is a well known proverb about a particular class of dogs; but no Catholic who respects himself, or his religion, will ever consent to become a party to an alliance with George Brown, or with any body in the State, which recognises him as its head.

We do not again revert to the question of "Representation by Population," or the arguments by means of which Mr. McGee in his letters seeks to recommend that measure to his readers; because Mr. McGee himself has effectually answered his own arguments, in his late Election Address. All the necessary reforms he therein assures us, can be obtained under the Constitution "as it is;" and he is by his own words bound, and solemnly pledged to uphold that "Constitution as it is;" and therefore, to oppose all attempts to introduce organic changes into that Constitution. This solemn pledge was given but some short eighteen months ago; to it Mr. McGee owed his election to Parliament; and were he a man of honor, had he the slightest regard for the obligations of a promise, or respect for truth, he would not directly or indirectly endeavor, by himself or others, to evade the engagements entered into by him with his constituents. He stands, however, before the world as a pledge-breaker, and as a contemner of a most sacred contract—that which binds the representative to keep faith with his constituents; and to refute him, and his arguments, we need but quote his own words, his own pledges, spoken and given when courting the suffrages of the Catholic electors of Montreal:—

"The Constitution of Canada, as it is, must be upheld."—*Mr. McGee's Address to the Electors of Montreal*.

To this we respond, Amen.

REGIOPOLIS COLLEGE.—KINGSTON.—Lower Canada has good reason to be proud of her numerous, and admirably conducted Catholic educational institutions; of her Schools, her Colleges, her Seminaries, and Conventual establishments, in which she is excelled by no country, and equalled by few.

But we must not suppose that this section of the Province has a monopoly of education; or that our brethren of Upper Canada have not equally good reasons to be proud of the rapid development of their resources; and, in spite of the many disadvantages under which Catholics labor, of the steady progress that the cause of sound religious education is making amongst them. Toronto and Kingston can both boast of their excellent Colleges; both are well worthy of the attention of the entire Catholic body; but to-day it is our attention to speak only of the latter—the College of Regiopolis.

This institution, under the patronage of the Bishop, is immediately directed by the Very Rev. Angus McDonald, Vicar-General of the Diocese of Kingston, assisted by a numerous and well appointed body of Professors. Classics, Greek and Latin, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Music, and Arithmetic are the branches of education pursued by the pupils; the healthy development of whose physical faculties is admirably promoted by the unsurpassed salubrity of the site on which the very handsome and extensive pile of buildings composing the College is erected.

We had the privilege of being present at the annual examination of the pupils of this institution on the 7th instant; and, as was the case with others who had the same happiness, came away vividly impressed with its immense value to the Catholic youth of Upper Canada, and to the

cause of religion throughout British America.—His Lordship the Bishop, and a large number of the Clergy from the different parishes of the Diocese, from Nova Scotia, and the United States assisted at the ceremony; and by their presence, and the interest which they took in the day's proceedings, manifested how deeply they have at heart the cause of Catholic education.

The junior classes were first examined, in Arithmetic, Latin Translation, Grammar, and in the Greek Testament. Most creditably to themselves and their instructors, did they acquit themselves; translating well and freely, and showing a thorough acquaintance with the grammatical construction of both Greek and Latin. Several pieces of music, well performed by the College Band, agreeably diversified the forenoon's proceedings.

In the afternoon came the examination of the senior classes, in Greek, Latin verse, and Mathematics. Again, as in the forenoon, the proficiency of the pupils, bore the best testimony to the care of the professors; and gave assurance of the proud position which ere long Regiopolis College will assume amongst the educational establishments of this Continent.

Then came the distribution of prizes, by His Lordship the Bishop of Kingston. Where all acquitted themselves honorably, and so many distinguished themselves, it might seem invidious to mention names. Yet cannot we forbear taking notice of two Irish pupils—Mr. James Swift and Mr. O'Bryan—as having betwixt them carried off an almost disproportionate share of academic honors, and particularly distinguished themselves amongst their youthful competitors.

In terminating this brief, and necessarily very imperfect notice of the educational institutions of Kingston, we should not forget to make honorable mention of the excellent schools under the management of the good Christian Brothers, and the Ladies of the Congregation. In the latter, boarders excluded, upwards of 200 female children are receiving gratuitously a sound and truly Christian training; and when to this we add that the entire Catholic population of Kingston does not much exceed 5,000, our readers will be able to appreciate the efforts in the cause of Catholic education which are being made by the revered Prelate of that Diocese, and ably seconded by a zealous clergy, and a most generous and liberally subscribing laity.

For further particulars respecting Regiopolis College, and the advantages it enjoys, we would refer our readers to the advertisement in another column.

The Scholastic year of the Ladies of the Congregation of Montreal was brought to a close on Friday last, 8th inst., in presence of a numerous and delighted auditory. The occasion was marked with all the usual interesting features; and the proficiency displayed by the young Ladies, in the various branches, reflects much credit alike on themselves and their devoted preceptors. Very clever specimens of drawing, fancy work, &c., were examined with much interest; and the recitations and music, vocal and instrumental, bore evidence of careful culture. On this occasion, Misses A. Perrin, S. Quinn, S. Ward, C. Brock, M. Regnaud, and A. Grothe, completed their course of studies with honors; and in the junior classes, Misses Agnes and Charlotte Caine, A. Paitra, T. McGavran, and C. Smith, were particularly distinguished. In the department of music, Misses Regnaud, Pacaud, and Agnes Caine, won honors. Two very interesting literary compositions—one in French by Miss M. Regnaud, and the other in English, by Miss S. Ward—were listened to with much pleasure;—and reflect credit on the good taste and ability of the writers.

The proceedings terminated with the distribution of premiums and honors in the various classes.

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE.—The annual distribution of premiums and honors in the St. Mary's College, Montreal, took place on Tuesday last. Among the large assemblage present, were His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, Mr. Justice Mondelet, Mr. Justice Monk, His Worship the Mayor, &c. A very able and eloquent lecture on the educational training of youth, by the Rev. Pere Gravelle, preceded the distribution. The Rev. gentleman discussed this important subject in all its bearings and details, with an ability and earnestness which rendered it interesting and instructive alike to the student, Professor, and the parent; and concluded with an eloquent appeal to the parents of our Canadian youth to mark their patriotism by their zeal for the moral and intellectual advancement of their children. The music, as usual, was excellent. The orchestra appeared in the picturesque costume of the Tyrolese, and gave several original airs with good effect. The whole proceedings passed off with enthusiasm and eclat.

DEAF AND DUMB ASYLUM.—We would remind our readers that the examination of the pupils of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, will be held on Monday next, at two o'clock of the afternoon, in the St. James' school house, situated on St. Denis Street, and attached to St. James' Church. We need scarcely add that this examination will be extremely interesting, and that the public are earnestly requested to attend.