THE
Protestant & Evangelical Witness.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1861.

Rector M'Donald and the Index Prohibitory.

In to-day's issue we publish, according to promise, a lengthy communication from Rev. Angus M'Donald, Rector of St. Dunstan's College, animadverting on our leading article of the 30th ult. The same communication, we observe, appeared in the *Examiner* of Monday last. Now, in the outset we have this remark to make, as Mr M'Donald hints that he purposes to address us again. If his subsequent letters be as lengthy as the one which we have inserted in our present number, and he be so impatient to see them in print that he cannot wait until such time as we find space to publish them, he need not expect that we shall take the trouble to copy them into our columns.

Our correspondent does not deny the existence of the "Index" to which we referred, nor does he complain of our having in any respect misrepresented its contents. There being then no dispute in regard to the *matter* of the Index, Mr M'Donald would have written to some purpose had he manfully expressed his approval or disapproval of that notorious catalogue. He does neither. The charge preferred against the Church of Rome is, that she has forbidden the writings of Addison, Bacon, Robertson, Milton, Locke, &c., and has thus exerted her influence to repress freedom of thought, and expression of private opinion. Mr M'Donald does not state whether he approves of this prohibition, or whether as a Teacher he ought to conform to it as a part of the "discipline" of the Church to which he belongs; but artfully evades expressing a direct opinion on the subject by discoursing amply of "incendiary and seditious works," "immoral and infidel writings," "impious and corrupt books," &c. Our position is that if the commands of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the writings of the men whom we have named are observed in St. Dunstan's College, then that institution is not entitled to the support of Protestant legislators; if on the contrary, however, the Rector allows his pupils to peruse the works of these authors, he does so in violation of the strict injunctions of that Church of which he is a priest.

Mr M'Donald writes as if we approved of the "writings of Voltaire, Rousseau *et hoc genus omne*." If he refer to the article on which he comments, he will find that we have expressed our disapprobation of them as strongly as he has; all that we said which could in any way be construed into an expression of approval was to hint that a doubt might be entertained by some as to the propriety of *absolutely* forbidding the works of these men; and we may remark that the justness of this doubt seems to be strengthened by the fact that the Rector himself does not hesitate to quote from Voltaire in support of his own opinion concerning the licentiousness of the press! We do approve of the writings of Addison, Bacon, Robertson, Grotius and Puffendorf; we found them condemned and prohibited in the Index; we expressed our disapproval of such prohibition; yet Mr M'Donald finds it convenient not to write one word in vindication of his Church with respect to her treatment of the works of these authors. We find "The Tale of a Tub" prohibited by the Index, and we understand that this book is in the library of the "Catholic Institute;" we did think and still think that the proof of Roman Catholics in this instance was sadly at variance with a rule of their Church; and the Rector, who is "closely connected" with the Institute, writes a long letter without any further attempt at removing this inconsistency than carping at our use of the word "indulgence." Reading a prohibited book is a *crime* which subjects the offender to ecclesiastical censure, and there is nothing unlikely in our supposition that "the Church" may have indulged her children in the commission of such a crime, for we find that she has before now extended her indulgence to the perpetrators of far darker deeds. We read, for example, that "poisoning was by her absolved for eleven ducats, six livres tournois. Absolution for incest was afforded at 33 livers. 3 ducats. *Perjury* came to 7 livres and 3 carlines. Pardon for murder, if not by poison, was cheaper." (Motley's Rise of the Dutch Republic, Vol. I. p. 72.) Perhaps we may be told that it was not indulgence but absolution which was granted at these rates. It was indulgences however which Tetzel, a Dominican monk, sold in Germany by the appointment of the Pope about the commencement of the Reformation, and which he extolled in the following manner:—"Indulgences are the most precious and the most noble of God's gifts." "Come and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins that you intend to commit may be pardoned." "There is no sin so great that an indulgence cannot remit." (D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, Vol. I. p. 86.) That the Church of Rome does grant indulgences, Mr M'Donald cannot deny; and if we have used expressions in some trifling particular not in accordance with "Catholic phraseology," it is not to be wondered at, as we have not, after the example of the Rector, spent years in acquiring a knowledge of that and such like unimportant matters.

"Had you, Sir," writes our correspondent, "been better acquainted with the teaching and discipline of the 'Romish Church,' you would have known that the prohibitions of the 'Index' are not in force here." If Mr M'Donald by the latter part of this statement means that all classes of British subjects do not regard the restrictions of the Index, he goes to very unnecessary trouble in stating a truth in which all Protestants rejoice; but if he means to assert that the prohibitions of the Index are not intended to apply to Roman Catholics in this country, we must respectfully beg to differ from the Rector, as the very words of the Index express that its rules are designed to govern Roman Catholics everywhere. "Regula X. *Ad extremum vero* OMNIBUS FIDELIBUS *præcipitur, ne quis audeat contra harum Regularum præscriptum aut hujus Indicis prohibitionem, libros aliquos legere aut habere.*" "It is strictly (or to the very letter) enjoined upon *all the faithful*, that no one shall dare read or possess any books contrary to the decree of these Rules, or the prohibition of this Index." The Index and its rules are then evidently intended to be obligatory on "*all the faithful*," without any qualification as to locality. Does Mr M'Donald believe that any of "the faithful" reside in P. E. Island? If so, they are, so far as the Index is concerned, not to dare read or possess "Paradise Lost," "Robertson's Charles V.," "Swift's Tale of a Tub" &c., on pain of excommunication! and if the students of St. Dunstan's College are permitted by the Rector, as he hints, to peruse some of these works, it is high time we should say, taking the Index as our authority, that he was called to account by his superiors for the manner in which he discharges the functions of the priestly office. If, however, as Mr M'Donald states the prohibitions of the Index are not in force here, there must be some decree of the Church suspending their operation in such countries as this. If a decree or "indulgence" of this kind exists, the Rector would oblige by quoting it entire, or telling us where it may be found. Until he give us more than mere assertion on this point, we must hold to the letter of the Index, as it makes no exception, that we have seen, in regard to country or clime. But on the other hand, admitting that the prohibitions of said book are not in force here, as Mr M'Donald affirms, to whom then, we ask, are the "children of the church" in this Colony indebted for the liberty they enjoy in perusing the works of such master genius as Bacon, Locke, Addison and Milton? Assuredly not to the Pope, for the Index is issued by his authority, and no doubt he would rejoice to see its rules obeyed to the ends of the earth. If then "the discipline" of the Romish Church in this matter does not prevail in this country, it must result from one of two things, either that the authorities of the Church are ashamed or deem it inexpedient to carry out their discipline in mixed communities, or amid the general enlightenment that obtains in Protestant countries they think no injury can be caused to "the faithful" by reading such works as are perused by their neighbors around them. Mr M'Donald appears to boast of the liberty enjoyed by the students of St. Dunstan's College in being permitted to peruse works which are on the Index; if they possess this privilege, let them thank God that they live among Protestants, for did they study in Madrid, Vienna or Rome we fear they would feel the restrictions of the Index in all their force. But our correspondent says:—"Even in countries where the discipline prevails, leave to read them (proscribed books) is obtained." It is just possible, then, that were some of the students of St. Dunstan's to repair to one of the three cities which we have named to complete their education, they might obtain leave or "indulgence" to read Bacon, Locke, Addison, &c. If any of them should go for this purpose to Rome for example, and there have to ask for and obtain this leave before they could peruse any of the forbidden books, we would give them two problems to solve as a part of their studies; first, why are the writings of some of these authors more dangerous in Rome than on P. E. Island? and secondly, if the books on the Index are good books, where is the necessity of obtaining leave to read them? or if on the contrary they have been placed there because they tend "to pervert the understanding or corrupt the hearts of his (the Pope's) children," how can he be justified in giving leave at any time, or place, or to any person, to read books having this tendency?

We have only taken up a few points referred to in Mr M'Donald's letter, but we find that we can afford space for no further remarks at present. At our leisure, we may offer some comments on the Rector's misapplication of two or three texts of Scripture to prove that a book should be rejected on account of one false principle, and may enter into an examination of his views on the freedom of the press.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.—A copy of the Annual Report of the New England Branch of the American Tract Society for 1860–61, has kindly been placed in our hands by a friend of the Society. This organization appears to be doing a very good work, not only by publishing tracts and useful books, but by employing colporteurs to disseminate them and perform a certain kind of missionary labor. Within the year the Society has had in commission 23 colporteurs,—7 of whom labored in Maine, 5 in Massachusetts, 4 in Connecticut, 2 in New Hampshire, 2 in Vermont, and 1 in Prince Edward Island. In reference to the efforts of Mr Secord, the person who has labored on this Island, the Report says:—

A colporteur who has labored with great zeal and success on Prince Edward Island, writes: I am led to say that the Lord is with me, blessing my feeble efforts. A young man with whom I have been permitted to associate for a short time, has been led to give his heart to God. I conversed with him about his soul, gave him books and tracts, and we met together in my little room, and engaged in prayer. As I go from house to house, often do I see the tears trickle down the cheek. I cannot begin to tell you how kindly I have been received; and I am led more and more to see the need of this work. Oh, may it ever be my believing prayer for God's Spirit to accompany the word.

We understand that Mr Secord, for the fourteen months he has labored here, has circulated $1370 50 worth of books, and has received orders for books and tracts to the amount of $42 83. The number of families which he visited destitute of all religious books except the Bible, were 111; number of Protestant families destitute of the Bible, 29. Number of Roman Catholic families visited, 227; families who habitually neglect attending any place of worship, 12. Number of families conversed with on personal religion, or prayed with, 2284. The whole number of families which he visited was 2536. These statistics show great diligence and faithfulness on the part of the Society's colporteur in this Colony, and that all the Americans who come here to sell books are not seeking to impose upon us. We trust that if he is permitted to continue his labors on the Island, he may everywhere meet with kindness and encouragement from our people.

The Society's books may also be had at the store of Messrs Sinclair & Son, Harris's old stand.

A writer in the last *Examiner*, over the signature of "Quintus," tries to be very severe on us for remarking that our Roman Catholic fellow-colonists do not appear to regard Thanksgiving days recommended by the Government, and asking, Is this because they have no reason to be thankful? We are not so very ignorant as to require the instruction which he proceeds to give us in regard to "how it is that Catholics do not conform to the Governor's proclamation." We do not, any more than "Quintus," believe in the State dictating to the Church in spiritual matters; but when a government only entreats that worship be held in churches and chapels on a given day, we think that even those who are commanded by their church to obey the temporal power only in "things regarding the government and well-being of the state," might comply with such a request without any violence to conscience. We are of opinion also that the observance of such days have an important bearing on the "well-being of the state," and therefore come within what is enjoined by the Romish Church on her children.

PRESBYTERY OF HALIFAX.—We learn from the *Presbyterian Witness* that the Presbytery of Halifax in connection with the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, met at Lunenburgh on Tuesday the 31 inst. The whole day was occupied in hearing the trial exercises for ordination prescribed by Presbytery, at its last meeting, to Messrs. Donald M'Millan and John Morton, probationers. The exercises were sustained as highly satisfactory. On Wednesday morning the Presbytery met in the Church at Lower La Have, when Mr M'Millan was set apart to the office of the Holy Ministry, and inducted to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Lower La Have and New Dublin. On the same day the Presbytery met at Bridgewater, and ordained Mr Morton to the pastoral charge of that congregation.

Call from Richmond Bay Congregation.—All the papers connected with the Call from this congregation to Mr M'Leod were read before the Presbytery, so soon as they could meet after dinner—Reasons of translation to Richmond Bay—Replies of the congregation of Newport to these—with other reasons why he should remain in his present charge. Mr M'Gregor, by request of the congregation of Richmond Bay, was heard in support of their claims. The commissioners from Newport not being able to attend, the Presbytery then agreed to seek divine direction in prayer for themselves, and very specially on behalf of Mr M'Leod.

Mr M'Leod, being called upon for his views in the matter, expressed a readiness to allow the Presbytery to decide, at the same time intimating that after careful consideration he had concluded that it was his duty to remain in his present charge. We cannot follow his remarks in detail, but the main reasons for the decision were the *perfect unanimity* of his present charge and the *many tokens* of usefulness which the Head of the Church had afforded him in Newport, while, on the other hand, the Richmond Bay congregation were less united in their call, and the extent and numbers of that congregation were beyond his strength, and in his opinion, beyond the strength of any ordinary man to supply.

The Presbytery expressed approval of Mr M'Leod's choice, and directed intimation to be given accordingly.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION AND LITERARY INSTITUTE.—The Rev. G. M. Grant lectured on Thursday evening. "Holiday Travels" was his theme. He began by vindicating the propriety of discoursing upon matters not strictly religious before a *Christian* Association; quoting from Dr Arnold to the effect that we wanted in these days, not so much a religious literature as a secular, imbued with the religious element. He then proceeded to discourse of "Holidays;" pleading with a mixture of earnestness and pleasantry for material relaxations. This was followed by a discursive paragraph on Scottish scenery and associations. The lecturer then set out upon a continental tour. He took his audience to Holland, and detained them there for a considerable period. He spoke of the general aspect of that singular country, with its dikes, its canals, and its far-reaching levels—of its people, with their wealth, and their contrasted habits of cleanliness and smoking—of its museums and its pictures—of its British sympathies, its heroes, and its history. He then passed over into Germany; lingering especially at Munich and Cologne. In Munich, he gave us pictures and descriptions of Catholic worship, and of Lutheran: the one grand, artistic, showy, but heartless—the other simple, but spiritual, and appealing to the profound wants of man's inner nature. In Cologne, he painted in words its vast and magnificent cathedral; with its gothic architecture without, and its doll-worship within—its ideal and imaginative Christianity, its actual and debasing idolatry. Somewhere here he introduced a dissertation upon German character, and the destinies of Germany; anticipating for Middle Europe a united German empire, corresponding to the united Italian empire in Southern Europe; and exerting a vast influence upon the future, politically, intellectually and morally. He closed with warm panegyric upon Britain, her Queen, and her flag; by way of showing that his "heart, untravelled, still returned to home." Such is a mere outline of this instructive and interesting lecture. Some exception might be taken to sentiments and suggestions here and there. Something might be said as to an occasional carelessness and brokenness in style, and also to a want of compactness. Scarcely well adapted perhaps to popular tastes, the lecture was such as none but a man of mind, culture, travel and observation, could have produced. It was worthy of the vote of thanks accorded to the lecturer, and may be accepted as an earnest of something still better in the same line hereafter.

The next lecture will be delivered on Thursday evening next, the 26th inst. Lecturer, W. A. Johnstone, Esq., Attorney. Subject, "Genius and Self-Culture in Cottages." Admission, One Penny.

Mr Sabine Knight will lecture in the Temperance Hall, at ½ to four on Sunday; subject—The Church at Prayer. At ½ past seven, there will be a lecture on "the Glad Tidings." Also on Monday—at the former hour, to Children, on "I wish you a merry Christmas," and at the latter hour on "The Times of the Gentiles." Admission free.

[For the Protestant.]

Mr Editor;

My attention having been directed to an article, headed "Index Prohibitory," which appeared in the *Protestant* of the 30th ult., and in which you allude to St. Dunstan's College and the Catholic Institute, I feel that, in justice to these institutions, with both of which I am closely connected, I am obliged to make a few observations in order to remove the false impressions which the article in question may tend to create. As a Protestant journalist, you are at liberty, as a matter of course, to exhibit the doctrines of our Church in the most odious light possible, without giving any Catholic the opportunity of defending them in your columns, even should he desire to do so; but when you attack our local institutions and our principles regarding Education, I think that the case becomes altered, and that in justice to us you are obliged to afford us an opportunity of replying. For this reason I presume that you will be just and honorable enough to publish in your journal this communication, as well as whatever else I may consider necessary to write on the subject.

That the "Index" concerning which you have written exists, is true. It is also true that the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and many other infidel, heterodox and immoral writers have been placed thereon, and prohibited to be read. But it is a question of importance to inquire whether these writings, are prohibited absolutely and everywhere. Had you, Sir, been better acquainted with the teaching and discipline of the "Romish Church," regarding which you venture to write so dogmatically, you would have known that the prohibitions of the "Index" are not in force here, and you would not have shown your unacquaintance with Catholic phraseology by asking the young men of the Catholic Institute if they "obtained an *indulgence* (!!) for the gratification of their humor in perusing "The Tale of a Tub."

That the students of St. Dunstan's College are not so restricted with regard to the authors which they are permitted to read as you have insinuated, is evident from the fact that they have within their reach some three thousand volumes of the choicest works on history, literature, philosophy and the sciences, including some of those works which you say are on the "Index," but which they have been permitted to peruse without having obtained an "*indulgence*" for that purpose. We shall be happy to afford you an opportunity of satisfying yourself by ocular demonstration, regarding the truth of this assertion, at any time you please to honor us with a visit. Perhaps I may be permitted to express the hope that you, Sir, will be kind enough, in consequence of the lively interest which you appear to manifest for the development of the noble faculties of the mind, to give the public some information regarding the number of historical, literary, philosophical and other works which the Government, influenced by the laudable desire of perfecting our system of Education, and developing, to their fullest extent, the intellectual faculties of the youth of the Colony, have placed at the disposal of the students of their pet institution, the Prince of Wales College.

The right of the Popes to prohibit the reading of books dangerous to faith or morals, is a consequence of their spiritual authority; and I presume, Sir, that you will not deny that it is a duty incumbent on those who have the charge of others to see that those under their care imbibe nothing which may be to them dangerous or fatal. The Sovereign Pontiff, in placing bad books on the "Index," wished to guard the faithful from danger, and I cannot understand why they should be censured for placing on the black list the immoral and infidel writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, *et hoc genus omne*. From the fact of a book being placed on the "Index," we are not to conclude that every thing contained in them is condemned, but rather that the whole thereof is not approved of. One error, one false principle in a whole work is sufficient to have it placed on the "Index." You may consider this very illiberal on the part of the Popes; but on reference to your Bible you will find the following:—"He, therefore, that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." And again: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law but offend in one point, is become guilty of all." I doubt not but the doctrine contained in these texts from Holy Writ "may be questioned," to use your own words, "by not a few liberal minds."

You say that there is no charge more confidently "preferred against the Roman Catholic Church than that she has exerted her influence to repress freedom of thought and the expression of private opinion." That such a charge is made, is indeed true; but it is equally as true that it is unjustly made. The services of the Popes to letters—to borrow the words of an illustrious writer of our day—are forgotten, whilst the restrictions imposed by them on the press are made a matter of reproach. A Committee of divines was appointed by the Council of Trent to form a list of bad or dangerous books; who, having failed to complete the task assigned them before the close of the Council, were allowed to continue their labors, and ordered to submit them to the Pope for approval. The list of books is daily increasing, the reading or retention of which is prohibited under ecclesiastical censures; and although this discipline is overruled by contrary usage in most countries, it seems to give coloring to the charge that the Popes are hostile to the liberty of the press. In justice to them I must observe that their sole object has been to restrain the press within the limits of the divine law; and that the licentiousness which sends forth impious and corrupt books, to poison the minds of youth, is that which our late venerable Pontiff visited with unmitigated censure. Liberty of the press, considered as a civil right, does not suppose freedom from moral restraint, or impunity from civil penalties for its abuse. Its chief value, in a civil point of view, is to give free expression to public sentiment in regard to the management of public affairs, by rulers and other officers, and thus to prevent oppression, or procure its remedy, by exposing it to general censure. The exercise of such liberty for the true interests of the country, is nowise opposed to the spirit or discipline of the Church. It is well known that the Popes have permitted the publication at Rome of works on civil polity, which, on account of their liberal and popular principles, were proscribed in several European States;* and that at all times, they have shown themselves disposed to favor the oppressed, rather than stifle their complaints. Incendiary and seditious works could not, of course, be countenanced by the rulers of the Church, who are bound to sustain established order, and promote peace; but these are not included in the true notion of liberty of the press. In all that regards science, literature, philosophy, and the arts, the utmost freedom of the press may be enjoyed, with no limit but the caution of not advancing on holy ground. The golden age of Spanish literature was precisely that in which the laws of the Index were strictly enforced. How can it be pretended that science is impeded in her legitimate progress, because she is warned not to displace the landmarks of religion? A vast space lies open to research and improvement, without encroaching on the realms of faith. If Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, and Milton's Paradise Lost, are found on the list of prohibited books, it is because the philosopher artfully underrated the doctrine of the spiritual nature of the soul, and the poet exhibited Christ according to the fancy of the Arians, and made of Lucifer a hero. Lest an unwilling reader, misled by great names, should imbibe fatal error, the books were proscribed; but even in countries where the discipline prevails, leave to read them is easily obtained. The Popes have at all times respected the meditations of true philosophy, and honored the inspirations of the Muse, always loving the truth of what God has revealed.

The decree of the Pope proscribing certain books, as containing false doctrines, are for us the warnings of a father against what might pervert the understanding and corrupt the hearts of his children. Independently of them, we are naturally bound to shun whatever is dangerous to our faith or morals. The youth who, uninstructed in the great evidences of revelation, familiarizes himself with Paine's Age of Reason, exposes himself to the manifest danger of infidelity. The female who, with morbid curiosity, peruses an obscene tale, is liable to lose that purity of heart which is her greatest treasure. In proportion to our information and moral habits, the dangers may be diminished: but it is beyond a doubt, that to the reading of bad books may be traced the infidelity and corruption of innumerable individuals. The restrictions which the Popes imposed would be unjust, if arbitrary; and unreasonable, if those for whom they were intended did not already recognize their pastoral authority; but this being recognized, nothing is more reasonable and just than to turn away the sheep from noxious pastures, by proscribing whatever is contrary to sound doctrine. At all events, the precedent of the proscription of bad books was given by the Apostles, when the vast collection of works of magic, belonging to converts from that superstition, were consigned to the flames, as we learn from the 19th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Will the readers of Scripture charge the Apostles with hostility to knowledge? The moral restraints resulting from our discipline serve to avert many of the evils with which the licentiousness of the press deluges the world. The pangs of the broken heart, when its shame has been revealed—the desolation of families, whose sorrows have rung on the public ear—the torture of high-minded patriots, writhing under the calumnies of reckless rivals—the fury of a populace maddened to arson and bloodshed by incendiary publications, and the struggles and convulsions of parties, which almost threaten the dissolution of society, are no imaginary evils. Even Voltaire did not hesitate to declare that the press had become one of the scourges of society. "*La presse, il le faut avouer, est devenue un des fleaux de la societe, et un brigandage intolerable.*"

It is evident, therefore, that the Popes, in proscribing bad books, only performed a duty which they owed to religion and society—a duty which will be performed not only by clergymen who are faithful to their obligations, but also by public journalists who desire to aid in protecting innocence and youth from the baneful effects of the unallowed and polluted matter which too frequently disgraces the publications of the present day.

On a future occasion I will reply more directly to your charge against the Popes of repressing freedom of thought. In the meantime I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

A. M'DONALD.

St. Dunstan's College, Dec. 10, 1861.

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* The work of Spedalieri, entitled "*I diritti dell' uomo*," in which the right of a nation to depose a despot, is supported by the authority of St. Thomas of Aquin, in his letter to the Bishop of Rome, was published at Rome in 1791, dedicated to Cardinal Ruffo, Apostolic Treasurer, Pius VI., who encouraged its publication, rewarded the author by appointing him one of the Canons of the Basilic of St. Peter.

Secular Department.

ARRIVAL OF THE ENGLISH MAIL.

The Royal Mail Steamer *Europa* arrived at Halifax on Sunday last at half-past 12 o'clock, with Liverpool dates to 30th ult., and Queenstown to 2d inst. She was detained at Queenstown 24 hours to await arrival of a Messenger from London, with instructions to Lord Lyons to demand an atonement from the American Government for the seizure of Messrs. Mason and Slidell, from on board the R. M. S. *Trent*, by the Captain of the *San Jacinto*, which act is pronounced by the Crown Officers of England to have been illegal.

GREAT BRITAIN.

WAR WITH AMERICA APPARENTLY INEVITABLE.—The capture of Mason and Slidell is creating great excitement in England, and the all-absorbing topic relates to the possibility of a war between Great Britain and America in consequence. An indignation meeting was held at Liverpool, and the press is teeming with articles, of which we give a condensed report up to the departure of the Steamer, which indicates the general feeling.

The *Post* says: "It has been decided by the law officers of the Crown that the action of Captain Wilkes of the *San Jacinto* was unjustifiable. He had no right to arrest peaceful passengers sailing under the British Flag, and the deed he has committed amounts to flagrant violation of the code of nations and a direct insult to this country. Under these circumstances we need hardly point out that the Government will lose no time in seeking for the prompt and complete reparation which it is its duty to require. In this case it will assuredly receive the unanimous approbation of public opinion. We are unwilling to place the worst construction on the outrage committed by Captain Wilkes, and to look on it as an international affront on the part of the Government of the United States. We hope that the Government will at once disavow the act of their officer, make suitable apology, and restore the persons of the gentlemen arrested, and in fact make every compensation in their power. Mild as are the words written and spoken by Mr Seward, and reckless as American policy not unfrequently is, we can hardly suppose that the Northern States are seriously disposed to accept a war with England. We have in American waters, including the Mexican expedition, and the ships already there, a force amounting to, not far short of 1,000 guns, which we could largely increase with the greatest ease and rapidity. In one month we could sweep all the *San Jacinto's* from the seas, blockade the Northern ports, and turn to a direct and speedy issue the tide of the war now raging. This is so obvious that we feel it almost impossible to suppose that the Cabinet of Washington can commit or act so madly suicidal as to reject our earnest and positive demands."

The *Times* says that the disposition of the officers of the *Trent* have now been submitted to the law officers of the Crown, and their opinion has been given that the proceedings of the American frigate are not justified by the law of nations. It is, we understand, the opinion of these jurists that the right of the Federal Government, acting by its officers, was confined to visiting and searching the mail packet; that if any men or things believed to be contraband of war had been found on board of her, the proper course was to take her into a port and submit the question to a prize court, which would hear evidence and argument on both sides, and would have decided the case according to precedent and authorities. The *Times* observes that this proposition seems so clear that it requires only to be stated to obtain universal assent. The Cabinet meets to-day to consider what action shall be taken on the opinion of the law officers. We do not wish to speculate as to what steps they may consider necessary. If Mason and Slidell were wrongfully taken, they must be restored with a sufficient apology.

The *Daily News* says, beneath everything there exists an under-current of apprehension, lest the American Government really contemplate the desperate policy of seeking to force a quarrel on Great Britain, in order to gain a standing ground for abandoning its design of subjugating herself.

Letters from France state that the news of the American difficulty caused immense sensation in Paris, and the first general impression was that ample reparation must be made to prevent a collision. Communications have taken place between the English and French Governments, and a good understanding of the subject was believed to exist, as already done on the question of the policy to be carried out with reference to the American question generally.

The *Times* of the 30th makes important announcement that Cabinet has come to the conclusion that the act of the captain of the *San Jacinto* in seizing passengers on Board a British vessel and carrying them forcibly away, is clear violation of the Law of Nations, and one for which reparation must be at once demanded. In all probability the fleet steamer will carry out instructions to Lord Lyons to demand reparation for the ill-advised act in seizing Mason and Slidell while under the protection of the British Flag. Should this just demand not be complied with we cannot doubt that Lord Lyons will, under the instructions of Government, withdraw with British Legation from Washington. The *Times* expresses the belief that the Cabinet has taken a view of the matter which will be satisfactory alike to the patriotism and reason of the country. It also says that the principle on which Government rests its demands is that a British ship must, until her violation of neutral rights is fully proved, be held to be British ground as much as if she were an actual piece of British soil, and the right of protection to all persons on board is as valid as on British territory. Now no such violation has been proved or sought to be proved against the *Trent*, and consequently the seizure of four persons, dragged from her decks was entirely illegal.

The *Post* confirms the announcement in the *Times*, and says the demand which Lord Lyons will make to the Washington Cabinet will be plain and brief, and they will hold the issue in their own hands. If our demands are not at once complied with, Lord Lyons will break off diplomatic relations with the Cabinet of Washington and return to this country. In London the prompt, clear, and temperate expression of the French press on the American outrage was received with satisfaction, as it is believed that it will have immense weight in facilitating the adjustment, so long as the means of adjustment are still open. It is scarcely doubted that the Government of France will act with care in any course of policy that may be determined upon.

Large reinforcements will be immediately sent to Canada.

The ship Melbourne is now loading at Woolwich with Armstrong guns, &c.—30,000 Enfield Rifles, ammunition, and other stores for Canadian Militia.

The London *Times* says the wisest course for Canada is to prepare and discipline the Militia. Montreal only wants stout hearts and zealous hands to be safe until the spring, when we can make it secure. The *Times* also adds, that in 1854 we were totally unprepared for war, and had to provide everything; but now, by the large and unprecedented outlay of the past year, we have attained a degree of efficient power, such as was never before known.

The Law Officers are in frequent personal communication with the Government, and a Cabinet Council is held daily.

The Exportation of materials of gunpowder, were prohibited by proclamation.

Consols have fallen two per cent, and shares five.

The affair of the Nashville, which stirred up attention last week, has almost disappeared from public view, in consequence of the more exciting kindred events that the last few days have revealed. The vessel is still at Southampton; the protest of Captain Nelson, the commander of the destroyed ship, Harvey Birch, has been published, and communications have passed between the American Minister, Mr Adams, and Lord Russell, and the result is that the British Government will not interfere.

ITALY.

TURIN, Nov. 26, Evening.—A bill for the temporary occupation of the convents by the military was brought forward to-day in the Senate. Urgency was demanded for the passing of this bill, as it will shortly be necessary to provide lodging for 93,000 recruits. Baron Ricasoli stated in the Senate that the relations between Italy and France continue to be of the most cordial nature. He said also that the accounts of brigandage in the Neapolitan provinces were exaggerated, that the number of brigands in the Basilicata does not exceed 250, and that a reinforcement of 2000 carabineers would shortly be despatched into that province.

POLAND.

WARSAW, Nov. 28.—The Council of State continues to discuss the question whether civil rights shall be granted to the Jews in Poland, notwithstanding the assertions of the *Breslauer Zeitung* to the contrary. Perfect tranquility prevails in Warsaw and throughout the provinces. Personal security is nowhere threatened.

TROUX, Nov. 29.—There is great and general agitation in Warsaw on account of the resignation of the Marquis Wielopolski. The decree by which the Emperor accepts his resignation states that he is relieved from all his functions until further orders.

Three Days Later.

The steamer 'City of Baltimore,' was intercepted off Cape Race. We are indebted to the Pictou 'Colonial Standard,' for the following telegraphic summary of her news:

The Steamer City of Baltimore passed Cape Race at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning bearing Queenstown dates to the 5th instant.

Excitement unabated in Paris.

It was rumored that the report of the *Persia* being chartered to convey troops to Canada, was pronounced premature.

The *Australasian* was advertised to sail for New York on the 7th inst. America substituted.

A letter from General Scott, in favor of the maintenance of friendly relations between England and America, attracts much attention.

The Paris *Patrie* has an editorial foreshadowing the disposition of France to recognize the South, if England sets the example.

It is asserted that the *Australasian* has been chartered to convey troops and Battery Artillery to Canada. She was to have sailed about the 12th inst.

It is stated that the *James Adger* captured a privateer off Fayal on the 17th ult., and towed her into that port.

The partial effect of *Persia's* news was sent per *Europa*, and it was then regarded rather hopefully, and Consols and Cotton slightly improved; but after carefully digesting the sentiments of the American Press on the San Jacinto affair, a reaction set in, and fears were entertained that the Government at Washington would seek to justify the act.

Lord Lyons' instructions, on which the Cabinet were unanimous, are explicit and determined.

The *Morning Post* says that an acknowledgment of error and surrender of prisoners would be received with great joy, but if the Federal Government fails to do so, no man in England will blind his eyes to the alternative that England must do her duty. Her rights and duties were never more completely blended than in the present case.

The *Times* continues to assert that it has been Seward's policy to force a quarrel with England. Both it and the *Post* call for Energetic military preparations for Canada.

Serious decline daily taking place. Canadian securities total 12 per cent.

The *Times* says it may reasonably predict that three things will immediately follow an outbreak, viz.: the destruction of the Southern Blockade; complete Blockade of the Northern Ports; and recognition of the Southern Confederacy by France and England.

Active preparation was going on in the various Navy Yards. A considerable number of vessels were ordered to be ready for immediate commission.

The transport *Melbourne* was to leave Woolwich on the 9th for Halifax, with thirty thousand stand of arms, large quantities of ammunition, and a battery of 6 Armstrong guns. She will be convoyed by the *Orpheus*, 21 gun frigate.

Great interest was excited in Paris. Appearances indicate that the Government papers have been instructed to write in anti-American tone. An article in the *Patrie* attracts considerable attention, as it argues pretty clearly that France will side with England and recognize the Southern Confederacy, and also take decisive attitude on the international question.

The Liverpool *Post* gives a rumor that Napoleon has been proposed as arbitrator of the question.

LONDON, Nov. 5.—Tone of the French press changing. The *Monitor* considers a peaceful solution not impossible, and says that public opinion in the United States is very powerful, but also very feeble, and therefore it would be best to await a solution of the question. The *Monitor* adds that the French Government are in no hurry to recognize the South. Other French papers are of the same opinion.

The German press generally takes part with England.

The Augsburg Gazette says the Charleston blockade is ineffective, otherwise the escape of the Theodora would have been impossible.

They state that the Commissioners having reached a neutral Spanish port, on board of a neutral English Steamer, could not be lawfully seized by the North.