

To SUBSCRIBERS.—We respectfully request our country subscribers who find the figure 8 after their names to observe that their subscription expires with this month; and that all papers of which the subscription is not renewed are necessarily, according to our system, discontinued. They are, therefore, requested to remit in time, and they will confer a great favor by endeavoring each to send another name or two with his own.

THE WITNESS.

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, AUG. 23, 1865.

EDITORIAL ITEMS.

—We invite attention to the address of the Free Church of Scotland to the Churches of the United States, a document which cannot fail to produce an excellent effect at this time.

—It is very often the case in this world, that public interest is sacrificed to private interests. The abuses which, from the evidence adduced before the Police Committee, evidently existed both in the Police-force and the Committee itself, instead of being fully investigated, are purposely ignored. Evidence was refused, reporters for a time shut out, and efforts made by some members to hush up and conceal the truth; and now the Police-force and Committee are whitewashed by a series of resolutions carried by the votes of the very individuals who are more or less implicated in the charges.

—When the Baldwin-Lafontaine Administration was in power, the "Clear Grits" of Canada West who supported it were frequently dragged through the mire by fidelity to their party. The strain upon their consciences was probably great in many of the votes they had to give, but, at all events, those votes were such a heavy strain on their consciences that the all-powerful party came to naught. History repeats itself; and the Upper Canada Liberal members who are now, on account of their connection with the Cartier Government, obliged to vote against their own principles on questions such as the election bill, negatived on Thursday, must be committing suicide like their predecessors of twenty years ago.

—There was a great outcry all over the world, and nowhere louder than in Canada, against the intemperance of a high public functionary of the United States a few months ago, and the blame was not confined to the individual, but attached to the country. But how is it with our own Government? Is it not notorious that one or two of our Cabinet Ministers are sometimes unfit for business through intemperance, when most needed? We see also, by the *Pays*, that a confirmed inebriate has been appointed by that Cabinet to a most responsible office. In these cases the blame is not confined to the individual but attaches to the country.

—The "City of Baltimore" and the "Belgian" bring us news to the 11th.

—No tidings of the "Great Eastern" or her consorts had been received in England up to date of steamers' departure. On the 9th, at a meeting of the Company, it was resolved to convert the preference shares into consolidated 8 per cent. stock, and to raise additional capital of £900,000 sterling, to complete the present cable and lay down a second one. Further news from Mr. Field at Heart's Content is very encouraging. He says the "Great Eastern" can lay the cable in any weather; that nothing has yet occurred to cause practical men to doubt the successful submersion and working of the cable; and that there is a possibility, with improved machinery, of recovering the end of the cable and completing the line. The great ship should have arrived off the Nore some two or three days ago, even though short of coal. She will need to complete her farther preparations speedily, so to be able to make her second voyage in time to escape the equinoctial gales.

—The mutual attitude of Austria and Prussia looks more pacific. A Vienna telegram reports that Austria will not quarrel with Prussia for the sake of the Duke of Augustenburg. There is another rumor, of a some what older date, to the effect that, should the propositions of Prussia relative to Schleswig-Holstein fall of acceptance, Austria will urge the Federal Diet to recognize Augustenburg as sovereign of the Duchies.

—It is believed that France will send reinforcements to Mexico to the extent of 6000 men, 3000 from the Empire and 3000 from Algeria. The latter should be a most effective corps, as they are trained to camp life and all the varied exercises of the field. The despatches we receive from Mexico, however, are, with but few exceptions, favorable to the Liberals; and if they are to be relied on, the 6000 men will not go far towards the pacification or conquest of Mexico.

—The cholera was spreading at Constantinople. A couple of China steamships were missing. A loan of £4,000,000 for Brazil was being negotiated in London. The illness of the King of Spain was more serious. British politics unimportant.

—An English baronet, Sir Frederick William Pottinger, died lately in Australia. He was a representative of one of the most ancient families in the United Kingdom, tracing his lineage directly to Egbert, the first King of England, of whom he is said to have been the thirty-second descendant. At the time of his death he was

employed in New South Wales as an inspector of police, being principally engaged in hunting down bushrangers.

—More defalcations are reported in the United States. A freight-collector on the Erie Railroad, with a salary of \$1000 a year, has been living like a millionaire upon the funds of the company, and, being detected, has absconded. A teller in a Wall Street Bank has swindled the institution out of \$100,000, but his bondsmen paid down the money for him, and made good the loss of the bank.

COMMON SCHOOLS VS. SECTARIAN EDUCATION.—A correspondent points out that it was the common schools of the Free States which really conquered the rebellion and preserved the Union. It was also the common schools of Scotland which made her prosperous and influential out of all proportion to her size and population; and he maintains that, to grant State aid to sects to teach antagonistic principles, will only produce anarchy and revolution in this country sooner or later.

SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION.—It is much to be regretted that longer notice was not given of the proposed Sabbath-school Teachers' Convention. We fear many schools will be unable to send delegates for want of notice in time. The convention will take place at Hamilton on the 5th, 6th, and 7th September. Should any friends of Sabbath-schools wish to be present, they can obtain circulars with full particulars, from Mr. Milne, Bible Depository, Montreal. The fare will be half-rates, and accommodation will be provided during the convention.

THE SAGUENAY TRIP.—The last trip of the great men of Quebec to the Saguenay was, we believe, at the Grand Trunk expense, a year or two ago, and the provision of champagne on that occasion, was, according to the custom of the company, most lavish. This "hospitality" had such an effect that the more staid members of the party were, we have heard, shocked and disgusted; and probably they have all voted against a renewal of such "high jinks" at this time. At all events, the Saguenay trip was most wisely negatived.

PROTECTION OF PURCHASERS OF LAND.—Mr. Dickson has introduced a bill to protect immigrants, and others ignorant of the laws of Upper Canada, from unprincipled persons who sell lands as if they were clear, when burdened perhaps with five years' unpaid taxes. The remedy proposed is very simple, namely, that registrars shall require a certificate of payment of taxes as a condition to registration of a deed. He makes this rule only apply, however, to non-residents' land, while it would appear fair that it should apply to all lands, unless the purchaser expressly waive the proviso, and declare himself cognizant of the amount of taxes due upon the land, and his willingness to pay them over and above the stipulated price.

PROTECTION OF SHEEP.—Mr. Wright, of East York, has introduced a bill imposing the duty upon all Upper Canada townships of levying the following taxes on dogs:—On every bitch 3 months old and upwards, kept by one person or family, \$2; upon every additional bitch, \$5; upon each dog not exceeding two, \$1; and on each dog more than two, \$3. The owner of any dog to be liable for the value of the sheep it kills, and if the owner cannot be found, or cannot pay, the township to be liable. Any person may kill any dog he sees worrying sheep. The owner of any dog that has worried sheep to be fined 62½ cents for every day he allows said dog to live, after notice is served on him.

ABYSSINIA.—This country, now all but unknown to Europeans, will probably soon be opened up to the commerce of the world. A company of Marseilles merchants intend establishing a line of vessels to run across the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal, and down the Red Sea, having the termini of the route at Marseilles and at Adulis, the latter a deserted port on the Red Sea. Traffic with Abyssinia has hitherto been chiefly in the hands of Hindu merchants. The country is described as one of the most fertile on the globe, and has eight millions of inhabitants anxious to secure intercourse with Europe. The voyage will be a short one from Marseilles, occupying only about twelve days.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE RECIPROcity TREATY.—When the Reciprocity Treaty was obtained some nine years ago, two American gentlemen were, it seems, employed by the Canadian government as confidential or lobby agents, to secure its passage by "diffusing correct information" in influential quarters at Washington.

This information was rather costly, as was indicated by some money votes at the time, concerning which, no very definite information could be given by the ministry of the day; but the larger part of the cost of "diffusing it" was not voted till 1864, when the demand for it by the confidential agents became urgent. But though the balance for services rendered in 1856 was voted more than a year ago, it turns out that it has not been paid yet; and the reason it seems is that certain persons, some of whom are well-known public men in Canada, are pretending to have a claim on it. One of the agents in question has issued a pamphlet, in which he says that of the sum of \$40,000 voted in 1855, in part payment, "nearly every dollar was immediately divided among Canadian blood-suckers, who stood around him (Mr. Andrews), like so many vultures around a carcass to strip

him." It is added, "Of this money, the Hon. A. T. Galt, then, as he is now, a cabinet minister, received \$10,000."

Mr. Galt has since explained, through the *Montreal Herald*, that he became personally liable for money raised to pay those agents, and the money retained was to repay said loan.

GREAT FORGERY. The business of depositing gold and raising loans upon it has for some time been carried on to an immense extent in New York,—the gold speculators thereby keeping up the market, and the banks obtaining interest upon large issues of their bills. The gold was deposited with a bank, and checks drawn and accepted against it could be pledged any where for money. As such checks were not to be presented, a door was opened for forgery, which has been availed of by the junior partner of a New York banking house of high standing to the extent of nearly two millions. The house was the old firm of Morris Ketchum, Sen. & Co., and the forger, E. B. Ketchum, who has absconded after realizing other securities to a large amount. The elder Ketchum was believed to be worth five millions of dollars, but it is thought the house will not pay over 50 cents.

EXHUMATION OF A BISHOP.—A most imposing ceremony was lately witnessed at St. Andrews, Prince Edward Island, in connection with the removal of the remains of the Right Rev. Bishop McEachern, the first Roman Catholic bishop of the Island, who died in 1835. The church beneath which he was buried having become decayed, his grave was partially exposed, and it was decided to remove the body to a new structure lately erected in the neighborhood. There were some 4,000 persons in the funeral procession, which was headed by three of the provincial bishops and a large number of the clergy; and Protestantism of all sects was extensively represented in the cortege, as the deceased prelate was universally respected. When the procession arrived at the old grave, the coffin was opened. The skeleton and outlines of the figure remained, and the grave-clothes appeared to be tolerably well preserved; and the P. E. I. *Examiner* makes the strange statement that "pieces of the clothing, and small detached bones were eagerly sought after by such persons interested in *reliquæ* as could get close to the coffin."

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE POLICE COMMITTEE.—We have to acknowledge a mistake which this morning we fell into, in common with our contemporaries, in our report of the proceedings yesterday afternoon before the police committee. This mistake will not be wondered at, when we say that the information had to be obtained as the press best could, the reporters being forbidden to be present. Our report thus gives a portion of Coun. Labille's motion, "That Ald. Rodden deserves the censure of the committee, &c." The fact is, that the motion of Coun. Labille dissented from Ald. Rodden, but did not censure him, as will be seen by the following copy of that part of the motion which referred to Ald. Rodden's conduct:—

"Proposed by Coun. Labille, that this committee having always been prepared to continue and complete the proceedings of this investigation, disapprove of the special report made by the chairman of this committee at the last meeting of the Council; the more so as this committee are far from concurring in the views expressed by the chairman in his said report."

Still, the motion of Coun. Labille is erroneous; inasmuch as three of the members left the room at the last meeting when the subject was taken up, and there being no quorum the business could not go on. Hence there was no alternative for the Chairman but to make his special report. Again on the 3rd August the Committee met for general business, when the Chairman asked the Committee to go on with the investigation, whereupon they expressed a desire to let it lie over till the action of the Council should have been taken on the special report. We think the public will be of opinion that the Chairman of the Police Committee did his best to bring out, during the investigation, the whole of the facts of this now not very reputable case.

THE PURCHASER OF THE HUDSON BAY TERRITORIES.—The article signed "Observer" in another column, was written about three weeks ago for the *Witness*, by a close observer of public affairs, but we reserved it till the subject of which it treats should come up in Parliament. That subject has not only come up, but it appears to be the only part of the great scheme of Confederation that is to be pushed through this session. Our fortifications and defences, which were considered so urgent that Parliament had to be stopped to allow the Ministers of the Crown to go to Britain to confer about them, may stand over—but the interests of London bankers and speculators cannot be postponed. The opportunity of raising, at the expense of this Province, a few millions to be divided among those gentlemen, leaving, doubtless, handsome "considerations" in the hands of the friends in Canada who prove helpful, is one which will not occur every day; and delays might be dangerous. It is no wonder when a job like this is on hand that Saguenay trips should be proposed. If the H. B. Co. can get from five to ten millions from Canada without parting with anything that is of any value to them, it will be the greatest job yet put through. That is what is now attempted, and there will, unhappily, be plenty of agents in Canada, even in high places, willing for a small share of the money to fasten this new mill-stone round the neck of this Province.

A DIFFERENCE.—The *Globe* has a long article on the firmness, resolution, and steadiness of purpose which all Canadians should at this time manifest in building up a great united empire of British North America. In this article it holds up for imitation the persistent resolution and enormous sacrifices of Britain to maintain her national position against the first Napoleon; and the perseverance of the Northern States, through many disasters, in asserting the integrity of their national territory. These are grand examples, but the supposed case of Canada is scarcely parallel. Britain had to contend against a tyrant belonging to a different and intensely hostile race, whose victory over her would have overturned all her institutions, commerce, and prosperity. In such a cause, it is little wonder that a whole nation should be united in making an amount of sacrifices, but we fall to see any parallel in the danger which the *Globe* seems to think threatens us from the United States.

Again, the North, in their struggle with the South, had to contend against treason and slavery, and the consciousness of this fact aroused a high and holy enthusiasm in the minds of the most devoted supporters of the Union cause. Now, we would by no means undervalue the power of the sentiment of loyalty to the throne of England, or of fidelity to the British Empire, but it is necessary to look at things as they are, and, in a contest with the States, many would believe that they were contending against self-government in the most extended sense and material prosperity.

The Dutch Governors of New Amsterdam endeavored to arouse a national spirit among the Dutch of that colony, to resist English invasion; but the colonists clearly saw that the neighboring English colony of Connecticut was much more free, expansive, and prosperous than themselves, and, notwithstanding the difference of language, quietly declined to fight, so that New Amsterdam became New York without the striking of a blow. But neither is this case in point, though nearer to a parallel than the cases alluded to by the *Globe*; for the Dutch had no representative government, whilst Canada has, and a change of rulers on the part of the Dutch did not involve the assumption of a heavy debt.

We are well off and contented as we are; but if some radical change must be made, the question will naturally arise in every mind, What should that change be?

THE PROTESTANT MINORITY OF LOWER CANADA IN A BAD, BUT NOT HOPELESS, CONDITION.

The Legislature has been in session but a few days, and already the position of the Protestant members of Lower Canada who have joined the coalition is no longer the same,—it is very essentially altered; it has become a false one, and untenable for men of power and principle. When the scheme of Confederation was first proposed to them, they felt, and the Protestant community felt with them, that it would be suicidal for the Lower Canada minority to support a scheme that placed them at the mercy of a Roman Catholic and French majority. Yet the votes of these members were indispensable to carry the scheme, since nearly the half of the French members had refused to join the coalition. In this emergency the support of seven Protestant members from Lower Canada was secured by a secret written pledge, given to them in behalf of the Ministry by Mr. Galt. By a very timely indiscretion, this written pledge has been placed in the hands of Mr. Dorion, and by him publicly exposed.

The secret agreement refers to four guarantees tendered to the Protestant minority of Canada, and which are summed up as follows:—1st. No change in the constituencies of English-speaking members unless on a vote of two-thirds of the latter.—2nd. The limits of several municipalities within said counties will be changed by executive interference, but only according to law.—3rd. These municipalities will be permitted to acquire the crown lands within their limits at a nominal price, provided they resell them without distinction to every purchaser.—4th. The school system of Lower Canada will be remodelled, so as to give Protestants the control of their own schools, and system of education. The government does not pledge themselves, however, to any particular means of reaching this end, which may be by a change in the council for public instruction, by the appointment of a Protestant Superintendent, or otherwise. The discontents of different municipalities will be allowed to unite their taxes for the support of their schools. Isolated dissentients, however, will not be allowed to send their taxes to support a school far removed from them."

We take the above statement from the organ of Mr. Dorion, *Le Pays*, because an incorrect version has been published in the English papers, omitting some of the checks with which the guarantees were provided, thus giving too much scope to the latter. For instance, it will be seen that a Protestant Superintendent of education was not positively promised, but only mentioned as possible, and that the right of the townships to monopolize public lands, for the benefit of a certain class, was not only not granted, but expressly excepted.

It was on the strength of these secret pledges of this written guarantee, under the signature of Mr. Galt, that seven Protestant members from Lower Canada agreed to support the Ministry

and their Confederation scheme. By exacting such pledges, these gentlemen fully acknowledged that without them the Confederation scheme was not acceptable to the Protestant minority; that it was not a safe constitution for them to accept; and that their interest and duty would be to oppose it. This is the very ground which the Protestant independent press of Lower Canada has taken from the beginning; and it is very refreshing to find that there were Protestant members from Lower Canada who secretly thought precisely the same, although openly giving their support to the government, and to their pet scheme. But they had guarantees of which their constituents knew nothing, and that made their conscience easy. Their apparently inconsistent excuse was afterwards to be explained at the polls, when they could triumphantly point to the success of their secret negotiations.

But now all this subtle arrangement is destroyed. The secret letter has been made public, and its effect has been a crushing reaction against the rights and the claims of the Protestant minority. The French Canadians of all parties are unanimous in protesting against these guarantees, and pledging themselves not to observe a single one of them. Mr. Cauchon has indignantly committed himself to vote against every one of these concessions. *Le Canadien* looks at them as only a successful trick played on some Protestant members in order to secure their co-operation, and, without which, the scheme, not commanding a majority from Lower Canada, would have fallen through. *The Courrier* and other French papers protest more vigorously still. The *Mines* alone keeps silent, because that organ of Mr. Cartier regrets to see the trick prematurely exploded, and deems it imprudent to awake the Protestant spirit of Lower Canada by saying that none of the secret guarantees will ever be allowed to pass in the constitution. As to the French opposition press, they are more violent still in denouncing every one of these concessions to Protestants. They do not see in it only a trick of the Ministry, but a treason. They clamor that their nationality and their religion are ruffled if any of these pledges are granted, and they agree to vote down every one of them. Even the provision of Mr. Galt that the lands would be sold indiscriminately to all comers fails to satisfy the *Pays*, because if the settlers are a Protestant corporation they can adhere to the letter of the law, but evade the spirit by selling all sorts of lies to turn off Catholic applicants for a lot of land.

The net result of this secret diplomacy becomes very apparent, and it is that the Protestants of Lower Canada are placed now, through the indiscreet action of their ministerial representatives, in a far more precarious position than at any previous time. If the Confederation scheme carry, they will be sacrificed and put in a much lighter place than if no attempt had been made to secure their rights privately and by double dealing. The abortive attempt leaves behind two most unfortunate results; viz., the mistrust of the Catholic majority, which will suspect everything in connection with Lower Canada Protestants, and the determined hostility caused by irritation, which will prevent all generous dealing with the minority, and lead to cutting down their just demands.

But what will the members who have lost their pledges do? Can they possibly be infatuated with the notion that there is still some virtue lingering in the written guarantees of Mr. Galt? The Catholics of Lower Canada are a unit in protesting that they will not allow one of them to pass into the local constitution. The Protestant members find themselves where they were before the pledge was given, or rather still farther off from the security they deemed indispensable to their constituents. Under these circumstances, only one honorable course is open to them,—either to exact from the coalition a new pledge, not secret, but public, written and well-defined; or else to withdraw altogether from the coalition. The fate of the Confederation scheme rests now entirely with the Protestant members from Lower Canada, for the Catholics of that section are almost equally divided. They command the situation; there is yet time for them to break down the obnoxious scheme, and substitute for it that of Representation by Population, which alone offers to their constituents a sufficient guarantee. Whatever course they adopt, a heavy responsibility rests upon them; may they prove themselves equal to it.

—The French Government have invited the cotton mill owners of Lowell, Massachusetts, to send to the Paris Exhibition of 1867 machinery to represent the various branches of cotton manufacture, and also a number of female operatives to work at the spindles. The circular states that North America has not yet been adequately represented in any of the universal exhibitions of Europe.

—A new town is about to be founded upon the shore of the Bay of Guadalupe, by the Emperor Maximilian, to be named Miramar, after his castle at Trieste. Commercially the site is a good one, and it is expected to attain to considerable importance.

—The citizens of Worcester, Mass., a town of only about 30,000 inhabitants, have raised the sum of \$11,000 and opened a free public library,—an example worthy of imitation in every city on the continent.