

WEEKLY WITNESS.

Circulation upwards of 26,000.

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DAILY WITNESS, 10c per line first insertion, and 5c per line after insertion, on outside pages.

ISSUED LAST WEEK.

Number copies of WEEKLY WITNESS	87,400
" " " " " " " " " " " "	8,925
" " " " " " " " " " " "	73,153
" " " " " " " " " " " "	49,391
Total, ...	138,469

Montreal Witness

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1876.

NEWS SUMMARY.

A RAILWAY COLLISION near Hitehita, Hertfordshire, England, on Saturday, resulted in five persons and several injuries to twenty others.

A VESSEL DRIVEN ASHORE on Marshall's Island, near Swan's Island, bore three dead bodies from shore.

THE MURDERERS of Mr. Birch, a British resident in the Malacca settlements, have been sentenced to be hanged.

A RAILWAY ENGINE EXPLOSION on the Illinois Midland near Paris, Indiana, killed the engineer, the fireman and a passenger.

THE UPSWING of a passenger car near Belfast, Ohio, tumbled up the passengers promiscuously, and all were more or less injured.

ANOTHER REVOLUTION has burst forth in Hayti, and there has been fighting in the streets of St. Domingo. The President has resigned.

FOR MARKED ROBBERIES broke into a house in Raynwood, Long Island, and having removed several portable articles, they put them in a boat and rowed away.

THE AMERICAN FOREIGN BRENT, having been surrendered to the American authorities, the British Minister at Washington has been notified that the American Government will abide by the treaty of 1812 in the extradition of criminals.

AN ULTIMATUM has been presented to the Turkish Lord Salisbury, who announces that the British fleet will leave Turkish waters unless the Sultan accepts the proposals agreed upon by the powers.

MIDAT PASHA'S FRENCH WORDS about what Turkey would submit to, and there is no contradiction of the statement of their utterance to Lord Salisbury, do not give much promise of a pacification, and it is pretty certain that they only too well represent the feeling of the great mass of the Mahomedans of Turkey, which makes them of much more weight.

If similar language would express what the populace are determined upon, it would be easy to obtain a Minister to use it, but it is probable that if Midat Pasha were to agree to any of the schemes of occupation which have been proposed, another Grand Vizier would soon have to be found, as another Sultan had to be in place of a yielding one. It seems that Sir H. Elliot has been pursuing the old policy of upholding Turkey, and encouraging her in resistance much further than the Bismarckian Government was willing to go, and that was considered by the British people to be much too far.

The Ambassador may lose position, but if he really has been encouraging the Turks in resistance, in disregard of his instructions, dismissal from office is entirely warranted, and it is not a penalty. There were enough of difficulties in the situation, without their being increased by an Ambassador acting in accordance with his personal opinions, and not with regard to the policy decided on by his superiors. The new Turkish constitution is full of principles and promises, and if it were carried out would leave nothing to be desired, but it would be difficult to find any person who has given an adequate conception of the manner in which the new plan of government has the slightest chance of being seriously enforced in Turkey. It is difficult to believe that the Porte means it to be anything more serious than a pretext for refusing real concessions, or that the Minister, having been so deceived, will believe that their solemn declarations are possible of fulfillment.

THE SAFETY OF BUILDINGS.

All that a man hath will he give for his life. Recent events have brought into prominence two evils connected with the construction of buildings affecting men's lives: the imperfect planning of theatres and halls, which slays its thousands; and mistakes and positive malpractice in the drainage and ventilation of houses, which slays its ten thousands. Two measures of an administrative sort are called for: first, an efficient and capable building inspector, who shall oversee every building erected, or at least every public or semi-public building, and be accountable to the public for its safety; and secondly, some action on the part of the architectural profession that will acknowledge and impress on its members the moral responsibility of architects. A machinist may not make burglar's tools because he is paid for it. A doctor cannot commit malpractice to please a patron, nor a minister marry people unlawfully for a fee. It is, therefore, not a sufficient excuse, although too often pleaded, on the part of an architect, who builds a factory that falls on its inmates, or who is indifferent in providing for the safety of drainage, that he did as his patrons desired. He is, jointly with the owners, responsible for misconstruction, and, knowing best what he is doing, has the larger share of responsibility, and should be morally held to account. Of course, there is a difference between his case and those just cited, as they are offences against explicit law, whereas the builder's sins are against a code that cannot be very precisely formulated. They are sometimes only to be dealt with by an intelligent public opinion, and that it seems the duty of the creditable members of the profession to cultivate and officially make themselves the organs of. But it may not be impossible to formulate laws of construction which must not be departed from. To fail to connect a drain under the floor of a house, or to ventilate it immediately under the kitchen and drawing-room windows, might be safely treated as criminal. Theatres might build much more fire-proof than they are. Canvas ceilings, the lack of a wire curtain for the stage, the absence of fire-extinguishing apparatus, might be subjects of by-law. The matter of egress is already subject of law in the way in which doors are required to open. It might be worth while making a calculation as to what is the least amount of passage way permissible in proportion to the space inside, and whether it is ever allowable to have turns in the passages, by which an audience frightened by fire and confused by smoke could possibly lose its way. Stairs should not descend into passages at right angles, but should point the outgoing

crowd direct to the door. We have, of course only given a few crude ideas, which seem to suggest the possibility of forming a code by which builders and architects might be actually brought to book.

THE GLOBE AND CLERICAL POLITICS.

The *Globe* has a reply to the last article in the *Witness* under the above heading published the morning after the recent decision in the Bonaventure case in Quebec; but apparently in entire ignorance of that most important judgment. In reply to the instance of the Mayo election, voided for spiritual intimidation by a Parliamentary committee, the *Globe* answers that by Britain it meant England and Scotland, which of course is the strict meaning of Britain; but we had not interpreted it in that sense, as it is the same election law, and the same interpretations of it which prevail in Ireland as in Britain proper, where spiritual intimidation is, so far as we know, not a feature of election contest. The *Globe*, having endorsed Judge Routhier, naturally has not a very high opinion of Judge Fitzgerald; but Judge Keogh and Judge Lawson, and any other judge who has expressed himself on the subject, agree with the Irish Baron, always excepting Judge Routhier, who quotes the *Syllabus* as an authority, and does not believe that he has any power to deal with a Roman Catholic priest in any matter whatever when he is personally concerned. The law now being beyond dispute, the other point, whether spiritual intimidation should void an election, comes in. The strength of the *Globe's* position that it should not, may be judged from the following questions which it puts to the *Witness*:

1. Ought an election to be rendered void in every case when a priest demands the use of bell, or threatens the refusal of the same to all who do not vote in a particular way, whether the candidate denounced loses votes or not?

2. Ought the word of one man, or two, to the effect that he or they had been terrified by such denunciations, to be sufficient to void an election?

3. Would the refusal of the consoling of the Church to any man who had testified that he had been terrified, or changing their votes be a sufficient ground for prosecuting the priest in a court of law?

4. If it would, what becomes of "spiritual independence"?

5. If the State is right to review the grounds upon which a priest enters a Methodist minister excludes a member from the fellowship of the Church (which is a voluntary association, from which any one can go at his pleasure)?

6. If so, must the member be restored when it is so ordered by the civil court?

7. If our contemporary says he ought, will it be kind enough to mention any Protestant Church or clergyman in the Dominion that would submit to take orders in such matters from the civil powers, even though, as a matter of fact, the particular exclusion from fellowship had not been justifiable?

The law and the judges have answered the first two of these questions very emphatically, both in the United Kingdom and in Canada. The inference is that "spiritual independence" must not lead to "spiritual intimidation" in election contests, whatever becomes of it. As for the last three questions and the following one which comes in further on, "But will the *Witness* at this time of day tell the Protestants of Montreal, whether ministers, elders, deacons, class-leaders, or church members, that they will make void an election if they tell a man he will vote for 'Mr. Dick' in the event of his voting for 'Mr. Sir, or Harry, as the case may be, who may be suited for their 'sweet voices'?" If the *Globe* cannot supply an answer, it is not probable that any answer from the *Witness* could satisfy it. The law and the judges deal with practical evils, not with theoretical and philosophical ones. If the *Globe* has no knowledge which enables it to see a practical difference between Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen in such a matter, we can only say that it is no wonder that it should take such a stand as it has done in opposition to British law and British judges, and for the matter of that Canadian law and Canadian judges also. We have not had in question what the law theoretically ought to be, but what it is. What should be law would be probably decided differently according as the reasoner worked downward from theory to practice as Stoicisms are prone to do, or from facts to principles as is more customary with persons of English training. Practically no liberal person sees any danger to the State from any amount of political preaching, whatever damage it might do to more spiritual interests. England owes her liberties very largely to the political agitation of her dissenting denominations. Such appeals may be made to the reason or to prejudice, but are based on the principle of free choice. It is a very different thing when we have to deal with an assumption of authority "that genders to bondage" and an intimidation which does not convince, but makes a man through fear vote against his views and knowledge of what is right. So distinctly practical is this evil that we who have to submit to the Government of the Province of Quebec, do not see our way clear to quarrel with a law which is the deliberate conclusion of the British and Canadian Parliaments, and which meets the case exactly.

NOTES FROM QUEBEC.

(Special Correspondence of the *Witness*.)

QUEBEC, Dec. 21.

THE DEATH ROLL.

Death still continues busy in the Legislative Council. Yesterday the remains of the Hon. John Shepley were committed to their last resting place. In him, the Legislature have lost an able and experienced man of business, whose advice and counsel would have been valuable in the somewhat precarious course upon which the Province seems entering. It will be many a day before the void his loss will make in the mercantile community will be filled. The sad event was not altogether unexpected, as his health for some time has been breaking, and he has been unable, since the opening of the session, to attend to his duties in the House. His death has been attributed to breaking up of the system, hastened, if not brought on, by grief at the loss of his only daughter, under very painful circumstances, somewhat less than two years ago.

THE VOTE OF WANT OF CONFIDENCE.

was tried on Wednesday night, the result being 17 to 43. Mr. DeBeauvoir was not present, but he had been there, the Opposition would probably have scored one more. At the same time, it is well to state that two of the Quebec members, Messrs. Shepley and Rinfret, well-known Liberals, voted with the Government in consequence of the question affecting the North Shore Railway, in which the city is supposed to be so much interested. The result, at all events, is more hopeful than last year, when the vote of want of confidence proposed by Mr. Joy at the beginning of the session, only obtained twelve adherents. Mr. Joy, in support of his motion, very strongly pointed out the consequences of the course the Government was adopting. He showed clearly that we were rushing into financial ruin, and he declared that the consequence would, in all probability, be legislative union. His words of warning, however, fell on headless ears. The Treasurer said the various lines of rail would not only pay the interest of the expenditure upon them, but a handsome surplus. To this kind of argument there is, and can be, no answer. The calculations, it seems, have been made by "one of the ablest engineers," and it was ascertained that the road between Quebec and Montreal would yield 35 per cent. upon an expenditure of 4½ millions. This is very pleasant to hear, and we will certainly be unfeignedly pleased if it turns out to be true; the prediction is, however,

by the experience of the different railways, not only in Canada but on the whole continent. It may be that the "very able engineer" is correct; in his calculations; it is to be hoped so. Still it could seem strange if such exceptional success marked a road which for seven months in the year leads nowhere, and in the case with the North Shore until a bridge has been built across the St. Lawrence at or near Quebec, to connect the North Shore with the South during the winter months. Those who are at all familiar with the environs of the ancient capital, can form some idea of the difficulties and expense likely to attend such an enterprise. Moreover, there is one at least of the many episodes connected with the North Shore Railway scheme, which has not been quite forgotten in Quebec, and which would seem to cast some doubt as to the amount of reliance to be placed upon the estimates furnished even by able engineers. Some years ago, Mr. Cauchon was president of the North Shore Railway Company, at the same time Mr. Irvine, the present commissioner, were directors. Some American capitalists came on from Chicago and signed a contract to build the road within a given time; the sole subsidy the company at that time was to receive from Government was a land grant. These gentlemen went upon the English market with their contract, in order to obtain the money they required, and they would have succeeded in doing so, but for the treachery, it is said of one or more of the directors. Meanwhile Mr. Cauchon, resenting the underhand machinations of the Hon. Hector Langevin against him, had left the Conservative party, and joined Mr. Mackenzie and the Liberals.

Mr. Irvine still held a seat on the Treasury bench as the local House, and had not yet, as he did little later, passed over to the left of the Speaker. The Hon. Mr. Langevin and Mr. Irvine at once understood that if the American capitalists built the road, with Mr. Cauchon as president of the company, that gentleman would for years obtain the control of the various constituencies along the line of rail. To prevent Mr. Cauchon's becoming politically too powerful, it became therefore,

NECESSARY TO PREVENT the Chicago contractors from obtaining their English loan. Mr. Potter, of the Grand Trunk, whose hostility to the road was well known, was applied to for the purpose, and statistics furnished him, showing that the road never could be made to pay, and that any money put into it would be irretrievably lost. By means of the information so obtained, Mr. Potter succeeded in preventing Messrs. Dunlop & Co. from effecting their loan. The next year Mr. Cauchon was turned out, while attending the marriage of his daughter, by a well-remembered riot on the part of the Grand Trunk, who were hostile to the road for the purpose, and statistics furnished him, showing that the road never could be made to pay, and that any money put into it would be irretrievably lost. By means of the information so obtained, Mr. Potter succeeded in preventing Messrs. Dunlop & Co. from effecting their loan. 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