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WEDNESDAY,..... AUGUST 28, 1895

## THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

The secular press of Canada has been, for the past ten or twelve days, full of the report sent in by the Ontario Departmental Commission on the separate schools of Ottawa, and of those under the Christian Brothers in particular. We are not in a position to discuss the details of that report, which seems very favorable to the "Sisters" and very unfavorable to the "Brothers." Moreover we are at too great a distance to be able to enter into all the merits and demerits of the commission. It suffices to say that the wholesale publication of a wholesale condemnation is liable to be productive of grave injustice and to give rise, as it already has, to very false conclusions. Two dangers at once flash before us: Firstly, this report upon the efficiency of those special schools in Ottawa is made use of as an argument against the separate schools of Manitoba. Secondly, there is no limitation to the condemnation, and the whole Order of the Christian Brothers, with their methods, their successes, and their very usefulness is set before the world to be judged by the standard of this report upon exceptional and isolated cases.

Before dealing with each of the two points at issue we desire to draw attention to the fact, which the press overlooks, that the school trustees, or a number of them, in Ottawa, have long since been anxious to get rid of the Brothers in order to secure positions for secular teachers, and naturally the most pugnacious amongst them have left no stone unturned to render the path before the Brothers very difficult to walk. For some years this storm has been collecting and for a long time the Brothers have felt that they were not wanted, that the fact of having for long years taught the best schools at the Capital would not weigh in the balance, and that not even common gratitude would recall the blessings, since the pioneer days of the city, they had bestowed upon the thousands of prosperous citizens who received their commercial training under their roof; consequently, they must have felt that all efforts put forth to improve the schools would be rewarded as were those of the past. Be that as it may, the Ottawa Board acted most ungratefully towards the benefactors of thousands, and as a result the Brothers to-day leave the Capital with the superadded load of this very unfair report to carry with them.

When we style the report unfair we do not mean to deny the truth of many of its accusations. There are facts which we have not been able to investigate and which—leaving aside all question of animus—may be sufficiently well-founded to give color to the censure contained in the report. That a certain percentage was not made in arithmetic, geography, composition and other branches is quite possible; that the teachers of English in French schools are not always masters of the former language we readily admit; that the student's pronunciation of English may leave much to be desired—whether that pronunciation has been acquired on the streets of Lower Town or in the school—we do not dispute; that in some classes pupils are taught more by "memory answers" than otherwise there is no doubt; herein we have the whole of the accusations brought against the Brothers in the Ottawa separate schools, and we have those accusations without any of the corresponding perfections and praiseworthy methods. In fact, the Commission—with all due respect to its impartiality—deliberately indicates every flaw in the schools, and seems to find most religiously the mention of commendable quality. And this being broadcast over Canada,

couched in language that would lead the ordinary reader to suppose that ALL Catholic separate schools came under its hammer, and that the WHOLE Order of Christian Brothers, the world over, was the subject of its sharp analysis and censure.

Therein lies the biting injustice of that report; also therein do we find the unfairness of the manner in which it has been circulated. With these few considerations in view we will beg of our readers to permit a somewhat lengthy editorial investigation into the question above mentioned. In order not to weary we will be as brief as the case will permit, yet so vitally important is the subject that we cannot allow it to pass without, at least, thoroughly sifting it to the bottom. It will be remembered that we write from a distance and away from the whirl of political and other excitement, also under very unfavorable circumstances. But "truth needs no set phrase of speech," and when our duty calls us the hand must indeed be feeble that will not grasp the pen.

Firstly—It has been argued, by the non-Catholic press, that this report condemning the methods and efficiency of the Catholic separate schools of Ottawa reflects upon the separate schools of Manitoba, and is an argument in favor of the Greenway contention and against remedial legislation.

We unhesitatingly state that the argument does not apply and that the very contrary is the case. To begin with, the Manitoba question is one of minority right and not one of efficiency of schools. No matter what the status of the Manitoba schools was, or is, it does not affect the question of constitutional right. This has been explained over and over again by Mr. Ewart and by numerous writers on the subject. The Catholics are as anxious as are their non-Catholic fellow-citizens to have first class schools; the Catholic parent is desirous of having full value for the money he spends upon his children's education. What, however, he does want, and what the constitution guarantees him, and of which the Legislature would deprive him, is the right to send his children to schools where he can have them instructed according to the dictates of his own conscience. There is the sum and substance of the Manitoba question. The persons who invoke the Ottawa incident as an evidence of the defectiveness of separate schools merely argue from the exception to the rule and from the particular to the general. Even in the Ottawa case it is from the Catholics themselves that comes the demand for more efficient schools. Therefore, this one straw of an anti-remedial argument is snapped in twain by the very circumstances of the two cases. If this were the only wrong that now famous report gave rise to, we would be thoroughly satisfied. But, we are sorry to notice that the tone of the report, the general terms in which it is couched, the wholesale manner in which it censures the methods and teachings of the Christian Brothers most probably will be the source of untold injustice to some of the greatest and truest benefactors that modern humanity has ever known. We come, then, to our second and far more important consideration.

Secondly—Owing to the general terms of the condemnation in that report, the whole Order of the Christian Brothers, their schools at large, and their methods of instruction, are liable to suffer—not in the eyes of the people who know them and have had experience of them, but in the estimation of the numbers who are ignorant of all they have done and are doing in every quarter of the civilized world. The selecting of an isolated and exceptional case—apart from the strange combination of circumstances that surround it—and the basing thereon a general censure is as unjust as it is ungenerous. We may be told that "the object of the Order's foundation was 'elementary instruction'"; but since the days of Venerable De La Salle times have changed and men have had to change with them. The new conditions of social and civil life have opened out wider horizons, and the Order has had to develop itself in accord with the elasticity of educational requirement. The Order of the Grey Nuns was originally founded for works of corporal mercy as Sisters of Charity; but new surroundings, different circumstances, necessitated its developing into an order of teachers. The requirements of the times and not the original idea of a founder must govern the enlargement of every sphere of usefulness. Whosoever contends to the contrary is not to be argued with.

Having laid down the foregoing, we now come to the consideration of the Christian Brothers in general, and we trust that when the reader has carefully perused the following few paragraphs he will smile at the insignificance of the condemnation that, dealing with a solitary case under particular circumstances, launches its arrows at the stonewall of educational strength with which this wonderful Order has surrounded itself.

Take a rapid glance over the English-speaking world of to-day and behold the educational heights that the members of the Order have scaled—they are Alpine in their magnitude. Look at the work of the Christian Brothers in Ireland, the

reports of the most anti-Catholic Boards throughout the land accord the palm to the humble Friars, whose methods agree so admirably with all requirements and correspond so successfully with the needs of the various classes. Of some great merit must be a community that draws to its ranks the lovable, gentle and learned Gerald Griffin, and that to-day numbers amongst its teachers some of the very first educationalists of the land. It was only last week that the Catholic Summer School of America was electrified by the general erudition and extensive scientific knowledge of Brother Potamian, who came all the way from London, England, to impart a portion of his treasures to the great Catholic public of America.

Take the Christian Brothers in the United States, and what a splendid refutation you possess of the general insinuation that the Ontario Commission's report contains. On the science of instruction and advanced methods of training they have produced some of the standard works of the day, and at the Chicago World's Fair, through the zeal of Brother Maurelian, they established for all time their right and title to the first educators of the country. Small and mean does the report appear when held in one hand, and compared with the works of the late Brother Azarias that you hold in the other.

Walk over the whole American educational field, and on all sides you behold the monuments of their success and the irrefutable evidence of their worth. Radiating out from Manhattan to the extreme limits of the civilized horizon, the land is studded with their institutes, colleges and academies, while the various walks of life are thronged with the successful and polished men who received the basis of their education—and many of them their complete instruction—at the hands of the Christian Brothers. Go into the business houses of New York, Chicago, Boston and other large centres and count the number of their graduates. Take that report of the Ontario Commission to the first merchants of the Empire City and hand it to the hundreds of prominent citizens who have come forth from the De La Salle Institute on Fifty-ninth street; ask them their opinions of the Order and their ideas concerning the precious document in question.

Come nearer home. Do not go outside the City of Montreal. Will the man, who has a thorough knowledge of Mount St. Louis and its work, place any faith in a wholesale condemnation of the Order that built up that magnificent college and secured for Canada the honors that its exhibits drew from the united educationalists of the world two years ago? Go down to St. Ann's and examine the pupils; put the students and professors to the severest tests; ransack their curriculum; attempt to discover a "memory answer" system of instruction; and, after going through all the inquisitorial gymnastics performed by the Ontario Commission, confront the report in question with the result of your honest investigation.

No system, that is human, is perfect in all its details; exceptions to every rule will be found: circumstances alter cases; but let not the crying injustice of a general attack upon one of the finest orders of teachers in the world, be handed from press to press without, at least, the fair play of giving credit where it is due. Not one word of commendation in that report, hence we see that it is built upon the flaws, abstraction made of the good qualities. But worst of all is the glaring fact that upon the isolated case of a difficulty between one branch of the Order and the lay educators of a certain locality, is based the general condemnation of a community of eminent and extraordinary instructors of youth. FIAT JUSTITIA.

## UNWHOLESOME BOOKS.

We read considerable about light literature, the danger of bad books, the crimes committed by the readers of sensational novels, and the lives ruined by the poison of immoral writings; but we do not often find any good, practical suggestions as to how this plague is to be destroyed. As long as the devil exists and man has talents to be perverted there will be immoral writers; as long as there are such authors there will be publishers found to send forth their abominable conception to the world; and as long as the world lasts there will be innocent souls to be polluted by the filth of impure and infidel literature. These are facts that we cannot prevent—they are there and must be accepted as they stand. By education, by good religious instruction, by moral training, by the encouragement of elevating and pure literature, by the circulation of moral works, and by a hundred such means, much can be done to counteract the effects of the poison. But these methods will produce their results more upon the coming generations than upon the present one. What we actually require, at this juncture, is some general supervision by the authorities, whereby the circulation of notoriously bad literature may be prevented. In fact, we would advocate a general bureau, under the Government, with a regular Index tribunal, of three or five members, whose duty it would be to

deal with pernicious literature, its importation, publication and circulation, in the same manner as the license inspectors deal with the vendors of liquor, or the Inland Revenue Department deals with the distillers, brewers and cigar manufacturers. Each product should bear the official stamp of the department, or else be subject to confiscation and the one making or selling it subject to a fine. We could not better illustrate our idea than by relating a fact that took place a few days ago, and which we witnessed.

We were on board one of the many splendid steamboats that ply up and down the St. Lawrence; during the course of the day a man passed around amongst the passengers selling nuts, apples, cakes, candies, cigars, books and periodicals. Twice he offered us copies of the leading magazines and of various books—principally paper-covered specimens of light literature. Thus we learned the names of some of the works he had for sale. Not far from where we sat were a young girl and young man, the former about sixteen, the latter about twenty-one. They seemed to be from some country town and were returning home from a visit to Montreal. The young man bought some fruit and they apparently enjoyed the eating of it. Most certainly it was more beneficial than his next purchase.

When the vendor came around a second time with books, the young man asked the young girl to take one. He paid the twenty cents and the girl—without ever looking at the title or seeming to have any particular choice—took an attractive looking-covered volume and placed it carelessly beside her. Neither the young man nor the young girl knew what had been purchased. For fully an hour the volume remained on the seat, and we saw, by the title and the author's name, that it was one of the very worst, lowest, filthiest of immoral romances; it was a degrading sample of the Zola school. We became more interested and as we had several hours of leisure we kept an eye upon that young girl and her book. Soon we reached a port where the young man got off, and the young girl, being alone, took up her book. She read fully fifteen chapters as we watched her closely. If her mother could have only seen the kaleidoscopic changes upon her daughter's face, as her innocent soul drank in the first intoxicating draughts of the poison, she would have shuddered and wept. We felt that we were gazing upon a moral suicide and watching the first blow that murders a soul; and we asked, is there a preventative?

## THE NEW WOMAN.

In the editorial notes in Donohoe's Magazine for July, notes which are always interesting, there are some very pertinent remarks concerning the "New Woman" and the mad length to which people—otherwise apparently sane—carry this fad. It appears that while the "new woman" is to have everything that heretofore belonged alike to man and woman; fixed up after a special fashion for her use, she includes in the list the Bible. Here are a few specimens of the new biblical version taken from the humorous "Charivari," of Paris:

"On the sixth day, God created woman, and called her name Eve."

"As she was weary in the Garden of Eden, and fell asleep from fatigue under a palm tree, the Lord took one of her ribs and made it a man, and called his name Adam."

"And Eve, when she had looked upon her husband, after she awoke, made a curious grimace, which clearly signified, 'What is this fellow doing here?'"

"And with a prophetic glance into the future, she foresaw the quarrels, the hair-pullings, and the divorces that were henceforth to be the lot of coupled humanity."

"Adam had been forbidden to taste of the fruits of a single tree, an ordinary apple tree that produced acid fruit of a detestable flavor—which fact caused Adam to frequent the vicinity of that particular tree."

"One day, not being able to restrain himself, he plucked an apple and, without even offering a single bite to his companion, he ate the whole himself."

"How well we recognize here the vile taste and the abominable egotism of man!"

"In punishment for this disobedience, they were both banished from the terrestrial paradise, and the innocent Eve suffered for the guilty Adam."

Farther on we read: "Madame Noah alone was given the task of saving creation, which otherwise would have perished in the universal deluge. She built the ark and caused a pair of each kind of animals to enter into it. But she made a mistake in admitting a representative of the male sex, for here was a good opportunity of letting it die out. No one would have missed it."

Amusing as may be the humor of the "charivari," there is nevertheless a couple of serious lessons to be drawn from the fact that the "new woman"—that is to say, the woman of the world—so far deviates from the path traced out for her by the finger of duty, as to expose her sex to the ridicule of the public and the contempt of all serious people. That this creature should want a new Bible is not surprising; it is a generally acknowledged fact, that as soon as man, or woman, falls away from the pure and elevating principles and teachings of Christianity, the first step is to remodel the Bible so as to make it agree with the newly developed whim, passion or pro-

penalty. It has ever been so; the Bible, that is to say the Word of God as written and as preserved through the Ages of Christ's Church, is the first object to suffer mutilation. Hence the numberless Bibles, versions of Bibles, sections of Bibles and forms of Bibles that to-day constitute the fuel that feeds the great conflagration of division between the different sects of the non-Catholic world.

Apart from the natural tendency of the "New Woman" to tamper with the Bible, we behold, in this movement, an evidence of the error, misery, shamelessness, and eventual moral chaos that are the direct consequences of the falling away from the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. No matter how her enemies may assail her; no matter how she may be criticised, abused, calumniated, misrepresented and hated by those who have rejected her all-saving dogma; no matter what arguments may be used to prove—that she is in error and that her teachings are other than purely Christian, still, despite all such opposition, we have not yet found the non-Catholic who has dared to accuse the Catholic Church of sanctioning divorce, or permitting aught that might violate the sacramental character of matrimony. So high is the Catholic ideal of woman, so pure is her brightest model of womanhood, so glorious is her respect and veneration for the Blessed Mother of God, that she stands there as a perpetual angel of protection extending her giant wings over the women of the world and forcing man to bend in homage before the noble creature given to him as a helpmate by the Almighty.

It is only when the frail human being falls from faith and grace, rejects the Catholic Church and her teachings, seeks to find in some new Bible a pretext for guilty indulgence of lawless passion, that the sacrament of marriage is ignored, divorce permitted, the ties of family broken, the rights of children trampled upon, domestic happiness shattered, and all the long train of ills unknown to the virtuous and true pour in, like a deluge, upon society; it is only then that the "New Woman," with her new Bible, her new code of morals, her impudence, her wantonness, her heart of lead and face of brass, steps in upon the scene and transforms all that is lovely and lovable in her sex into that most repulsive of brutishness—the more or less offensive virago.

While we fully appreciate the spirit in which the Parisian journal seeks to ridicule the extravagances of the modern woman of the world, we still feel that there is a more serious phase of the question to be studied. If this unwomanly spirit continues to spread, please tell us where are the wives and mothers of the future to be found? Wives—none, for divorce and license will have ruined the domestic hearth; mothers—none, for the "New Woman" will not want to bear children, and she will find means to escape that duty. Oh! for universal Catholic Influence!

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A TRI-FLUVIAN HOTEL.

[WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS.]

Can you imagine two very narrow streets meeting almost at right angles, tall, crazy, staring houses on either side, an ancient hostelry of the last century style forming the corner; a dark, laden sky, wild with scudding clouds overhead, gutters that might be navigable for a bark canoe under foot, snow, hail, rain, wind, sleet, and sudden and fitful dashes of sunlight interjected? If you can conceive the picture, you have my surroundings on a mid-August day, at the corner of Notre Dame and St. Antoine Streets, in Mr. Joseph Cloutier's "Windsor Hotel," in the ancient, hospitable and historic city of Three Rivers.

It is of this Tri-Fluvian Hotel I would speak. It has peculiar attractions not to be found in any other town in Canada, nor in any other house that I have ever inhabited. Between the gusts of wind, and the quickly passing showers, when the sun struggles out from the confusion of gray clouds and shoots a golden arrow at the head of Lavolette's statue, or floods for a moment the grey stone walls of St. Ursule's Monastery, the silence is broken by the tinkle of a hand-bell and the voice of the "town-crier" announcing the loss of a brown cow with a white face. You peep out the small, port-hole-like window, and around the corner darts a goat harnessed to a small cart, in which is a boy and a large tin can of goat's milk. The quaint vehicle disappears down the very narrow street beyond and you are left oncemore to your reflections and the contemplation of the ghosts of an historic past that must surely frequent the old house—the grand, comfortable, hospitable old house that is styled the "Windsor Hotel."

Again, to "return to our mutton,"—and the very best of mutton is upon that generous table—it is of this Tri-Fluvian Hotel I would speak. The house is after the fashion of the old regime,—three stories high, and yet the lower entrance, being on a level with the street, and the first floor below that level, it has the general appearance of a two-storied house. It is within a few minutes' walk of the wharf and the post-office, and within two steps of the market. The walls are about four feet thick and deep in them are cut niches that domestic economy has translated into cupboards, wardrobes and clothes-preses. The building rambles off around the corner and down the side street in a variety of queer gables and additions, each one of which seems to have been added on a generation after the other. The long, slanting roof; the deep, over-

balancing eaves; the small, old-fashioned windows; the well-protected doors; the huge stone archway—like the entrance to a feudal castle—that cuts the eaves in two, and, like a tunnel, runs out of the front street and opens upon the public market behind; the huge rafters, ponderous beams, solid floors, low ceilings, narrow corridors, large rooms, immense parlors,—all, all suggest some ancient edifice of Normandy, or the wing of a crusader's castle in La Basse Bretagne. And this is a modern hotel. On the first floor, and below the street, in a mysterious yet very accessible locality, is the indispensable *bureau*, where the people of the surrounding country say that the very best of refreshments are to be had—even as if they had been drawn from the cellars of the primitive owner of this ancient establishment.

But were it not that you were told of the locality where such refreshments were dispensed, you would never suspect its existence. All through the house a very monastic quiet reigns; not a whisper, not a sound, to tell the traveler that others inhabit the same building. From morning till night and night till morning the same quiet reigns supreme. One is tempted to ask if its close vicinity to the monasteries of the Ursulines and the Precious Blood has the effect of producing this convent stillness. Yet go to one of the back windows overlooking the great court behind, and watch the confusion of life and business upon the public market below, and you will feel that you have suddenly stepped from a hermitage into a vortex of activity.

In olden edifices one is generally prone to look for cobwebs, blue-mould, rust, dampness and dust. Here it is exactly the contrary. Picture to yourself a section of a medieval *chateau*, where the hand of cleanliness had touched every object, where the walls are bright, the floors carpeted, the air dry and warm; the odor of the surroundings most delightful, the linen like driven snow, the tables loaded with feudal munificence, and the faces of the people radiant with perpetual smiles indicative of old-time benevolence, and you have the interior of this very unique inn, this strange caravansary, this Oriental khan, this connecting link between a long dead past and an extensively lively present. Such is the Tri-Fluvian Hotel—inside and out.

It has a peculiar fascination for one—this comfortable, silent, and yet ever busy place. It seems to me that there must be some legend connected with those old walls, some story of feudal times that, ivy-like, should cling to those imposing rooms, some ghost of dead years that should haunt those corridors, steep passages and peculiar stairways. The spirits of hospitality and comfort have certainly clung to the place.

I will make it my business to find out the real history of the "Windsor Hotel"—the name seems too modern for such a grand old house—and if Mr. Cloutier, the proprietor, has no fear that the raising of ghosts might injure his trade, I will tell the story, at another time, to the generous and dear readers of THE TRUE WITNESS. J. K. F.

Three Rivers, 24th August, 1895.

## PILGRIMAGE

To the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes of Rignaud, P. Q.

On August 10th, feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a large pilgrimage of about 1200 souls, from Montreal, went to pay a visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, Rignaud, P. Q., on the C.P.R. This shrine is on the grounds of Bourget College, and is under the direction of the Fathers who direct the College, where they give a complete theological, philosophical, scientific, classical, commercial and preparatory course of studies. They have a complete English commercial and literary course also. The Fathers of Bourget College are to be congratulated upon the success they obtained in promoting the devotion of pious pilgrims to Our Lady of Lourdes. On September 2nd., the Irish Catholics of Montreal will make a pilgrimage to the Bourget College Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, Rignaud, per steamer Duchess of York, under the direction of Rev. Father Strubbe, of St. Ann's Church, Montreal. Several hundred pious pilgrims are expected. They are all welcome by the Bourget College Fathers.

## ST. ANN'S ACADEMY.

### Successful Examinations of Pupils.

At the last Teachers' examination for the Province of Quebec, four young ladies—Susie McGarity, Elizabeth Wesler, Cassie Kieley and Mary Cherry—received Model Diplomas. Likewise, in 1894, three pupils from St. Ann's carried off the same honors. We heartily congratulate these talented and clever young ladies on their success, as also Rev. Sister St. Alphonsis, the Superior of the school, and her efficient staff. Such examinations speak for themselves and are the highest testimony in favor of the grand work done in this splendid institution, which comprises nine classes and ten teachers. Their courses will re-open on September 2nd. We wish them a most successful year.

## IRISH CATHOLIC UNION.

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 23.—The twenty-seventh annual convention of the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union of America completed its work yesterday. Officers were elected for the ensuing year as follows: President, D. W. Lynch, of Delaware; First Vice-President, John F. Bohan, of Canada; Second Vice-President, Miss Kate Gorman of Rhode Island; Treasurer, M. Dober, of Pennsylvania; and Secretary, Augustus H. Boyle, of Pennsylvania.

## Almonte Father Mathew Total Abstinence Society.

At the last meeting of the Father Mathew Total Abstinence Society, of Almonte, the following were elected officers for the ensuing term:—Chaplain, Very Rev. D. F. Foley; president, J. O'Reilly; 1st vice-president, M. Hogan; 2nd vice-president, E. Letang; treasurer, P. Daly; secretary, Jas. R. Johnson; assistant-secretary, W. H. Maher. Committee of Management: Jos. P. O'Connor, G. W. Smith, W. McAuliffe, J. Lynch, A. Perrier, F. Johnson, P. Frawley and J. Sullivan.

The National Society of Sculpture, No. 104 St. Lawrence street, Montreal. Drawing every Wednesday. Lots valued from \$100 to \$1500. Tickets 10 cents.