

# The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY

The True Witness Printing & Publishing Co.  
(LIMITED)

At No. 761 Craig St., Montreal, Canada.

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## SUBSCRIPTION : RATES

City, \$1.50; country, \$1.00. If not paid in advance \$1.50 (country) and \$2 (city) will be charged. Subscribers, Newfoundland, \$1.50 a year in advance.

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WEDNESDAY, ... NOVEMBER 28, 1894.

## PRAYER BOOKS.

There are many kinds of Prayer Books in the world, from the huge Bible-sized volume that the father of a family carries under his arm, down to the two-inch, tiny booklet that the father of another family puts in his vest pocket. There are prayer books that appear as if they were printed to be read at a distance of ten yards, and others that the ordinary reader would require a microscope to detect what their pages contain. Of course the size, the binding, the print, the many other accidents of prayer-books depend upon the different opinions, requirements, ideas, whims, or necessities of the persons making use of them—or else buying them to be made use of by others. It is not for the purpose of examining into the sundry forms of prayer-books that we touch upon this subject; we merely wish to express a few words regarding the manner in which the contents of some prayer-books are prepared. There are some people, who undertake, through excellent motives, the task of compiling prayer-books who might as well attempt the making of dictionaries, or who would do more service were they to compile volumes of wit and humor.

We spent some time the other day examining different prayer books that are on the market, and we were both amused and surprised at the manner in which a certain number of them were prepared. Of course they all contain the general essential devotions: morning and evening prayers, litanies, prayers for Mass, Vespers and Benediction, as well as preparations for confession and communion and the stations of the cross. A Catholic prayer-book that did not contain all these devotions would be almost useless—unless it were for a certain purpose, gotten up for a retreat, or for Lent, or for some particular feast. But we are now referring to the ordinary prayer-book that is used by the every-day Catholic in church. Without wishing to find fault we cannot help extending a little advice to the person who undertakes the compilation of such a work.

In the first place have a good table of contents; don't forget to give a table of the different feasts and fasts, especially the movable feasts; but, above all, try and have the devotions run in the order of a day's routine. The Mass at the end of a book is somewhat, in our mind, as much out of place as would be a Mass in the afternoon. The morning prayer after the Mass is as inappropriate as would be the morning prayer, that should be said on rising, repeated about noon time. In a word, the devotions should come in the order in which they are to be performed. But what most attracted our attention was the translations of the

Latin, whether the Vespers, or the hymns for Benediction.

In taking up one beautifully bound and elegantly printed little "Key of Heaven," that, according to the title page, had been revised and corrected, we found the translations of different prayers, psalms and hymns, too literal, too stiff, and often too inexact. It reminded us of the "Revised Testament" that had been "corrected" for the use of our non-Catholic friends. We don't like the idea of these "revisions" and "corrections" of prayers that have stood the test of generations and of sacred compositions that have come down to us from inspired sources. Besides, there are many of the prayers and hymns which our fathers, and their fathers, and their ancestors learned by heart and transmitted to their descendants; we do not care to be asked to repeat these in a "revised," or "corrected" form, above all when the new wording is not as good a translation nor as exact as the old one. To illustrate our meaning we will give a simple example; every Catholic knows by heart the "Salve Regina," or "Hail, Holy Queen." It is thus we were accustomed to repeat that prayer: "Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To Thee do we cry, poor banished sons of Eve; to Thee do we send up our sighs, moaning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, O, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, etc., etc." Just imagine a child, who has repeated this prayer thousands of times, from the days he knelt at his mother's knee, attempting to say it thus: "Hail, O Queen, O Mother of Mercy! Hail our life, our comfort, our hope! We, the banished children of Eve, cry out unto Thee. To Thee we send our sighs, groaning and weeping in this vale of tears. Come, then, our Advocate, and look down upon us with those thy pitying eyes, etc., etc." Apart from the halting English, the translation of the Latin is inexact. If any of our readers will kindly take up the "Salve Regina," it will be at once apparent that in these few lines there are not less than six or seven inexact translations.

The point we are coming at is simply this: people who are not qualified to compile such an important work as a prayer-book, or who will not give the time necessary to the labor, or who look upon it as a very ordinary and important performance, should never attempt it. Let them compile stories, or poems, or something else; but, for heaven's sake, let them not attempt the "revising and correcting," the furnishing of their versions of prayers, hymns and devotions that are as old as the hills and as sacred as they are old.

We will touch again upon this subject when opportunity presents itself. Not to have it said that we are too critical, we will mention one fact that will soon become generally known. We are aware of a certain new prayer-book that is about to create a model whereby others may be formed. It is compiled by a religious and is intended for the special use of young girls, at "church, at school or at home." We will not say any more concerning this volume, at present, beyond expressing the hope that all future compilers of prayer-books will "take a leaf from that religious book" of experience and see that their works, like hers, has been, are revised by eminent theologians, and that they "contain clear, concise and accurate instructions on the doctrine and practices of our Holy Religion."

THERE is something remarkable in the fact that Bishop Mutz, of Denver, has taken the very unusual course of sending

his resignation to the Holy Father. It appears that the financial condition of the diocese is anything but desirable, and that the people refuse to co-operate with their Bishop in the work of rectifying matters. It is seldom that we hear of a Bishop being pushed to that extreme, and truly there must be something radically wrong when he finds the situation so desperate that he is obliged to resign.

## THE PIANO CONTEST.

One of the most interesting events in connection with the recent Villa Maria Bazaar was the contest between the Shamrock and the National Amateur Athletic Associations. Mrs. Moore, whose energy and zeal are so well known and so highly appreciated, succeeded, before the bazaar opened, in securing from Mr. L. E. N. Pratte, of Notre Dame street, the donation of a magnificent Hazleton Concert Grand Piano, which was kindly donated. The Shamrocks and National Lacrosse Associations entered the contest for the splendid gift. Of course the greater amount of the election work rested with the ladies, and as in many another case, with the ladies of our race, they succeeded in securing a handsome majority of votes for their favorites. As a result the Shamrocks carried off the piano by a majority of several thousand.

We regret, however, to state that the full amount received did not come to more than five hundred dollars. Of course this can be easily accounted for in view of the many calls that this autumn have created and on account of the hard times that have prevailed during the past summer. But one thing is to be considered as a matter of congratulation and promise, the whole contest—between the athletic representatives of two different races—were carried on in a most amicable and cordial manner, and the good feeling that existed throughout should be a lesson and a model for the older members of both nationalities. While expressing our congratulations to the winners we cannot refrain from conveying our congratulations and admiration to those who unsuccessfully contended.

Such contests are too often fruitful of considerable trouble; but in this case the harmony that existed speaks volumes for those engaged in the contest and for the great love and respect manifested by all towards the good Sisters in whose behalf the bazaar was held.

THE Villa Maria Bazaar, which closed last week in the Monument National, was a grand success. It is, indeed, an honor to Montreal and its citizens that such should be the case. There have been so many bazaars, entertainments and other extraordinary events of late that naturally the public might be expected to have grown tired of the perpetual calls upon its purse. But, in this case, it mattered not how many other demands had taken place, or were likely to arise, the citizens flocked in thousands to the scene, and each one gave according to his, or her, means, for the glorious work that will result from this beginning. We trust that the nett result will suffice to lay the basis of a fund that will serve to rebuild the Mother House.

THE brutal manner in which the Christians of Armenia have been treated by the Mohammedan Kurds is merely a fourth repetition of the same tragedy since the commencement of this century. In fact the Christians of Armenia are in a most desperate condition and their lives cannot be called their own for twenty-four hours. The Turkish Government at Constantinople expresses its

deep regret at the occurrences, and in the meantime takes no steps to prevent the repetition of the same. Some day a second Peter the Hermit will arise and start a fresh crusade against those infidels. Until they are taught a severe and lasting lesson the Christians can have no hope of peace or security in the East. But the age of barbarism is dying away, and we are confident that before the middle of the next century civilization will have established safety even for Christians, and even in Armenia.

## C. M. B. A.

## Grand Annual Concert.

The members of the C.M.B.A. branch No. 9 held their first annual concert on Monday in their hall, 80 Panel street. The president, Mr. P. Flannery, occupied the chair, and the programme was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. During the evening Grand President P. O'Reilly delivered an address. The address consisted of a most timely and ably expressed resume of the workings of the branch and the manner in which it was given confirmed the opinions of all in the fact that Mr. O'Reilly is decidedly the most energetic and able president that the council could possibly have.

## Branch 1—Nomination of Officers.

On Monday evening a largely attended meeting of Branch 1 of the Quebec Council, C.M.B.A., took place. It was largely attended and a most pleasant time was spent. The nomination of officers took place and all the office-holders were re-elected unanimously. The only office for which a contest was necessary that of treasurer. The incumbent heretofore expressed his desire to withdraw and the consequence will be an election. The officers are: W. J. Innes, president; John Lappin, 1st vice-president; W. J. McLaughlin, 2nd vice-president; F. C. Lawlor, recording and corresponding secretary (this gentleman has held the same office for the past eight years); T. F. McGrail, assistant secretary; W. J. Scullion, the present financial secretary, returned unanimously. It is understood that Mr. J. Tierney will contest the office of treasurer with Mr. T. J. White, the present holder of the same.

The other officers elected were Mr. P. Connolly, marshal; S. McKenna, guard; Messrs. Keenan, P. Morninge, J. Tierney, L. Emond, and P. McCaffrey, trustees. Chancellor J. P. Nugent, who was once a president for a couple of years, has been honored with the title of Supreme Deputy by the Supreme Council. The retiring president, who will become chancellor, is Mr. W. J. Kerr.

The meeting was most successful, and all left the hall well pleased with the result and with the active interest taken by the different members of the association. The recording secretary reported having paid \$2,000 beneficiary, due on the death of their late brother, E. Munday, who departed this life leaving four children. It is with pleasure that we note the progress made by this branch and assuredly do we wish its members all manner of success for the future.

## ST. ANTHONY'S SOCIAL.

The ladies of St. Anthony's Church held a social entertainment in the hall of that church on Saturday afternoon and evening. A varied programme was much enjoyed by the large audience present, who also disposed of some excellent refreshments. The success of the entertainment is due in a large measure to the efforts of the Rev. J. E. Donnelly, who had charge of the affair.

We are all aware of the grand efforts made by Father Donnelly for the success of every undertaking that tends towards the spiritual or temporal welfare of his parish, and in this case we can heartily congratulate the Rev. Pastor, as well as the ladies, in the success that attended the entertainment above mentioned. St. Anthony's is one of our finest and most promising parishes, while its pastor is, unquestionably, one of the most popular and zealous priests of our city.

A man who puts off his enjoyment too long will find it mislaid by the time he gets to it.